

## **I AM the True Vine** (John 15:1-8)

<sup>1</sup> [Jesus said,] “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, and I will 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. <sup>5</sup> “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.”

1. Jesus said, “I tell you the truth, . . . before Abraham was born, I am!” (John 8:58). What truth did Jesus proclaim with each of his “I am” statements?

2. Explain Jesus’ picture of the vine and the branches by completing the following paragraph.

Like a vine which \_\_\_\_\_ the vital, life-giving sap to its \_\_\_\_\_ so they may remain alive and be \_\_\_\_\_, so the Lord Jesus is the source of life for his \_\_\_\_\_. As long as the connection between \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ remains, there will be spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ as a result.

3. Jesus stresses the importance of having a connection with him. What connects us to the Savior? Who created this connection? How?

4. Some people only appear to have a connection with Christ. What is the immediate result for those branches that are not truly connected to Jesus? What is the ultimate result?

5. The word prune suggests a painful experience. Give examples of what the Father might use to prune the branches that are connected to Christ. Why does the Father prune? Share an example of such pruning found in the Bible and, if possible, from your own life as well.

6. Jesus uses the word “remain” eight times in this short discourse. What warning is implied by his frequent use of this word? How will Christians respond?

7. Why does Jesus say that our bearing fruit is to the Father’s glory rather than to our own?

**Agree or disagree** with the following statements:

- In this lesson, Jesus is handing us a blank check regarding prayer.
- Jesus clearly teaches that people will go to hell because they bear “no fruit.”

9. How would you respond to each of the following fellow Christians?

- “I’m not sure why the Lord took my job away. He must be punishing me.”
- “I pray all the time. I don’t have to attend worship services to be a Christian.”
- “I’m so disgusted with myself. I want to live for the Lord, but no matter how hard I try, I keep messing up. Sometimes I wonder if I’m really a Christian at all.”

10. In the eyes of God, “a good work is whatever a believer does according to God’s Word out of love and thanks for all of God’s goodness.” Why can we rightfully say that even the very best unbeliever can never do anything that is pleasing to God?