

# GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

## Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide SB 08.29.2021

### THE SECRET OF THE VINE: JOHN 15:1-8

#### Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week's message? Discuss with your group.

God first revealed His name to Moses as "I AM" (Exodus 3:13-14). God was declaring to the Israelites His eternal unchanging, uncreated self-existence. In the New Testament, Jesus reveals His name as "I AM" seven times. Jesus declared "I AM" the Bread of life (John 6:48), the Light of the world (8:12), the Door of the sheep (10:7), the good Shepherd (10:11), the Resurrection and the Life (11:25), the Way (14:6), and the true Vine (15:1). Jesus is the "true" or genuine Vine of life. Israel was also called the vine. God's intention in bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt and planting them in their own land was that they might bring forth fruit for the nations, so that in them all nations of the world could be blessed (Ps. 80:8-9). But that vine failed in that high purpose. Israel was considered an empty vine, bringing forth fruit unto himself (Hos. 10:1, Jer. 2:21, Is. 5). God no longer expects the children of Israel or any of us today to be the vine. The risen Lord Jesus is the true Vine and we are to be branches of the Vine, bearing the fruit God produces as we permit Him to live through us. Let's get into our study...

1. Describe some of the characteristics of a vine with healthy branches.
2. Jesus is the "true" Vine. What is our role as a branch on the Vine?
3. What stood out to you during this week's study?

#### Digging Deeper in God's Word: Life Lessons

##### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ John 15:1-3

"Branch" refers to a shoot which comes forth from the central vine. Its life and growth depend on the vine. The branch is to grow and eventually produce fruit. In the same way, a believer's life and growth depend on Jesus. Eventually, the believer should produce fruit. Some characteristics of fruit are a.) it bears the nature of the vine it came from, b.) it is visible, or evident to others, and c.) it exists for the benefit of others. A non-productive branch hinders the growth of fruit. Therefore, the Vinedresser prunes, or cleanses this branch. Pruning is the single most important technique for ensuring a plentiful harvest for believer. It involves a process of being exposed to the Word of God, which exposes sin, and then the exposed sin is pruned out. This pruning, or repentance then results in a branch that is able to bear much fruit.

1. In what ways do our life and growth depend on Jesus? (Prov. 3:5-7)
2. Fruit represents the productive life of a Christian. What are some examples of Spiritual fruit? (Gal 5:22-23)
3. Correlate the characteristics of fruit with the examples of Spiritual Fruit found in Gal. 5:22-23.
4. How might a non-productive branch hinder the growth of fruit on other branches? (Rom. 6:23)
5. Why is pruning in the life of the believer important in the process of bearing fruit? (Rom. 6:1-2, Matt 3:8)

##### HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 15:4-8

## **Visitation/Restoration in 2021**

To abide means to remain, to continue, or to dwell with. To “abide in” Christ is to experience an unbroken fellowship and personal communion with Him. In daily walk, Christians are to stay in intimate fellowship with the Lord. A branch abides in a vine drawing all its life and nourishment from that vine. Branches not abiding in Christ, are thrown into the fire, and are burned. So, we abide in Christ by spending time in prayer, reading and obeying His Word, fellowship with His people, and being continually conscious of our union with Him. The branch can only bear fruit as it abides in the Vine. Then the Vine can flow through the branch to produce fruit. We are to abide in Jesus, and Him in us (15:4).

6. What does it mean to abide? How does one abide in Christ?
7. Branches abiding in the vine draw all its life and nourishment from the vine. What is the life and nourishment believers draw from Christ? (John 6:48)
8. How might abiding in Christ be the secret to bearing a bumper crop of fruit? (John 8:12, 10:7, 11:25, 14:6)
9. How might the Vine flow through the branches to produce fruit? (John 15:4)

### **Applying God's Word**

**What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.**

The Vinedresser closely examines every branch of the Vine. He knows which branches are producing and which ones are not. He then prunes so the branches can bear more fruit. The pruning removes dead wood full of disease, reduces overgrowth, and removes sucker shoots. He doesn't prune to punish, but to promote more fruitfulness. In this passage of scripture, four types of branches are indicated. First, some branches produce no fruit and are cut off. Second, others bear some fruit and are left on the vine. Third, the ones which are pruned bear more fruit as the result of pruning. Then, the Lord speaks of a fourth branch. This branch bears “much fruit”

1. As the Vinedresser closely examines your branches, what quantity of fruit are you producing (i.e., no fruit, some fruit, more fruit, much fruit)?
2. What might be some areas in your life that requires pruning?
3. What steps will you take this week to bear “much fruit”?

### **PRAYER**

Thank you for Your tender love and care for us. Thank You for being our Vinedresser. Lord you know which branches are producing fruit and which branches need pruning. Please remove from our branches the dead wood full of disease, reduce the areas of overgrowth, and remove the branches that are stealing vital nutrients from us. Help us to bear much fruit as we abide in You and You in us.

*“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me” (John 15:4, NKJV).*