

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Who Is Jesus?

The True Vine

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Throughout the past six posts, we have been answering the crucial question, “Who is Jesus?” from John’s Gospel, where Jesus made seven “I am” statements. In our last post, we observed a culmination of sorts when Jesus brought together the first five “I am” statements in [John 14:6](#), saying, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” By making this sweeping declaration, Jesus emphatically asserted that He is the exclusive, all-sufficient Savior.

Jesus’ encouragement was critical for the disciples to understand because He was departing to the Father, and their hearts were troubled by this looming reality. They worried how their relationship with Christ would function when He was no longer physically present with them. The question that plagued their minds is relevant for all Jesus’ disciples today. If we recognize who Jesus is in His first six “I am” statements and come to believe in Him for life, how do we live out that life in this present world awaiting His glorious return?

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Many professing disciples of Jesus currently have little or no understanding of what it means or looks like to live the Christian life in Christ's absence. Many professing Christians would claim they believe in Jesus and are saved by His cross and resurrection, but they cannot articulate how that salvation should impact the way they live. They do not see Jesus as all-sufficient for their daily living, nor do they believe He can help them navigate the struggles of their lives.

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The question for all Jesus' followers is simply this: How do we live lives of dependence on Christ in our day-to-day walk so God is glorified through us in the here and now? Jesus answers this question in His final "I am" statement in John 15, when He calls Himself "the true vine." In this statement, Jesus provides the key to depending on Him as our all-sufficient Savior: we must abide in Christ because He is the true vine who gives all we need.

To grasp Jesus' meaning, there are three things we need to understand as disciples of Christ about abiding in Him.

First, if we would abide in Jesus and truly depend on Him for all we require to be pleasing to the Lord, we must understand the *necessity of abiding in Christ.*

Abiding in Christ is not an optional part of the Christian life, but an absolute necessity for Jesus' disciples. Christ alone is the source of God's blessings, and He alone is the source of what we need to live the Christian life. Jesus is, in essence, emphasizing again His total and absolute sufficiency. Because He is the true vine, His sufficiency and power will never run dry.

Jesus gives us two more reasons why it is necessary that we abide in Him. The first is that abiding in Jesus is the *sole source of fruitfulness*. Because we are not the vine, we have no innate capacity for fruitfulness; we are entirely dependent on the vine to bear fruit. Apart from Christ we can't worship, pray, understand the Word, obey His commands, speak words that edify, love one another, show kindness as He has shown to us, forgive one another, discern truth from error, bring people to a knowledge of Christ, or build up the church. Abiding in Jesus is critical for believers because apart from Christ we all are useless in the vineyard and kingdom of God.

When we look at the New Testament, there are essentially four types of fruit we can bear when we abide in Jesus. There is the fruit of the Spirit, which are admirable and attractive virtues that are the result of abiding in Christ. There is the fruit of praise and worship of God, which is the outflow of abiding in Christ. There is the fruit of godly living, which is the result of the fruit of the Spirit permeating our lives. There is also the fruit of seeing

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unbelievers converted, which comes from believers being empowered by the Spirit of God to proclaim the gospel to the unbelieving world.

Additionally, abiding in Jesus is the *mark of a true disciple*. Those who do not bear fruit because they do not abide in Christ are revealed to be false disciples, whose end is divine judgement.

Second, we must understand the *method of abiding in Christ*.

In this passage, Jesus tells us three things we have to do to abide in Him. The first is that we must be *saturated with Scripture*. It is the Word of God that cleanses the sinner's heart as the Spirit works through the Word, and believers must consider, understand, and treasure every word. The second is that we should be *persistent in prayer*. If we are praying God's Word back to Him, God will answer our prayers and give us whatever we wish. The third is that we must be *compliant with His commands*. When our lives are moving towards holiness, when obedience is our desire, when growing more like Christ and reflecting His holiness in a lost and sinful world is our heart's passion, we abide in His love.

Finally, the third truth we need to understand about abiding in Jesus is the *blessing of abiding in Christ*.

Why would we want to produce fruit as Christ's disciples, and to abide in Him through His Word, through prayer, and through obedience? Because the result of abiding in Christ is infinite and eternal joy. Jesus spoke these things because He wants us to have joy: great joy, eternal joy, divine joy, and limitless joy.

Here's what we should understand about Christ: He is the most joyful person who exists. No one has more joy than Jesus, and when we have His joy, then our joy is made complete. In our Savior, our joy overflows and cannot be contained. True happiness and joy are the blessings that come to those who abide in Christ as the true vine.

Throughout this series, we have sought to answer the question, "Who is Jesus?"

We have found that He is the bread of life, the light of the world, the door of the sheep, the Good Shepherd, the resurrection and the life, and the way, and the truth, and the life. All that to say, He is everything we need – our all-sufficient Savior.

These truths about Jesus mean that as those who have eaten His flesh and drunk His blood, as those who were blind but have been made to see, as His sheep, as those who will face death but never die, as those who are traveling the narrow way because we

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know He is the truth and source of life, we recognize that we abide in Him because He is the true vine. Apart from Him we can do nothing. However, if we abide in Him, and He in us, we will bear much fruit, prove to be His disciples, enjoy His incomprehensible love, and experience His infinite joy.



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