

Activate Group Resource for 26 August 2018 (Michael Brown)

Big Idea:

Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. (John 15:4)

Key Scriptures:

John 15:1-4 (NLT)

Jesus, the True Vine

"I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

Jeremiah 2: 21 (NIV)

The nation of Israel pictured as a vine that has run wild and in decay.

Key Points:

Connecting with His heavenly Father was a priority for Jesus, how much more so it must be for us. Barclay writes in his commentary: "to pray in the morning time, if it be only a few minutes, is to have an antiseptic for the whole day; for we cannot come out of the presence of Christ to touch the evil things....It will mean arranging life, arranging prayer, arranging silence in such a way that there is never a day when we give ourselves a chance to forget Him."

Discussion Questions:

How do we remain in Jesus, so that Jesus remains in us so our lives will bear fruit?

- 1) Why can't we do it on our own?
- 2) Does God really want our lives to be fruitful? When doesn't feel like that?
- 3) How does God prune us to be more productive?
- 4) The word pruned can be translated as cleansed, what are the implications?
- 5) How do we remain in God, so that God will remain in us?

Application:

Is there an area of your life where God is challenging you take a step forward? Are there thoughts, attitudes, actions in your life that God wants to prune while they are still small?