

JOHN 15:1-16:15

July 8, 2012

Today we'll be discussing **John 15:1 through 16:15**.

15:1-10 Look at **chapter 15** in **verses 1 to 10**? Verse by verse, what principles do we learn?

- **15:1** Jesus is the vine, the source of life. The Father is the pruner.
- **15:2** Branches (people) who don't bear fruit are removed from the vine. NOT bearing fruit means that you are not actually attached to the vine. You are like a disconnected branch laying among "live" branches. People that bear fruit get pruned; they get "cut back" so they can bear more fruit.

How does God *prune* us?

- God prunes us with tests that make us better Christians.

God wants us to bear more fruit. What more specifically does He seek to do in our lives so that we will bear more fruit?

- He wants to humble us so He can exalt and use us (**James 4:19**). Trials keep us aware of our need for Him and cause us to draw near to Him (**James 4:8**). He wants us to rely on His power, not ours (**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**).
- **15:3** We are "clean" because of God's Word (**Ephesians 5:26**).
- **15:4** We can only bear fruit when trusting and attached to (abiding in) Jesus.

This passage is about abiding. What does it mean to abide?

- To *abide* means to be at home. Abiding is where we live; it is the place from which we operate our lives. To abide is to have Jesus as the center of your life.
- **15:5** We can bear much fruit abiding in Him; we can bear NO fruit apart from Him. We can do things, but they have no eternal consequence.
- **15:6** The branches that are not connected to Jesus are thrown into a fire (**hell**).
- **15:7** When abiding in Him, our prayers are answered.

How can we get *whatever we wish* from God?

- When we truly abide in Him we only want for ourselves what He wants for us. **See Psalm 37:4**. [4Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart's desires.] When we only want what God wants for us, He can give us everything we want.
- **15:8** Bearing fruit (1) brings glory to God and (2) proves that we are disciples of Jesus (attached to the Vine).
- **15:9** Jesus loves like the Father, and He invites us to live in that love.
- **15:10** We abide in God's love by keeping His commandments. **See John 14:21**. [21 Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."] This is how Jesus abided in the Father's love.

15:11 Jesus speaks of us having His joy in **verse 11**. What does it mean to have His joy?

- Jesus had a joy in Himself that was not affected by the circumstances around Him. He had joy at the cross (**Hebrews 12:2**). Joy is a fruit of the Spirit that we experience when we obey, believe, and think correctly.

Can a person have joy and sorrow at the same time? Give an example.

- Yes. A person could be walking in joy but mourning the loss of a loved one. He knows that loved one is with the Lord and He has God's joy, but he still grieves his loss. Jesus always had joy but he wept at the death of Lazarus (**John 11:35**).

13:1-17:26 It is important to realize that Jesus is talking to the **12 disciples** in **chapters 13 to 17**.

15:13 **Verse 13** tells us that the greatest act of love is to die for someone. Is it harder to die for someone or to live with and for someone? Explain.

- Dying for someone is the ultimate sacrifice, but it may only require **20 seconds** of love and courage. To live with/for someone day in and day out for years requires far more perseverance than dying for someone.

15:16 **Verse 16** is about choosing the **12** to be His disciples (and to become Apostles expecting Judas); it is not about Jesus choosing them for salvation. What did Jesus choose and appoint them to do?

- They were to bear fruit and their fruit would remain. We are a part of their "fruit". We are not chosen as Apostles, but God also wants us to bear fruit (**vs. 1-2,5**) and to make an eternal difference.

15:18-21 Look at **verses 18 to 21**. What can we expect from "the world" if we live a godly life?

- Our righteousness and righteous standards are offensive to the world. See **John 3:19**. [19 And the judgment is based on this fact: God's light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.] If they hate God and His standards, then they will hate the people who seek to be like Him and who hold to His moral standards. See **James 4:4** [4 You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. And **2 Timothy 3:12** [12 Yes, and everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.]. The world should hate us because we are godly, though, not because we are self-righteous, pushy, obnoxious, etc.

15:22,24 What does **verses 22 and 24** say about accountability?

- God holds us accountable for what we know (**Romans 1:18-20**). [18 But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness. 19 They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. 20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.]

For what does God hold us accountable today?

- We are not only accountable for what we know; we are accountable for what we *should* know. With the Bible available to us today, we are to know God's will. God does not excuse our careless or deliberate ignorance.

15:26 What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in **verse 26**?

- He is a "helper" (literally one who joins us to assist us). He is "truth" (as is Jesus {**14:6**} and the Father {**Titus 1:2 and Hebrews 6:18**}). He will talk about (*testify*) Jesus, not Himself.

16:1-4 What does Jesus teach us in **chapter 16 verses 1 to 4**?

- There are people who are opposed to God but think that they are serving Him (like the Pharisees). These people are deceived about their faith. Jesus tells us this so we don't *stumble* (get tripped up) when we see it.

16:7 In **verse 7** we learn that it was "better" for Jesus to go away than to remain with them. Why is this true?

- Jesus was the presence of God with them. The Holy Spirit would be the presence of God in them. See **John 14:16-17** [16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.] And **Ephesians 2:20** [20 Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself.]

16:8-11 In verses 8 to 11 we learn that the Spirit would convict the world of three things. What were they and what does He mean?

- He would convict the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment. The word “convict” is a judicial term that refers to convincing for a verdict. The Spirit would convince people of their sin (singular, not plural: their sin natures). He would convince them of the perfect righteousness that (1) God possesses, (2) that Jesus lived up to and fulfilled, and (3) that we fail to possess. And He would convince them that...as a result of their sin and His righteousness, they were headed to judgment.
- In the cross we see all three: (1) God puts our sin on Jesus {**2 Corinthians 5:21**}; (2) we understand the righteous standard of God that must be fulfilled; and (3) we see God's judgment of our sin. See **Isaiah 53:4-6** [4 Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! 5 But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. 6 All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.]

16:13-14 What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in verses 13 to 14?

- He is truth. He will teach us the truth. He will not have His own agenda but will have the Father's agenda (as Jesus did in **12:49**). He will teach us about “what is to come”: He did this when He inspired those who penned the rest of the New Testament. He will glorify *Jesus*, not Himself. (Genuinely Spirit-filled people talk about Jesus, not the Holy Spirit.) He will help us to understand what Jesus said and meant.

16:15 In verse 15 we learn that all that the Father possesses also belongs to Jesus. See Romans 8:16-17.

- [16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.] **NLT**