

ABIDING WITH CHRIST

With Jesus in the Upper Room, John 15:1-17

March 21, 2021

*"I am the vine; you are the branches.
If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit;
apart from me you can do nothing."
John 15:5*

Introduction: Between the cross and a hard place

¹⁸ "If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you . . . I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 15:18-19 → John 16:33

- 1) Jesus preaches the ultimate "one sentence sermon" – but he has a great model in Psalm 80
- 2) "Bearing much fruit" will not endear me to the world!

Branches and the Vine

"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, and I will 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."

John 15

- 1) Vine, Gardener and source of the fruit – this sounds Trinitarian to me!
- 2) "Cut off" or "lift up"? Both work – it depends on who the "we" is
Passages for study: Isaiah 5; Psalm 80; Matthew 3:7-10; Matthew 7:15-23; Mark 4; Romans 11
- 3) Everyone agrees: the most important element of the *ordo salutis* is union with Christ
- 4) Bearing fruit is the expected [necessary?] result of our organic connection to the Vine

The answer to what kind of fruit? Ask for “much fruit!”

⁵ “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not remain in me, he is 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 given you. ⁸ This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

John 15

- 1) Fruit as simply obedience, new converts, love or character are “reductionistic” (D. A. Carson)
- 2) The warning is real (see Hebrews 5:11-6:12 for another example of a “real” warning)
- 3) “Remaining” is our first experience of the “rooms” Jesus is preparing in John 14:2 (see Psalm 90)

Sweet manure (remember Luke 13:8-9) for the branches (thanks to Deffinbaugh)

⁹ “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰ If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed 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, that he lay down his life for his 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 to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. ¹⁷ This is my command: Love each other.

John 15

- 1) We abide in Jesus’ love
- 2) We keep Jesus’ commandments
- 3) We love the brothers and sisters (see John 13:34-35)
- 4) We have great joy
- 5) We change from servants to friends

Resources for further studies of Jesus' Upper Room Discourse

The Bible Project team has great stuff on John at <https://open.life.church/items/179216-john-poster-jpg>

Spurgeon has a classic sermons at <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/jesus-washing-his-disciples-feet/#flipbook/> and <http://www.romans45.org/spurgeon/sermons/0005.htm> and <https://www.spurgeon.org/resource-library/sermons/a-sharp-knife-for-the-vine-branches/#flipbook/>

J. C. Ryle's commentary at <https://www.monergism.com/lord-are-you-going-wash-my-feet-john-136-15>

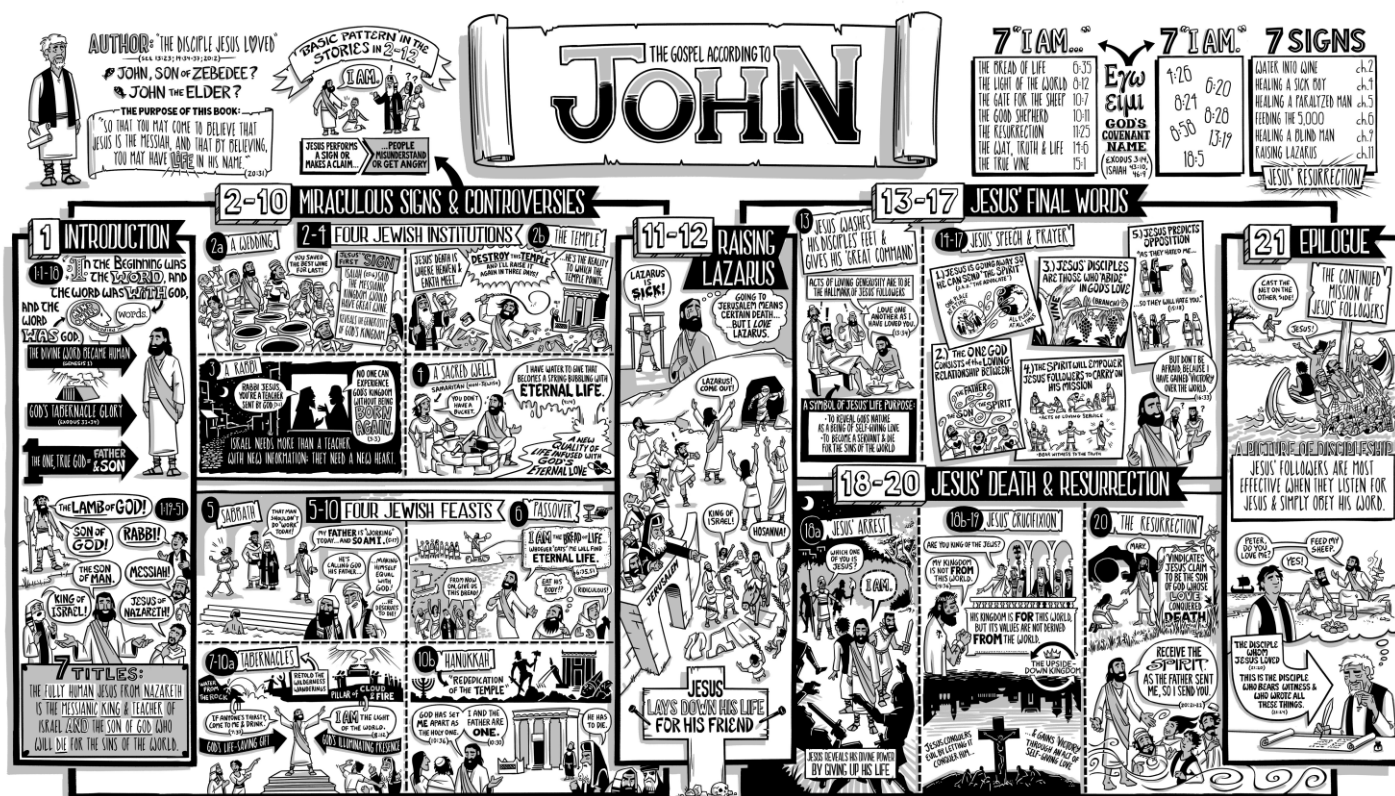
Deffinbaugh's sermons at <https://bible.org/seriespage/30-menial-service-john-131-17>, <https://bible.org/seriespage/33-having-friend-high-places-john-141-31> and

I have really appreciated D. A. Carson's commentary in the Pillar New Testament Commentary series (Eerdmans, 1991) and Earl Palmer's *The Intimate Gospel* (Word Books, 1978)

The two resources on our union with Christ are John Murray's *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* (Eerdmans, 1955) and Rankin Wilbourne's *Union with Christ* (David C. Cook, 2016). I also recommend Marcus Peter's short study at <https://www.crossway.org/articles/10-things-you-should-know-about-union-with-christ/>

Leon Morris has a short essay on the atonement in John's gospel at http://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/Ted_Hildebrandt/NTeSources/NTArticles/CTR-NT/Morris-JohnsAtonement-CTR.pdf

My old professor Carl Laney has an essay on the agricultural perspective of the vine and branches at <https://www.monergism.com/analogy-vine>



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