

“THE TRUE VINE”

Questions for Personal Reflection and Group Discussion

Jesus knew that His physical presence with His precious disciples would soon end. He also knew that these men would need a clear understanding of their position with God, as well as what was expected of them. So He consciously filled their minds with pictures and ideas to help them survive the days to come. But these same lessons also provide vital resources for preparing future generations of disciples — you and those you minister to — to grow in their faith.

Prayerfully read the following Scripture passage. Ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the words of our Lord and Savior as you seek to learn and apply His teaching to your new life in Christ. Then answer the questions as a means to write His word in your heart. ♥

John 15:1-16 NKJV

Jesus said: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

⁴bide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, 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, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

⁶If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

⁷If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

⁸By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Love and Joy Perfected

⁹As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

¹¹These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹²This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

¹³Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

¹⁴You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

¹⁵No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

¹⁶You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you."

¹⁷These things I command you, that you love one another."

♥ *Focusing*

1. What are the marks of a true friendship?
2. **What do you do to maintain your friendships?**

♥ *Studying the Word*

3. How are Jesus and the Father related? (15:1)
4. What is Jesus and who is the Father? (15:1)
5. How does the gardener tend to the branches that bear fruit and the branches that do not? (15:2)
6. Who and what cleanses us? (15:3)
7. What did Jesus say the branches must do in order to bear fruit? (15:4)
8. Who are the branches? (15:5)
9. What did Jesus say would happen to the branches that did not remain in Him? (15:6)
10. What privilege was given to the branches that remained in the vine? (15:7)
11. What would be demonstrated by the disciples' bearing much fruit? (15:8)
12. What did Jesus urge His disciples to do? (15:9)
13. How were Jesus' disciples to remain in His love? (15:10)
14. Why did Jesus talk with His disciples about vines and branches? (15:11)
15. What command did Jesus give His disciples? (15:12)
16. What is the greatest manifestation of love? (15:13)
17. Who did Jesus say were His friends? (15:14)
18. **Why did Jesus call His disciples friends?** (15:15)

19. Why did Jesus choose His disciples? (15:16)

20. **What was Jesus' command?** (15:17)

♥ *Understanding the Word*

21. How are we to remain in Jesus? Why?

22. What does it mean to bear fruit as a Christian?

23. How are we to bear fruit?

24. **When is it difficult to develop and maintain a personal relationship with Jesus?**

25. In what way has God been removing "dead" or useless pieces from your character?

26. In what way is your joy complete?

27. When do you struggle with loving others the way Jesus has loved you?

28. **What kind of friend are you to Jesus?**

29. **Why is it hard to be Jesus' friend?**

♥ *Doing the Word*

30. What steps can you take to develop a more intimate relationship with Jesus?

31. **How can you be a better friend to Jesus beginning today?**

ABIDE IN JESUS!

IT'S THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY ...