



ABIDE IN JESUS (2)

Jan. 11, 2026; Shalom Ministries International

Announcement

- 5th Ambassador Training Program
 - The orientation (Jan 10): 14 pastors participated.
 - Training is continued until March 25 (every Saturday 4pm).
- 2026 Abide Commitment Card
 - We are dedicating ourselves to God by learning to truly abide in Christ and bear much fruit.
 - If you would like to join us in this 2026 vision, please sign the card and return it to me. I will be keeping you in my prayers throughout all of 2026.
- 2026 Mission Project
 - July 17-26, Yangon, Myanmar
 - More information is on the way, but your prayers are greatly appreciated as we move forward with this project.

Israel is Portrayed as God's Vineyard

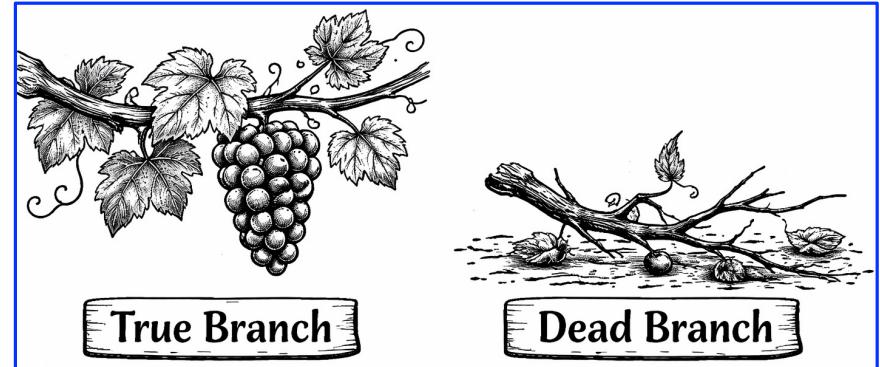
- The vine is a symbol of Israel's withered, unfruitful state.
 - He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines....Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it **yielded only bad fruit** (Isaiah 5:2).
 - I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a **corrupt, wild vine**? (Jeremiah 2:21).
 - God expected Israel to produce justice, righteousness, and God's goodness for the world. When Israel failed to produce this fruit, turning to idolatry, greed, and oppression, God threatened to destroy the vineyard.
 - God's ongoing love, with themes of eventual restoration and new life, particularly through Christ in the New Testament.
- Jesus is the True Vine
 - Focus is the individual who connects to Jesus (Israel as the nation).
 - Requirement is to abide in relationship.
 - Goal is to produce the fruit.

The True Vine (John 15:1-8)

I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 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 am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out (take away) as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples (John 15:1-8, NKJV).

Two Branches

- True Branches (the church)
 - Fruitful branches connecting to Jesus.
 - Clean, Bear fruit;
 - They are pruned; every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful (John 15:2b).
 - Behavioral traits: Humble mind (unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me, John 15:4b).
- Dead Branches (unbelievers)
 - Don't produce fruit or are not truly connected.
 - They are removed (taken away/cut off): He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit (John 15:2a).
 - Behavioral traits (Self-pride): The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished (Proverbs 16:5).



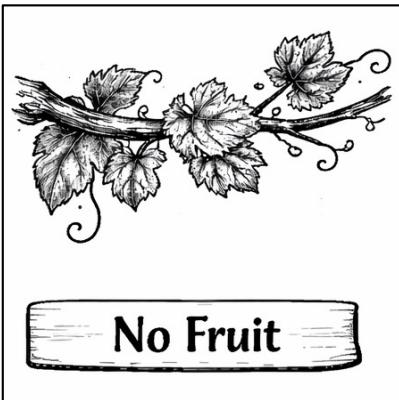
Judas, a Dead Branch

- Judas does not truly abide in Christ, ultimately cut off and burned
 - Judas was physically with Jesus. But he never truly abided in Jesus, bearing spiritual fruit.
 - If anyone does not abide in Me, he is **cast out** as a branch and is **withered**; and they gather them and **throw** them into the fire, and they are **burned** (John 15:6).
 - The imagery of being thrown into the fire signifies the judgment that comes to those who profess faith but don't truly remain in Christ, like Judas did.
- Jesus foretold about Judas
 - He who shared my bread has turned against me (John 13:18).
 - Woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born (Matthew 26:24).
- Takes away (airo)
 - Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He **takes away** (John 15:2).
 - God (the Vinedresser) takes away nominal or false Christians—those who profess faith but lack a genuine, life-giving connection.
 - These unfruitful branches (like Judas) are ultimately separated, proving they were never truly part of the living vine.

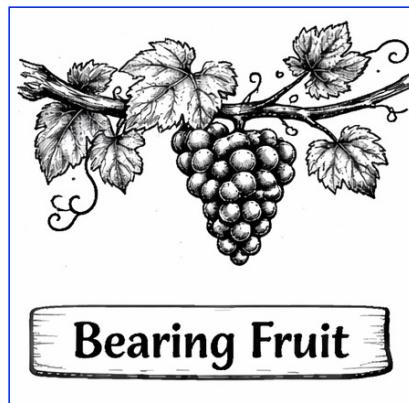
In Christ (in the True Vine)

- True branches (Christians/Church) are in Christ
 - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17).
 - For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:10).
 - 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).
 - If Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life because of righteousness (Romans 8:10).
 - To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27).
- Abiding in Christ
 - A deep, constant, and life-giving connection with Jesus Christ.
 - Branches produce spiritual fruit that glorifies God and demonstrates they are His disciples.

Spiritual Fruitfulness in Stages



No Fruit



Bearing Fruit



Bearing Much Fruit

Unproductive Branch

- A branch that doesn't produce fruit.
- The Father removes these branches (those not connected to Christ or abiding in His word).

Pruned Branch

- A branch that produces some fruit.
- The Father prunes it (cuts away dead parts) so it can bear more fruit.
- God's refining process through which believers to be more Christ-like and effective

Abiding Branch

- A branch that is deeply connected and produces abundantly.
- The result of abiding in the vine (Jesus) and His words.
- Truly Jesus' disciple, demonstrating deep faith, love, and transformed life.

The Pruning Process

- Purpose of pruning
 - Every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit (John 15:2b).
 - Increase fruitfulness: To produce more and richer fruit and to become more like Jesus.
 - Remove hindrances: To cut away sin, pride, worldly desires, and habits that stop the flow of God's life.
 - Glorify God: To display His glory through our lives.
- The process & tools of pruning
 - God's Word for cleansing (repentance) and cutting away what isn't Christ-like.
 - Life's seasons & challenges (Difficulties, losses, changing friendships, or closed doors) can be God's way of redirecting or removing hindrances.
 - The Holy Spirit continues the work of sanctification (cleansing).
- How to respond to pruning
 - Abide in Christ: Stay connected to Him (the Vine).
 - Trust the Gardener: Believe in His loving purpose, even when it's painful.
 - Allow God to show you areas to change and yield to His correction.

Characteristics of the True Branches

- True branches already clean
 - You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you (John 15:3).
- True branches prove to be disciples
 - This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples (John 15:8).
 - Who is a true disciple? 1) abide in Jesus; 2) allow His Words to remain in them; 3) bear much fruit as a result.
- True branches are loved
 - As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love (John 15:9).
- True branches obey
 - 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 (John 15:10).
- True branches have joy
 - My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full (John 5:11).
 - A deep, internal joy distinct from worldly happiness, found in connection with God, even amidst trials.

Reflection Questions

- The two types of God's work
 - Dead/unfruitful branch: Taken away in order to keep the vine healthy.
 - Fruitful branch: Pruned/Trimmed in order to make it more fruitful.
- Reflection Questions
 - Are you staying connected to the Vine?
 - As you look at your life, do you see the fruit growing?
 - We know that God prunes those who are fruitful—are you feeling that cutting back right now?
 - What habits or distractions is God removing to help you grow stronger?
 - Will you submit to His pruning process today?