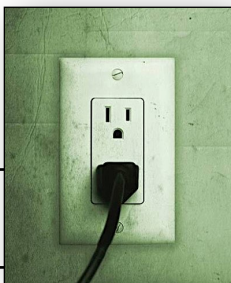


Our Spiritual Power Source

The Vine and the Branches

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5 NLT



- Do you ever feel spiritually and emotionally drained?

Years ago, a good friend of mine was a TV repairman with Sears. He once told me that people would buy a new TV and complain that it would not work. My friend would be dispatched to the customer's home to repair the TV. However, a large number of times, the TV did not work because the customer failed to plug it in. So he had to charge them for a service call to plug the TV into the wall.

In the same way, a Christian has to be plugged into his spiritual power source to function correctly and win the battles of life. Jesus used the word "abide." It is used 11 times in John 15:1-11.

Warren Wiersbe wrote, "What does it mean to 'abide'? It means to **keep in fellowship with Christ** so that his life can work in and through us to produce fruit... It also involves **obeying** Him because we love Him (John 15:9-10)." *The Wiersbe Bible Commentary*, p. 284.

Do you stay plugged into Christ?

Central Lesson:
The life & power of Christ flow into us when we stay connected to Him.

1. What Is Our Power Source?

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener." (15:1) "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches..." (15:5).

- ▶ The vine is—**CHRIST**
- ▶ The fruitful branches—true believers
- ▶ The unfruitful branch—imitators

Life Application Study Bible, "**Christ is the vine, and God is the gardener who cares for the branches to make them fruitful. The branches are all those who claim to be followers of Christ. The fruitful branches are true believers who by their living union with Christ produce much fruit. But those who become unproductive—those who turn back from following Christ after making a superficial commitment—will be separated from the vine. Unproductive followers are as good as dead and will be cut off and tossed aside.**" (15:1ff).

2. Why Stay Connected?

- **BEAR fruit.** (15:4). *"4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me."*

Warren Wiersbe explained, "Several different kinds of spiritual fruits are named in the Bible. We bear fruit when we when others to Christ (Rom. 1:13)... As we grow in holiness and obedience, we are bearing fruit (Rom. 6:22). Paul considered Christian giving to the fruit from a dedicated life (Rom. 15:28). 'The fruit of the Spirit' (Gal. 5:22-23) is the kind of Christian character that glorifies God and makes Christ real to others. Even our good works, our service, grow out of our abiding life (Col. 1:10). The praise that comes from our hearts and lips is actually fruit to the glory of God (Heb. 13:15)." (Wiersbe, p.285).

- **Avoid FAILURE** (15:5). *"5 Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."*
- **PRAYER power** (15:7). *"7 But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!"*
- **GLORIFY God** (15:8). *"8 When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father."*
- **Overflowing JOY** (15:11). *"11 I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!"*

3. How Do We Stay Connected?

- **TALK** regularly to God—prayer.
- **LISTEN** carefully to God—read the Bible.
- Attend **FAMILY** gatherings with God's people—fellowship.
- Show **APPRECIATION** to God—worship.
- Hold Christ's **HAND**—faith, trust.

Central Lesson:
The life & power of Christ flow into us when we stay connected to Him.

- ▶ Accept Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday's study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.