



Page I

FEBRUARY 2016
THE TRUE VINE

Greetings saints!

We pray this edition of our Living Logos newsletter finds you blessed by the Best and praying for the rest! Amen! ☺

I am extremely excited to announce that, beginning this month, our ministry will begin regular broadcasts on a local television station here in Macon, GA! Yes, starting here in February, Living Logos Ministries will begin airing a program called "The Living Word" twice a week! Glory to God! We are super excited about this!

Here is the background... The Lord joined me together with a brother in Christ here in Macon a year or so ago who runs a local CTN station (Christian Television Network). I have always been impressed with this man's heart and the ministry the Lord has given Him through his television station. And one of those ministries is he offers program opportunities for local ministries at a fairly reasonable price.

During the latter half of 2015, I was a guest on a couple of different programs that he already has established at the network and received many glowing reviews of how good people thought it was. And from my standpoint, I could sense the anointing just as much looking into the lens of that camera that I do when I minister face to face with people. There was one particular program we recorded that after we were done, we just sat in that studio in awe of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

So to make a long story short, after these opportunities, the Lord confirmed with me that this is something that He wants our ministry to begin regularly doing ourselves.

One extra added benefit is that he told me he could put one of my two weekly programs on immediately after the running of Andrew Wommack's Gospel Truth program! On the other run time, we will air on a Sunday evening and be sandwiched in between Jesse Duplantis and Petter Stone! Can you see the impact that will have? For example, those who tune in daily to Andrew's program might just hang around and then catch this pastor in the Macon area who preaches the same gospel! Glory to God! I can just see many opportunities coming through this but mainly the opportunity to reach people in their homes with the truth of God's Word.

So I say this to ask you to please pray for us regarding these programs we will begin recording over the next couple of months. Also, I want to ask you to please pray about partnering together with us in absorbing some of these costs. It is roughly \$500 a month to get these couple of programs running a week.

Living Logos Ministries is certainly good ground and all seed sown into this project as well as the other things we are doing in the United States and around the world is an extremely worthy cause. Thanks for your prayers and consideration!

Now, as for this month's teaching, I felt impressed to spend a little more time on something I mentioned rather briefly last month- Abiding in the Vine.

This particular teaching is from a series that I spent several weeks teaching at High Point Church's Healing School on Thursday mornings, and this series of messages was super good!

With that said, I do want to encourage you to visit our church's website @ www.highpointmacon.com and

Page II

take advantage of the audio teachings that we have available for you there. We have three services a week- of course, Sunday mornings at 10:30 am but also Sunday evenings at 6 pm and Healing School on Thursday mornings at 10:30 am. We include all three of these services on our church website, so that you can take advantage of the truth that comes from the pulpit here. So if you haven't already done so, please visit our website and listen to the teachings we include on there- particularly the one I will be teaching you from today entitled "The True Vine." It will bless you!

So now let's turn in our Bibles over to John chapter 15...

Now as we move into looking at this passage of Scripture, it is important for us to realize the context... It is important that we realize that this teaching in John 15:1-8 is part of Jesus' last words of exhortation to His disciples. Therefore, these verses must be of extreme significance as they were likely referring to something that was vital for them to know in the wake of His soon departure. Amen?

The background and context of this teaching is very important to consider because it will help give us the understanding as to what the Master was teaching His disciples and us through this passage.

THE TRUE VINE

Now let's begin in verse one where Jesus begins by telling His disciples- "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser."

Now by Jesus referring to Himself as the "True" Vine, He is implying that there are false vines out there too. Amen? So what are these other vines? They are people, belief systems, and all sorts of other things that man tends to see as their source of life, peace, joy, etc.

Now allow me to use the example of health and healing since this is the context I have been teaching this... Along with the world, many Christians have a tendency to look to everything from doctors, medicine, nutrition and exercise as the means for their physical well being.

Now don't get me wrong- there is nothing wrong with any of these things. The Lord wants us to take care of His temples and He has no issue with us taking medicine or going to doctors. But what is wrong is when we, as God's children, begin to put our trust in these things. That is the problem! And it is a subtle thing too- one in which it is easy to be deceived concerning.

So let me give you some key indicators as to what you are truly trusting in:

1. What do you spend the most of your time reading, studying, researching etc.? In other words, what do you focus on the most? That is a good indication of what you trust in the most.
2. Let's say you are big into nutrition and live on a pretty strict diet, avoiding harmful foods- If you were put into a position where, over a long period of time, you had to eat those bad things because that was your only option, what would your heart be saying? Would it be panicking because of the knowledge of what you are putting in your body?

Now this is not meant to condemn anyone. It is simply meant to expose any deception in our hearts and help us in the long run. And please understand me- I am speaking this out of personal experience too because there was a point a year or so ago where I was experiencing some tightness in my chest and the devil was bombarding my mind when thoughts of fear.

Page III

My mind was screaming at me thoughts that because I had made years of wrong choices as to what I was eating that my arteries were now all clogged up, blah blah blah. Then the Word of the Lord came to me saying, "Trey, do you not think that even if you had a 100% blockage in your main arteries that I could sustain you?"

Then it hit me! What He was getting me to see is that my trust ultimately needs to be in Him to protect and sustain my physical health, not my diet (or lack thereof). Amen?

Now this does not mean that we should just throw caution to the wind and eat whatever we want and avoid exercise like the plague. No! It simply means that while we use wisdom in these things and follow the directions of the Holy Spirit, we do not put our ultimate trust in those things. Amen?

And why? Because Jesus is the True Vine! He is the trunk that ultimately upholds us! Nothing and no one else can produce fruit in our lives other than Him.

This is why He goes on to say in verse 5 that without Him, we can do nothing...

You see, I am a big proponent of understanding who we are in Him and deepening our revelation of those "In Christ" realities. But at the same time, it is also important to understand who we would be apart from Him. In other words, it is good for a Christian to know where they would be apart from the True Vine- that is, to understand that without Christ in our lives altogether we would be lost and without God in this world, but also to understand the emptiness and what we would be susceptible to without a practical experience of Him in our lives.

Saints, **while knowing who we are in Christ will promote boldness, knowing who we are in ourselves will promote humility-** and both of these are important virtues to possess. Amen?

Now this leads me to the main point that Jesus was teaching us in this parable- the principle of abiding.

ABIDING IN HIM

Notice what Jesus went on to say in verse 4- "Abide 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."

I believe we make a mistake sometimes and assume that this "abiding in Him" is the same as what the Apostle Paul coined as being "in Christ," but it could not be the same thing. I said, it *could not* be the same! Why? Because the "in Christ" realities that the Apostle Paul brought to the table in his epistles were not even a reality when Jesus said these things in John chapter 15 because He had not gone to the Cross, nor been resurrected yet.

You see, the "in Him" realities are spiritual realities that are a result of His resurrection and our new birth. Therefore, it would have made no sense to Jesus' disciples for Him to be talking to them about "in Christ" truths. Not to mention, how can we abide in something that we never had been in in the first place? That just doesn't make sense, does it?

So then, what was Jesus talking about here when He told His disciples to abide in Him?

First of all, the terminology "*in Him*" could also be translated "to be in the midst of" a person, or you could say, to be "in their presence."

Secondly, this word “abide” comes from the Greek word *meno* which literally means “to remain, stay, live or dwell.” It carries the idea of remaining in one place and not being “in” one day and “out” the other. Therefore, Jesus was referring to constancy and consistency in this passage.

So, in considering the word “abide,” what Jesus was saying to His disciples here in this passage is that we need to stay, remain, live and dwell in the midst of Him, not just merely visit Him from time to time or be around Him one day and then leave Him the next. Therefore we can see that Jesus was literally telling His disciples “to remain in the midst of Him” or “to stay in His presence.” In other words, He was telling His disciples to stay close and connected to Him.

So put yourself in His disciple’s shoes here... What were they hearing Jesus say to them? Well, in one breathe, Jesus is telling His disciples that He is about to leave them (see John 16:5), and then in another, He tells them to stay with Him. So Jesus was letting His disciples know, in His last and (you could say) most vital words to them, that they must make sure that they stay in His presence- even though He would soon not be present.

So the question then is: How could they remain in His presence and stay in the midst of Him if He was leaving them? That seems like an impossible directive, doesn’t it?

This is such an important lesson for us to learn, because with our carnal tendencies, we want something tangible and want to feel something. Jesus was exhorting His disciples in the wake of His soon departure and where there will be no more physical Jesus around anymore, to make sure they “remain in Him.”

Now I don’t know about you, but when I saw that, that made me curious: How could they remain in His presence and stay in His midst if He was leaving them?

The answer to that question is simple- *by faith!* Yes, **a disciple can walk with the Lord by faith to the same degree as His disciples walked with Him by sight.** Saints, that is such a tremendous truth!

WALKING WITH GOD

Did you know that you can have just as good of a relationship with the Lord by faith as you do by feelings, by sight, etc? Faith has substance! (Hebrews 11:1)! So when we make a decision that we are going to walk with Him by faith, we can have all the natural effects of walking with Him physically! Amen!

Do you remember how God came down and walked in the Garden in the cool of the day (Genesis 3:8)? This Scripture implies that this was not an uncommon occurrence. Apparently, the Lord came to walk with Adam & Eve on a regular basis because they were familiar with His sound walking in the Garden after they ate the forbidden fruit.

But then, when sin entered, and they were banished from the Garden, we see how a man named Enoch who was born outside of this Garden experience decided that he was going to walk with God by faith. We know this because Hebrews 11:5 says that Enoch was translated because He had this testimony- that He pleased God. Then verse 6 goes on to tell us how he pleased God- by faith.

Now the Book of Genesis actually gives us less information on Enoch than Hebrews 11:5-6 does. Aside from his translation, Genesis 5:24 basically just tells us that Enoch walked with God. That’s it! So then it becomes very easy to see what Enoch did that pleased God so much-He walked with Him by faith! No,

Page V

not because God physically walked with him in the cool of the day like He did with his great, great, great grandparents, but simply because He chose to walk with Him by faith. So I believe that this act of faith excited God so much, that He just took Him.

Now let me make this point here: **God didn't take Enoch through sickness or disease; God took Enoch by faith! Amen!** That's how I want God to take me! How about you? Yes, that's how we need to desire to leave this earth- walking with God by faith! And, saints, this is how relationship with God is to be done! Praise God!

I WILL BELIEVE

Do you remember how Jesus' disciple, Thomas said, after Jesus' resurrection, that unless he saw His hands, the print of the nails, and puts his finger into the print of the nails and his hand in His side, he would not believe? (John 20:25)

Now it is important for us to realize that Thomas said he *will not* believe. In other words, he made the decision right then and there that he was not going to believe. Then Jesus told him, after He appeared to him, "do not be unbelieving, but believing." (John 20:27)

Is it this simple? Can we choose simply to not be unbelieving and to believe? Evidently we can or the Master would not have said this!

You know, you will hear people say, "I can't believe that!" Did you know that is completely untrue? It is not that one can't believe something, but that they choose not to believe it! Now that's the truth! You see, we complicate this faith thing and make it harder than it really is.

So the key to entering into faith is to choose this day whom you are going to believe. Make the decision today that you **will** believe! As the father of the boy vexed with that mute spirit said, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24) You see, the moment this man chose to believe, even when he still had unbelief screaming in his head, His son was set free!

STAYING CONNECTED

But we are talking about relationship with God walking with Him by faith here!

The Lord was exhorting His disciples then and His disciples now to "abide" in Him- that is, to stay in His presence like He was still present with them! Amen! And He uses the analogy of a vine and its branches to describe this principle of abiding.

So what would be some phrases you would use to describe a branch abiding in a vine? You might say, "a branch staying connected to the vine" or "a branch remaining attached to the vine."

So let me ask you some questions: What if a branch did not stay connected to its trunk? What if one day it was attached and then others, it was off doing its own thing? What would become of that branch? It might not completely lose its life, but it will never be able to produce any fruit. Why? Because as it is with everything in life- the key is *consistency*.

If we want to produce fruit naturally speaking, we can't plant seeds one day and dig them up the next.

Page VI

Likewise, we cannot be connected to the Lord one day and then disconnected the next. If we do this, it will be impossible for us to bear fruit because a branch must remain connected to its vine over a long period of time in order for this process of fruit-bearing to work.

This is why Jesus went on to say in verse four- "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in Me." In other words, unless we abide (remain, stay or dwell) in the vine, we cannot bear fruit. Why? Because we cannot bear fruit on our own! We must stay connected to the vine so that the entire process of fruit production can transpire.

This is important to understand when it comes to every kind of fruit we desire to produce in our lives- because we cannot bear any of this fruit ourselves either. All fruit that is promised through our covenant relationship with the Lord comes through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Every manifestation of God's promises- barring special manifestations of the Spirit- is going to come through this process.

IN CONCLUSION

But the fact remains that there is only one "True Vine" that can supply us with life because Jesus is *the* Way, *the* Truth and *the* Life. There is no other vine that can give us eternal, abundant, resurrection life but Him. And the way that we are going to walk in this eternal, abundant, resurrection life is by abiding in Him by faith. Amen!

Saints, I have witnessed this in my relatively short walk as a Christian- that the believers who remain planted in their place- that is, in their calling and in their relationship with Christ- are the ones who bring forth fruit that remains. There are far too many believers (and I use that term "believers" loosely) who quit doing this or stop doing that- either when the emotions wear off, they get offended, etc. And most of these unfaithful Christians, spend year after year wandering around in their own proverbial wilderness, running around the same mountains.

Saints, let's change this today! Let's find out exactly what God wants us doing and where He wants us, and then come hell or high water, we stay connected to that vine at all costs. I believe God rewards such faithfulness. That is the truth- namely the True Vine!

Until next month... Maranatha!

Victoriously,

