

Q&A October 26, 2023

First question:

This is for the question and answer on Thursday.

"Every branch in Me ... " "In Me" has always meant to me to be in Jesus Christ as a believer in Christ. I don't get how it means something other than that. Will you explain from Scripture what you mean? If I understand you correctly, you said that it referred to people who were around Christ, like Judas, but not to believers.

ANSWER:

*John 15:1-3*

*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 bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*

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In John 15:2-3, Jesus is contrasting a believer with an unbeliever, or more accurately, a true disciple with a false disciple.

In the Old Testament, the vine is Israel. **Psalm 80:8-12.**

Jesus calls Himself the True Vine in John 15:1.

The nation of Israel was the fruitless vine. **Isaiah 5:1-7.**

Jesus the Messiah will bear the fruit that Israel did not. **Isaiah 11:1-5.**

The disciples in the Upper Room had a kingdom orientation, not a church orientation. They were looking forward to the Messianic Kingdom and knew nothing about the church age at this point.

**Acts 1:1-8.**

The mystery of the church as the body of Christ would not be revealed until years later when Paul received this mystery as a direct revelation from the Lord.

**Ephesians 3:1-7.**

The church is never spoken of as a vine or as the branches of the vine.

The church is the body of Christ. **1 Corinthians 12:13, Galatians 3:27, Romans 6:3.**

Saints (church age believers) are members of the body of Christ (not branches on the vine).

So:

Israel: Vine and branches

Church: Head and body

Therefore, John 15:2 does NOT refer to church saints in Christ.

Branches that bear fruit are disciples (believers). Jesus says that the 11 disciples were already clean.

Judas is an example of a branch that was not clean. He did not bear fruit. He was taken away. See John 13:10-11 and John 17:12.

Judas was in the company of the disciples. He was in close contact with Jesus. But he was a false disciple.