

As we conclude the series I Am.... Jesus continuing pronouncements of Who he is...the Great I am...God in the flesh, I am...the self existing one...and his multiple examples of what that means...I am the light of the World...I am the way the truth and the life...and I am the good shepherd! These earlier statements focused on Jesus as the life-giver and had included an invitation to come to him and to believe in him, and last week His I am statement becomes very personal... I am the good shepherd...I am personally involved.. I know my sheep and my sheep know me and follow me..... ... (6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 11:25-26; 14:6).

So If you receive him as the light of the world.... believe him to be the way the truth and the life...and trust him to Shepherd you... the next logical thing is to grow up and become like Jesus! Which takes us to the last I am statement...

JN 15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

But to understand this statement we need to understand the context... *This statement was spoken on the last night of Jesus life on earth...and comes on the heels of His last Supper with them and the preparing of His disciples for his departure... along with making the startling statement that one of them is a betrayer... We pick up the narrative as Jesus washes his disciples feet at His last supper before the crucifixion...*

^{John 13:5} After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what **I am**. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

- **Jesus proclaims his disciples know who he is... But not Judas...What made them clean? he stated it in his dispute with the Pharisees**

John 8: ²³ But he continued, “You are from below; **I am from above**. You are of this world; **I am not of this world**. ²⁴ I told you that you would die in your sins; if you do not believe that **I am he**, you will indeed die in your sins.”²⁵ “Who are you?” they asked. “Just what I have been telling you from the beginning,” Jesus replied.

Can I say that another way? If you don't believe in the deity of the Lord Jesus, that Jesus Christ is God...that His sacrifice on the cross was sufficient because He was God...you will live separated from God!, that simple.

- **so Jesus tells his disciples at that last supper they are clean except one of them... because they believe..**
- **now it is interesting because Judas acted like one of them ...was the treasurer, went on the missionary trips and apparently performed miracles...yet he was not one of them!**
- **But for the rest he is setting them an example...the greater serves the lessor!...they must be come like him**

15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

- **Why did he do this? because a few minutes later...speaks to them as a loving shepherd...**
- **again expresses to them how they are to live...takes it beyond serving each other...to loving eachother..**

John 13:33 “My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come. 34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” 36 Simon Peter asked him, “Lord, where are you going?” Jesus replied, “Where I am going, you cannot follow now, but you will follow later.”

- **So he is going and they are staying...for there is work for them**
- **the discourse continues in chapter 14**

First this statement is made to those already those disciples who belong to him already... These disciples (minus Judas at this point) have just been informed that Jesus is going away, **but that His work is going to continue, and that it is to continue through them and their lives (John 14:12).**

John 14:12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

- **If they were to carry on the work of the Lord, then *they needed to know how to***

produce that kind of fruit in their lives.

- and lays out for them what following him looks like...it looks like a fruit plant...
- and the Father will send them the Holy Spirit to enable them to do these works..

*John 14:¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. **Because I live, you also will live.** ²⁰ On that day you will realize that **I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.***

- Believe is mental accent...Love takes it to trust...and obedience...
- they must learn to love Jesus
- love the child the Father loves you...if you love my kids I love you

²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show(reveal) myself to them.”

- **The Spirit in you and I am in you and you are in me...part of the teaching to obey is to know you are united with God!!!**
- **Because you love me your relationship will include the Father and the Holy Spirit along with me...show myself means to know me!**
- Then goes on to tell them it is good...it is a good pruning his Father has ordered for him..that much may be produced from his life... the holy Spirit can now come and add more to theirs lives... they will learn to obey his teaching out of love...their relationship with the Father will grow... the will learn to not let their hearts /emotions live in fear...

John 14:28 “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

- Believing Jesus appears to be progressive...for there is always more to know and learn...
- But for Jesus he must do what he must do ...a pruning ...

³⁰ I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, ³¹ but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now; let us leave.

Then they leave and head toward the Garden of Gethsemane

but before we go farther...lets taek a look at what does God command?

- **Jesus is not talking to them about command they have never heard of,,but commands he has stated numerous times...** and over time every writer in the New Testament shares them...

MT 22:37 Jesus replied: " `Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest **commandment**. ³⁹ And the **second is like it**: `Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

...John in his letter writes

1JN 2:3 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his **commands**. ⁴ The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. ⁵ But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: ⁶ Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

According to John

1JN 3: 23 And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. ²⁴ Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1John 3:11 For this is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another.

According to Paul

RO 13:8 Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. ⁹ The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

GAL 5: 14 The entire law is summed up in a single **command**: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

- as I stated... These commands have been shared by Jesus to his disciples numerous times...and over time every writer in the New Testament shares them...
- **As every disciple's of Jesus finds out...** this is an impossible task **their very life depends on this union. ...because even as a follower of Jesus , you cannot handle**

the issues of life without the empowerment of living in a love relationship with Jesus...being taught and empowered by the Holy Spirit, as God the Father directs your course.

********And this is where Jesus picks up this theme as they walk toward the Garden of Gethsemane on Jesus final night...as he prepares to obey his Father's will to lay down his life for the salvation of the sheep and since no servant is greater than their master and for you to accomplish greater things than me...

You must remain in Me...I must nourish support empower ...

15:1 "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

- **The image of the vine, and the closely associated term *vineyard*, were commonly used throughout the Mediterranean world, And is frequently used in the Old Testament and in Judaism to symbolize Israel as the vine and vineyard of the Lord...only to go wild ..every time it is used in the old testament as a symbol of Isreal ..it is in judgment**
- When Jesus refers to himself as the *true vine* (v. 1) he is once again taking an image for Israel and applying it to himself. Jesus himself is true Israel..He will succeed where they failed
- **The symbolism of the Vine and branches is similar to that of the Head and the body: we have a living relationship to Christ and belong to Him.**
- **You have not been able to be fruitful in a way that pleases God, but I've got you. I am the true vine."**
- He's stepping into that mess that you and I are just as prone today to step in and He's saying: *"The type of fruitfulness that pleases the Lord that you have been unable to walk in I will now make possible for you."*
- ***and as you bear fruit...the Gardner the Father will prune you back in order to produce more fruit..***
But Remember he is speaking to those who already belong to him..but they must be continually fed by him to bear the fruit the Father is going after...

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also 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.

- **You cannot bear the fruit of my disciples without remaining in me...I am the source of your ability...just like the trunk of the tree sustains the branches...**

6 *If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.*

- if you do not remain in me...there is no fruit that comes from you spiritually and you will wither... you are still the branch of my vine...but you are of no value to what I do...
- If you remove Jesus as the source of your nourishment...and choose another source you will dry up in that area...and it will produce nothing...only good for fire...
- Paul speaks of this in First Cor.

1 Cor 3: ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

- **just like a branch that is cast in fire...their potential is burned up..their reward is burned up**

7 *If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.*

- **If you remain in me..your will will align with mine ...and you will begin to desire and want what I want...and it will be granted to you...**
- **Well what will that look like....the branch must remain attached to the vine to produce fruit ...and the fruit is what we give to others...**
- **being a branch is for our benefit...producing fruit is for others benefit and used to draw them to the vine!**

Gal 5: ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

- those fruit are spiritual fruit ...and are produced ...grown in us...
- **How?** one way thoughts being connected to the vine means you are with other branches..

and this is what Our Father wants...

John 15:8 *This is to my Father's glory (that he is advertised), 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. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. 12 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I 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. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.*

- He changes his tune with the disciples here to friends...because friends are closer than a follower...they know each other personally...they trust one another...they believe in one another...they love one another
- whatever you ask to help accomplish this...Love one another ...he will give you!

end

His command is given in verse 15 of chapter 15...

^{JN 15:12} My **command** is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I **command**.

Again the command is repeated in verse 17...

¹⁷ This is my **command**: Love each other.

So what would people observe and experience in the eating of your fruit?

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end

- The identification of the people of God with a particular nation is now replaced with a particular man who incorporates in himself the new people of God composed of Jews and non-Jews.
- The symbolism of the Vine and branches is similar to that of the Head and the body: we have a living relationship to Christ and belong to Him.
- What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" God asked (*Isa. 5:4*). If ever a nation had everything it needed to succeed, it was Israel.
- But the vine produced wild grapes! Instead of practicing justice, it practiced oppression; instead of producing righteousness, it produced unrighteousness and cries

of distress from the victims. God had to deal with the nation Israel and chasten it, but even that did not produce lasting results. When God's own Son came to the vineyard, they cast Him out and killed Him (Matt. 21:33-46).

- There is also a *future* vine, “the vine of the earth” described in Revelation 14:14-20. This is the Gentile world system ripening for God's judgment. Believers are branches in “the vine of heaven,” but the unsaved are branches in “the vine of the earth.” The unsaved depend on this world for their sustenance and satisfaction, while believers depend on Jesus Christ. The “vine of the earth” will be cut down and destroyed when Jesus Christ returns.

[Romans 8:13](#) *For if you **live** according to **the flesh**, you will die; but if **by the Spirit** you put to death **the misdeeds of the body**, you will **live**.*

- He uses this example for the vine of Israel...using water...

Jer 2:21 I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?

- **How?**

Jer 2:13 “My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

- *Spring feeds continual living water...it sustains life*
- *a cistern hold water...over time since it is stagnant water...becomes unable to sustain life*

Jesus Declares He Is the True Vine and His Disciples Are the Branches (15:1-6)

Jesus begins with the Gospel's final "I am" saying. The earlier sayings had focused on Jesus as the life-giver and had included an invitation to come to him and to believe in him (6:35; 8:12; 10:9; 11:25-26; 14:6).

JN 8:12 "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

- He is the map to the Father...

John 10:14 "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—

then in Chapter 14
He says where he is going..

14 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God^[a]; believe also in me. ² My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going."

⁵ Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

⁶ Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you really know me, you will know^[b] my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

⁸ Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

⁹ Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? ¹⁰ Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. ¹¹ Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

Jumping to verse 15 Jesus tells them it is good he is going...For the Spirit will teach them...

¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be^[c] in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

²⁵ “All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

²⁸ “You heard me say, ‘I am going away and I am coming back to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. ²⁹ I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe. ³⁰ I will not say much more to you, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold over me, ³¹ but he comes so that the world may learn that I love the Father and do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now; let us leave.