

Jesus' "I Am" Sayings in John's Gospel

I Am the True Vine

Sunday, May 1, 2011

Pastor Warner Smith

Message Truth:

The seventh and final instance of the "I Am" saying (special word construction of the Greek "to be" verb combined with an emphatic personal pronoun) used by John, to reassure his reader of Christ's divinity, is Jesus' assertion that He is the True Vine. Jesus uses this allegory to emphasize the importance of fruitfulness in the Christian life and to point out that it is not the product of human effort but of abiding in Him. To better understand this figure we need to consider the meaning of the imagery of the vine in Israel and then examine this image's implications for Christians and apply it to ourselves.

Message Text:

¹ "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, 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. ⁵ "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. ⁶ 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. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. John 15:1-8

New Testament Images of Christ and the Believer

Body and its members I Corinthians 12
Bridegroom and Bride Ephesians 5:25-33
Shepherd and Sheep John 10

1. The i_____ of the v_____

- Grape vines have a single trunk
- Grape vines have many branches
- Grapes are only produced on this year's growth
- Left alone, branches will produce more foliage than fruit

¹ "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. John 15:1-2

● The prophets used this image of the grape vine n_____

²¹ I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine? Jeremiah 2:21

¹ Israel was a spreading vine; he brought forth fruit for himself. As his fruit increased, he built more altars; as his land prospered, he adorned his sacred stones. ² Their heart is deceitful, and now they must bear their guilt. The LORD will demolish their altars and destroy their sacred stones.

Hosea 10:1-2

● Jesus uses this image p_____

³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ 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.

John 15:3-4

2. The i_____ for C_____

- All disciples are t_____ c_____ by Jesus' W_____ and therefore are to be f_____

Branches are good for bearing or burning.

⁵“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. ⁶ 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. John 15:5-6

- The f_____ of the disciples is c_____ on their a_____ in Christ

Abide means to keep in fellowship with Christ so that His life can work in and through us to produce fruit.

⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. John 15:7

- The ability of the disciples to a_____ and r_____ is conditioned on their a_____ in Christ

If there is no fruit, you must examine the root

⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. John 15:8

3. The a_____ to y_____

- Bearing m_____ fruit glorifies the Father; so abide in Christ and g_____ God

Fruitfulness includes both the production of Christian character and the winning of others to follow Christ.

⁸ Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. Matthew 3:8

²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Matthew 7:20

²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. Romans 6:22

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Galatians 5:22

⁹ And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, ¹⁰ so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, ¹¹ **filled with the fruit of righteousness** that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. Philipians 1:9-11

Are you glorifying the Father by producing much fruit?