

VINE & BRANCHES ANALOGY

Request: Would you please explain the analogy of the Vine & Branch in John 15:1-8? What is it talking about when some branches are thrown into the fire and burned?

This analogy was part of the famous Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17).

The analogy of the Vine and Branches will be studied by the following four point homiletical outline.

- Description of the analogy (15:1-2)
- Doctrines of the analogy (15:3-4)
- Discipline lesson from the analogy (15:6,2)
- Discipleship lesson from the analogy (15:7-8)

1. There is a six-fold description of the analogy of the Vine and Branches (15:1-2).

- 1 – True Vine (alethinós ampleós) – Jesus
- 2 – Vinedresser (georgos) – God
- 3 – Branches (klema) – believers
- 4 – Fruit of the branches (karpos) – divine production
- 5 – Removal of non-productive branch (airo) – sin unto death (1 John 5:16)
- 6 – Pruning of productive branch (kathairo) – testing of word for more divine production

2. There are at least six doctrines given in the analogy. The branch and its fruit or lack of fruit dominant the analogy. The Greek word for fruit or divine production (karpos) is used 7 times in 8 verses.

First doctrine is that God created the branch to be the productive part of the vine (15:1,8).

Second doctrine is that divine production is directly related to each branch remaining in union with the Vine (15:4-8/ abiding/ meno).

Third doctrine is that God prunes the productive branch by His word to make it more productive (15:2-3,7).

Fourth doctrine is that God cuts off and throws away the withered non-productive branches into judgment fire (15:2,6).

Fifth doctrine is that a productive prayer life is part of the pruning of a healthy branch (15:7).

Sixth doctrine is that a productive branch brings glory to God and reflects discipleship (15:8).

3. The next four points will study the Sin unto Death taken from the discipline part of the Vine and Branches analogy.

“Every branch in Me that does not bear (me phero/ p.a.ptc nsn/ principle of continuous negative volition/ phase II) fruit, He takes away (airo/ p.a.ind/ phase II) (the action of the present participle occurs at the same time as the present indicative).” (15:2a)

“If (3cc) anyone does not abide (me meno/ p.a.subj/ phase II) in Me, he is thrown away (ballo/ a.p.ind/ passive of divine discipline/ vineyard of phase II) as a branch, and dries up (xeraino/ a.p.ind/ maximum reversionism); and

they gather them, and cast (ballo/ p.a.ind) them into the fire, and they are burned (kaio/ p.p.ind/ phase II/ sin unto death).” (15:6/ please note that these tenses are either aorist or past time or present time but none are future).

4. The Sin unto Death is the means by which the Lord transfers a reversionistic believer from phase II (time) to phase III (eternity) by maximum divine discipline (John 15:1-8; 1 John 5:16).

“Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart, in falling away from the living God.” (Heb.3:12) (Heb.10:29-39)

5. The Sin unto Death is the final stage of divine discipline of a reversionistic believer (Heb.12: 5-11).

First stage is warning discipline (Heb.12:5/ don't regard it lightly; Rev.3:19-20). Other believers should try to restore him under the ministry of the filling of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal.6:1-2; James 5:19-20).

Second stage is intense or scourging discipline (Heb.12:6/ every son whom He receives). Other believers should encourage him back to assembly but separate socially fellowship from that believer if they remain in reversionism (Heb.12:9; 1 Cor.5:9-13; 1 Thess.5:14; 2 Thess.3:6,14-15).

Final stage is Sin unto Death or dying discipline (1 John 5:16/ a state of sin leading to death). Other believers cannot pray another believer out of this stage. It is the sovereign decision of God based on His relationship with that believer. However, we can intercede on their behalf (Gen.18; 2 Pet.2:6-9; Jude 7-8).

6. The sin unto Death is based on state of sinning or maximum reversionism rather than a specific sin.

If (3cc) anyone sees (horao/ a.a.subj) his brother committing a sin (hamartano/ p.a.ptc/ hamartia/ sinning a sin) not leading to death (me thanatos), he shall ask (aiteo/ f.a.ind) and God will for him give (didomi/ f.a.ind) life to those who commit sin (me hamartano/ p.a.ptc) not leading to death. There is (eimi/ p.a.ind) a sin leading to death: I do not say that he should make a request for this.” (1 John 5:16)

“By means of hypocrisy of liars seared in their conscience as with a branding iron.” (1 Tim.4:2)

It is described as God giving them over to lusts of the heart (Rom.1:24) and degrading passions (Rom.1:26) and depraved minds (Rom.1:28).

It is described in as futility of mind (Eph.4:17) and darkened in understanding, excluded from the life of God, hardness of hearts (Eph.4:18).

7. The Sin unto Death is not the loss of salvation but rather the shortening of allotted time in phase II (CWL) (John 10:28; 2 Tim.2: 13; Heb.3: 17-19; 2 Pet.2: 1).

It is being delivered to Satan for the destruction of the flesh (1 Tim.1:20; 1 Cor.5:5; 10:10-12; Phil.3:17-19).
It is the loss of dying grace (Phil.1:21-25; Col.3:3; Jude 23; Acts 5:5,10; Luke 17:32).
It is the loss of the crown of life (James 1:12; Rev.2:10).