

• Sunday 26th February 2023.

• FLOURISH SERIES

• PART 2

• Remain in me.

• John 15:1-11 NIV

- “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. 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. **5** “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

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

- 8 This is to my Father's glory, 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. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

Introduction.

- It is good to commit your life to Jesus, but it's better and more important for you and I to remain in Christ, especially when storms, drought and other challenges of life confront us, when forces of evil surround us every day, it is important to remain in Christ. But Why do we need to remain in Christ?

1) We need to remain in Christ to experience growth. Pruning is part of growth.

(verse 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.

a) For us to have a deeper understanding on what Christ meant by this, we need to understand how pruning helps the vine tree to grow properly.

b) Withered branches on a vine tree are pruned in order to save the rest of the plant. In turn, the plant grows bigger, stronger, and bears more fruit.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands using a red-handled pruning tool to trim a grapevine. The background is filled with green grape leaves, some in sharp focus and others blurred. The overall scene is brightly lit, suggesting an outdoor setting. The text 'Summer Pruning of GRAPE VINES' is overlaid on the center of the image.

Summer Pruning of
GRAPE VINES

c) We never had vineyards at home, but we had bananas and often saw my parents pruning the them. Trimming back dead leaves from a banana tree and pruning the tree would then help with proper growth, It would also help the banana tree to retain its attractive look.

d) Pruning is part of the transformational work of God, God is working on us for us to retain our real image.

e) We must allow God to prune our withered habits, thoughts, possessions, and even certain friends out of our lives. By allowing this to happen, we will grow stronger and bear more fruit for the Kingdom of God.

2) We need to remain in Christ to experience more productivity.

- *(Verse 5) “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

a) More fruit is more productivity.

b) Jesus told Peter: “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18 NIV).

c) Whatever we are doing today will not stand without the work of the Holy Spirit.

c) Paul reminded Galatians saying, “The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

d) Verses- 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control Galatians 5:27. 2) .

e) The other fruit is reaching out, *“The righteous will flourish like a palm tree, they will grow like a cedar of Lebanon; 13 planted in the house of the Lord, they will flourish in the courts of our God. 14 They will still bear fruit in old age, they will stay fresh and green, 15 proclaiming, “The Lord is upright; he is my Rock, and there is no wickedness in him.”*

• *(Psalm 92:12-15NIV).*

Conclusion

3) We need to remain in Christ to experience maturity.

- **Verse 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.”*

a) When we become mature, we become like Him.

b) Our remaining in Christ is part of the transformational work of God that is helping us to retain his image.

c) Apostle Paul in his letter to Corinthians, said these words; “ *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom*
And we all, who with unveiled faces who reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

• *(2 Corinthians 3:17-18).*

Are you planted in the right place? What fruits are on your tree?

Just like the tree, if we are to flourish and produce more fruit, we must have our 'roots' in the right place, in order to receive regular nourishment. Are you established in a fellowship where you can receive guidance, encouragement and thrive in your gifts and talents?