



Portrait of Christ

Sketches in the Gospel of John

Inductive Discovery Lesson 16
John 15:1-27

Jesus: The True Vine

Nothing comforts an anxious heart like tender words of assurance.

The men who left all to follow Jesus grew apprehensive when the Lord spoke of going away. As the sun fell below the horizon on that Thursday evening, eleven hearts were beating in uncertain silence around their beloved leader. He knew their misgivings.

With masterful skill, Jesus spoke the words that their troubled souls needed to hear. He chose the ready symbol of a vine and branches to express to these, His dearest friends, just how close He wanted them to stay. So close that His life would be feeding into theirs. So close that when they whispered His name in prayer the Father would hear and answer. So close that they would love each other down to the very last heartbeat.

Jesus knew His words that night would leave a lasting impression, not only in His first disciples but in the heart of every person who will follow Him in faith.

“Abide in Me...”

Working Text for John 15:1-27
English Standard Version (ESV)

1 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch of Mine that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in Me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples. 9 As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. 11 These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

12 “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. 14 You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15 No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give it to you. 17 These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

18 “If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I

chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. **20** Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will also keep yours. **21** But all these things they will do to you on account of My name, because they do not know Him who sent me. **22** If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. **23** Whoever hates Me hates my Father also. **24** If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both Me and My Father. **25** But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: 'They hated Me without a cause.'

26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about Me. **27** And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning."



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

John 15:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 15:12-17

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

John 15:18-27

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the chapter is about. _____

Give a simple title to the chapter to help you remember what it says.



Take A Closer Look

**“I am the vine, you are the branches;
he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit,
for apart from Me you can do nothing.”**
John 15:5

Memorize God’s Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God’s Word

While you memorize this verse, let it work into your heart and mind. Scripture meditation is like a good cup of tea—the longer it steeps, the richer the flavor. So give yourself permission to slowly savor God’s Word! Use the questions below (like a tea bag) to keep dipping into this verse.

(Challenge alert: You won’t always see an obvious answer directly from the verse.)

Look up. What does this verse show you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, or His promises.)

Look around. What does this teach you about life or people in general?

Look within. What does this teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you personally, what has been the most important lesson from this chapter?
How will you put what you have learned into practice?

Something to Think About . . .

Fruit, more fruit, *much* fruit, is what Christ seeks;
It is what He produces;
It is what He will assuredly give to the soul that abides in Him.

Andrew Murray

Message Notes:

A large rectangular area with horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or message template. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the area. The edges of the rectangle are irregular and jagged, giving it the appearance of a piece of torn paper. The background of the area is a light gray color.

