



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

www.bibleradio.org.au

BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1687 ~ "I am the Vine"

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

The Lord Jesus Christ made seven "I am" statements about Himself in John's Gospel. Not only did He say "I am the bread of life," He also said that He was the light of the world, the gate, the good shepherd, the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth and the life, and now, this *Bible Adventure* focuses on the last one: "I am the true vine."

In today's drama, the Lord Jesus is finishing the Passover meal with His disciples so they could then walk out to the Mount of Olives, which they normally did for receiving further instructions from Jesus.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound](#).

Human nature has a way of putting off thinking about unpleasant things that may be coming up ahead in the future. A church close to a large retirement village and nursing home tried holding a short Sunday afternoon service in the nursing home lounge for any elderly people who wanted to sing Christian songs. Although invited, the people who still had walking and driving skills didn't ever come. They didn't want to imagine being in a wheelchair or in the next stage of their life.

The Lord Jesus had told His disciples many times that He would one day be killed. But they just couldn't imagine how they would cope without having their leader. Although it may have seemed a long way off, the disciples didn't want to think about things until later.

When at the last Passover meal Jesus shared with them, He made it quite clear to them that He wouldn't drink any more juice of the grapevine from then on until He drank it new in His Father's kingdom at the end of the world. This announcement brought the realization that the end of Jesus' life was frighteningly close.

Always known as a great teacher, Jesus used the simple and familiar things of everyday experience to raise the spiritual understanding of His disciples. Jesus' listeners knew both how grapes grew and the way vines were cared for. The fruit grows on the branches that shoot out from the vine's main life-giving stem. After fruit is borne and harvested, there's a cutting back or pruning time so that branches might send out new shoots. Part of the pruning includes cutting off those branches that suck life from the vine but produce no fruit at all.

In John, Chapter 15, the Lord Jesus gave the last of His "I am" statements, which ties some of His previous ones together. He said that He's the true vine while His Father God is the gardener. In the Old Testament, Israel was called a vine but it became barren and corrupt. God's true vine is Jesus Christ Himself. True Christians are the branches. In the same way that a branch cannot live unless the sap of the vine flows into it, so a Christian cannot live unless Christ's Holy Spirit flows into a Christian's life.

If we don't bear any fruit, it's a sign that Christ's Spirit isn't in us. Such branches are cut away by God because fruitless branches are useless to Him. However, fruitful branches are trimmed clean of the unproductive twigs and bad habits and sins so they can be even more fruitful.

Often God leads His own people through difficult and painful experiences to trim them clean. One prominent sin is pride and He often leads us through humbling experiences to remove it. As a consequence, we can then bear more good fruit for God.

A lot of the Father's pruning and cleansing takes place in our hearts and minds. Sin is granted acceptance in our intentions, motives and attitudes first. Then bad thoughts give way to saying wrong things and doing harmful things. To prevent the seeds of wickedness growing up within the human heart, we need to have our hearts fully cleansed so we can live godly lives and be fruitful for the Father. God uses His Word to clean and purify our hearts. As Christians, it's imperative that we read and study the Word of God so that the Lord can do this vital work of cleansing in our lives.

God is looking for two types of fruit from believers in Christ: firstly, all fruit of the Holy Spirit should be evident in our lives. In Galatians, Chapter 5, the qualities shown in Jesus' life are listed here. They are love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

The second type of fruit God is looking for is the conversion of new believers in Christ as a response to our witness of Jesus' life within us. In Proverbs, Chapter 15, it says: "He who wins souls is wise." Jesus has given us instructions to love one another, to help those in need, to love our enemies, to be a light in a dark world while proclaiming the Gospel to the lost, to hold fast to the faith until He comes. Nowhere in His Word does He tell us to cease spreading His Gospel.

In the Parable of the Sower in Mark, Chapter 4, Jesus shows that producing a crop and bearing fruit as indicated in John, Chapter 15, are actually one and same thing. Jesus said: "Just as the Father has loved me and I have loved you, remain in my love." Allowing our Lord's words to remain in us implies obedience to them. Jesus said that everyone who hears His words and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

Jesus wouldn't tell us to remain in Him if it was impossible for us to do so. The wording of that sentence implies a condition: 'that if we remain in Jesus', then He'll remain in us. The converse must also be true: 'that if we do not remain in Jesus', He will not remain in us. Fear of what might happen in the future can affect the way a Christian behaves. There's always a battle going on between those who trust what the Bible says and those who follow long-held traditions and idols.

In the years following Jesus' death and resurrection back to life, the Caesars who ruled the Roman Empire thought themselves to be gods and demanded worship from all their people. Christians clearly couldn't do that, and often they were killed. In England in the 1500s, whichever belief system the ruler held to, this became the belief system for all the people to adopt as well. Rulers didn't always live to a ripe old age those days, so when the ruler changed suddenly, some people were quickly in danger for what they believed. The first Archbishop of Canterbury discovered this to be true when a new ruler had him arrested for treason.

To try to escape a death sentence, the Archbishop signed a statement agreeing with all the things that the new ruler believed in. However, when the death sentence wasn't lifted from him, he realised what a mistake he'd made. Just before he was to be executed, a man in the crowd asked the Archbishop to tell all the people what he believed. This was done to show that a great reformer like him really wasn't a reformer at all.

The condemned man told everyone that he believed in God and every word taught by our Saviour Jesus Christ and His apostles. He continued, "For fear of death I signed my name to lies." The soldiers acting as government officials could hardly believe their ears. The crowd reacted angrily to his words. Above the noise, he held up his right hand and shouted, "This hand, this hand, with which I put my name to such lies, will burn first in the fire that will kill me."

He was so ashamed of what he'd done to deny God's truth. Yet the Archbishop went to his death in the sure knowledge that all his sins, including his denial of faith, were confessed and forgiven through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said that He is the true and genuine vine for all who believe in Him. There are many counterfeit vines in this world that we can attach ourselves to. Many false religious leaders flourish as people cling to their teaching, rather than getting a Bible and reading its truth for themselves. There's only one true vine which will enable us to bear fruit for God and that vine is Jesus Christ. Jesus made known to His disciples the marvellous unity that exists not only between His true followers and Himself, but also with His Father in heaven. By bearing much fruit, Christians glorify Christ's Father.

A fruitful grapevine with proper care and good pruning may reach an unusual age and size. For example, it's reported that one such vine in Jericho was over 300 years old and had a trunk diameter of nearly 46 cm or 18 inches wide. However, such vine wood is too soft to be of any use except for firewood. In Ezekiel, Chapter 15, the Lord God of Israel used vine wood as a fitting illustration of the unfaithful inhabitants of Jerusalem – it was good only as fuel for the fire. Jesus also said the eventual destiny of any unfruitful branches is also the fire.

Satan is here to kill, steal, and destroy anything and everything he can of God's. As a result, he'll do everything in his power to keep people from believing God's truth. He's discovered that combining some truth with some lies brings about the results that he wants – confused thinkers. He's also discovered that many of those he's determined to destroy give him no opposition and let him do so. They've been deceived into thinking that all God wants from them is their good intentions and good works.

What is missing in a person's relationship with the Lord Jesus if they think God will accept them just trying to be good? There must be a two-sided relationship. When we first believe in Jesus as our Saviour and Lord, and that He alone is our hope of salvation, we are then brought instantly into a pure and holy relationship with Almighty God. Believing who Jesus is and what He did for us at Calvary establishes an everlasting relationship with Him.

When we say we trust Jesus to be perfect in all His ways and that we give ourselves completely to Him, that means that He owns us – our lives, our pathway in life and all that we have. We are no longer Satan's possession but rather, Christ's.

We then have fellowship with God and learn His ways by reading the Bible and learning from mature Christians. We must never let ourselves be deceived by believing wrong ideas or thoughts about God that are contradictory to the Bible. We must keep checking the Scriptures for correct thoughts and the Holy Spirit's exposure of error that we may have been taught by false teachers or worldly influences.

In Romans, Chapter 8, Verse 10, it says: "If Christ lives in you, the Spirit is life for you because you have been put right with God, even though your bodies are going to die because of sin."

Each of us is called to make a difference in our world. God calls us to be salt, light and ambassadors for Christ. He wants each of us to leave our workplace, family, neighbourhood and church a better place than when we started there. Yet we can only do this by depending on the Lord Jesus for everything. Are you committed to staying true to the true vine Jesus?

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

< END OF SCRIPT >
