

Week of Meetings 10 the Farmer and His Fruit

by David Clifford

God has given us all we need to make the wine of spiritual fruit and to glorify his name, and we are called to walk in newness of life, holy, fruitful, and victorious.

Duration: 1:01:28

Scripture: Matthew 7:16-20, Matthew 21:33-46, Mark 12:1-12, John 12:24, John 14:6, John 15:1-8, Romans 3:23

Topics: "Fruit Of Obedience", "Glorifying God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by reading a passage from the book of Mark about a man who planted a vineyard and let it out to farm workers. The workers mistreated and even killed the servants sent by the owner to collect his share of the harvest. Eventually, the owner sends his son, thinking they would respect him, but they end up killing him too. The speaker emphasizes that the main point of the message is the failure of the workers to bring forth fruit for their master, symbolizing our failure to glorify God. He encourages the audience to reflect on their own lives and seek a blessing from God's word.

Transcript

Well, we're still in Mark's Gospel. There is a great benefit through going consecutively through the word. There are quite a number of benefits really.

And one good thing is that no one can say that the preacher has chosen to preach on certain subjects that he thinks are needed, or that he is preaching at certain people. Because what he does in consecutive ministry is preach on the subject as it comes, consecutively. And it's marvellous how the Holy Spirit so arranges that to meet the needs of the individuals present.

And if you see anybody specially with a face aglow this evening, it's because they came up the mountain with us this morning and they beheld the glory of the Lord as he was transformed on the mount and they by the Spirit were changed somewhat into his image and glory. I'm sorry in one way that the week is coming to a close, although nice to know I have an extra weekend with you. I am not worthy of such blessings and benefits, but the fellowship is good.

We're getting to know one another very much now. And we can, for instance Andy and I, we can almost say something rude to one another and we don't take offence now. That's good isn't it.

Shows you how we're getting on and developing in grace. I'm reminded of Lady Astor who was the first MP to be voted into the Houses of Parliament in Westminster. And she was from Bristol wasn't she? Yes, now Lady Astor of course was a friend in one way to Sir Winston Churchill.

But they were so friendly they used to have a terrific rub at one another now and again even publicly across the House of the Floor. That's right. Now you can see how Irish I am.

The Floor of the House, the House of the Floor, the Floor of the House. And one occasion she said to him, she said, Sir Winston, if I were married to you I would feed you poison. He said, Lady Astor, if I were married to you I would take it.

It's nice to really get to know one another isn't it. Well you can tell I'm a little bit Irish. My grandfather was Irish, that's why I say things backwards sometimes.

And my grandmother was Welsh. That's why when Andy said, praise the Lord, I said, Diolch. He said, huh? Never heard that one, he thought it was the Tongues Movement started.

And it means, praise the Lord, Diolch Higo! Bisamgofio chluoslawol. Praise be to Jesus every day.

And I always like to listen to a bit of Welsh preaching with a bit of Welsh fervour in it and Welsh singing. Nothing like it on earth, except of course the singing at Park of the Barren Land. And however, although I'm a cosmopolitan mixture, Irish and English and Welsh and so on, I found out that I was a bad lot altogether and had to be born again.

Now let's read the word together. I'm going to read tonight, some of you won't forgive me for this, will you? I'm going to read from Phillips's version. You won't forgive me.

Or two. I feel led to read this from Phillips's version tonight. And you might not like Phillips's version, but if you don't, that's just ignorance.

It's got to be because we have proved by research, not only in the Moreland Bible College in our lectures, but Dr Stephen Short of Bristol. He also has proved by diligent research that Phillips's expressions from the original Greek are closer than anybody's in modern English. And it's good to break away sometimes from the King James Version and read a modern version, especially if it is Phillips's, J.B. Phillips's version.

Now some of these others I'm not very keen on. I've got a bit of a critical spirit myself. Some of these where they put in their own little bits and pieces and it seems to me sometimes that adding to Scripture they say things that are not there.

Some of these versions where they give two or three ideas of their own of one particular portion of Scripture. And some of these are not Scriptural ideas at all, they've just been talked in. And they are propagated as interpretations of the Word and they're not.

So a word to the wise, you have to be very careful. But you can't go far wrong, I would give you that word for nothing. You can't go very far wrong with J.B. Phillips's version.

I'm going to read you the first few verses of Mark 12 from Phillips's version. Then Jesus began to talk to them in parables. A man once planted a vineyard and, he said, fenced it round, dug out the hole for the winepress and built a watchtower.

Then he let it out to some farm workers and went abroad. The end of the season he sent a servant to the tenants to receive his share of the vintage. But they got hold of him, knocked him about and sent him off empty handed.

The owner tried again. He sent other servants to them, another servant to them, but this one they knocked on the head and generally insulted. Once again he sent them another servant, but him they murdered.

He sent many others and some they did beat up and some they murdered. He had one man left, his own son, who was very dear to him. He sent him last of all to the tenants, saying to himself, they will surely respect my own son.

But they said to each other, this fellow is the future owner. Come on, let's kill him and the property will be ours. So they got hold of him and murdered him, threw his body out of the vineyard.

What do you suppose the owner of the vineyard is going to do? He will come and destroy the men who were working his vineyard and will hand it over to others. Have you never read this scripture? The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord and it is marvellous in our eyes.

May God bless to us that reading from his precious word. A student came into my study some time ago and he asked for permission to do some grafting in the college orchard. He was very anxious to try his hand at grafting and he was asking permission to do it in the orchard.

He wanted to see a special kind of fruit growing from a branch which he wanted to graft into a certain tree. Somebody was showing me around here the other day different kinds of fruit coming out of the one stalk, the one tree. And that reminded me that the world is waiting to see the life of the Saviour manifested in his own.

The life of the true vine flowing through the branches. The world is waiting to see Christians growing by the life of Christ and bearing fruit unto God by the life of Jesus in them. Now when our Lord Jesus in John 15 said I am the vine and ye are the branches I'm quite sure he had in mind Ezekiel 15 where he says likening Israel to a vine what is the good of a vine tree if it doesn't bear fruit? It's only good for burning.

You can't even fashion a piece of the wood to make a pin or a nail out of it to knock it into the kitchen wall to hang a kitchen vessel on. It's not even good enough for that. The only thing a vine tree is good for if it doesn't bring forth fruit is to be burned.

And of course God has put us here for his glory to bring forth fruit to his name. And here we have the details in this incident in Mark 12 tonight. See what this particular farmer did and what this particular farmer wanted and to what lengths he went to preserve things for himself and how through these men it was all a complete failure and still it is a failure today unless we learn the secret of real spiritual fruit bearing.

This farmer planted a vineyard. What did he plant a vineyard for? Was it that he might just have the pleasure of seeing the plants grow and get taller and bigger? No. Was it that he just had got a few men around he wanted to employ? No.

Was it that he wanted to compete with his neighbours and keep up with the smiths next door? No. What did he plant a vineyard for? He wanted fruit. And I presume the product of the fruit as it says in Psalm 104

and wine to make glad the heart of men.

This was his whole purpose and he went to great lengths to do this. Now God's vineyard is the earth and God's vines are men and he has put us here that he might be glorified through us that from our lives there may be fruit to his praise and as it were wine to gladden his heart. It says in the book of Revelation for his pleasure we were and are created.

This man planted a vineyard for his own pleasure for his own good and God has done that in the earth and we are here his creation for his glory and unfortunately we've all come short of his glory and from us as of ourselves there has been no fruit to gladden his heart and please him. Now this farmer not only planted a vineyard but he hedged it round. He put a hedge round about it.

The whole idea was to preserve the plants as they grew to preserve the fruit as it came so that he might get the wine to gladden his heart. He hedged it round and God has been doing that in his vineyard all down the ages. You remember in the Garden of Eden there was Adam and Eve hedged round.

Don't know whether there was a literal hedge around the Garden of Eden but the idea was there God blessed them and provided for them was willing to protect them but unfortunately the hedge was broken down and sin came pouring in. He did that you remember with Nor and his family. He eradicated evil and gave Nor and his family a new chance and he blessed them and he hedged them round so to speak and soon sin came pouring in through the broken down hedge.

Then of course God did that with Israel he chose a nation and he gave them all the necessary whereby they could glorify his name as his representatives on earth and he gave them his word and yet they came short of his glory. He hedged them round. The idea of hedging round is seen illustrated in Job.

At the beginning of the book Satan comes to appear before the Lord and the Lord God says to him where have you come from? He said I've been wandering up and down the earth. As a matter of fact he's still doing that so be careful. We must not be ignorant of his devices.

And he said well in wandering up and down the earth he said have you considered my servant Job? And Satan said yes I have considered him and I know why he's your servant too. It pays him to serve you. You've hedged him round and that was the idea that Satan used.

You've hedged him round. You've protected him and you've preserved him. And look at the blessings and the possessions he's got.

No wonder he's your servant Job said Satan sarcastically. God said alright. You are at liberty to break down that hedge that I have put around him.

And you can bring trouble into his life through the gap in the broken hedge and then we'll see. And Satan came with a temptation but at the same time it was the Lord coming with a testing. Now remember that.

The trouble that came into Job's life was a test from God. But the devil brought it as a temptation. Remember that.

God doesn't tempt anybody. We are tempted when we are drawn away by our own lusts and selfish desires. But Satan tempts us too as in this case.

And so it was, you remember the day came when Job heard that his possessions had gone. And then he heard that his loved ones had died. And then he found out that his health had departed and from the crown of his head to the sole of his feet he was covered with boils, terrible boils.

And his wife said to him now you turn round and curse God and die. And he turned round and worshipped God and said Blessed be the Lord, the Lord gave. And the Lord put the hedge round about me and the Lord has allowed it to be broken down and the Lord has taken away Blessed be the name of the Lord.

But that is the idea. He was hedged around. Satan was right there.

He is right sometimes. But he always mixes the truth with a bit of evil. And so it was that he had hedged Job around had God.

And the hedge was... Now of course God has done that in his vineyard all down the ages. Blessed people abundantly. But the greater the blessing the greater the responsibility.

Think of all your blessings in your country. Think of America. I am amazed at the vastness of America.

I am in the process of trying to learn the geography of America. I know a little bit about the geography of the British Isles the Scotland and Ireland and Wales and England. And one teacher in America said to another boy he said, where do your forebears, your ancestors come from? And he said, teacher, from the west side of Britain.

She said, did they come from Wales? And he said, no, from human beings. I told you my grandmother came from Wales. The country of Wales I was referring to.

I thought I better explain that in case you didn't get it quite right. But the greater the blessing the greater the responsibility. Now you look back for a minute.

Don't count your troubles, count your blessings. And don't stop at surprise. It will surprise you what the Lord has done.

Respond to God's love. The greater the blessing the greater the responsibility. Think of those dollars you've had month after month all through your life.

Think how God has preserved you on these busy dangerous roads. Think how God has led you to this place and given you a home. Think of the thousand and one blessings of yours.

This means you have a thousand and one responsibilities to God. And the apostle realising this said I am getter to everybody and I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome also. And he hedged it round.

God has done that in his vineyard. Now this farmer he dug a winecrest It says digged in the 1611 version. That's a bit ancient and out of date.

I mean that wording. He digged a winecrest. He dug a winecrest to be a bit more modern English.

And you know what was happening that when he was putting in these tender vine plants if that's what they do here and there around the area he came to a corner where the soil was only an inch and a half deep. And he said to his men it's no good putting those plants in there. They won't grow.

There's not sufficient earth. He said I'll tell you what to do. Scrape the soil away.

It will be useful somewhere else. And he said bring your mallets and bring your chisels and we'll scoop out from this corner and from this piece of rock a winepress. A winepress it is called.

Probably about 8 feet in diameter and quite a big basin and then what they would do would make a channel you see at the bottom and there would be a ledge there underneath outside. And the idea was that the men when the fruit was grown and ripe would pick the bunches of grapes and throw them helter skelter handfuls and handfuls into this winepress you see and then they would tread the winepress let's hope they washed their feet first and then the juice would flow into the channel and into the wineskins that would be placed on the ledge to receive the juice. That was the idea.

It didn't work out like that in this case. But this is what the winepress was for. It was the instrument to make the wine.

Now God has done that in his vineyard given to us all that we need to make the wine to glorify his name to bring forth fruit to his praise he has given you a voice to sing his praises like the choir did so beautifully tonight. He has given you a mind to be occupied with him. He has given you feet to walk in his ways and a heart to love and adore him and he has given you hands to do his will and he says, son, go work today in my vineyard.

But those of us who are believers in the Lord Jesus he has given to us a much more wonderful instrument if I can say that reverently to make the wine. He has given to us in our hearts his gracious Holy Spirit to be our sufficiency that we might, by his indwelling enabling make the wine. He might do it through us that there might be not the fruits of our nature but the fruits of the Spirit as the life of the Spirit of Jesus flows through us to the glory of God's name.

The winepress was the instrument to make the wine. God has done that in his vineyard. He has given you, if you are a Christian all that you need to glorify God and you and I tonight should be glorifying God because we have the necessary.

One boy was always painting and on this occasion he got paint all over his knees and hands and over his socks as well and his mother said to him, Johnny, you're forever painting and you've got paint all over you. Why are you always painting? I would like to know. So he looked up and he said, Because mom, when I grow older I want to be a great artist so that God will ask me to help him to paint his rainbows and sunsets.

Now of course she had to explain to him God didn't want him to do just that but there was so much God did want him to do in his life and how he wanted him to glorify him and bear forth fruit to the praise of his name. He dug a winepress as the instrument to make and then this farmer so that he might preserve the fruit that in the end his heart would be gladdened in the middle of the vineyard he built a tower. It was a high tower and this was of course for defense against his foes.

Now he had enemies. Probably some of the neighbors were enemies. Don't know what kind of a district he lived in.

Maybe there would be wild animals that he would have to keep out and a high tower was a defense against all his foes. He could see them coming and he could stop them from the high tower. Now God has done that in his vineyard.

He's given to us all all the defense we need against all our enemies so that he might be glorified in us. That the wine might be preserved. A high tower, the psalmist puts it this way the Lord is my high tower himself.

And again the name of the Lord is a strong tower the righteous runneth into it and is safe. We are safe in the Lord himself. The arm of flesh will fail you.

You dare not trust your own. This was for victory and defense against all their foes. The high tower in the middle of the vineyard and Christ himself by his indwelling spirit is our victory.

You know in Romans chapter 6 and verse 4 the apostle by the Spirit says so walk in newness of life. And this life is of course a new life. It says newness of life.

It isn't the old life patched up but superseded by another one. It's not the old life refined but replaced by another one. It's a new life.

It's the life of the risen Son of God by his spirit in us. And we're supposed to walk by that life. And that life is a wonderful life.

It's not only a new life because it is but it's holy because he's the holy one. And it's fruitful because he's the true vine. And it's a victorious life if you're walking in newness of life because he is the victorious Christ.

The point is you see it isn't so much that God will give you some help when your foes confront you and you are struggling against them. I don't think God's going to help you struggle in the energy of the flesh against any of your foes. Why should he help you in your old nature struggling when he finished with you and your old nature and all that you could do two thousand years ago when in his reckoning he crucified you with Christ? What he gives you is a new life which is a marvellous almighty life.

It's the victorious life of the Son of God. And day by day by faith we enter into another's victory because it is the victorious Christ by his Spirit who is the life of the believer. Imagine my son Ian or our son Ian I've got my wife here tonight Imagine our son Ian when he was a boy very interested in football English soccer I mean of course and well he was he was captain of the school in football and in some of the other sports as well.

He wanted to be a minister of sport in the British government but instead he's a preacher of the gospel and a teacher of the truth so we're satisfied.

However he was very interested in English soccer now imagine I say imagine him supporting the local town team you know week by week every Saturday afternoon going down to the field and watching them play and say hooray hooray we scored another goal and that sort of thing and then one day the team is playing away about 35 miles away in another town and they go by coach you see not greyhound an English coach and they go by coach and of course the coach is not too roomy and Ian can't go but of course he's there when they come back and even before they stop he was on the corner waiting for them and as soon as they turn the corner to slow up he shouts through the window he said how did he get on and they said we've won we've won and he runs down the road and he gets there before the coach does

and he runs through the house and he runs through the village and he tells everybody we've won he said we've won we've won he hasn't even been there but their victory is his victory that's the only way to get spiritual triumph day by day is to enter into another's victory by faith Christ is the victorious Christ Satan

will never stand against Jesus anymore forever his victory proved by his resurrection in his death proved by his resurrection is eternal perpetual and everlasting and if the victorious Christ is your life then that is your victory day by day we read of some in a coming day in the book of Revelation is the prophecy they are going to overcome Satan and all their foes how? by the blood of the Lamb their victory then is going to be through his victory two thousand years ago it

was the blood of the Lamb the life of Jesus poured out which was a glorious triumph over all his foes and incidentally over all your foes Jesus the victorious Christ is your life he built a high tower for defense against all his foes and the Lord himself my victorious Christ is my high tower he has already the victory game we are not on the winning side we are on the side that's won and it all happened at Calvary somebody said to Sam in central Africa we hear you have been converted Sam he said yes praise the Lord and we hear that you are satisfied Sam he said yes praise the Lord and we hear Sam that you now have the victory over the devil where is it? very theologically correct he said where is it? not exactly that it isn't that I have the victory over the devil but I have the victor of

the devil living in my heart that's it and the Lord himself is our high tower he is our personal victory because we enter into his triumph at the cross day by day just like the children of Israel I think you have gone forever on this subject if you wanted to because the word is full of it because this is the way of blessing and victory you know some of us are so much struggling in the energy of the flesh and never getting there and forgetting about his eternal triumph on the cross you know when the children of Israel went forward in their journeys day by day Moses got them all together and they had a little morning prayer together you know like Mr.

Willie gets you together here and we have a little morning prayer together the beginning of the day well this is what Moses did with the children of Israel you know but his prayer was much shorter than than ours here this was his prayer he said arise O Lord and let thine enemies be scattered and them that hate thee flee before thee Amen and you know what happened God arose and every day overcame their enemies for them and every day they entered into his victory it was the Lord's victory arise O Lord let thine enemies be scattered and day by day they entered into his victory by the way the end of the day this is just for your interest the end of the day they had another prayer and it was shorter than the morning prayer they gathered together around the Ark of the Covenant and they rested in the Lord's presence and Moses' evening prayer was this Lord return unto the many thousands of Israel Amen and on the way to the land of rest they found not only his victory day by day but his rest on the way to the land of rest in the Lord himself the Lord himself is our high tower the righteous runneth into it and is safe this is your only victory the victory of the cross for your present need and then of course this man he went into a far country this farmer this householder went into a far country and God has done that in his vineyard in relation to his vineyard you see he wanted to prove them so he must give them liberty that's what God gave you liberty for you have a free will you can do what you like but remember in giving you a free will God is proving you and testing you because he's not only given you a free will he has given you his instructions and you know what his will for you is and when this man went into a far country he left his instructions now he said to his men I want fruit they knew what his will was now God has done that in his vineyard and these men unfortunately they turned their liberty into license and it's so easy to do a thing like that God has left us his instructions the savior has gone away to the glory and he still says I am the vine and you are the branches and I want some fruit from you that's why I prune you so that you might bring forth more fruit and he gives us liberty and sometimes we turn our liberty into license the late Dr.

Dixon of London had a great London preacher had a father I think he was or grandfather in one of these southern states here during the time of the emancipation and he had quite a number of slaves he was very good to his slaves he looked after them very well and I think they liked him too and when the bill was signed by the president he got them all into his great hall in his home and he says now I can keep slaves no longer the great president has signed the bill of the emancipation and you are all free do what you like, go where you will and he himself went to the door and opened the door for them so they got their bits and pieces together their bags and their baggage and they were seen after a little while that's two or two and a half hours walking up the street up the lane single file with baggages on their head and under their arms and in their hand and they were struggling up the road and they were all free now didn't seem to know what they were going to do and where they were going anyway after a little while after two miles they turned right into a wood and then they stopped at a clearing and they put their trunks and baggages down and they sat on the trunks of fallen trees and they had a conference together they said where are we going? don't know what we're going to do? don't know we've got liberty, yes isn't it wonderful, yes but we loved our master we liked serving our master we don't know what we're going to do now why can't we what can we do? well we can't be slaves anymore they said no, but perhaps he'll let us serve him of our own volition that's an idea they said so they put their cases on their heads and under their arms and in their hands marched down the road again single file and the first one up the head the spokesman for the party knocked at the big front door and there were no slaves to open the door so poor Mr.

Dixon had to open it himself and there he saw this cure he said what on earth do you want? well they said we've come back we know that we've been set free and we cannot be your slaves by law but can we please be your slaves by choice and so they've got liberty but they didn't use it for themselves they used it for their master and they were saying I loved, I loved my master I will not go out free you know the story in the Old Testament and now within all the year was brought to the door post and this was so many outward signs an outward sign that the man was not turning his liberty into license but loved his master and out of a free will of his own volition was willing to serve him all his days now God has done that in his country gone into his vineyard gone into a far country given us

liberty but unfortunately we've turned it into license and we've pleased ourselves that's why the call in our Christian meetings is very often for a surrender will a absolutely surrender will to the will of Christ that we might serve him acceptably reverently and fruitfully and with godly fear now this farmer sent from the far country his servants to get the fruit from his vineyard and God has done that in his vineyard he sent more that preacher of righteousness and Moses that meek man on earth but that great leader he sent Elijah the prophet and Elisha and Jeremiah who broke his heart over the city of Jerusalem because of the backsliding condition of God's people and he sent Amos to the people of the north and they said Amos shut up and go home and so they treated God's servants badly

just like this farmer's servants were treated badly from time to time and God sent John the Baptist and they cut off his head and then God had a unique son that's the meaning of the word only begotten the real word is as in the American Revised Standard Version unique son he had one son his only, his well beloved dearly loved son he said I will send my sons and surely they will reverence my son but when they saw the son coming they said this is the heir this is the son of the owner the property is going to him let us kill him and seize the property ourselves and they caught him and slew him and cast him out and that's what they did in God's vineyard and they came to a place called Calvary and there they crucified him there the place where our Lord was crucified outside the city wall there

the place a place of darkness where might the sun of darkness hide in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus and so did you and so did I because he was wounded for your transgressions bruised for your iniquities the punishment that you might have peace was laid upon him by his stripes therefore you can be healed and there they crucified him the punishment our Lord endured when he was nailed to that rugged Roman cross for our redemption to bring us back to God and him the person who was crucified and put to shame declares to us Jehovah's name and love because this was his only beloved his unique and dear son whom he gave for our sakes to bring him us back to him so last of all God hath in these last times and last of all spoken unto us by his son this is God's last word to mankind in his son

the Lord Jesus last of all he sent the son came from the glory sent by the Father to do his will five times in Christ's high priestly prayer in John 17 he says thou hast sent me and to me these are the most wonderful words in Scripture it was the good pleasure of the Lord to bruise him not that God was happier to slay his son but it was the perfect will of Jehovah to put his son to grieve because he so he thus gave his only begotten son last of all he sent his and after the refusal of the farmer's son he didn't send anybody else he brought he came with judgment there's only one thing following the rejection of the Lord Jesus and that is the judgment of God because the Lord Jesus is the salvation of God for mankind you see the Lord Jesus said to Zacchaeus today is salvation come to thy

house today I must abide at thy house here is God's salvation for you and me if you have Christ you have God's salvation and after refusing the finger the son they accepted the judgment now the great point in tonight's message is this we're just coming to it now and I shan't be long and it'll be all over the great point I think is one of the most important things we have to learn in our conferences in our Christian life in all our ministry and meditation over the word follow me closely now if you haven't had a blessing in these three months or more I pray you tonight listen and get a blessing from the word of God at this particular point they never brought their master any fruit and from them he never received the wine to gladden his heart in God's vineyard it's been always the same all

through the years we've all failed we've all come short of God's glory we were made for his praise and we haven't praised him we are created for his glory and we haven't glorified him we were put here in God's vineyard to bring forth fruit and we brought forth sour fruit sour grapes to set the teeth on edge and this is the history of mankind all down the ages we've all failed all have failed and left to ourselves now the story is still one of complete and absolute failure because flesh is flesh you can never get the spirit from the flesh you may sublimate the flesh as much as you will it will never yield spirit nor the fruits of the spirit only the spirit of Jesus can bring forth the fruits of the spirit and this is why he is the true vine and we are the branches and we being joined to

him can have his life flowing through us to the praise and glory of his holy name these men failed and all down the ages the story has been the same wild vines sour grapes no pleasure to God then suddenly suddenly there's some pleasure comes suddenly God is pleased we heard about it this morning on the top of the mountain we heard about it we heard the voice of the Lord God saying this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased is it true? is it true? is there at last amongst the men of earth someone who is bringing glory to God and pleasure to his heart and fruit to his praise and wine to gladden his heart yes the heavens opened three times and the Father speaks glowingly and gloriously about his son and the pleasure he has in his dearly beloved and that is why if we are going to

glorify Jesus in our lives it must be by the life of Jesus through our lives he is the true vine the flesh is a wild vine only the true vine is fruitful unto God and the true vine is always fruitful unto God this is why we

must be joined to Jesus grafted in to the Saviour completing Christ in union with our Lord in a very real practical experiential way and then the life of the true vine which is always fruitful unto God shall flow through us to the praise of God's name the Father said in him I am well pleased and he is the young now haven't we seen that all through the week in one way or another didn't the Lord Jesus say last night was it, it is I the not afraid I'm the one you need I'm the answer to your problems I am the overcomer I am the miraculous Saviour if you'll only take me in

and let me in control the miracle will be done the Lord Jesus is the answer you never can by yourself flesh is flesh and spirit is spirit and if it's the spirit of Jesus then the fruit unto God well now for the branch to be grafted into the stalk into the tree I understand that both have to be cut sliced at an angle with a sharp knife both have to be cut and then they are placed together on the cut and they are bound together with some kind of raffia and some kind of muddy substance which keeps out the air so that the sap of the tree the life of the tree can flow now through the branch and then when my friend in Eversham, Worcestershire which is the fruit growing district of Britain where one of the two special areas there's another area in Kent when this brother from the Eversham

assembly was showing me around his fruit farm and describing to me how they did the grafting he said we did this one yesterday see that now he said after a while this will be grown you'll see this branch here growing by the life it's got from this tree not by its own life and this is, look over there he says there's one there with some leaves on it and those leaves have come from the tree to which it was grafted you see that one further over there there's some fruit on that one and it's not from the branch it's from the tree because the branch was grafted in and was abiding in the tree and so there's fruit and this of course is the only way you and I must be joined to Jesus we must be grafted in we must abide in Christ now of course to really make this work so that there's growth and life

there is eternal life the divine life the life of the eternal and fruit unto God I must be cut and the branch the tree must be cut if I'm going to bear fruit the fruit of the life of Jesus through my life there must be a cut in my experience there must be a crisis there must be a cut with the things of the world with any known sin with any little bit of self-will personal selfish desire must be cut right off there must be in the church of God godly repentance turning from everything that is known to be not of Christ there must be a genuine serious and clean cut before I can know the life of Christ flowing through me and not only so the tree has to be cut but don't worry it's been done his hands were cut and his brow was cut with thorns and his feet were pierced and cut with nail and his

side with a spear so that so that so that you and I could be grafted in all that is waiting for now a clean cut with all that is not of Jesus in my personal experience so that I might abide in him completely that his life might flow through me that I might grow spiritually by his life that I might bear fruit by the life of the true vine through me no man can but by the Holy Ghost the Holy Ghost is the Holy Spirit of the true vine the Lord Jesus himself and only the true vine is fruitful unto God this is the way of blessing and fruitfulness it is the Christ way indeed it is the Christ life not I not I let us pray let us take a moment this Friday evening at the end of this beautiful three months of conference season let us take a moment to pray and reflect take the retrospective view now

what did God say to you the first week and then was it the third or the fourth week you really had a message from the Lord think about that in prayer for a moment perhaps it was the beginning of this week or the end of last week tonight God has shown you that the thing that is hindering the fruit bearing must go self pity self desire self will selfishness self love let there be a clean cut oh God by thy grace I want to cut it

clean now all that is not of thee and of thy son in my heart Lord cut it out so that I can not only be joined to Jesus but that his life might flow through me that by the true vine in me and through me I might bring fruit unto thee now pray that prayer make the decision in the presence of the Lord and say not I there is the cut not I but Christ but Christ there is

the fruit the true vine hear our many prayers oh Lord in heaven thy dwelling place reveal the Lord Jesus to us again and now not only as our saviour and our Lord but as our present life and as the one who through us by his life in us shall bring fruit unto thy name glory to thee and as it were wine to gladden thy heart may the grace of the Lord Jesus thy love our God the fellowship and the enabling of the Holy Spirit be with us all tonight and always until we see his face

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