



LEADERS GUIDE – October 20

PRIMARY PASSAGE

John 15:1-12: I AM The True Vine

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹² My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

WHAT IS GOING ON?

1.) When did this passage take place? What events surround this passage? This passage occurs in the final week of Jesus' life. It's part of his farewell address. In chapter 13, he predicted his death, Judas' betrayal, and Peter's denial. In chapter 14, He told them he was leaving them to prepare a way and that the Holy Spirit would soon come. In the next days, Jesus' would go to the cross to die and then raise from the grave three days later. This is one of his final teaching moments with his disciples and he encourages and comforts them by speaking about how they can remain with him in the future.

WHAT DOES JESUS CLAIM?

2.) Read vv.1-12. With this imagery, Jesus labels himself, the Father, and the disciples. What are each of our roles and what does it mean?

- Jesus is the vine: In the Old Testament, Israel was referred to as "the vine" which spoke to God's salvation and deliverance. Jesus claims to be the true salvation and deliverance. He also claims that the Father is the gardener.
- The Father is the gardener: He is the one who plants, waters, and prunes the plant so that it may bear fruit.
- We are the branches: We are created to bear fruit, but apart from the vine (Jesus), we cannot.

3.) In verse 2, we see that the Father cuts off and prunes certain branches. What is the purpose for God's pruning? How does that relate to our life? God's pruning is not reckless, but for the benefit of the plant. It's so that the plant may thrive and bear fruit. In our life, God often is pruning things in our life that are not of him, so that we may bear fruit and enjoy the abundant life that he has promised us.

4.) What is the command that Jesus' gives to the disciples? He commands the disciples to remain in Christ. **What is the promise that follows?** When we remain in him, we will bear fruit. Jesus explains that bearing fruit is obeying God's command to love God and love others.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US?

5.) What does it mean to remain in him? Remaining in him means to abide or take residence in. Often, we think of practices that we can do: Read our Bible, Pray, listen to worship music, etc. This is part of it, but it's much more than this. Remaining in Him is about a perspective and a posture, not a practice. It's about being with someone, not doing something. Remaining in Him is about constantly fixing our minds on him. **What are some of the practical ways that you do this?** Reading the Bible, praying, worship, solitude, journaling, etc.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

Jesus' statement, "I am The True Vine," shows us that when we are faithful, Jesus makes us fruitful. As we depend on him (Remain in me), he will empower us (I remain in you) to love others.

- **What is one area in your life that God is currently pruning? How may God be doing this for your good?**
- **What practices do you need to put in place to create space to connect with Christ and foster a posture of dependence?**

