

# 23-1105p Transcript

## 23-1105p - *I AM the True Vine, Part 4, Jim Lokenbauer*

**Bible Reader:** John Nousek

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## I AM the True Vine, Part 4

Transcript (0:04 - 33:59)

### Scripture Reading

**Bible Reader:** John Nousek

**John 8:31,32,**

(0:04) Good evening. So this evening's scripture reading comes from the Book of John, (0:14) the Gospel of John, the Word of our Lord, the perfect Word of our Lord. It's John 8, (0:22) and it's just two verses, verses, let me see, 31 and 32. John 8, 31 and 32. (0:34) It reads,

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed him, (0:40) If you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, (0:48) and the truth shall make you free. Amen. (0:53)

### Transcript

**Preacher:** Jim Lokenbauer

(0:58) Well, good evening, everybody. (1:01) We're going to pick up where we left off this morning. I thank John for reading that passage.

(1:09) That is one of the traits that marks disciples of Jesus Christ. To the Jews who had believed (1:17) him, Jesus said, If you hold to my teachings, you are really my disciples. Some versions have the (1:25) word, If you hold to my word, you are really my disciples.

And both renderings of that are correct. (1:38) The Greek word for word there is logos, of course. And when you look logos up, it says that it is an (1:48) expression of thought.

And the Bible was primarily written in Greek, and the Greek language and (1:57) thought is very different than English. So the English translators had to look at the context (2:05) of the Greek text and come up with the best words in English to express Greek thought into English. (2:13) And that, of course, is called transliteration.

It is not a strict word for word translation (2:22) from Greek to English. It's more thought for thought. So there's other words for logos.

(2:34) The Vines expresses logos can mean account, cause, communicate, communication, intent, matter, (2:43) matters, question, questioning, reason, report, saying, speech, thought, things, treaties, and (2:51) utterance. And, of course, the word, word. So word is what we generally think of when we hear logos.

(3:01) Jesus was called the Logos in John chapter 1, 1 and 2. In the beginning was the word, (3:09) and the word was with God, and the word was God. So Jesus spoke into creation from his creative mind, (3:19) and his powerful words brought creation into being by speaking his thoughts. (3:29) So you get the idea, though.

A word is a vocalized expression of thought, and when our words (3:36) accurately express our thoughts, that is called moral truth. Jesus is our author of moral truth, (3:47) because he tells us that he spoke exactly what the Father told him to say. In fact, in John 17, (3:59) in Jesus's prayer, he asked that God would sanctify his disciples by his truth.

(4:10) And then he said, your word is truth. So he's equating the Father's word as truth itself. (4:20) So as a disciple, we're sanctified, set apart for holy purpose.

That's the definition (4:28) of sanctification. We're set aside by a holy purpose by the word of God. (4:38) Jesus said we are cleansed by his word.

John read that this morning, John 15, 3. (4:48) And that's where Jesus says, you are already clean because of my word. (4:56) So once sanctified, we can worship him with clean hearts and souls and serve him, (5:02) and go to him in his presence in prayer. And it's Jesus' blood that was shed on the cross (5:11) that cleanses the believing heart from sin.

And Paul tells us that we're also sanctified (5:18) by the blood of Jesus. So we have both the blood and the word that sanctify us (5:27) and cleanse us as believers, as his disciples. Paul expresses this idea in his discussion (5:36) of the marriage relationship of husband and wives, that they're a type of Christ and his bride, (5:46) which is the church.

Jesus cleanses his bride with his word. He washes the church with his (5:57) word. And so this comparison is not about baptism, though his word does include instruction and (6:09) commands about being baptized.

This is actually a benefit of believing the word when we have faith. (6:19) It tells us more about belief and grace than we realize. Listen, Ephesians 5, 25-27, (6:29) husbands love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself up for it, (6:36) that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, (6:43) that he might present the assembly to himself gloriously, not having spot or wrinkle or any (6:51) such thing, that it should be holy and without defect.

The word and the blood both sanctify (7:03) his disciples and makes the soul pure and holy, presentable before God. (7:10) One happens at belief, it would seem, when we hear the word, saying that the word (7:17) sanctifies when the person understands and believes and has faith. So God sees that heart (7:28) and sets it aside for holy purpose.

And it is, remember, a grace that saves us through the faith (7:38) that Jesus is the Son of the Holy and Living God. In Paul's gospel, his Roman letter, (7:46) he starts and ends his letter alluding to that faith is something that's developed. (7:54) It has a starting point and an end game, so to speak.

It matures into an obedient faith. (8:04) For some, that comes quickly, and for others, it may take time. In Romans 1, 4 and 5, Paul says, (8:14) he was declared, this talking about Jesus, he was declared the Son of God with power by the (8:20) resurrection from the dead according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, (8:26) through whom we have received grace and apostleship, to bring about the obedience of faith among all (8:34) the Gentiles for his namesake.

And to bring about the obedience of faith, that sounds like a name (8:42) or a goal, a growth process not yet achieved. And then he closes the letter, Romans 16, 26, (8:51) by the scriptures of the prophets according to the commandment of the eternal God that has been (8:57) made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith to the only wise God through Jesus (9:06) Christ be the glory forever. And again, leading to obedience of faith.

So there's a period of (9:14) time in there where the person has faith, what are they? Lost? Saved? I'll let you answer that, (9:24) but what they are, they're sanctified by the Word of God. So why am I bringing this up? (9:33) As disciples, we are always in learning mode, or at least we should be. As we mature, we should (9:42) often assess our own beliefs to see if we're still in line with God's Word.

Some of us who (9:51) are mature in this congregation have come to understanding that we may have misunderstood (9:59) God's Word at times. For me, when I first became a Christian, I became a Christian (10:07) because I believed in those Hal Lindsey books that my sisters gave me, (10:13) the late great planet Earth. I don't know if any of you are familiar with that book, (10:18) but he's a guy who gets people all whipped up thinking about the Antichrist and end times (10:27) and a thousand-year period of rain on Earth, tribulation and everything.

(10:33) And one thing it did do was got my nose in Scripture to read prophecies, (10:41) and just those prophecies' accuracy amazed me, and so I believed that that's something (10:49) that I should be paying attention to, something that maybe I should believe in. Up to that point, (10:54) I never gave God a thought. So did I have faith? Maybe not quite yet, but I did go out and buy a (11:06) Bible and read it through.

And I think that right there might be the beginning of faith for me. (11:21) And when I met my wife, we both sought out, we started going to a Catholic church because she (11:28) was Catholic, but then we both realized there's something wrong here. Let's go exploring and find (11:38) a church, which we did.

And we ended up going to this little congregation of about 35 people, (11:48) and it was called the No Bottom Road Church of Christ. Now, I don't know if that name was (11:55) prophetic. They're no longer in existence.

There's some other church now. But that's where I (12:03) heard the word, and I was taught, and I believed, and it led me to an obedience of faith, coming to (12:12) an understanding I needed to get baptized to have my sins washed away. But what about that period (12:20) where I believed, but yet I hadn't been cleansed of my sins? What of that period of time where I'm (12:31) walking around, where if a big grand piano fell out of the sky and flattened me, and I was dead (12:37) before I hit

those waters, am I saved? Or am I lost forever? With that finger of the preacher (12:47) pointing at you, which we've seen so often, so condemning, is that the case? (12:59) What does it mean to be sanctified by the Word? And when you consult most of the commentaries, (13:09) they'll agree that passage of Scripture has nothing to do with baptism, the washing, (13:16) the washing of the Word.

By making that statement, washing of the Word is washing of the Word. (13:23) That's a qualifying statement, expelling all other thought of what it could mean. (13:33) Is sanctified, sanctified, set apart for holy purpose? (13:38) Here's another example.

Scott brought us a wonderful lesson on Paul's gospel, a study in (13:46) Romans. And Paul even calls his letter his gospel. And I don't know why the authors of the Bible (13:56) who compiled it didn't just put the gospel of Paul as a letter to the Romans.

Anyhow, (14:06) through this lesson, we learn things we had not known before, and perhaps even had a misconception (14:16) of what grace, justification, and righteousness were. Those were, and those are, including (14:26) what we're talking about tonight, sanctification. Those are teachings for the mature, (14:33) those who chew on meat, not spiritual milk.

Dear young and the Lord, this might just zip over your (14:40) head, to which I would apologize for anybody who might be listening who might be a newer Christian. (14:48) I'm just trying to provoke thought, not controversy, but thought. Make us think, (14:56) what about that period of time? There's plenty of Scripture that alludes to (15:08) my way of thinking this through, and that is that I believe grace covers us in that period of time.

(15:23) That if the Lord takes us, we're with him regardless that we are still stained with sin. (15:32) If, and here's the qualifying, the caveat, the qualifying statement, (15:39) if we've been walking in the light, if we've been pursuing the Word, trying to understand it, (15:47) but for whatever reason, whether my own limitations of understanding what it means to be baptized, (15:55) or perhaps if it hadn't been taught to me yet, and I just didn't know to (16:02) understand that subject, and God sees a sincere heart that truly believes that Jesus is the Christ, (16:15) and let's say this time it's a Mosler saint that falls from the sky and flattens me, (16:20) am I lost? That's a hard question to answer. Now I know a bunch of preachers (16:32) who would look down their nose with their finger leading the way saying, (16:37) you're lost.

I don't want to be the person who makes that judgment. Let's leave that for God. (16:45) Never be a judge whether someone is saved or not.

Sure, God gives us a brain to identify good fruit, (16:54) bad fruit, to know his scripture, but to make a judgment call like that, aren't we told not to (17:01) judge? It's something to think about. So as a mature Christian, we saw that we can (17:20) be in error in some of the things we think about. For example, being Scott's class, (17:27) it shed light on us.

We thought differently afterwards. You know what that is? To think (17:34) differently afterwards? That's the Greek word metanoio. It's a Greek compound word meaning (17:41) to think differently afterwards, and you know what the definition is? Repentance.

Repentance. (17:51) We repented of our ignorance on certain subjects, and that's what the Christian has to continually do (18:00) in his Christian walk. It took a long time.

We were white haired guys when we came upon this little, (18:10) hey, the light bulb going off. So thank you, Scott, for that lesson through Romans. (18:19) Amen.

God is good. God doesn't want us to be ignorant. That's why Jesus said if you abide, (18:29) that means staying in, staying with it.

Abide in my word. Abide in my teachings. (18:36) You are truly my disciple, and then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

(18:42) What are we set free from? The guilt of sin. When we start applying these things, (18:52) like for Luke 14, picking up and carrying our cross every day, that's practicing what it is (19:00) we've been learning on a daily basis. That's carrying your cross.

It's working out your (19:10) salvation with fear and trembling. Shame on us if we think we know it all. We do not, (19:18) and nor will we know it all by the time we lay our head down and take our last breath.

(19:27) But God wants us to give the effort to do that, and to continue in it, and to continue teaching (19:35) others, to be able to teach others. It's a cyclic thing. We teach others, they teach others, (19:46) the church keeps going.

We have a chain that extends all the way back to the 12 (19:55) apostles' original teachings on that day of Pentecost. That chain has not been broken. (20:03) It takes one generation to slip up and not teach others, and if that happens on a global basis, (20:14) bye-bye Christianity.

It's just a footnote in a, you know, college sociology class, (20:23) or whatever class it is you go over, philosophies and stuff. We got a job. Get out there and (20:34) teach others about Christ.

Think about Romans 14, especially developing attitudes that we know it (20:51) all, or the attitude of, hey, that person's not baptized, they're going to hell. We should never (20:58) have that attitude. Paul tells us in Romans 14 that that weaker brother, let's call him as Paul (21:07) calls him, who misunderstands, maybe even a little superstitious in his belief about food, (21:17) sacrifice, the idols, doesn't do it, doesn't eat because, you know, it's taboo to him.

But Paul (21:28) says, go ahead and eat, so long as you give thanks to God for that food. Because what is an idol? (21:35) It's nothing. But to that weaker brother, you know, it's food offered to a demon, and perhaps (21:44) it was.

But here's the thing, don't eat that food in front of a brother. You know, we got to be (21:54) careful with our freedom and our knowledge not to upset those who don't know, (22:05) and certainly never to regard them as, oh, that guy's still superstitious. (22:10) We need to continue in his Word, and the goal is to teach a complete gospel from the start.

(22:23) We do that pretty good in the Lord's Church. Matter of fact, we'll teach baptism to a room (22:30) full of believers, and to quote the Hebrew writer, let's go on to maturity. (22:37) Point being, we don't know it all.

I'm not saying that that person who hasn't yet been baptized but (22:47) believes, I'm not saying for sure that guy's saved, but I'm saying for sure Scripture tells us (22:58) he's sanctified. What is

sanctification? Set aside for holy purpose. Paul's words, pure and (23:10) clean, is an example of God's wonderful grace, and the grace that was to come.

(23:22) Zechariah chapter 3 talks about the high priest of Israel, Joshua. Israel was in an apostate state. (23:35) They hadn't been teaching as they should have been.

They skipped some generations. Error crept in. (23:47) And you know what another gospel is? It's anathema.

Well, the same thing with the teachings (23:55) in the Old Testament time, only they ended up worshiping demons. And that style of worship was (24:05) not just limited to the Valley of Ben-Hanom, where they sacrificed their children to Mordechai. (24:13) That's right at the feet of Jerusalem.

That's right across the hill from where Christ died for (24:23) the world, where Isaac was offered. This happened in the temple as well. So I'm going to read (24:36) Zechariah 3, 1 through 9. (24:41) And Zechariah is seeing a vision.

And it says, (24:45) Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord. (24:52) And as you know, the angel of the Lord is the second figure of the Godhead, whom we know as (24:59) Jesus Christ, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. The Lord said to Satan, (25:10) The Lord rebuke you, Satan.

The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you. Is this man (25:20) not a burning stick snatched from the fire? Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood (25:30) before the angel. The angel said to those who were standing before him, Take off his filthy clothes.

(25:39) Then he said to Joshua, See, I have taken your sin away, and I will put rich garments on you. (25:47) Then I, Zechariah, said, Put a clean turban on his head. So they put a clean turban on his head (25:53) and clothed him while the angel of the Lord stood by.

The angel of the Lord gave this charge (26:02) to Joshua. This is what the Lord Almighty says. If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements, (26:11) then you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among (26:17) these standing here.

Listen, oh high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, (26:24) who are men symbolic of things to come. I am going to bring my servant the branch, (26:32) see the stone I have set in front of Joshua. There are seven eyes on that one stone, (26:39) and I will engrave an inscription on it, says the Lord Almighty, and I will remove the sin (26:45) of this land in a single day.

So Joshua the high priest of Israel and Israel itself were in a (26:58) sinful state. And here Joshua the high priest appears before God in heaven in his sinful state. (27:12) And that word for filthy garments, the translators were merciful to us.

In Hebrew, (27:22) filthy there represents something being covered, and not just animal dung, but human dung, (27:31) representing how filthy this man appeared before God. Think of how repulsive that is. (27:43) Have you ever changed a baby diaper? That's pretty repulsive, but you do it.

Notice Jesus (27:52) didn't do it himself. He had servants change that guy's clothes. He can do that. He's God. (27:59) But that's how steeped in sin Joshua was, one of God's believers, one of God's servants, (28:08) the high priest, the one responsible for making sure Israel was taught the truth and stayed on (28:16) the right track. So you can see why he was called up and the guilt was laid at his feet.

(28:25) But what did the angel Jesus Christ do? He exhibited God's mercy to the sinful soul (28:38) who had not yet even repented. I forgive your sins. And what did it say? He would not snuff out (28:55) a smoldering wick.

And doesn't Jesus quote that in Matthew 12 when talking about the Messiah? (29:07) He will not trample a bruised reed or snuff out a smoldering wick. That means the person (29:15) in their weakest, sorriest state, he's not going to condemn, he's not going to crush, (29:22) he'll only help that soul. That's how merciful and gracious our Savior is.

So now I ask you again, (29:37) the person who believes with all their heart that Jesus is the Christ and has not yet come to be (29:46) baptized and that grand piano from the sky falls on him, crushes him, he doesn't make it to the (29:55) baptismal waters, is he lost? I'll let you decide that. I think I know in my own heart I believe in (30:12) a merciful God, but I also believe in a God who expects his commands to be listened to, (30:19) not ignored. By not listening to the commands of Jesus Christ, when you know about those commands, (30:29) you are treating the blood of Christ with contempt.

With contempt. When there are teachers in the (30:43) world who say, you don't have to be baptized to be saved, that's another gospel. And that's (30:53) what Paul calls anathema, Greek for, you are condemned.

(31:01) Sticking with that teaching. So as disciples, and as we're making disciples, we have to teach (31:09) a complete gospel, which includes baptism. Let them know right away, don't let that person wander (31:17) around thinking they're okay.

There's a preaching and teaching that goes on here. (31:28) A young man came up to me and almost made me cry. Stephen Tuck came up to me and said, (31:41) I want to be baptized.

I can't remember, did I mention baptism this morning? (31:50) But something struck his heart that made him think, and it could have been just a culmination (31:58) of all of our teaching here over the years and his mother's guidance at home. The little boy (32:08) wants to be baptized. I said, well, let's, you know, basically let's get it done.

And he goes, (32:15) I want my father to be here, and Warren's sick. He's got the crud that you and I have got. So (32:22) Warren couldn't be here today, otherwise he'd have been baptized today.

That's our goal, (32:31) is to save souls and make more disciples. We need to get that boy in the water, (32:40) wash his sins away. Let's pray to that end, too, that Satan will not snatch the hope he has (32:54) away from his heart, taking the word away.

The parable of the tears warns us about that. (33:05) Prayer is powerful because God hears us calling out to him, and he answers our prayers, (33:14) especially when we believe it. Protect that boy, Stephen Tuck.

So I'm going to end there. (33:30) I pulled an audible. I cut out most of my stuff.

I was all discombobulated from Scott this morning, (33:39) and then I found myself piecing, okay, I went over this, but should I put tonight's in here? (33:45) So I just gave up. But I brought you the word. I hope it was okay for you.

If you need (33:54) any reason, prayers of the church, come for it. We'll be glad to help you. (33:59)