

# John 15: Jesus' "Viability" Theology

*The Paradigm of Viability: The True Vine (2)*

---

John 15.1-4

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

# This Can't Be Over-Emphasized!

*"I AM the True Vine . . ."*

---

*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?*

JEREMIAH 2.21

- ❖ On every occasion in which God depicted Israel as a vine of His planting, Israel was seen as a degenerate vine, one incapable of producing the fruit of righteousness or accomplishing the purpose for which God had planted it. In choosing an alternate source of life (worship), they produced the fruit of that source—

*"They have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves." (Jeremiah 2.13, 5b)*

❖ In praying for Israel, the psalmist Asaph gave prophetic identification to the one who would become God's True Vine, the One closest to the Father (cf. John 1.18)—

*Return to us, God Almighty!*

*Look down from heaven and see!*

*Watch over this Vine, the Root Your right hand has planted,  
the son You have raised up for yourself.*

*Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire;  
at Your rebuke Your people perish.*

*Let Your hand rest on the Man at Your right hand,  
the Son of Man You have raised up for yourself.*

*Then we will not turn away from You;  
revive us, and we will call on Your name.*

*Restore us, LORD God Almighty;  
make Your face shine on us, that we may be saved.*

❖ This *True-Vine-from-the-Father*, the “*One-and-Only, full of grace and truth*” (P<sup>14</sup>), the sole source of salvation and true life (cf. John 3.13-15; 10.10), was Jesus’ consistent and persistent presentation of himself. He alone was what people needed, their need was why he had come, and he was (and only) what the Father wanted for them.

*“Whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”* (4.14)

*“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”* (5.24-26)

*“Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.”* (6.56-57)

*“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die.”* (11.25-26)

❖ Every declaration which Jesus has made concerning himself is summed up in this statement: *“I am the True Vine.”* The implication of these words is the fundamental premise for every apostolic truth asserted about Jesus—

*“Know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. Jesus is “ ‘the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.’ Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”*

ACTS 4.10-12

*For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ! Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people.*

ROMANS 5.17-18

*God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

2 CORINTHIANS 5.21

*I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

GALATIANS 2.20

*I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!*

GALATIANS 2.21

*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. . . . which he has freely given us in the One he loves.*

EPHESIANS 1.3, 6b

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. . . . For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.*

COLOSSIANS 3.1, 3-4

*And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.*

1 JOHN 5.11-12

*He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.*

REVELATION 21.6

- ❖ Every other vine fails to give life. Only Jesus—*"the Son of Man You have raised up for yourself"*—the True Vine planted by the Father, can meet the deepest, most urgent, and eternal needs of humanity. All other vines are insufficient, deceptive, and toxic.
- ❖ As branches, we cannot be any more than our *"abiding"* in the Vine. Theoretically, the branch has available to it all of the sufficiency of the vine. Positionally, we have fullness in Christ—but we only experience His fullness to the extent that we are pruned of those aspects of life that are *"unVine-like"* and learn the *"life of abiding"*.