

The True Vine: Now the Spirit

We've been looking at John 15

- 15:1-8
 - God is the Gardener
 - Jesus is the True Vine
 - We are the Branches
- 15:9-17
 - **We are commanded to love.** Invitation to intimacy. Declaration of identity. Foundation of our impact.
 - **Joy completed.** Human flourishing!
 - We are chosen to be fruitful, to go and bear fruit, fruit that remains.
 - The desire for fruitfulness, the need to flourish, has been stamped on our DNA 'Go forth and multiply, Go and Make Disciples'.

John 15

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, **but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.** ²⁰ Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. ²¹ **They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.** ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not be guilty of sin. Now, however, they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates me hates my Father as well. ²⁴ If I had not done among them what no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin. But now they have seen these miracles, and yet they have hated both me and my Father. ²⁵ But this is to fulfill what is written in their Law: 'They hated me without reason.'
²⁶ "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me. ²⁷ **And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.**

Commanded to love but we will experience hate.

- The World hates you because I have chosen you.
 - If you are in me, remain in me, then you are so identified with me that my name is found in you. (*They will treat you this way because of my name v.21*)
 - What name is found in you?

Should we be loved by our community? Or should we be hated by our community?

- Think the answer is both
 - Some will love us for the positive change we bring
 - Some will hate for the claim that Jesus is God, the only God.
 - I want to be loved for and hated for the right reasons

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Father, Son and now the Spirit.

- This passage isn't really about the world hating us. **This passage is about a person encouraging us.** The Spirit of truth encouraging us.
 - Counselor is the word paraklitos which literally means encourager
 - The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth who encourages.
- The truth about Jesus. The truth about us. The truth about us in Jesus.
 - You do have a father. **You are fruitful.** Your joy is complete. **These are your brothers and sisters.**
 - In a world that thrives on lies and manipulation the Spirit of Truth is the only answer.
 - That's another reason the world will hate you: In the empire of lies truth is treason.

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Sounds legalistic. Isn't.

- When the Spirit of Truth encourages us with the truth, in a world built on enslaving deception we must testify.
- Yes there might be fear. Reluctance. But Truth needs to get out, wants to get out. It's what the truth does.
 - The disciples out of everyone on earth had to testify. It was right for Jesus to say to them 'you must testify'. They had been with Jesus from the beginning. They knew the truth. They had lived with, eaten with, journeyed with the Truth. Other's had things to say about Jesus, things not true, so they must testify

Conclusion

'And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning.'

- Does this apply to us?
 - And you also must testify for I have been with you from the beginning.
- Here's the reality, we are always testifying about something.
 - Are we testifying about Jesus? If not then who or what? What do other people say we stand for?

It's all about testifying about Jesus

- I don't want to win the argument
- I don't want to get a decision
- I don't want to have an answer for everything

- I don't want to give just good advice

I want to tell people about Jesus. About who he is in my life. That I love him. That I believe he is God, who died for me, because I am not perfect, because I am rebellious, so that I could be in relationship with him.

We have the Spirit of Truth as our Counselor.

- The same Spirit of Truth who filled Jesus.
- And because of this we must testify. Truth wants to be heard. Truth needs to be heard.

And then the ones we love can see in us:

- That God is a the good gardener
- That Jesus is the true vine
- That we can be fruitful, flourishing, chosen