① JESUS is the TRUE VINE

v.1 I am the TRUE vine
Ἐγώ εἰμί ὁ ἄληθινος ἄμπελος

- The 7th and Last "I am" statement
- I am the Bread of Life – John 6
- I am the light of the world – John 8
- I am the door of the sheep – John 10
- I am the Good Shepherd – John 10
- I am the resurrection & the life – John 11
- I am the True vine – John 15
- All are metaphorical to help us understand Him
- All speak of Deity "I Am" (Ex. 3:14, Isaiah, John 8:58)

- This "I Am" statement has huge significance AND CHANGE from:
  - Israel as a nation is God's vineyard to Bear FRUIT
  TO
  - anyone in Jesus is God's vineyard to bear FRUIT
- v.1-8 focuses primarily on abiding (7x) in the Vine (Jesus)
  - for the branches (disciples) to bear fruit (righteousness, holiness)
- ★ This is a monumental change
  - Israel as the Vineyard (which was mostly fruitless)
  - Christian community is (AND) Always will be, the New vineyard (abiding guarantees FRUIT)

★ Major Transition
- The vineyard as God's people
- who are to bear fruit is Gen. to Rev.

- Gen. 2:8-17
  - God planted a Garden in Eden
  - Tree of life and rivers came out of Eden to water the garden
  - 4 rivers came from it (multiply, increase, fruitful, bursting)
  - man was to tend and keep/guard the Garden (Adam = human, Eve = life, Eden = Pleasure)
  - There was Gold there, that was "Good" (Gold often = faith 1Pt. 1, Rev. 21-22)
- Jacob's farewell address:
  "Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over the wall..." Deut. 49:22
- Moses' farewell address speaks of his frustration w/ Israel as a vineyard
  "You have corrupted yourselves and become a crooked and perverse nation (v.5)... Jeshurun became fat and thick, you are obese! You forsook God who made you (v.15) For their vine is the vine of Sodom (Rev. 11:8) and their field/vineyard is Gomorrah, (Gen. 19) their grapes are grapes of poison and their cluster is bitter, their wine is venom..." Deut. 32:5, 15, 32 (entire chapter)
- Isaiah's Allegory of the vineyard:
  - God planted a beautiful vineyard on a very fruitful hill v.1
  - He expected it to bear good grapes, v.2 but it brought forth wild grapes
  - What more could God have done that He has not done? v.4
  - Why then are these not good grapes/fruit but wild/bad grapes/fruit? v.4
  - So what shall I do? I shall burn this vineyard, trample it, and give it no rain"
- ★ Then the "7 woes" Isaiah 5 MATCHES Jesus' words in Matt 21 Exactly!

② VINEYARD MOTIF CONTINUED

"I (God) have planted you (Israel) as a choice vine, a seed of highest quality. How then have you turned before Me into the degenerate plant and become a wild vine" Jer. 2:21

Ezekiel's poem of Israel & Ex. 15-17
- The wood/branches of this vine are no better than any other wood v.1-2
- This wood/branches are used for nothing but fuel for fire v.4
- I have given up Jerusalem for fuel v.6 for the fire & now set My face against them
- ★ Because of their unfaithfulness v.8
  Ezek. 15

- Chapter 16 speaks graphically of Israel being adorned by God
- To marry her, but she becomes an adulteress / harlot... a whore
- They are as disgusting as Sodom and Gomorrah (Deut. 29:23 imagery/symbolism)
- Calls them prostitutes

Ezekiel's Allegory/parable – ch. 17
- You are a vine that a great Eagle took away (Nebuchadrezzar)
- he made you his vineyard and you bore fruit for him (became his slaves/servants)
- Then came another great Eagle (King of Egypt)
- and you bent your vine toward him that he might water you and take care of you (be his slave/servants if he saves them from Neb.)
- What will I do w/ My vineyard? I shall punish and destroy it

- Psalm 80
  - You brought this vine out of Egypt v.8
  - you protected it, planted it, cleared the ground, and grew it
  - the branches covered the mountains and cedar Trees (Symbolism and hyperbole)
  - Return to this vineyard for it is being burned w/ fire and cut down by those in it
- Israel was to be the vineyard, but "unfaithfulness" caused it to be burned
- ★ The "New" Testament continues this Teaching

"The axe is laid to the root of the (FRUIT) Trees (Jewish believing Nation). Every (Fruit) tree that does not bear fruit will be cut down and thrown in the fire" Matt. 3:10

★ Matt 21... huge chapter on this vineyard Transition
- FIG TREE (often symbolizes Israel)
  - Jesus was hungry
  - Fig tree had no fruit
  - Jesus curses the fig tree and says "Let NO fruit grow on you ever again" Matt 21:18-19
- Parable of the wicked tenants
  - Master had a vineyard
  - leased it to tenants for its fruit
  - Every year there was no fruit
  - Owner sent His servants to get fruit from the tenants, He even sent His Son
  - The Tenants killed them all
- ★ What will the owner do?
  Destroy those wicked Tenants and lease the vineyard to tenants who will bear fruit
- ★ The rejected stone is the cornerstone
- ★ The Kingdom will be taken from you and given to people producing fruit
  Matt. 21:33-46
- ★ 7 woes to Israel in Matt 23 of w/ Is. 5
- Paul uses the same teaching w/ an Olive Tree and the branches
- Romans 11 "Olive Tree"
  - (★ Jesus is the root and offspring. Rev. 22:16)
  - Israel is like an Olive Tree
  - supposed to be rooted in God
  - the root is holy, so should be the "branches" (believers/disciples)
  - Due to "unfaithfulness" and unbelief the branches were broken off
  - Those who were faithful/believed were grafted in
  - Those who continue/remain/abide stay connected... cf w/ John 15
  - Those who don't are cut off of Christ
- ★ same teaching as John 15
  - abide/remain in Vine
  - results in branches that bear fruit

② Vineyard MOTIF in the New Testament cont.

- John uses the same imagery in Revelation regarding the Church
- Revelation 21-22 "The Church"
  - a pure river of life
  - on each side of the river were "Trees of Life" (Tree often symbolizes Believers just as "branches = Believers")
  - These "Trees" bore fruit all 12 months and healed the nations

★ The Church is the New Vineyard and we are to bear fruit
- all year
- To heal all the Nations
- NOT remaining in Jesus/the Vine will result in being broken off and burned

③ The Father's ROLE in the Vineyard

v.1 My Father is the Vinedresser (Gardener) NLT / NIV/NET
- The Father controls the growth, direction, etc

v.2 He cuts off/takes away every branch in Me that doesn't bear fruit
- the branches are the disciples "you are the branches" – v.5
- If we are "in" Jesus, but do NOT "abide" (remain, hold fast)
- we are cut off

"If anyone does not abide (while) in Me, he is cast out as a branch, withered, & burned" v.6

μένω = abide, remain, hold fast

v.2 He prunes/cleans every branch that bears fruit, so that it may bear more fruit
- there is a play on words here in the Greek
- "prunes" καθαίρω = cleanse
- ★ John uses a word for pruning, that also means cleansed in a moral sense
  - same word used in v. 3 You are clean because of My word
  - ★ and in 13:10 foot washing event You are clean, but NOT all of you

- The "pruning" helps us bear more fruit
  - by cutting away unnecessary limbs on the branch
- ★ Yes, this is painful, but needed
- Heb. 12:3-11 "Discipline/Chastening of the Lord"

"Do not despise chastening of the Lord or be discouraged by His rebuke, For whom the Lord loves, He chastens and scourges every son He receives. IF you endure (abide, remain, hold fast... abide, if you will, through the discipline) God will deal with you as a son... Now, no chastening (pruning) seems joyful at the moment, but painful, But afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it." Heb 12:3-11

- IT is the Father who disciplines (Heb 12)... or "prunes" (John 15)

④ Importance of Abiding/Remaining

v.3 You are already clean/pruned because of the Word I have spoken to you
- The apostles are starting off well
- They have heard & believed His Word λογος
- They have been cleansed by believing His Word (cf. 13:10)
- They have been "pruned" of unnecessary limbs

★ But they must remain/abide
- They must continue to bear fruit

- we all must remain/abide
  - we must continue to bear fruit
- NOTICE as well, it is the Word that prunes/disciplines
  - The λογος is God's Word

v.4 Abide in Me, and I in You
- most likely a conditional clause
- If you "Abide" in Me, I will remain in You

OR

- a comparison:
  - Abide in My Word/Teachings
  - The same way My presence abides in you (Fully, Richly)

v.4 No branch (disciple) can bear fruit by itself
- NOT a work of man
- but a surrender to God's will be done through you

v.4 It must abide/remain in the vine (Jesus)
- Hold fast to Jesus' teaching
- even when it's tough & scary, dangerous and life threatening
- ★ Pain and hurt typically teach us to stop... hard to continue knowing = Pain

v.4 Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain/abide in Me
- Again, Keeping His Word no matter how difficult

"If you keep My commandments you will abide in My Love, just as I have kept My Father's commands and remain in His Love" John 15:10
- in context (w/v.7) abiding and bearing FRUIT seems to be

★ Founded on PRAYER...
"ASK, and it will be done for you"
- Help me abide... Help me bear fruit