

I Am the True Vine, and My Father Is the husbandman.' John 15:1-17

by R.A. Torrey

R.A. Torrey's sermon emphasizes the importance of abiding in Christ to bear fruit, experience fullness of joy, and maintain a vibrant prayer life.

Scripture: John 15:1

Topics: "Abiding in Christ", "Fruitfulness"

Description

R.A. Torrey emphasizes the vital relationship between Christ and His disciples, illustrating that Jesus is the true vine and the Father is the husbandman who nurtures the branches. He explains that abiding in Christ is essential for bearing fruit, which is the evidence of true discipleship, and that this relationship brings fullness of joy through obedience to His commandments. Torrey highlights the importance of cleansing through the Word and the necessity of remaining connected to Christ to experience spiritual vitality and effective prayer. The sermon encourages believers to reflect on their connection to Christ and the fruitfulness that results from abiding in Him.

Transcript

DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Abundance of Fruit by Abiding in Christ, vv. 1-8 Under what figure did Jesus set forth His relation to His disciples? What is the central thought of this figure? What is the relation of the Father to the vine and its branches? How, then, do we come under the Father's especial care and training? What kind of care will such an husbandman bestow upon the vine and its branches? Why did Jesus say He was the "true" Vine? (Ps. 80:8.) Is it by being united with the Church that we have life?

How is the life and nature and power of the vine manifested to the world? How is the life and nature and power of Christ manifested to the world? What is the distinguishing characteristic of a true branch? What is the distinguishing characteristic of a true disciple of Christ (v. 8)? What is the fruit? (Gal. 5:22; Phil. 1:11; 1 John 2:6; Ro. 1:13; Col. 1:10 and vv. 8, 16.) Who is the final judge as to whether we bear fruit or not? (Ro. 14:4.) Ought we to judge ourselves? (1 Cor. 11:31.)

What is done with the branch that bears no fruit (vv. 2, 16)? Does this branch that bears no fruit and is taken away represent a real disciple or one who has merely an outward and no vital connection with

Christ? (v. 8; Matt. 7:20.) If we bear fruit, what then? For what purpose does He cleanse us? What, then, may we expect in regard to our fruitfulness as we remain under the care of the wise husbandman? Is this cleansing process always agreeable? When we shrink from it, with what thought ought we to strengthen and comfort ourselves?

How then ought we to regard it? How is this cleansing principally effected (vv. 2, 3, R. V.)? If, then, we desire the largest measure of fruitfulness, with what should we bring our lives in constant contact? Has God any other way of cleansing the branch in order to increase its fruitfulness than by the Word? (Heb. 12:6, 11.) Why does God sometimes resort to this severe mode of purging the branch? What did Jesus mean by saying "already ye are clean" (R. V.)? Was there no cleansing still to be done? (Compare c. 13:10, 11.)

What is the one essential condition of fruitfulness (vv. 4, 5)? What does the word "abide" mean (v. 16; compare Authorized and Revised Version)? What does "abide in Me" mean? Is this merely a privilege? Can we do it? What is absolutely necessary, if we are to bear fruit? Does the branch receive its life from the vine and then go away and bear fruit by itself? Can we? How much fruit shall we bear apart from Christ? Why is it so many of us are unfruitful? To what extent shall we bear fruit?

What will result to the extent we try to live independently of Him (think our own thoughts and carry out our own purposes)? How is this abiding, vital union with Christ maintained? (vv. 7, 10; 1 John 2:24, R. V.; 3:24, R. V.) When we abide in Him, what does He do (v. 5)? What is the inevitable result if we abide in Him and He in us? What, then, is the sole condition of fruitfulness? Are not education and natural gifts also necessary for "much fruitfulness"? Which will bring forth the most fruit for God, the uneducated, untalented man who abides in Christ, or the educated, talented man who does not abide in Christ?

How much fruit will every one who abides in Him bring forth? How much apart from him? What, then, is the all-important question for each of us to put to himself? Does God expect "much fruit" from each of us? How much? (John 14:12, 13.) Is there any other doom besides that of unfruitfulness awaiting the one who does not abide in Christ? Is this thought of the necessity of continuance found elsewhere in the New Testament? (Matt. 24:13; Acts 13:43; 14:22; Ro. 2:7; 11:22; Col. 1:23; 1 Tim. 2:15; 4:16; 2 Tim. 3:14; Heb. 3:14; 8:9; James 1:25.)

Will the doom indicated in v. 6 overtake anyone who ever really was in Christ? (1 John 2:19.) What is the proof that we really are in Him? Are there any tendencies at work to draw us away from Him? How are they overcome? (Luke 24:40, 46; Ps. 119:11.) What else results from abiding in Christ (v. 7)? What can we ask? What will be the result? Suppose our prayer is not according to God's will? Is there any connection between this power in prayer resulting from abiding in Christ mentioned in v. 7 and the fruitfulness resulting from abiding in Christ mentioned in v. 5? (Compare c. 14:12, 13, 14.)

What is the one great condition of prevailing prayer? (Compare 1 John 3:22, 24.) What will be the result as regards God of our abiding in Christ and consequently bearing much fruit? Is that much of an inducement to fruitfulness? (1 Cor. 6:20; Matt. 5:16; Phil. 1:11; 1 Peter 2:12.) Why is God glorified by our fruitfulness (v. 1)? What will be the result as regards ourselves? (Compare John 8:31.) What does "disciple" mean? Why will a true disciple of Christ seek to glorify God? (John 17:4.) 2.

Fullness of Joy by Keeping Christ's Commandments, vv. 9-16 What did Jesus tell those who were abiding in Him that His feeling toward them was? (v. 9, R. V.; compare Matt. 3:17; John 17:23.) Does Christ love His disciples only? Is the peculiar love He bears toward His disciples worth having? How are we to show

our appreciation of it? (v. 9; compare Jude 21.) If we are truly His, will we not abide in it? Wherein, then, is the need of bidding us to abide in it? How can we continue in that love (v. 10)?

Of what is our keeping His commandments a proof? (c. 14:21, 23, 24.) If we wish to continue in His love what must we do? What does disobedience do? Is there as much blessing in obeying the commandments as in appropriating the promises? What was Christ's purpose in saying all this? What joy did He wish them to have? What does "My joy" mean? (Compare c. 14:27.) Is that as good as the world's joy? What was His joy? (c. 4:34.) What would be the result of their having His joy? Where, then, can we get fullness of joy?

Can we get it anywhere else? What is Christ's commandment which we must keep if we would abide in Him and have fullness of joy (v. 12)? What is the measure of the love He requires of us? (v. 12, R. V.; compare John 10:18.) What does He mean by saying "this is My commandment"? (compare 1 John 3:23.) What was the supreme proof of Christ's love (v. 13)? Are we to show ours in the same way? (1 John 3:16.) Suppose there is no call for that manifestation of our love, how, then, shall we show it? (1 John 3:17.)

Is it not greater love to lay down our life for our enemies? Is it a privilege to be a friend of Jesus? (compare James 2:23.) What is necessary in order to become His friend (v. 14)? Do what? (Matt. 12:50.) Why did He call them friends (v. 15)? If we wish to enjoy the same confidence of Christ, what must we do? (Compare 5:14 and Ps. 25:14.) What would Jesus no longer call them? What is the difference between a servant and a friend? (v. 15; compare Gen. 18:17; Jas. 2:23.) Did the disciples no longer call themselves servants? (James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; Rev. 1:1.)

Is it not an honor to be His servants? What higher honor is ours? With which of the two parties did this intimate relation between Christ and His disciples begin? (v. 16; compare 1 John 4:19.) What sort of persons are we when He chooses us? Were they chosen, or "elected," merely to salvation (v. 16)? Is there any "election" to salvation set forth in the Scriptures, separate from election to holiness and service? (1 Peter 1:12; Ro. 8:29.) What is the proof that a man is "one of the elect"? (2 Peter 1:10; see context.)

How many of His disciples had He appointed to bear fruit? What was the character of the fruit they were to bear (v. 16, R. V.)? How abide? (Compare c. 4:36.) What word precedes the "and bear fruit"? Why is it, then, that many do not bear fruit? What would be the result of going and bearing fruit? How often is this promise found in Christ's last discourse? (c. 14:13, 14; 16:23.) Why did Jesus repeat it so often? Do men believe it even yet? CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

1. God (1). Titles: The Father, 1, 8, 10, 15; My Father, 9, 16; the Husbandmen, 1. (2). What He does: Takes away fruitless branches, 2; cleanses fruitless branches, 2, R. V.; cleanses fruitful branches through Christ's word, 3; loves the Son, 9; continues to love the Son because the Son keeps His commandments, 10. (3). His glory: The aim of all true disciples, 8; manifested in the fruitfulness of Christ's disciples, 8. 2. Jesus Christ (1). Title: The true Vine, 1. (2). What He enjoys: His Father's unchanging love, 9, 10; fullness of joy, 11. (3).

What He does: Keeps His Father's commandments, 10; abides in His father's love, 10; loves His disciples even as the Father hath loved Him, 9; chooses His disciples before they choose Him, 16; abides in those who abide in Him, 4, 5; abides in those who let His word abide in them, 7; produces all the fruit in those who abide in Him, 5; cleanses by His word those who abide in Him, 3; desires His joy to be in His disciples, 11; desires His disciples to have fullness of joy, 11; calls His disciples not servants but friends, 15; makes confidants of His disciples (tells them all the Father has told Him), 15; lays down His life for His friends, 13. (4).

His relation to His disciples the same as His Father's relation to Him: Loves them even as the Father hath loved Him, 9, R. V.; they are to obey Him even as He obeys the Father, 10, R. V.; they are to abide in His love even as He abides in the Father's love, 10, R. V.; they are to love one another even as He had loved them, 12, R. V. (5). The things that belong to Christ: "My Father," 1, 8, 10, 15; "My disciples," 8; "My friends," 14; "My name," 16; "My commandments," 10, 12; "My words," 7; "My love," 9; "My joy," 11. 3.

Abiding in Christ (1). The solemn duty: It is commanded, 4. (2). The imperative necessity: Unless we do, no fruit, 4; unless we do, we shall be cast forth, 6; unless we do, we shall wither, 6; unless we do, we shall be burned, 6. (3). The blessed results: He will abide with us, 4; we shall bring forth much fruit, 5; we shall prevail in prayer, 7; we shall abide in Christ's love, 9, 10; we shall have Christ's joy in us, 11; we shall have fullness of joy, 11. (4). The simple method: Let His words abide in you, 7 (compare 1 John 2:24); keep His commandments, 10 (compare 1 John 3:24, R.

V.). 4. True Disciples of Christ (1). Titles: Branches, 5; friends, 14, 15. (2). What is done for them: Christ abides in them, 4; the Father cleanses them that they may bring forth more fruit, 2; Christ cleanses them by His word, 3; their prayers are answered, 7. (3). What they must do: Abide in Christ, 4; continue in Christ's love, 9; love one another as Christ loved them, 12; do whatsoever Christ commands them, 14; "Go," 16; bring forth fruit, 16; ask of the Father in Christ's name, 16; glorify God, 8. (4).

What they have: Christ's abiding love, 9, 10; Christ's abounding joy, 11; Christ's perfect knowledge, 15; power in prayer, 7, 16; Christ's implicit confidence, 15. 5. Fruit-Bearing (1). What it is: The proof of discipleship, 8; the condition of escaping destruction, 2, 6; the basis of prevailing prayer, 7, 16; the demand of God upon Christ's disciples, 2; the way to glorify God, 8. (2). Conditions of increased fruitfulness: Cleansing especially through the Word, 2, 3. 6. Obedience (1).

The true kind: Entire, 14. (2). Its requirements: "Love one another, even as I have loved you," 12. (3). Its results: Makes us friends of Jesus, 14; brings us full disclosures of what He has learned of His Father, 14, 15; brings Christ's joy to us, 11; brings fullness of joy to us, 11; brings the abiding enjoyment of His love, 10. 7. Prayer (1). Condition of prevailing prayer: To the Father, 16; in Jesus' name, 16; abiding in Christ, 7; Christ's word abiding in us, 7; "Go" where He sends, 16; bear fruit, 16. (2). What it gets: Whatsoever we ask, 16, or will, 7.

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