

A close-up photograph of a hand holding an open book. The book is held vertically, and bright, golden light rays emanate from the pages, creating a dramatic, ethereal effect. The background is dark, making the light from the book stand out. The text 'BOOK of JOHN' is overlaid on the image in a stylized, golden font.

BOOK *of* JOHN

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

JOHN 15:1-11

This is the seventh and final of the “I AM” statements of Christ recorded in the Gospel of John.

Abiding in the Vine—The Secret to Joy!

- Picture in your mind four large beautiful baskets in which we place the fruit of our lives.
- One basket is labeled “**no fruit.**” Some baskets have “**some fruit**” in them; other baskets have “**more fruit**” in them; one basket has the label “**much fruit.**”

Which basket is the basket of your life?



ARE YOU MEETING THE MASTER'S EXPECTATIONS?

- Question for you: If Jesus chose us for abundance, expects abundance, and created us to deeply desire it, how can we ever find fulfillment in a half-empty basket?
- A life cut off from the vitality of the vine produces little or no fruit—we only produce what we want, not what God wants.
- We become vending machines filled with junk food.

THE LAST WORDS OF A DYING MAN

Abide in the Vine . . . live for, in, and with Jesus!

- God the Father is the vinedresser and He wants abundant fruit out of every vine.
 - Not useless dried wood
 - Not nice fluffy leaves
- If your fruit is not characterized by righteousness, it did not come from His vine. **Galatians 5:22-25**

You and I are branches of the true vine!

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “ABIDE”?

- Our essential oneness with Christ brought about by the new birth, or our standing before God
- If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. **2 Cor. 5:17**
- The Greek words *Meno* or *diameno*, *parameno* translated “to abide,” “remain,” “dwell,” or “continue,” mean to maintain constant intimate fellowship with God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- God’s will done God’s way is our path to “***much fruit.***”

The Vine reproduces Himself in His branches.

PURPOSEFUL PRUNING

- Are you a branch that has become dirty with mud and mildew? He will lift you up out of the mire.
- Have you become spiritually sickly and useless because of sin? He will cut out the dead.
- This passage is talking about service not salvation; because God cares about you, He cuts and cleans.
- Get ready, the pruning shears are coming!

God uses painful experiences to bring us to repentance and fruitfulness!

SURRENDER YOUR LIFE TO HIS KNIFE

- While He cuts off the dead branches, He stands with open arms ready to sustain you with His grace so you can bear **MORE** and, ultimately, **MUCH FRUIT**.
- He knows right where to cut and just how much to cut off.
- He will not cut too little or too much.
- Only through abiding in the Vine and letting the vinedresser snip and saw can we bear much fruit!

A GOOD WARNING TO EVERY BRANCH

- Do you have any dead wood lying around? ***We all do.***
- I think the words of the apostle Paul help us to put this verse in the right perspective. ***1 Cor. 3:12-15***
- He said every one of us will one day stand before the bema seat of Christ; a fruit inspection is coming!
- If we are abiding in continuous fellowship with Christ, we will bring forth fruit that will bring glory to the Father; and this fruit will remain.

Let the dead branch go and the good fruit will grow!