

Stay Connected

#7 the Great I AM

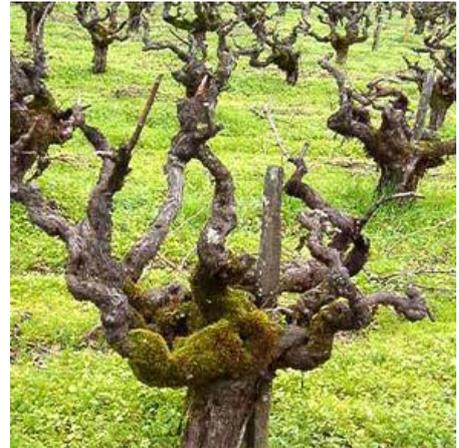
Introduction: Last of the Seven “I AMs”

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|----------------------|-------------------------|
| ⇒ Bread of life | ⇒ Resurrection and Life |
| ⇒ Light of the World | ⇒ Way, Truth and Life |
| ⇒ The door / gate | ⇒ True Vine |
| ⇒ Good Shepherd | |

- Vine was a symbol of ancient Israel
- Israel’s purpose was to point people/ nations to the Lord God
- Jesus came and said “*I am the true vine....*”
 - what Israel failed to deliver, Jesus fulfilled
- Our world is on the move
 - in Australia, most people move every 5 years
 - We live in a culture of uneasiness.
 - In recent years, uneasiness has grown
 - Covid
 - Bushfires
 - Floods
 - wars
 - Is humanity is to blame for all of these?
- There is a hunger for stability which Jesus the Vine can give
 - we struggle with Jesus’ statements:
 - Remain in Him
 - Abide in Him
 - Dwell in Him

1. Our Position

John 15:1-3 *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you..."*



- Notice the phrase "you are already clean"
 - Branches are "in Jesus"
 - Speaks of believers / those "born again"
 - The unfruitful branch is called a "sucker"
 - It can look healthy, but is all show and no fruit.

(a) *The Sucker*

- The sucker and the pruned begin to shoot at the same time
- Suckers are a distraction:
 - Work, people related
 - Some cause (conspiracy theory??)
 - Bad choice/s
 - Wilful sin
- Suckers drain us so we are not as fruitful as we could be.



(b) *The Pruning*

- Verse 3 – The pruned branch has already been fruitful
 - Pruning leads to freshness for the new season
 - Fruitful get pruned because they have already been found faithful.

2. Our Potential

John 15:4-8 *'Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me.*



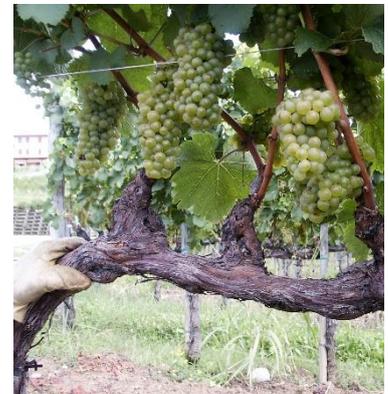
I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing.

If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up and thrown into the fire and burned up.

If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given you.

This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.'

- Fruitfulness is a choice
 - If you remove yourself, you will wither.
- Fruitfulness requires TWO actions:
 - (a) Remain / Abide / Dwell in Him
 - (b) Know His words
- If we know His word, we will not ask for selfish reasons
- We will act in faith (*"They will receive"*)



3. Our Prescription

John 15:9 *'As the Father has loved Me, so I have loved you. Now remain in My love.'*

- Where does the love come from?
 - Jesus demonstrates the power and love of God

QUESTION: What does *"remain in my love"* mean?

John 15:10 *'If you obey my commands, you will remain in My love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in His love.'*

- Jesus commands to His followers must be lived out.
 - What command is He talking about?

John 15:11 *"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete".*

- my joy in you
- that you may be complete

John 15:12 *'My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.'*

ILLUSTRATION: ¹

An early church writer, Jerome, tells a story about John from the AD 90's. By this time John was very old and used to be carried into church every week on a chair with poles through it. The church members would often ask him to speak.

He would sit in the chair at the front, and he'd just say, "Little children, love one another!"

The next Sunday, they would carry him into church and ask if he had a word for them. "Yes" he'd say, "I've got a word for you today".

They would carry the chair to the front, and he'd say, "Little children, love one another."

The next Sunday, they brought him in and exactly the same thing happened. They began to think he was getting senile. Didn't he realise that he kept repeating the same words?

They finally went to the old man and said, "Master, why do you always say, "Little children, love one another?" He said: "Because it is the Lord's command, and if only this is done, it is enough."

¹ Jerome AD 90 *'Unlocking the Bible'* (David Pawson) P1239

- What does love look like?

John 15:13-14 *'Greater love has no man than this; that he lay down his life for his friends. You are My friends if you do what I command.'*

4. Our Promotion:

John 15:15 *'I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I have learned from My Father, I have made known to you.'*

- promotion from servant to friend
- attitude of servant-hood, but knowledge of a friend.

5. Our Purpose

John 15:16 *'You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in My name.'*

- you have been chosen for a purpose
 - you have been appointed
 - appointed = fix; settle' name to an office
- Purpose – to bear fruit that is GOOD
 - THEN the Father will give you.....

