

John 15:1-6, “Abiding in Christ”

Last Sunday: Peace with God, Peace of God, Peace with One Another

Today: Abiding in Christ. The term “abide” is used fifteen times in the first ten verses of John 15. This section of John is profound, yet difficult to understand.

We will also study the seventh and final “I am” statement of Jesus: “I am the true vine.”

1. “I am the bread of life” (Jn. 6:35).
2. “I am the light of the world” (Jn. 8:12).
3. “I am the door of the sheep” (Jn. 10:7).
4. “I am the good shepherd” (Jn. 10:11).
5. “I am the resurrection and the life” (Jn. 11:25).
6. “I am the way, and the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6).

15:2a/ “Every branch in me that does not bear fruit...” What does fruit include?

- Repentance and obedience to the Lord (Jn. 3, 15:10)
- Loving one another (Jn. 15:10, 12)
- Our witness to the world (Jn. 15:16, 27)
- Fruit of the Spirit: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Ga. 5:22-23).

15:2a/ “He takes away” - αἶρω (airó). This phrase has one of three meanings:

1. Believers can lose their salvation. That view does not square with the rest of John.
 - a. Jn. 6:47, “He who believes has eternal life.”
 - b. Jn. 10:28, “I give them eternal life, and they will never perish...”
2. He takes away – These are false believers who profess Christ, but do not possess Christ.
 - a. Mt. 3:8, 10, “Bear fruit in keeping with repentance ... Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”
 - b. 2 Jn. 9, “Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.”
3. He lifts up – Can be translated this way; these are believers not producing good works.
 - a. Jn. 17:1, “He lifted up his eyes...” (Both meanings for αἶρω are found in John.)
 - b. The way a vinedresser lifts up a drooping branch to give it more sunlight or air

15:2b/ “He prunes that it may bear more fruit...” How does Christ prune (or cleanse) us?

1. Through the Word of God, Eph. 5:26, “Having cleansed her by the washing of water

with the word...”

2. Through trials, James 1:2-4. Ps. 119:71, “It was good for me to be afflicted...”
3. A combined view? How to be a good theologian by Martin Luther (Ps. 119):
 - a. Oratio (prayer)
 - b. Meditatio (meditation on the Word of God)
 - c. Tentatio (trials, temptations)