

**III. MANIFESTATIONS OF CHRIST'S POWER IN
PRIVATE MINISTRY
JOHN 15**

**C. THINGS WHICH JESUS SHARED WITH HIS DISCIPLES ON THE WAY TO THE
GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE**

1. First of all, the Lord Jesus shared with them the kind of relationship they needed to have with Him(15:1-11).
 - a. The Lord Jesus used the metaphor of a vine and it's branches to illustrate the importance of maintaining a constant relationship with Him (1).
 - b. He said every branch (believer) in Him that didn't bear fruit the Vinedresser (the Father) taketh away (2). This seems to indicate that fruitless believers will be taken out of this world (physical death) as a vinedresser would cut off branches that do not produce.
 - c. Jesus said every branch or believer that beareth fruit the Vinedresser purgeth or cleanses so that he will produce "more" fruit (2). This process in the believer's life is carried out through the cleansing and convicting power of God's Word as well as through trials and chastenings. Note Heb. 4:12; 12:11; Jn. 17:17; James 1:2,4.
 - d. Jesus said His disciples were now clean "because of" the Word which He had spoken to them (3). This no doubt referred to their justification as well as sanctification which had come when they had believed on Him. Note this truth is revealed earlier(Jn. 13:10).
 - e. Jesus then commanded His disciples to abide in Him. (4). He said as a branch can't bear fruit unless it remains in a vine, a believer couldn't bear fruit unless he remains in fellowship with the Lord.
 - f. Jesus then pointed out the results of staying in fellowship with Him (5). They would bring forth "much fruit." He mentioned also why this was necessary – they couldn't produce.
 - g. Next the Lord Jesus pointed out the results of not staying in fellowship with Him (6). Such believers would be cast forth as branches and consumed. This seems to follow a parallel of what happened to the unfruitful Israelites who were called God's vine in the O. T. (Ezek. 15:1-7)
 - h. Jesus stated if they would stay in fellowship with Him their prayers would be answered (7).

- i. Jesus said if they stayed in fellowship they would bear much fruit and this would glorify the Father(8). This would also demonstrate to whom they belonged. This example was later demonstrated in Acts 11:26.
 - j. Notice in verses 9, 10 Jesus shared with His disciples how they could abide in His love as He had abode in His Father's love – it is by keeping His commandments.
 - k. Finally Jesus told them that abiding in Him or staying in fellowship would produce fullness of joy (11). Believers in fellowship with the Lord are happy and joyful. Unhappy believers are those out of fellowship with the Lord.
2. Secondly, the Lord Jesus shared with them the kind of relationship they needed to have with one another (15:12-17).
- a. They were commanded to love one another as He had loved them (12). This involved a sacrificial love (Rom. 5:8).
 - b. Jesus said the greatest demonstration of love was for a man to die for his friends (13).
 - c. Jesus then referred to His disciples as His friends (14,15). He then pointed out the difference between being mere servants and being friends. He had shared with them the most intimate things in His life.
 - d. He then told them why He had chosen them and reiterated His command for them to love one another (16-17). The fruit may mean the graces of the Christian life such as righteous conduct (Rom. 6:21,22; Phil. 1:11) or character produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22,23) or it may also refer to converts won to Christ (Rom. 1:13).
3. Thirdly, the Lord Jesus shared the kind of relationship they would experience in the world (15:18-27).
- a. He said the world would hate them because He had chosen them out of the world (18,19).
 - b. He exhorted them to remember a principle concerning this matter (20).
 - c. He mentioned why those of the world would hate believers (21).
 - d. He mentioned why those of the world had hated Him (22-24). He had demonstrated by His words and His works that God had sent Him and through their rejection they had hated both Him and His Father as well. This He said was a fulfilling of the Scriptures (25). Notice Psa. 35:19; 69:4).
 - e. Finally He pointed out that the Holy Spirit will testify of Him when He came and they also would be witnesses (26,27). Notice Jn. 16:8-11; Acts 5:32 fulfills what is prophesied here.

QUESTIONS WHICH WE MAY APPLY TO OUR LIVES

1. What does it mean in verse four to abide in Christ? _____

2. How is this accomplished and maintained? _____

3. How can you prove that verse six is not referring to loss of one's salvation? _____

4. How can the believer's life glorify God according to verse 15:8? _____

5. According to verse 15:10 what will keep the believer abiding in Christ?

6. What does verse 15:19 intimate about a believer? _____

7. What can a believer expect from the world according to verses 18, 20? _____

8. What practical application can we make from 15:20? _____

9. According to verse 5, what is necessary for the believer to bring forth fruit? _____

10. According to verse 2, what can the fruitful Christian expect in his life? _____

EXPOSITORY NOTES

15:2,6 These verses have often been used to support the argument that a believer can lose his salvation. It should be noted however that such an interpretation would be contradictory to the clear teachings of the whole New Testament. Salvation is a free gift and it is eternal (Eph. 2:8,9; Jn. 5:24; Rom. 5:15-17; Jn. 10:28-30).

One should keep in mind that this metaphor of the vine and the branches is dealing with fellowship and fruit bearing and not with being saved or losing salvation.

Those cast away here are unfaithful and unfruitful believers who remain out of fellowship and are cast into the fires of affliction and trials which overtake them and consume their lives. This seems to follow the parallel of what happened to Israel who was God's unfruitful vine in the O.T. (Ezek. 15:1-7).

15:4 Notice the word "abide" (meno) occurs ten times in this passage and means the maintenance of an unbroken relationship with the Lord or staying in fellowship with Him.

There are certain results for those who maintain this relationship. First there will be purging in their lives to produce more fruit (15:2). Secondly abiding insures much fruit (15:5). Thirdly this fruitfulness will glorify God (15:8). Abiding will result in the believer's prayers being answered (15:7) and will also produce joy in the believer's life (15:11).

15:2 The word for "taketh away" (airo) can be translated as "taketh away" as in Jn. 1:29 or as "taketh up". Some take this to mean that the Lord lifts up unfruitful believers as one would a fruitless branch to get more light and air so it will produce.

Others take this word to mean that unfruitful believers will be "taken away" as in physical death (I Cor. 11:30).

Still others take this reference to mean false professors who will be taken away because they produce no fruit because they have no life. The argument is that every believer will produce some fruit. One thing is for sure, we know it does not refer to a believer losing his Salvation.

It would seem, following the practice described in this metaphor, that this would refer to unfruitful believers being disciplined and taken out of this world through physical death because they live a sinful life.

