


The Word

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Episode 31



JOHN 11	Life (Lazarus is raised by Jesus)
JOHN 12	Death (Jesus predicts His death)
JOHN 13 - 17	Life for His disciples (in the time between Jesus' departure and His return)
JOHN 18 - 19	Death (Jesus' crucifixion)
JOHN 20	Life (Jesus is risen)

The true vine

JOHN 15:1-17

*In the previous episode:
How the world will
come to see God.*

*In this episode:
Real purpose.*

We start with some
background by looking
back to Psalm 80

→ Psalm 80:8-11

⁸ You transplanted a vine
from Egypt;
you drove out the nations
and planted it.

⁹ You cleared the ground for it,
and it took root and filled
the land.

¹⁰ The mountains were covered
with its shade,
the mighty cedars with its
branches.

¹¹ Its branches reached as far
as the Sea,
its shoots as far as the River.

The story of the vine

God brought His people (pictured as a vine) out of Egypt and into a promised land. This happened in around 1500 BC, after more than 400 years of slavery.

God's vine, Israel, was so fabulously fruitful it covered the entire land, from the mountains to the sea. (**Psalm 80:10-11**)

In other words, God's people, under His blessing, grew from small beginnings into a great nation.

¹⁴ Return to us, God Almighty!
Look down from heaven and see!
Watch over this vine,

¹⁵ the root your right hand
has planted,
the son you have raised
up for yourself.

¹⁶ Your vine is cut down,
it is burned with fire;
at your rebuke your
people perish.

¹⁷ Let your hand rest on the
man at your right hand,
the son of man you have
raised up for yourself.

¹⁸ Then we will not turn away
from you;
revive us, and we will call
on your name.

¹⁹ Restore us, LORD God Almighty;
make your face shine on us,
that we may be saved.

Tragically, the people walked away from their relationship with God. The fruitful vine was cut down, as God's people were defeated by their enemies and sent into exile. **(Psalm 80:14)**

But what is prophesied here?

- The Son of Man (Jesus) is to be sent... **(Psalm 80:17)**
- ...so that they might be saved by God. **(Psalm 80:18)**

What will being saved look like?

- They will be brought back into a permanent relationship with Him. **(Psalm 80:18)**
- He will bring them back to life (revive them).
- They will pray to him (call on His name).
- His face will be turned towards them in blessing. **(Psalm 80:19)**

*The Son of Man will bring
this complete salvation.*

Let's also look
back to Isaiah

→ Isaiah 5:7

⁷ 'The vineyard of the
LORD Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.
And he looked for justice,
but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness, but
heard cries of distress.'

Isaiah 27:6b

⁶ 'Israel will bud and blossom
and fill all the world with fruit.'

The vine and its fruitfulness is a theme that continues in Old Testament prophecies.

Around 700 BC, Isaiah prophesied against Israel for turning away from God and producing bad 'fruit'.

But he also promised a time when the true vine's beautiful fruit (His saved people) would fill the whole earth.

In the next few episodes we will see Jesus explain how that worldwide fruitfulness will come about.

With that
background,
back to John

¹ ‘I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

Bear fruit: the life of Christ flowing through His people. The coming chapters will show that this means joyful obedience to Jesus’ commands, lived out in love for others and a witness to the world empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Joined to the vine

What is Jesus claiming here?

- He is the key to all the Old Testament promises of God having a fruitful people who glorify Him. **(v. 1)**
- This means that Jesus fulfils all the things that Israel never managed to be.

What is the severe warning in verse 2?

- If a person says that they believe in Jesus but bears no fruit, they will be 'cut off'!

What is the promise for God's people who are joined to Him?

- Pruning for growth! Just as a gardener prunes a bush to strengthen it, so God prunes His 'vine' so that it brings more fruit. **(v. 2)**

In verse 3, the word 'clean' in the original Greek is the same as the word 'prune' in verse 2. You could translate it as: 'You are already pruned through the word I have spoken to you.'