

Message Two
The Son's Vine

Scripture Reading: John 15:1-17

I. The Son's vine is the organism of the Triune God in the divine economy to grow with His riches and express His life through the bearing of fruit—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9; John 15:1, 5a:

- A. The function of the true vine as a sign of the Son is for the Triune God to have an organism in the Son for His multiplication, spreading, and glorification in His divine life—vv. 8, 16.
- B. God the Father as the husbandman is the source and the founder; God the Son is the center, the embodiment, and the manifestation; God the Spirit is the reality and realization; and the branches are the Body, the corporate expression—vv. 1, 4-5, 26:
 - 1. All that the Father is and has is embodied in Christ the Son and then realized in the Spirit as the reality—16:13-15.
 - 2. All that the Spirit has is wrought into us, the branches, to be expressed and testified through us; in this way the processed Triune God is expressed, manifested, and glorified in the church—Eph. 3:16-21.

II. As the branches of the true vine, we are the multiplication of Christ, the duplication of Christ, the spreading of Christ, and the enlargement of Christ—John 15:4-5, 16:

- A. When we believed into the Lord Jesus, He branched into us, and we became branches in Him—3:15.
- B. The vine is everything to the branches; from the vine and through the vine, we receive everything that we need to live as branches—15:4.
- C. Christ as the vine does everything through the branches; without Him we can do nothing, and without us He can do nothing—v. 5.
- D. The branches are for the bearing of fruit to express the riches of the Father's life in the divine dispensing—vv. 8, 16.
- E. By practicing the God-ordained way to carry out the divine economy, we fulfill our destiny as branches to go forth and bear fruit—v. 16.

III. As branches of the Son's vine, we need to abide in the vine—vv. 4-5:

- A. Our abiding in Christ as the vine depends on seeing a clear vision that we are branches in the vine; once we see that we are branches in the vine, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord—v. 2.
- B. Apart from the vine, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing—v. 5b.
- C. Only when the branches abide in the vine can the vine be everything to them.
- D. To abide in the Lord is to be one spirit with Him, that is, to live in the mingled spirit—1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit—mingled together as one spirit—v. 17; Rom. 8:4.

2. The union of God and man is a union of the two spirits, the Spirit of God and the spirit of man; the union of these two spirits is the deepest mystery in the Bible—1 Cor. 2:11-14.
3. The focus of God's economy is the mingled spirit, the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit; whatever God intends to do or accomplish is related to this focus—Eph. 3:9, 5; 1:17; 2:22; 4:23; 5:18; 6:18:
 - a. By being one spirit with the Lord, we can experience Him as the all-inclusive One, taking Him as everything to us—1 Cor. 1:2, 24, 30; 2:7, 10; 3:11; 5:7-8; 10:3-4; 11:3; 12:12; 15:20, 47, 45.
 - b. When we are one spirit with the Lord, we enjoy the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord—1:9.
4. To be proper Christians, we must know that the Lord Jesus today as the embodiment of the Triune God is the Spirit indwelling our spirit and mingled with our spirit as one spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.

IV. When we abide in Christ as the true vine, we have the church life—1:2, 9, 30; 6:17; 12:27:

- A. We can have the church life only by living in the mingled spirit—in Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our spirit; we should remain in this mingled spirit for the church life—15:45b; 6:17; 1:2; 12:27.
- B. The branches are one with the vine and with one another—John 17:11, 21-23.
- C. The church life is a life of loving one another in the life of Christ, in the love of Christ, and in the commission of Christ—15:12, 16-17; Eph. 4:16; 5:2.
- D. When we abide in Christ as the true vine, we participate in the wonderful fellowship among the co-branches—John 15:4-5; 1 John 1:3-7:
 1. The inner life of all the branches is one, and this life should continually circulate through all the branches—vv. 2-3.
 2. Such a fellowship must be unique because Christ is unique; it forbids any division among the members of His unique Body—Acts 2:42; 1 John 1:3; 1 Cor. 12:27:
 - a. This fellowship involves not only the oneness between us and the Triune God but also the oneness among all the believers—John 17:21-23; Eph. 4:3.
 - b. The church life is the fellowship, the communion, the co-participation, the mutual enjoyment of Christ—1 Cor. 1:9.
 3. In the New Testament, fellowship describes the flowing both between us and the Lord and between us and one another—1 John 1:3; Phil. 2:1:
 - a. The flow, the current, that we have in our spiritual fellowship involves both oneness and life; our fellowship is a flow of oneness.
 - b. This fellowship is the reality of the church life—1 Cor. 1:9, 2.
 4. All the local churches are one Body, and within this Body there is the circulation of the divine life—v. 2; 4:17; 7:17; 11:16; 14:33; 16:1; 12:27; Eph. 4:4.
 5. The one circulation, the universal fellowship, of the divine life in the Body brings all the members of the Body into oneness; all the local churches should remain in this unique fellowship—Col. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 10:16.