

# 23-0917a Transcript

## 23-0917a - *I AM the True Vine, Part 1, Jim Lokenbauer*

**Bible Readers:** Tom Freed and Roger Raines

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## I AM the True Vine, Part 1

Transcript (0:03 - 32:03)

### Scripture Readings

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Reader: Tom Freed

**John 15:1-8,**

(0:03) Morning. I'll be reading John 15, 1 through 8. John 15, 1 through 8.

(0:12) I am the true vine of my father, the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, (0:19) he takes away. And every branch that bears fruit, he prunes it so it may bear more fruit. (0:26) You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (0:31) Abide in me and I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, (0:38) so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. (0:44) He who abides in me and I in him, he bears much fruit. So apart from me he can do nothing. (0:52) If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up. And they gather them (0:59) and cast them into the fire and they are burned. You abide in me and my words abide in you. Ask (1:06) whatever you wish and it shall be done for you. My father is glorified by this, that you bear much (1:12) fruit and so prove to be my disciples. (1:15)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader: Roger Raines

**John 15:8-17,**

(1:20) Good morning. Morning. I'll be reading from the book of John, (1:28) chapter 15, verses 8 through 17. John 15, 8 through 17.

My father is glorified by this, (1:40) that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. Just as the father has loved me, (1:48) I have also loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. (1:57) Just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide by his love. These things I have spoken to (2:04) you so that my joy may be with you and that your joy may be made full. This is my commandment, (2:14) that you love one another just as I loved you. Greater love has no one than this, (2:22) that one lay down for his life for his friends. You are my friends and if you do what I command (2:30) you, no longer do I call you slaves for the slave does not know what his master is doing, (2:38) but I

have called you friends for that all things that I have heard from my father, (2:46) I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you will (2:56) go on and bear fruit and that your fruit will remain so that whatever you ask of the father (3:02) in my name, he may give it to you. This I command to you that you love one another. (3:09) This concludes this reading. (3:11)

## Transcript

**Preacher:** Jim Lokenbauer

(3:16) Good morning, everyone. (3:21) I thank Tom and Roger for those long readings.

You guys are troopers. I appreciate you. (3:30) Okay, well, as you can tell by the text that's been read, we are continuing the Great I Am (3:37) study.

And today's lesson is going to be on Jesus' statement, I am the true vine. And again, (3:47) that's found in John chapter 15. So that's primarily where we're going to reside in our study.

(3:59) And we're going to explore I am the true vine. And Jesus' life on earth as a man, (4:12) at this point in time was rapidly coming to a conclusion. He would soon be nailed to the cross (4:19) of Calvary, completing the task that the father commanded him to do.

And remember Jesus' words (4:27) from John 10 in the lesson, I am the good shepherd, when he said in verse 18, no one takes (4:35) my life from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority (4:42) to take it up again. This command I received from my father.

Well, this command was about (4:50) to be fulfilled by Christ. And our subject matter is found in the continuation of the same (4:57) discourse that Jesus was having with his disciples in the upper room on the night that he was (5:03) betrayed. Remembering the unfolding of events leading to this moment in time, we have Jesus' (5:11) last public teaching in the market at the end of John chapter 12.

And in John chapter 13, (5:20) is Wednesday evening, one day before Christ's death. And Jesus and his disciples (5:27) are in the upper room. And the chapter starts out this way.

(5:33) Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his time had come, (5:38) that he would depart from this world to the father, having loved his own who were in the world, (5:45) he loved them to the end. During supper, the devil, having already put into Judas' heart (5:54) to betray Jesus. So from these verses, we clearly can tell that it was before the feast of Passover, (6:03) as they were having a special supper.

It wasn't the Passover meal, but it was a special supper (6:12) to them. It was a last supper that they would enjoy together while Jesus was alive. (6:20) During this meal, Jesus also instituted a lasting rite for Christians to follow.

(6:27) And that ordinance is the Lord's Supper, which we just enjoyed together. (6:33) And the followers are to observe this until Christ comes back for us. Jesus would be teaching (6:41) these disciples some of the most important lessons from this point on, right up to the (6:47) point where he's arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, when the temple guard and the Roman (6:53) soldiers

take him away.

And we are told from these two verses that Satan had already put into (7:01) Judas' heart the idea to betray Jesus. And that happened a few nights prior when Martha and Mary (7:12) held a special dinner on Jesus' behalf, and Mary had anointed Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, (7:21) at which point Judas stood up and berated her for this, putting her down, and then giving (7:27) some subterfuge about how the money could have been helping the poor. And the text even said (7:35) he could care less about the poor.

Well, Jesus then rebuked Judas for that, and from that point (7:44) on is when Judas decided that he was going to betray Christ. And it's because Satan put that (7:52) thought in his heart. How that's done, I don't know, but Satan got credit for it here.

(8:02) So that night we have Jesus give his teaching about service and humility by washing his (8:11) disciples' feet, also revealing that one of them was going to betray him that night to fulfill (8:18) scripture. So he already knew what Judas was up to. And one by one, all of the disciples asked (8:26) the Lord if it was them.

Not us, Lord. Lord, is it not? And we also have Peter and John secretly (8:36) asking through their fisherman's code, whatever they did. You know, Peter motioned to John, (8:44) since John was reclining next to Jesus at the table, they would lay down basically when they (8:52) would commune together around the table on pillows.

So Jesus tells John who it was that (9:02) was going to betray them. So John and Peter, those who were actually closest to Jesus, (9:10) knew who the culprit was. And Jesus gave the sop to Judas.

And at that very point, (9:19) when Jesus gave the sop to Judas, Jesus looked at him and said, what you do, do quickly. (9:29) And so Jesus was not only looking at Judas and saying that, but knowing that Satan had already (9:38) entered his heart, was basically telling Satan, let's do this. Bring it.

I'm ready. (9:46) So Jesus was ready, knowing that the cross was right there waiting for him. (9:54) And so Judas left that night and went to the high priest.

And we know this wasn't Passover night, (10:00) because Jesus wouldn't have told Judas to go out into the night, because part of the Passover laws (10:07) was you stay indoors until morning on Passover. So Jesus wouldn't have caused Judas to sin. (10:19) So that's another way we know this wasn't the Passover meal.

It was the night before. (10:24) It was the Wednesday night meal. So with Judas gone, Jesus gave the disciples a new command.

(10:33) And that we see in John 13, 34 and 35. Jesus said, a new command I give you, love one another. (10:41) As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

All men will know that you are my disciples if you (10:47) love one another. As the Lord's followers, we're to love each other. And Judas should have been (10:56) full of joy at what Mary did for Jesus by anointing him.

Mary gave to her Lord the best (11:04) that she had. Mary's love for Jesus moved her to anoint him with expensive perfume, (11:10) readying him for burial, the text told us. Judas should have been

touched by her loving care for (11:17) Jesus.

Instead he revealed that he had an envious, bitter, and unloving heart. And with him gone is (11:25) probably why Jesus gave this very command at that moment. Because Judas had no love in his heart.

(11:34) So he gives that command to his disciples. And perhaps he was implying, don't be like Judas, (11:41) unloving, love one another. Then Jesus predicted Peter's denial of him three times.

(11:49) And with all these very heavy revelations and teachings that the disciples got, (11:57) they were actually quite distraught at this point. So in chapter 14, we have Jesus (12:05) revealing to them that he is the way, the truth, and the life. And we went over that a few lessons (12:12) ago.

And that gave them much comfort. And in that discussion, he revealed that he and the Father (12:19) are one. When you see Jesus, you see the Father.

And he discusses the role of the Holy Spirit in (12:28) chapter 14. And that he also had to go back to his Father. So he said he would prepare them (12:37) a place in heaven.

And that he would come back for them one day, so that they could be where he is. (12:45) And knowing that the time was close, he said to the disciples at the end of chapter 14, (12:51) verse 29, now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe. I will (12:59) no more speak with you much.

For the prince of this world comes, and he has nothing on me. (13:06) But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father commanded me, (13:13) even so I do. Arise, let's go from here.

So from Bethany, having been refreshed at his friend's (13:22) home, Jesus came into Jerusalem that day with his face set like flint. Nothing could change his mind (13:30) or turn him away from what he was about to do, what his Father commanded him to do. And that was (13:39) to undo the damage that Satan has done to mankind, and to redeem mankind back to himself.

(13:50) God knew that Satan would come at Jesus with all his fury to try to destroy the Son of Man (13:56) on the cross. But the devil was actually playing into God's hand. You cannot outthink God.

(14:04) Luke 14, 13 tells us, so when the devil had completed every temptation to the Lord, (14:12) he departed from Jesus until a more opportune time. This was Satan's opportune time here. (14:23) And so Satan wasn't going to waste time.

God didn't give Satan permission to kill Job (14:33) when he was tested. Job 2, 4 says, so Satan answered the Lord and said, skin for skin, (14:40) yes, all that a man has he will give for his life, but stretch out your hand now and touch his bone (14:46) and his flesh, and he will surely curse you to his face. Can you imagine being so cheeky to speak (14:54) to God that way? Well, that's Satan.

And that's what he's about to do to Christ. (15:03) There were no such restrictions put on Satan's treatment of Jesus. Now, (15:08) Satan would make sure that Jesus would suffer the most cruel torture and death while trying to get (15:16) Jesus to fail in his mission.

Satan wanted Jesus to sin. He wanted him to either curse God to his (15:26) face or to fall on his knees and worship him. He thought the best way to do that was to put (15:36) Jesus on the cross.

So the remainder of Jesus' teachings that night in chapters 15 through 17 (15:43) are on foot, moving from the upper room to the Mount of Olives, to the Garden of Gethsemane. (15:51) Jesus said, the prince of this world comes and then said, arise, let's go from here. (15:58) Jesus wasn't fleeing or running away.

He was heading to meet the prince of this world. (16:06) God's will, his providence was guiding his son to the cross because this was the plan. (16:13) Jesus prayed in John 12, 27, now my soul is troubled.

What shall I say? Father, (16:20) save me from this time. But for this cause, I came to this time. For Jesus, this is that time.

(16:31) While on the way, he had a lot to teach the disciples. And chapter 15 is taught on foot, (16:38) so to speak. He teaches them about being his disciples and the aspect of bearing fruit.

(16:46) So I thank the guys for reading the text. It's a long text. And I will not read that, (16:57) but we'll go through my motive operandi going verse by verse.

But having left the upper room (17:05) where they had just eaten a special meal together, Jesus was heading to the Garden of Gethsemane (17:10) with his disciples in tow. From Jerusalem to the garden, there were plenty of olive groves (17:17) and vineyards. And perhaps by passing one of these inspired Jesus to use this allegory of a vineyard (17:26) to teach his next I am statement.

So let's look at verses one and two where Jesus says, (17:35) I am the true vine and my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no (17:43) fruit. While every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

(17:52) So Jesus stated that he was the true vine. He was implying that there were also false vines (18:00) or vines that were of no value and produced no fruit. He was making a distinction between he and (18:07) someone else.

But who? I suggest that since he was at odds with the scribes and Pharisees and (18:15) the rabbis and all the rabble that would follow Christ around giving him a hard time, (18:22) that he was talking about these people. This prophecy may explain this from the Old Testament. (18:31) In Jeremiah 2.21, God says against Israel, I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and (18:41) reliable stock.

How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine? So God the father is (18:50) the vine dresser in this allegory and the owner of the vineyard. He planted the seed and groomed (18:57) it into a beautiful vine. He is the one who knew the time was just right for this spiritual seed (19:05) of Abraham to come and bless the whole world.

Those who believe and accept that Jesus is the (19:13) Christ, the seed of Abraham who was to come, are the branches of Christ, of the true vine. The (19:21) father, the vine dresser, cuts off those that Jeremiah writes about who are corrupt and wild (19:29) and are incapable of producing good fruit or any fruit for that matter. We saw as an example of (19:38) this with Judas Iscariot being pruned off the vine.

God prunes. Judas was proving he was unfruitful (19:49) and the fruit that he did bear was not good fruit. By Judas.

Those who do belong to the true vine, (20:00) God will skillfully, like a vine dresser, trim and prune the branches in order to get them to (20:07) bear fruit. And that is a true skill. You got to know how to address a vine or a branch that's (20:17) stimulated to produce fruit.

Ask Jean. She could probably tell you. It's a skill.

You got to know (20:23) where to cut it and how to cut it in order to stimulate it for new growth or to bear fruit. (20:33) And let's look at verse 3. You were already pruned clean because of the word I have spoken to (20:40) you. So Jesus could see their hearts, the 11 remaining disciples, and knew they were true (20:47) believers and they were being transformed spiritually by his word, being cleaned by his (20:54) word.

Because when you have the word of God in you and you're trying to live by that word, (21:00) you automatically become clean because you're rejecting all the things of the flesh that it (21:06) tries to get you to do that makes you unclean. So his word or his teachings, and he could see (21:14) these disciples were following him. Verses 4 and 5. Remain in me and I will remain in you.

(21:21) No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you (21:29) remain in me.

I am the vine. You are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear (21:37) much fruit.

Apart from me, you can do nothing. In this verse, Jesus vacillates between the vine (21:46) allegory and the actual. Jesus tells us that we have to remain in the true vine, which is to remain (21:54) in him.

If we do that, like the branch on the vine gets all its nourishment from the vine, we can draw (22:02) from his life, giving spiritual nourishment, which we get from his word and from his teachings and (22:10) from the spirit. And exercising our active faith, we are then able to bear good fruit for him. (22:19) We have to keep our active faith in Jesus to the very end.

Well, the end of what? Either the end of (22:28) our lives, individually, or when Christ comes to end all time. Either or. We have to be faithful (22:37) to the end.

You may ask, how do we get into the vine or in Christ to begin with? Well, the apostle (22:47) Paul was an expert explaining how to get in Christ and explaining the benefits of being in Christ. (22:56) Paul tells us the process of being in Christ in Romans 6, verses 3 through 8. He says, (23:05) or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? (23:13) We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised (23:21) from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united (23:28) with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

(23:35) We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, (23:41) that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been free from sin. (23:50) So baptism is the vehicle, so to speak, of which we get into Christ. It is also the death of our (23:59) sinful nature because we are also baptized into his death.

So we actually suffer a death, (24:07) so to speak, when we're baptized. We die. Our old nature is in

the water.

Our old nature is (24:16) nailed to the cross, it says elsewhere, regarding baptism and what happens to our old sinful nature. (24:25) So into is the transition from going from one place to another or from one state of being to (24:34) another. In this case, we are going from a sinful lost state into a sinless saved state, (24:43) and we find ourselves born again and raised anew in Christ.

(24:50) And that makes us part of the true vine. Paul uses other analogies to express our dependent (24:57) relationship with our Savior and how we must stay in him to receive spiritual blessings and (25:05) salvation. In Romans 11, Paul uses the olive tree analogy, very similar to this grapevine analogy, (25:16) and how we as gentiles, when we believe, are grafted into a cultivated tree by God (25:25) and receive the same nourishment from the holy root of that tree.

And Christ, of course, (25:31) would be the tree that we get nourishment from. And the natural branches, which is Israel, (25:40) we receive the same nourishment that they do when we're grafted in. (25:46) Paul also has a running theme through several of his letters, Romans, Galatians, Ephesians, (25:53) among some, depicting that the believing gentiles are like adopted children of God, (26:01) who have been adopted into the family of God, and we are children of the free woman and children (26:08) of promise, the promise to Abraham, who start off on spiritual milk, the very basic learnings of (26:17) Christ, and then as we mature, we start chewing meat, the heavier teachings of God.

And just as (26:27) Jesus, with all his teachings surrounding his I Am statements, shows everyone that he is the way to (26:34) heaven and he has the words of life, we need to hear and believe. So Paul always points (26:41) our attention to the source of all our blessings, and that is Jesus. Listen to Paul's words in (26:49) Ephesians 1-3.

Praise be to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly (26:56) realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. In chapter 1 of the Ephesian letter, Paul uses (27:05) the idea of in Christ eight to ten times, depending on which version you have, and (27:15) citing the benefits and advantages we have of being part of Christ's glorious body, (27:23) being in the true vine. And all spiritual blessings can only be in Christ.

You have to be (27:32) in Jesus in order to receive them and bear fruit. So Paul echoes what Jesus has been saying in this (27:40) lesson. If you want spiritual blessings, you have to remain on the true vine, and you'll be able (27:46) to produce fruit for the Lord, which gives him glory.

You may ask, what kind of fruit will we (27:53) produce? In short, good fruit. That's the smart-alecky answer. But good fruit can come in (28:00) many varieties, and we'll explore some of the types of fruit for the Lord.

Producing fruit is (28:07) a mark of a disciple, and we'll see in verse 8 in our next lesson this evening about that. (28:15) Let's read verse 6 together. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown (28:22) away and withers, and such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned.

God, (28:32) Yahweh, has warned Israel using this same vine metaphor when Israel went its own way following (28:40) other gods, ignoring our Holy Father in heaven. God delivered on this threat after sending prophet (28:48) after prophet to get them to repent. They ignored those warnings and were destroyed (28:57) as a nation, and many people died, and there was just a remnant of them

carried off (29:03) away into Babylon for 70 years' punishment.

In Ezekiel 15, 1 through 8, it says, (29:12) Yahweh's word came to me, saying, Son of man, what is the vine tree more than any tree? (29:20) The vine branch which is among the trees of the forest. Will wood be taken of it to make anything? (29:27) Will men take a pin of it to hang a vessel on it? Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel. (29:35) The fire has devoured both its ends, and the middle of it is burned.

It is profitable for nothing, (29:42) for any work. Behold, when it was whole, it was suitable for no work. How much less, (29:51) when the fire has devoured it, and it has been burned, will it yet be suitable for any work? (30:01) Therefore, thus says the Lord Yahweh, as the vine tree among the trees of the forest, (30:05) which I have given to the fire for fuel, so I will give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

I will (30:14) set my face against them. They will go out from the fire, but the fire will devour them. Then you (30:21) will know that I am Yahweh.

When I set my face against them, I will make the land desolate, (30:28) because they have committed a trespass, says the Lord Yahweh. (30:34) That's what Jesus is saying in this vine allegory. Branches that do not produce any fruit (30:43) will be pruned off the vine and thrown into the fire to be burned.

And that's hell, folks. So we (30:53) have to be in the true vine. We have to produce fruit for the glory of God.

Jesus gave that same (31:04) warning. So remain on the true vine. John 15, 7 says, If you remain in me, and my words remain (31:13) in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.

The Lord looks after his own. (31:21) He takes care of his children. If you show true faithfulness, keeping his word and having Holy (31:29) Spirit as a seal in you, meaning that you're an authentic Christian, this is how the Lord knows (31:37) those who are his.

You will be blessed in what you do by the Lord. He loves us and looks out for us, (31:44) and if we ask, he will give to us. So if you have any request of the Lord, this is the invitation.

(31:55) You can come forward, let it be known, and we'll be glad to pray for you, and (31:59) God will bless you. So come as we stand and sing.