

Fruitful Branches

Description

[RG AUDIO 041912](#) John 15:1-8

Jesus says that he is the vine. The disciples as branches have no independent life apart from the vine. Unlike a tree, which has a large trunk at the bottom and smaller limbs at the top, a vine cannot be easily divided that way. A vine in its entirety is a single, continuous entity. Jesus himself is the entire vine.

The disciples as branches are part of the communal life of Christ. This is similar to Paul's description of the church as the body of Christ. To be fruitful, a disciple must participate in the communal life of the vine, the church of Jesus Christ.

To make a branch more fruitful, the vinedresser must prune it from time to time. The Greek word for prune is related to the word for cleanse. Jesus says that it is his word that prunes and cleanses the disciples and makes them fruitful. And what exactly is the fruit that a disciple is called to produce? It is not so much a list of accomplishments as it is the fruit of Christlikeness.

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