

Gospel of John  
[Jesus, the True Vine (Part 1) (John 15:1-17)]

Introduction

-Transition at 15:1 Jesus moves from comfort to teaching and admonition. He teaches them things about their relationship to Him (vs. 1-11), their relationship to one another (vs. 12-17), and their relationship to the world (vs. 18-27).

-Seventh and Final 'I AM' Saying": I am the true vine" (vs. 1, 5)

-Metaphor: vine = Jesus; vinedresser = the Father; branches = disciples

-Structure of vs. 1-17:

I. The Metaphor (vs. 1-8)

II. The Commentary (vs. 9-17)

●Abiding (vs. 4-7 → vs. 9, 10); Fruitfulness (vs. 4, 5, 8 → v. 16); Prayer (vs. 7, 8 → v. 16)

●Both sections rest on the redemptive-historical transition from the OC to the NC: Israel gives way to Jesus (vs. 1, 5); slaves give way to friends (v. 15)

OT Background

-Assumption: The fulfillment of Israel's prophetic hope, as it is described in the OT, is found in the person and work of Christ and the church.

-Israel = Vine (Ps. 80:8, 9; Ezek. 17:5, 6; Hos. 10:1)

-Israel was an unfruitful vine, deserving God's judgment (Is. 5:1-7; Jer. 2:21; 5:10; 12:10-12). See also Matt. 21:33-45 and parallels

-Messianic reference (Ps. 80:14-18)

Significance

-Jesus replaces Israel. D. A. Carson: "*Jesus supersedes Israel as the very locus (place; location) of the people of God.*"

-Vine image includes the branches; Vine/vinedresser points to the subordination of the Son to the Father

Observations

- At the heart of Christian discipleship is spiritual union with Christ (vs. 2, 4-7).
- The presence of spiritual fruit is the indispensable proof of spiritual union with Christ (vs. 4, 5, 8).