

God is the Gardener

- Jesus is the Vine
- Spirit is the Sap
- I'm the Branch
- Spiritual Fruits are the Result

1) Submit to the Father's **pruning** without disconnecting from the **true vine**

John 15:13 (ESV)

"I am the **true vine**, and my Father is the **vinedresser**. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit **he takes away**, and every branch that does bear fruit **he prunes**, that it may bear **more fruit**. 3 Already **you are clean** because of the **word**.

- God **prunes** the branches
- God **polishes** the spiritual fruits

Ephesians 5:26-27 (ESV)

...having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle...

2) Stop trying to **produce** what only a proper connection grows

John 15:4-5 (ESV)

Abide in me, and I in you. As the **branch cannot bear fruit by itself**, unless it abides in the **vine**, **neither can you**, unless **you abide in me**. 5 I am the **vine**; you

are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, **for apart from me you can do nothing.**

- Growth Is Mutual Indwelling, Not Occasional Connection
- Growth Is Relational Union, Not Religious Effort

- A shared life
- A shared presence
- A shared source of power

- Jesus Repeats Himself Because Our Natural Tendency Is Autonomy

This means:

- Daily surrender
- Daily dependence
- Daily attentiveness to the Spirit

3) Prove a true **connection**, it is a disciple's I.D.

John 15:6:8 (ESV)

If anyone **does not abide in me, he is thrown away** like a branch and **withers**; and the branches are gathered, **thrown into the fire, and burned.** ⁷ **If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.** ⁸ **By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.**

- Prayer Promise
- Produce Promise

Praying Scripture

Psalm 23:1 (ESV)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

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4) Move from obedience by **pressure** to obedience by **connection** to His presence

John 15:9-10 (ESV)

As the Father has loved me, **so have I loved you. Abide in my love.** ¹⁰ If you **keep my commandments**, you will **abide in my love**, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

- Legalism says, Try harder
- Jesus says, Stay closer

5) Expect His **joy** to overflow when you are **connected** to Him

John 15:11 (ESV)

These things I have **spoken to you**, that **my joy** may be **in you**, and that **your joy may be full.**

6) Let love become the **consistent evidence** that you are connected

John 15:12-13 (ESV)

“This is **my commandment**, that you **love one another** as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that **someone lay down his life for his friends.**

- **Christ Love Is Not A Suggestion**
- **Christ Love Is Not Sentimental**

Conclusion:

1. **Am I submitting to the Father's correction without disconnecting from the true vine?**
2. **Am I trying to produce what only the proper connection can grow?**
3. **Am I proving a true connection?**
4. **Am I moving from pressure or connection to His presence?**
5. **Am I experiencing joy because I'm connected to Him?**
6. **Am I following His example by loving with a sacrificial love?**
 - **Stay connected.**
 - **Stay surrendered.**
 - **Stay dependent on the Holy Spirit.**

Because the branch that abides will always bear fruit.