

John 15:1 - 8 (NASB) ¹"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ²"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. ³"You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴"Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵"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. ⁶"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are 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"My Father is glorified by this, **that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.** **John 15:16 (NASB)** ¹⁶"You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you **that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain**, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

Monday Morning Moment

"We may encounter many defeats, but we are NOT defeated!"

2 Peter 1:5 - 8 (NASB) ⁵Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in *your* moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶and in *your* knowledge, self-control, and in *your* self-control, perseverance, and in *your* perseverance, godliness, ⁷and in *your* godliness, brotherly kindness, and in *your* brotherly kindness, love. ⁸For if these *qualities* are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Fact sheet about Grapes, vines and fruitfulness!

The growing and care of grapevines has changed little over the centuries. The following facts about grapes help us understand Jesus' use of that particular plant to illustrate the relationship he expected between himself and his disciples:

- Grapes are the most widely grown fruit in the world.
- Archaeological evidence from Egyptian tombs = grapes were being cultivated 2,500 yrs. BC
- Even today, grapes are central to Israel's agriculture and economy.
- The grapevine is part of Israel's national emblem.
- Grapes are consumed in three popular forms: fresh, raisins, wine.
- Grapes grow in a multitude of colors, sizes, and flavors.
- The quality of a vine is only as good as the rooted stock. Individual branches are grafted into a healthy, productive stock.
- Vines are adaptable, but require attentive care: water, fertilizer and pruning.
- New plants are pruned for 3 - 5 years to "train" them before they are allowed to produce a crop.
- Good roots produce for as many as a hundred years.
- For their size, vines are very productive, yielding as much as 80 lbs. of grapes in a single season.
- Disease and lack of productivity can spread from dead branches that have not been removed.
- Well-tended grapevines are beautiful and aesthetic plants.

"My Father is the vinedresser." (15:1) God the Father is the Gardener.

Paul described his work as merely part of God's plan when he wrote: **1 CORINTHIANS 3:6 (NASB)**

⁶I PLANTED, APOLLOS WATERED, BUT GOD WAS CAUSING THE GROWTH. **COLOSSIANS 2:19 (NASB)**

¹⁹and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.

Barriers to Fruitfulness		
Barrier	Explanation	Implication
Lack of proper nourishment	Poor supply of water or nutrients will destroy the vine.	If Christ's life do not flow in us, we will be spiritually unproductive.
Disease	Insects and disease move from dead wood into healthy plants.	Ongoing sin and unresolved past issues will lead to spiritual ineffectiveness.
Immature branches	New branches require several years of pruning before they can produce.	We need time to grow. Growth may involve suffering.
Improper pruning	A wise gardener knows what to remove in order to bring about fruitfulness.	Our priorities must be guided by his Word, not our own wisdom and desires.
No gardener	Vines need constant attention.	Resistance to God's guidance and pruning leads to unfruitfulness.
Separated from the Vine	Branches must be attached to a healthy root stock.	We must not think for a moment that we are capable of surviving apart from Jesus Christ. He is the giver and sustainer of life!

“Every branch in Me.” (15:2)

- Believers, both sincere and false, are pictured here as the branches.
- The branches are all those who claim to be followers of Christ.
- The fruitful branches are true believers who by holy living, produce much fruit. (i.e. **Obey the Word, demo the fruit of the Spirit, remain faithful**)

The Father “CUTS OFF EVERY BRANCH THAT BEARS NO FRUIT.” (15:2 NLT)

15:6 (NASB) “IF ANYONE DOES NOT ABIDE IN ME, HE IS THROWN AWAY AS A BRANCH AND DRIES UP; AND THEY GATHER THEM, AND CAST THEM INTO THE FIRE AND THEY ARE BURNED.

Who is He referring to?

- Those who become unproductive (Acts 8:9-23)
- Those who turn back from following Christ after making a superficial commitment (John 6:66)
- Those who made phony confessions of faith (Matt.7:21-22)
- Those who left the church (1 John 2:19)
- Those who live “sloppy” carnal lives claiming Christianity (1 Cor. 6:9-11;19-20)
- Those who look like Christians on the outside; church members; religious and moral, but are actually hypocrites and sinners on the inside. (Matt. 23:27-28)

The imagery here in John 15:2 and 6 is one of destruction. It pictures the judgment awaiting all those who were never saved. Here is one of many example texts:

2 THESSALONIANS 1:7 - 9 (NASB)

⁷AND TO GIVE RELIEF TO YOU WHO ARE AFFLICTED AND TO US AS WELL WHEN THE LORD JESUS WILL BE REVEALED FROM HEAVEN WITH HIS MIGHTY ANGELS IN FLAMING FIRE,

⁸DEALING OUT RETRIBUTION TO THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW GOD AND TO THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL OF OUR LORD JESUS.

⁹THESE WILL PAY THE PENALTY OF ETERNAL DESTRUCTION, AWAY FROM THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD AND FROM THE GLORY OF HIS POWER,

(Check out: Matt. 3:10–12; 5:22; 13:40–42, 50; 25:41; Mark 9:43–49; Luke 3:17; Rev. 20:10–15)