



Daily Reflections

May 17, 2017

Scripture

John 15: 1-8

Scripture

Jesus said to his disciples:

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.

He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit,
and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.

You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you.

Remain in me, as I remain in you.

Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own
unless it remains on the vine,
so neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit,
because without me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me
will be thrown out like a branch and wither;
people will gather them and throw them into a fire
and they will be burned.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,

ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.
By this is my Father glorified,
that you bear much fruit and become my disciples."

Our Scripture Reflection

At the Last Supper, Jesus expressed a real concern for His disciples, especially after He would be taken from them. Hence, His use of the image of the vine. The way they would heal from His departure and actually thrive in time would be the result of their staying connected to Him as a vine and branches are connected. And how do they stay connected? By living the commandment to love one another.

Food for your Journey

In *Secrets of the Vine* (33-36), Bruce Wilkinson shares an insight that he learned from a vineyard owner in Southern California: "New branches have a natural tendency to trail down and grow along the ground, but they don't bear fruit down there. When branches grow along the ground, the leaves get coated in dust. Then when it rains, they get muddy and mildewed, and the branch becomes sick and useless."

"What do you do?" asked Wilkinson, "Cut it off and throw it away?"

"Oh, no!" he exclaimed. "The branch is much too valuable for that. We go through the vineyard with a bucket of water, looking for those branches. We lift them up and wash them off. Then we wrap them around the trellis or tie them up. Pretty soon they're thriving."

"... For the Christian, sin is like dirt covering the grape leaves. Air and light can't get in. The branch languishes, and no fruit develops ... When the branches fall into the dirt, God doesn't throw them away or abandon them. He lifts them up, cleans them off, and helps them flourish again."

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, By living Your way, may my heart always stay closely connected to Your loving heart. Amen.