**John XIV Abiding in Christ John Ch 15 & 16**

**Review:**

**John Ch 14 Jesus Comforts His Disciples Reasons to be comforted**

John 14:1-4 Trust in God. Trust also in me. Why?

Because… In my father’s house there are many rooms. If that were not so, I would not have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you.

Marriage metaphor.

We are married/betrothed to God, but our marriage will be consummated at the end of time.

God has a place prepared for you! What do you think it is like?

1 Cor 2:9 “No eye has seen, nor ear has heard, nor mind conceived what God has prepared for those who live him!!!

Thomas: How do we get there?

John 14:6 In fact, I, I am the way, the truth and the life. I AM statement #6.

I AM the way. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus.

Jesus is THE ONLY WAY.

I AM the truth. Jesus embodies truth. He defines truth. When we find Jesus our search for truth is fulfilled.

I AM the life. Abundant life is found in him (John 10). Meaningful life is found in him.

John 14:12 You will do greater works than I have done. The work of bringing salvation to Jews and Gentiles.

v. 14 Ask anything in my name… In the authority of Jesus. This is one of the reasons we can be comforted. That we can “Trust in God, trust also in me.”

John 14:16 Jesus: I will not leave you alone. I am sending the Advocate, Counselor. He is RIGHT THERE with you. Advocating for you with the Father.

The theme of this sermon. John 14:27 Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

**John Chapter 15 The Vine and the Branches.**

John 15:1-8

v. 1 I AM the true vine. I AM statement #7 Remember, in John, Jesus is revealed through his miracles, through his statements about himself—especially his I AM statements and through how he fulfills the Jewish festival foreshadows.

I AM the bread of life 6:35

I AM the light of the world 8:12,9:5

I AM the door (and the gate) 10:7

I AM the good shepherd 10:1,14

I AM the resurrection and the life 11:25

I AM the Way the Truth and the Life 14:6

I AM the true vine 15:1

So, what is this one about?

A common metaphor. ***Isaiah 5:1-7***, Psalm 80:8-18, Jeremiah 2:21 also Ezekiel 19:10 and Hoseah 10:1.

But in these, Israel is the vine. Jesus changes the metaphor here. I am the *true* vine.

Three characters here: Jesus, us, the Father.

John 15:1 Jesus is the vine. He is the connection to the Father, to the Holy Spirit, to the life-giving essence.

So… Is God the soil then?

God is a gardener. A deep metaphor. He is he one who prunes the branches.

We are the branches. This is the part that bears fruit.

In the sense that our purpose, in this metaphor, is to bear fruit.

15:2a He cuts off every branch which bears no fruit. Is this a threat that if we do not bear fruit, we will be cut off?

Answer: Maybe, but the stronger sense of John 15 is a promise that, if we are attached to the vine, we will bear fruit that will last.

15:2b Who here likes being pruned? What is the purpose of pruning? What happens if the tree is not pruned?

I see a lot of almond tree pruning. I prune our pomegranate tree.

It is more like, those parts of us which are not going to be fruitful, he cuts off so that we can bear more fruit. If this passage is a warning, it is more a warning that we will be pruned than that we will be cut off.

But that is a good thing!

Let’s go back to John 15:2a (he cuts off every branch…)

connected to 15:6 If you cut yourself off. If you leave Christ You will be a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

Matthew 7:15-20 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

15:3 But that is not you. You are already made clean = you have already been pruned. Pruned = cleaned. Jesus is not intending to criticize but to encourage.

15:4 The key teaching in John 15:4 We should abide (remain) in Jesus. This is an action on our part.

Note: Abiding is commanded. It is something we do.

15:5 Abiding in Christ is the key to fruit-bearing.

We must decide to be connected and act on our decision to be connected to God through Christ.

In Christ, abiding is the key to fruitfulness.

Outside of Christ = no fruit at all and being burned.

How much of real value can we do apart from Christ? Nothing!! Do you believe that?

OK, so how do we abide in Christ? (Jesus’ answer is not what we would expect)

15:7 Ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.

(repeats John 14:13 and repeated later in John 16:23)

Conditioned on us abiding in Him and his words abiding in us.

1 John 5:14 If we ask and it is acc to God’s will, we have it.

John 15:7 If his words remain in us, we will pray for that which is his will!

15:8 As Jesus glorified the Father by doing the work given to him, so we glorify Jesus by doing the work he gave us. What is that work? Bearing fruit.

Do you want to glorify God? I do!!! In bearing fruit, we prove (to who? To ourselves!) that we are Jesus’ disciples. What fruit have you borne lately?

What is this “fruit”? Is it the fruits of the Spirit? Yes. Pray about it.

What kind of fruit does a grape vine produce? Grapes!!! This has to include adding disciples. Pray about that!

What is this fruit? 15:7-8 It is the things we ask for. It is the things produced through our prayer.

The fruit is the product of our vision. What is your vision for God using you? What do you pray for continually? What do you rely on God for? This is the fruit you will bear.

Skip forward to John 15:16 abiding = answered prayer abiding = much fruit that will last (eternal life). These are strongly connected here.

So far: abiding in Christ = knowing his Word, having a vision for what he can do in your life and praying for that fruit from God.

But there is more…

John 15:9-17 **The key to abiding is loving and obeying** (esp. v. 10).

How to abide? 15:9-10 by keeping his commands. He repeats himself in v. 14.

That is (one of the ways) we abide in Christ.

Abiding in Christ and in his love is found in obedience, particularly in bearing fruit and in loving the family of believers. This is not complicated.

v. 11 The result: Joy. Sounds like John 10 Life and life to the full.

v. 12-15 Again, the key to abiding is love.

v. 12-14 Jesus repeats the “new commandment” of John 13:34.

v. 14-15 Jesus even calls us friend.

v. 16 And he chose us to be his friend!

What kind of friend is Jesus? v. 13 He even dies for us. That’s love!

Our obedience is that of a friend who willingly obeys rather than as a slave who is forced to obey. In that sense, we also “lay down” our lives to him. This is freedom in Christ.

It is so much better—so much more fulfilling serving because we want to than because we have to.

Hey, have you met my buddy. We go way back. We are really close. Who am I talking about? Jesus.

v. 17 In case you did not already get it: Love each other!

Summary:

Jesus is the vine. We are the branches. As branches, we must abide in the vine: Jesus.

We do this by

Abiding in his word.

Developing a personal vision for our life from that Word and praying for that vision.

By obeying him.

By loving each other.

Then God will give us much fruit in the form of what we have been praying for.

John 15:18-16:4

Here, Jesus is continuing with comforting his disciples, although it may not feel like it!

The love and fellowship we have in Jesus is contrasted to the hatred we will have from the world.

Outline: six if… then… statements v. 18, 19, 20 (2x), 22, 24.

Believe it or not, this is all part of Jesus’ comforting his disciples (and us)

Like he says in John 16:1. So that we will not fall away.

Jesus’ assurance (which may not sound very reassuring) is that it is only natural that the world will hate you. To the extent that you are like me, you will be hated by the world. In any case, it is me, not you who they are hating.

v. 23 Whoever hates me hates the Father. Do you see where he is going? Jesus says, Hey, it does not bother me when people hate me. I do not take it personally. I represent the Father.

Similarly, whoever hates you hates me. So you should not take it personally (but of course you will to some extent).

I have been kicked out of dorms and malls.

I have had doors slammed in my face. One time, the lady slammed it. Then she opened it up again, and slammed it a second time!

I had a guy swing a club at me, missing me by a few inches to intimidate me.

v. 25 Without reason. Their hatred is not reasonable. It is irrational. (quoting Ps 35:19, 69:4).

v. 26-27 Jesus goes back to comforting. The Counselor (*parakaleo* the caller alongside) will come. He will help you to know the truth and will testify to me that you are OK. In other words, those people can say what they want, I am going to listen to the Holy Spirit, not to them!!! Do not worry. Keep testifying.

16:2 You will be kicked out of the Synagogues. This was fulfilled in about AD 90, when the “Twelfth Benediction” of the synagogue service was added: “May the Nazarenes and heretics perish in a moment, be blotted out of the book of life, and not be written with the just.”

16:4 Again, these things are said so that they will remember he warned them.

This is normal.

**John 16:5-16 Jesus further comforts the Disciples**

Jn 16:6 It is for your good that I am going away. Why? Because it is better for us to have the Holy Spirit living in us than to have Jesus living among us. If I do not go away, He cannot come.

Jesus: I understand you will have grief, but you should not!

16:8 The Holy Spirit will convince/convict the world with regard to sin, the opportunity for righteousness and the inevitability of future judgment.

The Holy Spirit will act as a prosecutor for the world. How will he do that?

Through us!! The Spirit is not in the world, so how will He convince them? Because of our testimony. This is a great responsibility on our part.

v. 9 Concerning sin. What sin? Unbelief. Unbelief in Jesus is willful, inexcusable and damnable.

v. 10 Concerning the opportunity for having a right relationship with God because Jesus will be resurrected and will ascend to heaven. We are saved through the death, but also the resurrection of Jesus.

v. 11 Concerning judgment because Satan is already condemned. That part of the trial is already over.

Remember, Jesus is comforting his disciples. He is about to die a brutal death.

Jesus: Trust me!

v. 13 You do not understand now, but you will.

v. 14 The Father will be glorifying (lifting up) me

v.16 In case you do not get it. Just wait. I will be gone for just a tiny while, then after three days you will see me again.

This is a good thing. Why?

1. I will be raised by the Father and will go to the Father, so you will be vindicated and the world will be convicted.

2. When I get there, I will send the Holy Spirit, who, in you, will allow you to do greater things than I ever did!

John 20:19-23 Jesus did not wait for the 49 days until Pentecost. This is when they finally got it!!!

3. Because, finally, all of what I have been saying all along will finally make full sense. Everything makes sense when Jesus dies, is raised, and ascends to God.

Jesus: Trust in God, trust also in me (John 14:1)

4. By my death, the opportunity for righteousness will be created.

Skip 16:17-29

John 16:29-30 They are finally getting it!!! Yippee!!!!!

John 16:31-33 Summary of Ch 14:1-16:30 Take heart! I have overcome the world!!!