

John 15: 1-17 (New International Version)

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

⁹"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

Footnotes:

- a. [John 15:2](#) The Greek for prunes also means cleans.

OASIS: Vitally Connected--John 15: 1-17

Possible Starter question: **Over the last several months we have heard Sunday messages (and even had a LC study) on various “one anotherings.” Which ones can you recall?**

Now, are there any biblical “one anotherings” that we haven’t done--that you wish we had? Which ones?

Transitional comment: **Today’s passage culminates with one we don’t want to miss.**

- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s leading (if you haven’t already prayed)
- Read text either aloud or silently (or both).

Overview question: **What are some of the “big”(repeated) words and ideas in this section?**

First paragraph—verses 1-8:

- O Let’s begin by looking at the spiritual illustration (or allegory) that Jesus constructs. Who is who and what do they do? What is the hope?
- O What do you notice about how the Father functions in the vineyard? What is the difference between cutting off and pruning?
- O What do you learn about Jesus’ role?
- O Now let’s look at the central theme—and the key verb “remain.” How many times is it used in this paragraph?
 - I What does it mean to “remain” (RSV/KJ “abide”; Living Bible “stay”)? How does this relational dynamic work? What helps it?
 - A What does that look like in “real life?” How can you be the best branch possible?
- O What does Jesus teach will be the outcomes or benefits of effective “remaining”?
- O What is the potential risk or danger to us branches?
 - I What might cause a vine branch to detach from a vine?
 - A What are some of the ways that might happen in our spiritual lives? *(Note that the spiritual illustration of the vine and branches does have a limitation. What vine branch ever decided to abandon its vine? Plants don’t have that kind of autonomy!)*

Second paragraph—verses 9-17:

- O Even though the vine imagery continues, several new emphases are introduced. What are several of the important ones you noticed?
- O What are some of the ways that the Father is involved?

- O In verses 9 and 10, what is the pattern that the Father and Jesus have established—that can be extended into our lives?
 - I When Jesus says to “remain in my love”, how does that translate into your life? What does that mean?
 - A What does that look like for you?
- O What does Jesus say we can expect as a result? (v. 11)?
 - A In what ways have you experienced that joy?
- O Verses 12-17 provide another pattern that Jesus has provided that we need to extend to others. What do you learn about the character and quality of this love?
 - I What are the kind of reasons that can motivate us to try to live out this kind of pattern of love?
 - A What are some of the ways that this love has been lived in your Life Community? What are ways that your group can grow in loving each other in the days and months to come?

Pray that your LC can continue to grow as a place where God’s love is deeply experienced.

Text is on other page or www.Biblegateway.com

- a. BIG idea: To remain in Christ is to experience a moment by moment, vital connection with Jesus that makes us more like Him.
- b. Key verse: John 15: 9: "**As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.**"
- c. Today’s text is didactic (teaching) or prescriptive. This is a core, central text.
- d. KEY: O = Observation; I = Interpretation; A = Application (or C = Challenge).

Advice to study leaders:

- a. Complement your OIA questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? What do others of you see/think?)
- b. Always reword questions in language/word choice that is comfortable for you (and, if the question doesn’t make sense to you, then drop it.)
- c. When you ask questions, how quickly do people answer or respond? How long do you wait? (Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage people’s participation!)
- d. Pace the study—move on—conclude with “difference making” application.
- e. Timing: Here is another text that is so rich that you’ll be tempted to take an hour on each section. Instead, allocate your time and move forward gently but steadily.
- f. Determine the core questions you will ask (know which ones to skip if pressed for time).
- g. Secondary texts—use very sparingly. They tend to push you into a “teaching” role, rather than that of facilitator. It can cause people to feel distracted or de-powered.
- h. If you are utilizing this “on-line” study and not part of OASIS, I recommend that you get the New Bible Commentary Revised (IVP). It is well worth the \$40.