

True Vine 3: We the Branches

John 15:1 *"I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. 2 He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me. He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit. 3 You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.*

⁵ *"I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me – and I in him – bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you. ⁸ My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples.*

We've been looking at John 15:1.

- God, our Father, is the Gardener
 - He is highly invested in your fruitfulness. Significance. Impact.
- Jesus is the True Vine
 - Which means he's the True Israel.
 - Ongoing relationship with Jesus gives us the promises of Israel.
 - We don't connect via race or religion. Because at the core of the promises to Israel is intimacy. **Intimacy transcends race and rules.**
 - The promises are of belonging and significance. Presence and empowerment.
 - Jesus shows us this by being the True Branch.

The Father is the Gardener and Jesus is the Vine. That leave us as the branches.

Which is interesting because **there seems to be a lot of risk in being a branch.**

- Risk of removal: ² *He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me*
- Risk of being burned up: ⁶ *If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up*
- Not even a risk but **a promise of being pruned**: *He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit*
- But there is also the reward of fruitfulness
 - *bear more fruit v2*
 - *The one who remains in me – and I in him – bears much fruit v5*
 - *My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples v8*

I've only wanted to be fruitful. I've often felt unfruitful. **Sometimes we don't feel**

fruitful

- Often because we don't feel clean
- I see this in my own life so much: I feel unclean, I feel unworthy, I've failed and I declare "I'm so unfruitful!"
 - And then we end up in a self fulfilling prophecy

But Jesus has an answer for this. He says we are already clean (this verse seems out of place!) v3 *You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you* v3

- If we are in an ongoing relationship with Jesus we are already clean, **no matter how we feel.**
 - This frees us from our own condemnation
 - This releases us from guilt that makes us ineffective
 - The cleansing of the word of Jesus in our lives frees us to be fruitful.
 - What did you do that makes you feel unclean?
 - What did God do to make you clean? Which is more powerful?

Sometimes I don't feel fruitful because I'm not equipped, not resourced.

- I don't have enough money. Training. Contacts. Time. The right answers.
- Feeling unclean can make us feel unfruitful. **Feeling unequipped can make us feel unfruitful.**
- I can so easily forget the wealth of resources we have access to as Christians. Jesus says v7
 - *If you remain in me and **my words remain in you**, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you*

Note that the answer to our cleanness issue is the same as the answer to our resource/equipping issue: the Word (and remaining in Jesus).

Can I believe this word?

- Can I believe **his** word? There are great promises here. Power, provision, protection. The book of Acts.
- It doesn't matter what I don't have, if I have the word of Jesus in my life I have access to everything.

God calls us to be fruitful and resources us by his Word.

Conclusion

God calls Every Nation Melbourne to be fruitful.

- We're here to Honour God and Make Disciples
- It doesn't matter that we don't have our own building. There's a long list of what we don't have. But what really matters is what we do have.
 - Cleansing from our sin by Jesus
 - Access to ask whatever we want from him!

God gets the glory from our fruitfulness

- Jesus provides the power for our fruitfulness
- **But the branches get to be fruitful**

Break through the mindset of uncleanness!

Break through the mindset of lack!

If you are a Christian here tonight: no matter how dirty you feel you are clean, no matter how poor you feel you are rich!

If you are not a Christian here tonight: no matter how right you feel you are filthy, no matter how equipped you feel you are impotent.