



Campbell Chapel

Sermon by Bob Bradley



Abiding in Him

Sunday, June 3, 2018

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Jesus here is speaking. This conversation that Jesus is speaking is happening on Thursday night. He has had the Last Supper. He is on His way. As He is going down towards the Kidron Valley; this is one of the scriptures, this is one of the events, this is one of the conversations that He was having with His disciples as He was going towards the garden of Gethsemane where Judas was going to come with several hundred of the scribes and Pharisees. They were going to come with torches and lanterns and staves and so forth. They were going to come and get Him.

However, Jesus, as He is walking that way; this is the conversation that He was having with His disciples. The reason I say that is this. This must be very important because this is going to be one of the last things here on planet earth that Jesus was going to get to teach His disciples. They were going to come and get Him a few hours after this. He was going to be inside the city. He was going to be condemned. The next morning, around six o'clock the Sanhedrin was going to come together. They were going to condemn Him to die. We know that around nine o'clock the next morning they were going to put Him on the cross.

We know that this lesson, this conversation that He was having with His disciples was one of the last conversations that He was going to have with them—not the last one but one of the last ones. So, it had to be very important. I think there are some things in here that are very striking in the day and the time and the world we live in.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

John 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

Jesus is speaking to His disciples. Again, I am going to skip over a whole bunch of stuff here because I just want to talk just for a few minutes. He makes the statement here that...

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

You will find out in the scriptures that Israel was compared to a vine. We know that when you read Isaiah 5; we know that God makes a statement; "What could I have done more? I planted you guys in the choicest of places. The rocks were taken out, all the obstacles, all the enemies, and anything that would hinder you guys from being a great nation that I wanted you to be; I took it all out of your way. Yet, instead of you bringing forth fruit, you brought forth wild fruit. Instead of you bringing forth grapes and something that was needful, useful, and beneficial; you brought forth wild grapes." We know that He was speaking to the nation of Israel. He also says here that He is the true vine and my father is the husbandman.

John 15:1 I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

He is going to teach His disciples; He is going to teach us something that I think is so very important in this day and this time that we live in today. Just as the vine and He says, He is the vine. His father is the husbandman. In other words, His father is the land owner. God the Father is the land owner. He is the one that owns it all.

John 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

He is talking about the vine and He is talking about the relationship of a vine with the branches or the branches with the vine.

John 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

If a branch does not bring forth fruit, he takes it away. Does everybody get that? Do you know what it says also here when I read to you here?

John 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

I do not know a whole lot about pruning trees and fruit trees and things like that. However, as I read over the years, especially over in that part of the world; they would

send the people that pruned their fruit trees and things to school. They may send them to school for two, three or four years to learn how to properly prune their fruit.

There was a way that they needed to do that. There was a proper way to prune the vines so that they could produce more fruit. He takes the branches away that are dead, those that are not bearing anything; He takes those away. Those that are bearing, He purges them. Do you know what that means? He prunes them. He cuts away some of the stuff that is not needed. As I read and as I read over the years before about pruning trees—not only will an experienced pruner take away maybe a part of that particular branch that is bringing forth fruit, not only will he take part of that away that has some life in it; do you know what he will do? He will go back behind where there may be some issues, some rot, something that is causing this particular branch not to bring forth all the fruit that it can; he will come back behind that back into where the branch is actually solid, where there is no disease and no infection that is there and he will cut that branch. There is a particular way that an experienced pruner would cut a branch because he knows what he is doing. He has one thing in mind so that particular branch can bring forth more fruit.

Do you know what? God knows exactly what He is doing in my life and in your life. Do you know what God wants me to do and you to do? First of all, He wants us to be branches and He wants us to stay connected to Him. He wants us to bear fruit. He wants us to not only to bear fruit but He wants us to bear more fruit and much more fruit. For us to be able to do that God has to prune some of the things that are in our lives. He has to cut some of those things away.

If you will think back just a moment, if you have been saved any time at all; there were some things in your life when you got saved that you no longer do. There are some things—they may not have been bad things necessarily, but things that were hindering your relationship with Him, or from you bringing forth the fruit that you needed and you could bring forth; there were some things there that you no longer do. Do you know why? Because God has pruned those things away. God has cut some things out of your life that you do not need. Sometimes it is people. Sometimes it is situations. Sometimes it can be a lot of different things that God will cut out of our lives and remove from our lives so that we can bring forth the fruit that we need to bring forth. Does everybody say amen on that? Everybody should say amen on that. God has the best in mind for me and you. He wants us to bring forth fruit. He wants us to bring forth a lot of fruit. He will cut away that which is dead. He will cut away that which is no good. He will cut away sometimes that which is good so that we can bring forth more fruit.

He says here...

John 15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

John 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

We know that He is talking about the Bible.

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

The word *abide* is a good word. If Susan, you go to Susan's office; she has it wrote on her office. She has the big word abide, or she used to have it up there. We used to talk about the word abide all the time. I went up to her and said, "Susan, what does that mean?" We talked a little bit about it. The word *abide* means to stay put. The word *abide* means to stay home. That is what the word abide means, or to be at home.

Do you know what Jesus says abide in me? He is telling the branches, and He is telling you and me that we need to abide, or stay at home, or stay put with Him. Amen!

In our world today, when so many people are departing from Him, do you know what Jesus is saying to the church today? Stay at home. Not stay at home but stay at home with Him. Stay at home with Him. Be at home with Him. Stay put with Him so that you can bring forth fruit. He says abide in me...

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

If a branch does not stay connected to the vine, it cannot bring forth any fruit. Do you know what happens to a branch when it is broken off? Do you know what happens to a branch when it is no longer at home with the vine? Do you know what happens to the branch when it does not stay connected to the vine? It dies. Does it not?

That is the same thing with you and me. The life, the spiritual life of a Christian comes from abiding in Jesus Christ. Staying at home with Him, being at home with Him, having Him in our lives; our spiritual life comes from us being connected to Jesus Christ. Not from some creed, not from some covenant; no. But our spiritual life and the ability for us to bear fruit comes from our connection to Jesus Christ. Without Him, and without abiding in Him, without us being at home in Him; we cannot do anything. That is what that says.

We need to understand that today. If we are going to do anything that is going to bring glory to God today; we must abide in Him. We must stay connected with Him.

In Israel, if you know and read much about grapes and grape vines over there; the branches that are connected to the vine, it is almost impossible to break the branch away from the vine because they are that tightly connected.

Jesus Christ has a hold on you and me. Do you know what He is not going to do? He is not going to just throw us away. He is not going to just forget about us. Do you know what He is going to do when I sin? He is going to prune me. When you sin, He is going to prune you. Amen! Thank God for that. Amen! Thank God that when we mess up that He will chastise us. He will correct us. He will chasten us. Not because He is mad

at us but because He loves us. He has a plan for us. He wants to use us. He wants to bless us so that we can be a blessing to other people.

John 15:5 I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Ask yourself a question tonight. You do your own examination. You take your own test. How much fruit are you bringing forth tonight? Jesus is the one that does the examining. He is the one that looks down in here. How much fruit does He see in your life? I am not talking what you see in your neighbor's life. We have too much of that going on today. Amen! You need to look at your own life. You need to examine your own life. You need to see what is going on in your own life. If you do that then our attitudes and actions would be so much better. We would figure out quickly that we do not have much fruit. We are not bearing much fruit. Do you know what happens when we figure that out? The Lord begins to work on us and He will show us the error of our way. He will show us the rottenness that we have. He cuts that away. Then we can start producing more fruit. Amen!

Get this. There is a lesson here.

John 15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

That is pretty plain. Don't you think? It is a serious thing when we will not abide in Jesus Christ. It is an absolute serious thing. Men gather the branches up and they cast them into the fire.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

I like that verse. Don't you? I like to abide with Him. I like to abide in Him. Here is the test whether you are abiding in Jesus Christ or not. I do not know that. Here is the test. You get to take it. you get to answer this for yourself.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Do you know what that means? If we are abiding in Him, and His word is abiding in us, the prayers that we are praying are getting answered. That is what that says. You get to take that test. You get to ask yourself am I really abiding in Him? I am not asking you if you belong to the church if you have been baptized. I am not asking you that. Is God answering your prayers. Are we abiding in Him and He in us? If that is the case, He said, "ask what you will and it will be done."

Do you think that was important? Do you think we should know that? Do you think that we should look at that in our own lives and see if prayer is really being answered? Do you think answered prayer is important to you? It is. Amen! That is the test. If your prayers are being answered, you are abiding in Him and His word is abiding in you.

That is a pretty simple test. Don't you think? That is the test that you can take for yourself. That is the question you can ask yourself. Tonight, tomorrow is God really answering my prayers. If not then why? What is going on inside that—where have I disconnected from the vine? What has happened here that I am no longer at home with Him? He is no longer home with me? We call that backsliding. We call that a lot of different things in life. We separate ourselves from God. God does not separate himself from us necessarily. We walk away from Him. We turn our back on Him.

John 15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

My student. This is God's will. God is glorified that ye bear much fruit. He says if you do that so shall ye be my disciples. My students. If you are abiding in me and my word is abiding in you, your prayers are being answered, my father is glorified when you bring forth fruit, and since that is the case you are my disciple, my student, my learner. I am teaching you some things.

It is sad when Christian people become unteachable. Amen! It is sad. I do not care if you live to be 150 here on earth; you will never get too old to learn something.

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

Get this one.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

If you are keeping God's commandments, you are abiding in His love. That is something else we can look at.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Does everybody get that? Look what it says here.

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full.

Do you know what that tells us? When we abide in Him, when we stay connected to Him, when we draw our spiritual life from Him, when we know and get to the place in life that we know that we can absolutely do nothing without Him. If we are not connected to Him, we cannot do anything that is going to bring glory to His name. When we are living right, when we are doing right, when we are abiding with Him and His word is abiding in us; our prayers are being answered. We love as He loves. Get this. Our life is full of joy.

Are you happy tonight? There is a difference between happiness and joy. The thing is—in some ways happiness and joy go together. Sometimes our happiness depends on circumstances. Do you know what joy depends on? Get this. Do not ever forget

this one. Joy depends on my relationship with Him. Joy depends on me abiding with Him. Joy depends on His word abiding in me. Joy depends upon my relationship with Jesus Christ and nothing else. When my relationship is right with Him, I have joy despite whether I have any money or not. The world may be falling apart around me. The storm clouds may be rolling. However, I can still have joy in my heart that I know that my life is held in the hallow of His hand. Isn't that great to know?

Come and pray—