

The Gospel of John



The Gospel of John

- Two major divisions:
 - Chapter 1-11, covers 3 ½ years
 - Chapter 12-21, covers 1 week
- Chapter 12,
 - the Triumphal entry
- Chapters 13-17
 - The 'upper room discourse'

Upper Room Discourse

- Longest recorded discourse in the NT
- Begins in the upper room
- Ends en route to the Garden of Gethsemane
- Chapter 13,
 - Judas leaves the room
 - That which Jesus has to say is for His own
 - ‘Masterclass’ in discipleship
 - If you are to be a disciple of Jesus, these are the terms:

Disciple's Masterclass

- Lesson 1: Chapters 13 & 14
 - Giving up the right to yourself – pre requisite
 - Servanthood – pre requisite
 - A new commandment: Agape Love
 - Keep My commandments
 - The Holy Spirit will be given to teach you
- Lesson 2: Chapters 15 & 16
 - Disciples are appointed to bear fruit
 - They are to continually abide in Christ
 - Persecution will come... But...
 - The Holy Spirit will be given to comfort you



The Gospel of John

Chapter 15

I am the **true vine** and my Father is the husbandman.

John 15:1

- 'Genuine Vine'
- Genuine as opposed to counterfeit
- Two other vines in scripture: both profess to lead men to the Father
- Psalm 80:8-15
- Revelation 14:9

Degenerate Plant

8 Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it.

9 Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land.

10 The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like the goodly cedars.

11 She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.

Psalm 80:8-15

Degenerate Plant

12 Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her?

13 The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.

14 Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

15 And the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself.

Psalm 80:8-15

Degenerate Plant

- ¹ Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:
- ² And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

Isaiah 5:1-7

Degenerate Plant

- 3 And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard.*
- 4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?*

Isaiah 5:1-7

Degenerate Plant

⁵ And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down:

⁶ And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.

Isaiah 5:1-7

Degenerate Plant

7 For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

Isaiah 5:1-7

Degenerate Plant

21 Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

Jeremiah 2:21

Degenerate Plant

- Israel were to be a witness to the nations, testifying to the God of Abraham, Isaac & Jacob
- Through this vine, the nations were to come to the knowledge & fear of the One true God
- But... Israel (through disobedience) became a degenerate plant, thus a byword & proverb
- Rather than being a witness they brought God's name into disrepute
- However, the Jewish religious leaders still thought they were the only way to God

National Warning #1

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Matt 3:9-10

National Warning #2

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

Matt 21:33-43

National Warning #2

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

Matt 21:33-43

National Warning #2

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

Matt 21:33-43

National Warning #2

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, **which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.**

Matt 21:33-43

National Warning #2

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Matt 21:33-43

The nation to whom the kingdom of God is given will bring forth the fruit that Israel failed to do

National Warning #2

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceivèd that he spake of them.

Matt 21:44-45

Vine of Deception

- Another Vine:

Vine of Deception

⁸ And there followed another angel, saying, **Babylon** is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because **she** made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of **her** fornication.

Rev 14:8

Vine of Deception

- cf. Revelation 17 & 18
- Who is this 'Lady Babylon'?
- As Matt 23:37 "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...*"
 - Represents house of Israel
- So Babylon is representative of the apostate religious system
 - which began & ends there

Vine of Deception

18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of **the vine of the earth**; for **her** grapes are fully ripe.

19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered **the vine of the earth**, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

Rev 14:18-19

Vine of Deception

- This 'Babylonian' vine is the epitome false religion
 - Began with Cush, founder of Babel
 - Hermes – 'son of Ham'
 - 'Confunder' (Jer 50:2)
 - Established by Nimrod (Bar-Cush)
 - Propagated by Semaramis
- It promises a way to spiritual security...
- ...but leads to destruction & the cup of wrath of God
 - cf. Numbers 5: 'Penalty for Adultery'

The True Vine

So... in John 15,

- It is in contrast to these two vines ...
 - Vine of Israel
 - Vine of the Earth
- ...neither of which can lead anyone to the Father
- ...that Jesus says:
- 'I AM the genuine Vine'

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

John 15:1

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:2

- What does it mean for an unfruitful branch to be taken away?
- Is Jesus referring to believers or unbelievers?
- What does it mean for fruitful branches to be purged?
- What is the fruit that should be produced?

The Fruit

“I do not believe that the fruit mentioned here refers to soul-winning, as so many people seem to think. I believe soul-winning is a by-product but not the fruit itself. The fruit is the fruit of the Spirit. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance . . .”* (Gal. 5:22–23). This is fruit in the life of the believer. Abiding in Christ will produce effectual prayer, perpetual fruit, and celestial joy:.”

Purging

- A strange(?), but carefully chosen word
- Gr. *kathairō*, which means 'to cleanse'
- Lit. drain poison from the system
- This is what our Husbandman does with us
- The process is called 'Sanctification'
- It causes us to bear more fruit

Purging

IO For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness.

II Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

Hebrews 12:10-11

- Gr. *paideuo*, discipline, correction

² Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:2

Gr. Airo 'to lift up'

- To whom does this refer?
- Two options:
- Believers
 - How can they be taken away?
 - Can they be restored?
 - Is it possible to bear no fruit?
- Unbelievers
 - How can they be 'in me'
 - Why would they be expected to bear fruit in the first place?

³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

John 15:3

- Back in chapter 13 water had cleansed their feet
- In Ephesians Paul will clarify:

²⁵ Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Eph 5:25-26

- 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
- 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:4-5

⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:6

- Two options:
 - Believers?
 - Unbelievers?

Unfruitful Branches

- Arguments for these being a carnal believer:
 - Jesus is talking specifically to His disciples
 - ‘Take away’ in v.2 can mean ‘lifted up’
 - Supported elsewhere in scripture

Unfruitful Branches

5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Cor 5:5

- This individual was 'cut off' from fellowship
- Paul was vindicated because in 2 Cor 2:5-11 we find the man had repented

Unfruitful Branches

- 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*
- 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*
- 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

1 Peter 1:3-7 5

Unfruitful Branches

⁶ Wherein ye greatly rejoyce, though now for a season, **if need be**, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

⁷ That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be **tried with fire**, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 1:3-7 5

Unfruitful Branches

15 For if the **casting away** of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiuing of them be, but life from the dead?

16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

17 And if **some of the branches be broken off**, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

Rom 11:15-24

Unfruitful Branches

- 18** Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee.
- 19** Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in.
- 20** Well; **because of unbelief they were broken off,** and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear:

Rom 11:15-24

Unfruitful Branches

21 For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Rom 11:15-24

Unfruitful Branches

²³ And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: **for God is able to graff them in again.**

²⁴ For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

Rom 11:15-24

Unfruitful Branches

Other biblical precedents:

- Prodigal son – Luke 15:11-23#
 - Father ‘gave him over to the world’
 - His flesh life and appetites were destroyed
 - He got burned by the world
 - He repented and came back to the father
 - Though he lost his inheritance, he did not lose his sonship

Unfruitful Branches

Other biblical precedents:

- The nation of Israel:
 - The book of Judges
 - The books of Kings
 - Babylonian captivity
 - Deut 28 (Diaspora)

Unfruitful Branches

Conclusion:

- God does use the world to bring correction (trial by fire) for those He loves 'if need be'
- God will not permit a carnal Christian to continue in their carnality
 - Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
 - Many weak, sick and sleep (1 Cor 11:28-30)
 - Sow to the flesh = reap corruption (Gal 6:7-8)
 - If you defile the temple – God will destroy (1 Cor 3:17)
 - 1 Cor 3:11-15 – The burning up of works, not the individual, and in regard to works not spiritual fruit
 - God is able to restore (Gal 6:1)

Unfruitful Branches

The BIG question:

- is this what is being addressed in John 15:1-6?

Second Opinion

¹⁷ The first one to plead his cause seems right,
Until his neighbor comes and examines him.

Proverbs 18:17

Unfruitful Branches

- Arguments for these being a false convert:
 - Believers, however worldly, still produce spiritual fruit
 - A believer could never be taken from the place of abiding in Christ (Rom 8:35-39)
 - The language here is always used elsewhere of unsaved individuals
 - The context: Jesus in this discourse contrasts 4x the way of the world and the way of His disciples – the final one being that a disciple bears fruit whereas those who do not abide in Christ do not & cannot

Unfruitful Branches

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Matt 7:16-22

Unfruitful Branches

¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Matt 7:16-22

- What about the 'in me'?
- How can these be said to be 'in Christ'?

Unfruitful Branches

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied **in thy name?** and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Matt 7:16-22

Unfruitful Branches

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

Matt 13:47-50

Unfruitful Branches

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Matt 13:47-50

Unfruitful Branches

- Wheat & Tares

³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matt 13:30

- ‘Men’ gather them (inserted by translators)
- ‘They are gathered’ – Matt 13:30 tells by who

Unfruitful Branches

- Four Soils: Matthew 13:
- # 1 Doesn't even get started
- # 2 & 3 Unfruitful (Matt 13:22)
- # 4 Bears fruit

²³ But he that receiveth seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Matt 13:23

- All bear some fruit, just differing quantities

Unfruitful Branches

- Remember Jesus warnings to Israel:
- Because you have been unfruitful...
- ...the 'vineyard' will be given to a nation who will bear fruit

⁴³ Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Matt 21:43

Unfruitful Branches

- Remember Jesus warnings to Israel:
- Because you have been unfruitful...
- ...the 'vineyard' will be given to a nation who will bear fruit
- And you will be cut off...

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Matt 3:10

Unfruitful Branches - Conclusion

“In John 15:1-6, Jesus effectively underlines that which He already told the disciples, that He was the *only* way to the Father (John 14:6). Israel were no longer a vine whose fruit would be to lead the nations to the Father. Neither could the vine of the earth (Rev 14:19) bear any good spiritual fruit. The only Vine of value was the True Vine. Through His propitiation for the whole world (1 John 2:2), all mankind now had the opportunity of abiding in the Vine. However, if any branch abide not in the Vine, it would be spiritually fruitless, and therefore taken away to wither and finally be burned.

What an incredible picture of the person who rejects Christ!

Unfruitful Branches - Conclusion

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Rom 6:21-23

- 7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
- 8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:7-8

- Ask what you will?
- Only if abiding in Christ (cf Psalm 37)
- Abiding in Christ will result in constant communication with the Father
- It is the Father's desire that we bear much fruit
- 'So shall ye be' - Examine yourself... (2 Cor 13:5)

9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

John 15:9-11

- *These Things*: The principles of discipleship

I2 This is my commandment, That ye love one another,
as I have loved you.

I3 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay
down his life for his friends.

I4 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command
you.

John 15:12-14

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 15:15-16

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

John 15:17-19

- V. 18, contradiction?

- 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.
- 21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:20-21

- 'Watched My sayings'
 - The world will Critically observed what we say

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John 15:22-25

- Psalm 64:9

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

John 15:26

The Comforter

- The Comforter - Holy Spirit
- 14:16 'another comforter'
 - Gr. 'allos' : another of the same kind
- Spirit of Truth
 - Therefore He will never contradict the Word
- He will testify of Jesus
- How?

²⁷ **And** ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John 15:27

- ‘And’ Gr. de (deh); moreover, because
- How will the Holy Spirit testify of Jesus?
 - ‘testify that Jesus is God’
- By the fruit produced in the lives of believers
 - ‘Greater works’ (John 14:12)

Practical Application

- The discipleship training course ends
- Now it's time to put it into practice
- Primary commandment: *Love one another*
- This will be produced by abiding in Him
- As believers we will produce fruit
- The amount will depend on how deep our roots go down into His word
- The fruit will trigger persecution...
- ...but will testify to the deity of Christ



Next Session

The Gospel of John

Chapter 16