

Gospel of John (2nd Yr Study 13 of 19, Chap 14 Cont)

by G.W. North

Jesus teaches that he is the true vine, and those who abide in him will bear much fruit, while those who do not will be taken away.

Duration: 58:52

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of staying busy for God and seeking wisdom from the ways of ants. The sermon is a continuation of the teachings of Jesus in the upper room, specifically focusing on the concept of being a true branch of the vine. The speaker highlights the need for believers to go through the cross and the grave in order to be of use to God. The sermon concludes with a reference to John 14:31 and a call to be in the will of God.

Transcript

Into thy holy presence, Lord. God, help us at all times to remember the God holy, holy, holy. And hear, thou art preparing us to live in thy presence, Lord, for ever and for ever.

And the things of this world won't exist. We do bless thee, Father, for the way thou dost save us, win us, sanctify us from this world. We should be a people distinct unto thee.

Lord, we praise thee, not just for us, but for all thy truly born-again ones, Lord, who live in thy holy presence, in thy consciousness that thou dost give us. Thy known holy presence will us whatever we do, wherever we are, except thou wilt not go, if we go into sin. Therefore, Lord, we pray thee, in thy great love, who had thine own son slain for us, who teaches the solemnity as well as the joy of belonging to thee.

Keep us, we pray thee, enable us, Lord, to think right and to understand right. And we ask thee, Father, for nothing more than thyself being with us shall be all in all to us this day. Amen.

We'll turn to that 15th chapter of John's Gospel. Now, I'm way behind schedule. Always am.

It's my constant complaint. There's not time enough for anything, really, in this world. We'll have to keep busy all the time for God.

And remember too, the old King Solomon said, To people in his days, go to the ant, thou sluggard. Consider her ways, and be wise. If we had the wisdom of ants, we'd do better, apparently.

They're very wise little creatures who can teach us something from their ways that will make us wise. That's so very wonderful, isn't it? But there again, I suppose it comes from the fact that I stored my mind and heart up with all, right through the whole scriptures. I can wander off on those.

So I want to keep on to John with you, beloved, and may the Lord help us. Now you will remember, I hope, that we finished the 14th chapter, or at least we hurried through at the end. Coming into chapter 15, you will understand that this is one continuous teaching of the Lord in that upper room.

So, some of it is just wonderful teaching. You don't need anybody like me or anybody else to teach you because it's so plainly stated. It's right on the surface, and I told you, didn't I, about that wonderful discovery of that tremendous diamond.

It was quite on the surface, nobody had dug for it, and they didn't know, the children, that they were playing with the biggest diamond in the world. They didn't, just didn't know. They played around with it, fooling about.

And you see, we can be like that. And if everybody was to read through the scriptures, just pick up, picking up the precious stones, shall I say, that are on the surface. Well, you don't have to do any digging or cutting or polishing.

In their wonderful first state, they have to be recognized. So, you've done all that, I suppose. Something like that in these following chapters, that is the chapters 15 and 16.

I want to get through them both, so that we can start on Monday, in the will of God, with that marvellous chapter 17. Which, as you will know, though I may remind you of it on Monday, because students are apt to forget, as well as lecturers, is the real Lord's Prayer. They've got it all wrong, you will know that.

It's been systematically taught, wrongly taught, that those words in Matthew, when ye pray, say, Our Father. Now, notice, he said, when you pray, that wasn't the Lord's Prayer, that was the disciple's prayer. I guarantee you, on Sunday morning, they'll say, let's say the Lord's Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is in the 17th chapter of John. And no one but he could have prayed it. How marvellous, then, for us to get to correct our ideas.

We, through slipshod thinking, unquestionable acceptance of statements, that a denomination or a person may say, we accept them, and we never really think about it at all. Thoughtless prayer is useless prayer. So then, we're going to start in John 15, and eventually, giving you a whole weekend to think about it, we're going to start on Monday, in the 17th, being in the will of God.

Alright, you will notice that in the end of 14, the very last verse, that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence. Have you noticed the significance of that one verse? I ought to have ten years studying John's Gospel, would you? Here is the thing, you know, he did not, first of all, go to the cross, or shall I say, put it the other way round, he did not go to the cross, first of all, for you, or for me.

He went for his Father. Why, what I'm going to do now, I want the whole world, he says it, to know that I love the Father. Father wanted him to die on the cross, so that's it, don't blame the Jews, don't blame the Romans particularly, though they have a whole world of blame to bear for it.

It's because Father wanted him to die, and rise again, so that he could have a family of new born children. That's what it was. He does it and did it for the Father's sake, because God wanted a family, of which you could be one, if you fulfil the conditions.

Without fulfilling the conditions, you cannot be a child of God. Tell me all the conditions, have I got, what do I have to do this, I have to do that, I have to do that and all, you don't have to do anything. But if you want to be a child of God, you have to do what the Father tells you.

No rebels in Father's family. You understand this, you might have rebelled against your parents, or someone else, or all kinds of things, and you were dragged up in that sense, never brought up properly, to obey your parents first of all. Self, self, self, and it was to crucify that self, that Jesus went to the cross, not just to take away your sins, not just to shed the precious, precious blood, but to destroy you, that awful self, that you inherited through your parents from the devil.

All right, and this is why Jesus came to us, you must get this plainly in your mind. Understand that, and then you will begin to understand lots of other things that he said and did, you see, and you won't blame those people that slew him years ago, because they didn't slay him. Nobody in this world slew Jesus, he is the unslayable.

You must not think that sin overcame him on the cross. You must not think that the Jews killed him on the cross. You must not think the Romans killed him on the cross.

You must not think that death killed Jesus, it did not. Have I shocked you? Jesus voluntarily laid down his life, three crosses, on this side a terrible man, on that side a terrible man. They were struggling not to die, keep that clear.

They didn't want to die, they were paying the penalty for their crimes. They went to them, because it was the Passover, you must read it, you must read your Bibles properly, you will never know what they teach. You will have to rely on some preacher, or something like that.

They went to one man, he was alive, on the cross, screaming, in terrible pain, so they broke his legs to hasten his death. They went to the other thief on the other side, and did the same with him. And when they came to Jesus, they were staggered out of their minds, he was dead already.

Physically. All he did, was serve the Father. Alright, and when he had finished the task, that God his Father laid upon him, he dismissed his spirit.

The other two people, you won't dismiss your spirit, if and when you die, you will die. But he accomplished the work, God is not a sadist, he just accomplished the work. I have finished the work thou gavest me to do.

And when he, if you like, died, he didn't say, the people listening to see, when his breath is finished. He just dismissed his spirit. He overcame death.

He slew death. That's what makes Paul say, I'll be preaching to you instead of teaching. You've got to get certain principles basic in your thinking.

Alright. And when Paul talked like he talked, he said, I was crucified with Christ. That it was all done for his Father, first of all, who wanted a pure, holy, eternal family.

And then for you, and for me. Now you please yourself what you do about this. Christ did it for you, if you don't accept that death.

And to the world, and to sin, and to all the trickery, and I don't know what's in the world. That's up to you. I press it upon you, that you understand.

He saw what it was all, he said, I was crucified with Christ. I was crucified. He did it for me.

And unless you are a crucified and living person, you don't belong to God. They're the only kind of children he has. Through his one, human, child, Jesus.

Perhaps I ought to have dictated that all to you. But I trust your hearts and minds are wide open. I don't want to have to come and waste my time dictating A, B, C to you.

This is the great thing that you have to understand. So he said, I want the world, verse 31, we haven't even got into the 15th chapter yet. Goodness me.

I want the world to know that I love the Father. And obey his commandments. So I am going to the cross.

That's what he said. Marvellous, isn't it? And you will be of no good to God. Gifted though you may be, talented though you may be, singer, instrument player, got the gift of the gab so you could easily preach, and all this business, you'll be no good to God.

Unless you've been to and through the cross and the grave. You'll be loved by him, he'll plead with you, he'll call you, but whether you respond or not is entirely up to you. Now this is the thing that we start with.

Now he teaches the vine, you see, it's quite logical. You know Jesus, you know his thoughts, you know the way his mind works, and his spirit works. He says, I'm a true vine.

I'm a true vine. And you've got to be one of the true branches. Think of all that I've just said, you've got to be one of the true branches of the vine.

So you judge yourself. And I must judge myself. We've got to come out of the fantasy, that it's in so-called Christianity, in the Christian world today, you've got to come into the reality of the life of God, imparted to you by this way and only by this way.

I am the way, he said in chapter 14. 14, I am the way. I've not just come to show you the way, or to direct you according to a map.

I am the way. If you want to get anywhere with God, you've got to walk me, like I have to walk down from that house this morning. It's so simple, you could teach it in an infant's class.

You've got to walk me. What a marvellous thing. Now he brings this.

God is expecting fruit. That's right. He wants fruit from his Son, from his act of sending his Son into the world, and raising him from the dead, after he had satisfied him with that wonderful death, as it was called.

He departed from his body voluntarily. He never hung there being tortured, tortured, tortured, after he had completed the work that God gave him to do. And everybody was surprised.

How? He ought to be dead. He ought not to be dead. He should be a strong, healthy man, as they would say.

And they'd say, well, you know, when we got to that metal cross, he was dead. He was gone. The other two were struggling, cursing, I don't know what, hanging on to every last breath.

Didn't want to die. They got to face the judgment then. What a tremendous truth.

Now then, here is the very thing that God has. Let's read it. I am the true thyme.

Now that's the statement, first of all, which would have shaken those men. Thought, oh, I thought you were going to rudely, because if I knew you, I wouldn't think you were rude, rudely go up without asking to be excused. Here is the thing.

They heard this, I am the true thyme. Do you know why? Because Israel, of which they were part, thought they were the vine of God. In fact, they would point you back to Isaiah, which I'm sure you're familiar with, that wonderful fifth chapter of Isaiah, where you're told God's complaining, really, to Israel.

He said, he took a vine out of Egypt, planted it in a vineyard, would you say that's on the blink? And they thought they were a vine. They were the vine, you see. But Jesus says, I am the true thyme.

Thank you. So, I am the true vine, not Israel. And you know that Israel has two symbols.

You know that, don't you? The vine and the fig tree. The fig tree is their worldly standing, you know. The vine was supposed to be their spiritual standard.

All right? A bit of information, perhaps, that you already knew, I have reminded you of. So, he says this, I am the true thyme. I want you to know that Israel, whatever you want to call them these days, not bring you forth fruit unto God, except that there are many Jews now, and they're called messianic, or something like that.

They've turned to Christ. Many Jews. Wonderful.

It's just as wonderful as many Englishmen, or Frenchmen, or whatever you happen to be. The thing is, turn to the Lord. I'm not going to discuss that.

I'm just talking to you right from here, so that you and me have the correct picture in our mind. Now, he says, I'm the true vine. My father is the husbandman.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he takes away. Now, that should have killed the die-hard, Calvinistic place you might have been holding in your mind. I don't know.

Because they say, once saved, always saved, if you're in the vine, and that's it, whatever you do be, and all that. But God said that branches are broken off the vine, and that's it. Keep that clear.

Because you might have been brought up in the very Arminian position of, once saved, always saved, don't matter what your law, say today, lost tomorrow, kind of thing. That's a bit of a jive. They don't quite preach that.

But still, that's the thing. Of course, you can get saved again. Oh, dear old, dear old, dear beloved, you just believe what Jesus said.

My father is the husband, I am the vine, and my father takes away. The branches in me that don't bear fruit. Now you look at me eyeball to eyeball, now will you? Because I'm saying that to you, and you, and you, you, you, you, all of you.

You have to bear fruit, not starve, keep living your life on hopes of going to heaven when you die. This is the thing, this is the gospel. What fruit have you borne, and still are bearing? Which is obviously the fruit of the vine.

Jesus faced them up with it, you see. You've got to be faced up to truth, beloved. What to do with doctrinal stuff you may have been fed from the beginning.

Oh, you've got to have some kind of doctrine. By the way, you know, if you were in a university, they would take these problems, and they would say, we will study the theory, say, of kinetic energy, or something like that. If it's, you go to a seminary, a college, a church, they call it the doctrine.

Say, we will study this doctrine. Same thing in technical language. But it isn't knowledge of the laws that govern it, and there are laws of governing, as we shall see in this fifteenth chapter.

There are laws of fruit bearing. Got to be. A branch in me, he says, is going to be broken off if it doesn't bear fruit.

Oh. There's not a lazy bone in Jesus Christ. You understand.

For an unfruitful branch of him, for branches are in the vine, and you do know that the stalk, the vine, the main stem, never has fruit on it. Did you know that? The fruit is only born on the branches. The branches have to bear the fruit.

He gives life unto the branches, so we say, he's bearing fruit. Wonderful, isn't it? That's all plain to you, isn't it? This is what it is. Now let me read through, and I'll emphasize some things.

Here they go. Every branch, every branch, including a branch named North, you understand, though I'm not called that in heaven. I don't think he called me South either.

Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. They don't die. He takes them away.

And every branch that beareth fruit, he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now that's the evidence. Do you know why I realized way back in my life that I needed God to do a great big thing in me called baptism in the Holy Spirit or fullness of the Holy Spirit, because I'd never led a soul to Christ.

I knew that. Oh, I could preach. I could put words together.

I could do all this, and I was brought up to sort of learn Bible texts from my youth. Three years of age, I think, talk about this, three years ago, I remember standing on a platform in a Sunday school where I

attended, and I could say the Bible alphabet. Three.

I could repeat it. Yeah. You see, A, listen, I'll give you the A and B anyway.

I'll give you the C and also, listen, listen, a soft A, we say, A, a soft answer turneth away. B, but foolish words stir up anger. C, come unto me.

I'm quoting from three years of age. Were you given that privilege? Or did some stupid person give you a sand tray or something? Or did you do painting? The church is all going to pieces, beloved. Only here and there do you find the people that are concerned to ground you into scriptures from your earliest age.

Only here and there. And this is the big thing for us to get there. He purges, purges, that they bring forth more fruit.

Now you're clean through the word that I have spoken unto you. Abide in me. Correction, it's your thinking, if you like, and I in you.

Don't abide in me in heaven. You abide in me in you. Oh, if he isn't in you, it's no good you dreaming about heaven.

That's the wonderful thing. He says it here, it's in the book. No fiddling, no denominational emphasis or conjuring.

You were in that upper room. You remember I said that was the day I would have chosen, if I'd had my choice. You're in that upper room with him.

You're hearing it from his own lips. My father will take you away if you don't abide in me. But this abiding is I in you.

That's the one that Jesus, you have to abide in. He has to be in you. And you are to abide in him in you.

Oh, wonderful isn't it. It's true. It's right out of his own mouth.

You don't have to conjure with it and bring up some sort of theological idea out of your head almost to combat it. You've got another. God's very interested in you.

And me, of course, by his grace. See, now you are clean, verse 3, through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in me.

So you've got to produce it of yourself because you are abiding in him. You don't bring forth fruit through another. You've got to be yourself.

I am the vine. I am the vine. Not you.

You are the branches. You are just a branch of the vine. All right.

Oh, it is so wonderful. He that abideth in me, remember, and I in him, the emphasis is again, that's the I you have to abide in, the I am in you. In you.

Or is it somebody who just goes to a building once a week to worship? What is this thing you've got hold of? Jesus Christ was the human life of the divine life, of the eternal life, the exposition of it, the display of it.

That's it, him. So glorious.

Oh, I am the vine. You are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.

For without me you could do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into a fire that burns. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, it doesn't say the Bible, my words, the words I have spoken.

Beloved, you've got to know this New Testament. You might know Isaiah, you might know Moses, you might know all the other people, you might know David, especially the 23rd Psalm, the Lord my shepherd, and so on and so on, my words. So it doesn't matter what Moses said, oh yes, of course.

This is. Is Jesus Christ the speaking, Jesus Christ in you? This is what's called communion. It's so tremendous.

You've got to live. Cheap talk, when people talk about discipleship, often, that's the way you'll be my disciples. John only used this word disciples three times.

The others were full of it. Disciples this, disciples that, and you read it, Matthew, Mark and Luke. John only used the word three times.

He never once used the word apostle. Never. He knew they were only trainee apostles, during the Lord's life on the earth.

It's so glorious, beloved. Oh, if you love me, and my words. Does he speak to you? I didn't even say, except the New Testament abides in you.

My words. So you are, if you're a child of God, are you telling me you're in constant communion and communication with him? Does he speak to you? In here. I suppose Derek has taken this with you in the past, but there were a group of people called the quietists.

And they taught, and they were wonderful people. The Quakers in England became, were really quietists. Madame Guillaume, you've heard of Madame Guillaume, you've read her books, haven't you? Yes, she was a quietist.

These people that had this blessed, quiet, inward, glorious, eyeball-to-eyeball, mouth-to-mouth contact with God. Oh, I'm talking about the seeing of faith, of course, and the hearing of faith. When this is the true Christian life, what it is, come before, it's not in noise, it's not in instruments, it's not in organs, whatever you want, it's not in that.

What should be aides to worship have sometimes become the enemies of worship. And Madame Guillaume wrote wonderful hymns. You should read her works, if you haven't, behind the 14-foot-thick walls of the Bastille in France.

She loved God, she loved him. And they used to speak about, in their times, of persecution, of course they were persecuted, even by men who ought to have known differently. She used to just quietly talk about turning in Well, I invite you, every one of you, this morning, to turn in.

What do you find in there? What is this voice that whispers through your brain, your mind? What is it? It'll either be your life, like sep, is the life in the vine, or your death. This is the marvellous thing you've got to know. So that if you could be shut in a cell, I was reading, or looking at, trying to read some of the works of one of those men yesterday, but I couldn't speak his language.

But you know, he talked to me. You say, what? Oh, yes. And in would sweet communion with those whose rest is won.

Are you in that? Time for six minutes. Let us go on, beloved, but I do plead with you to take into your heart that if you don't bear the Jesus fruit, you will be plucked away from the vine. The Father will take you away and you will still call yourself a Christian or something.

That's the big thing, beloved. And the fruit, of course, is not souls being one, that is fruit in another area. The fruit is, listen, is listed for you by Paul in his fifth gospel, I keep saying, in the fifth gospel, as love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, self-control.

You never lose your temper, do you? Self-control is a fruit. Sometimes they say to me, don't you ever lose your temper? Oh, I said, I lost it about 50, 60 years ago and it's never come back. It's real, this salvation.

It's real. The things God exalts you to, He has already accomplished in a human being called Jesus of Nazareth. And it's exactly that kind of life, it is that life, that is imparted to you and me.

That's what it is. In case you know, because you may not be a world traveler or even anything to go be a big preacher man and give appeals and people respond. You say, look at the fruit of my visits, or something like that.

But you can produce sweet grapes for the Father. You like grapes, don't you? So does God. These kinds of.

And you and I have to produce. You're not a snappy, nasty, your temper's dictated by your physical state or something. Oh, I've got a bad head this morning.

Get out of the way. That kind of thing. And everyone says, oh, she's got a bad head.

You know, she's got plenty of trials and difficulties. You see, no, no. If God can't save us from difficulties in our personal makeup, you see, as well as from sins, it's really not much good to us, is it? He's got to produce his Son in you.

That's what it's all about. And how wonderful. Now listen to this.

If you abide in me, now you just think of this, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will. What you will. And it shall be done unto you here in this.

My Father glorified. Have you properly, ever properly read this fifteenth chapter of John? My word. The prospects of this, beloved, oh, you'll really be a child of God then.

You really will. Pleasing your Father, he says, I'm going what I do. Remember the last word of that fourteenth chapter, shouldn't be in the chapter divisions, you'll get tired of me saying this.

He said, as the Father gave me commandment, I'm going to do it. Even so, I do. Arise, let's go.

He said, Even so, Arise, so, Arise, Even so, I do. let's Even so, do. Let's make a new creation.

It's reversed. Make the earth first, then we'll fit for man to live in, OK? Then we'll prepare men to live in. He is preparing men and women and has been doing so from that first Easter morning, when the Holy Ghost came and prepared them and by filling the wall with the Holy Ghost, that they could live in that great new creation.

That's what it's about. Don't ascend to it in your mind, though it's good to do that, but with all your heart say, Oh, praise God, this is the thing. Don't be like I used to be when I used to have to learn when I went to school how to swim.

I'm not a good swimmer. I can swim all right, but I'm not one of these great swimmers. Whereas other boys in my class, they used to go, whoo, in.

I used to stand on my back like that and test the water and often slumped back into my little cabin. I've always been a cold man. I'm colder than my name.

Here is the tremendous thing to get hold of. Plunge in, beloved. Plunge in.

I hate the first few seconds of getting into a shower, even, then I turned up ever so hot and said, who had the temperature this heat? That was me. You see, beloved, this is what it's about. I only gave up a bath because I fell in it twice when I had the stroke and so I had to buy one of those horrible things called a shower.

But here you are, beloved, and here you must understand. Don't be so human. And don't guide it by your neighbour or what your family does.

You are important and you've got to plunge right in, That is I'm never going to get through, am I? My ambition for Monday morning fades. But here's the great truth, beloved, get it right into you. If you don't abide in Christ's Son, Daughter, whoever you are, no matter what you call yourself, where you come from, or where you think you're going, if you do not abide in Christ, you'll get precisely nowhere.

Significantly, they use this word burning. You'll be burned, that's all. Oh, it's so great, beloved.

If you keep my commandments, and only if ye shall abide in my love, even as I kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love, these things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. That's where you should rejoice, that Christ is abiding in you. Not, I'm going to heaven when you die, get it out of your thinking.

It's what you are now that will decide what you will be then. And this is the big thing for us that this is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. So now you can gauge how much people enjoy the love of God by how they do or do not love you.

That's how you can gauge. You don't judge. Nothing to do with judging, you just simply know or else you've got nothing up here.

How marvelous it is, greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends, if and only if, keep it there, you do whatsoever I command you. Oh, but Jesus loves me.

But you haven't got the right reciprocal love, unless you accept his commandments in your life. I ought to stop and give you some illustrations of this. I suppose none of you are really understanding what I'm saying, or perhaps all of you are, I don't know.

But here's the thing, you have to obey. God is not pestering you all day, he's not that kind, he'd be more like a devil. The devil drives you, God leads you.

You perceive this, beloved, you're only his friends, if you do what he commands you. Henceforth I call you not servants, for a servant knoweth not but his Lord doeth. But I have called you friends, for all things I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

You haven't chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go, he doesn't say which fruit should remain. For whatsoever you should ask of my Father in my name, he may give it you. Now, beloved, that's all so tremendous, isn't it? You can't stand still, dear Christian.

You know, a grapevine cannot produce its fruit unless it sends out branches that go, and go, and go. And as they go, the branches, not just one bunch, because it went a little way, you've got to go. Going and growing are simultaneously.

Going and growing and producing are simultaneous. That's it. Hallelujah.

Now don't suddenly get a fit in your head that you're going to go and live in China or something like that. That's not what I'm talking about. May God bless us.

Apologies to my dear friend, she must have some Eastern blood in her. But this is the thing, and she will undoubtedly go home, but you know what I'm talking about. Don't get these terrible things into your head.

Just be simple, just abide, just grow and produce fruit. I warn you, the Father will break you off if you don't. Jesus said so.

Cup of tea, please. You can all break for five minutes.

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