

Christian Apologetics (11)
[I Am The True Vine]

The word apologetics is derived from the Greek word, apologia. Apologia refers to a speech made in defense or a verbal response.

“Christian apologetics is a field of Christian theology that presents a rational basis for the Christian faith and defends the faith against objections, and exposes the perceived flaws of other world views.” (Wikipedia)

All of the lessons in the series entitled, Christian apologetics, will be taken from the Gospel of John.

Today will study the seventh outrageous **I AM** claim made by Jesus in the Gospel of John:

The Son of Man	The Door of Sheepfold
The Messiah	The Good Shepherd
The Bread of Life	The Resurrection and Life
The Light	The True Vine

Today’s lesson is taken from a collection of teachings of Jesus known as the Upper Room Discourse (John 13-17).

Many Bible scholars believe that John 15-17 occurred at the foot of Mt. Olive on the way to Gethsemane (John 14:31; Matt.26:30, 36). It was given to eleven of the disciples of Jesus. Judas Iscariot had left to finalize his betrayal of Jesus to the Jewish religious leaders (John 13:30-31; 18:1-3; Matt.26:14-15; 27:1-10).

Following the prayer of John 17, they crossed the Kidron and went to the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:1).

Christian hermeneutic teachers like Zuck and Terry refer to our lesson text as an allegory. As an allegory you are looking for comparisons explained in the allegory with a main doctrinal theme plus other doctrinal concepts.

**We will study the following six aspects of the outrageous claim of Jesus
“I AM THE TRUE VINE.”**

1. There are three main comparisons with a main doctrinal theme in this allegory.

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|------------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| • True vine | (Jn.15:1, 4, 5) | Jesus |
| • Gardener | (Jn.15:1, 8) | Father |
| • Branches in Me | (Jn.15: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) | Believers |

Main doctrinal theme (Jn.15:8): “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”

The main doctrinal theme is emphasized by a special prepositional phrase, “**by this** (en+instrumental houtos / inst.sn)

(Jn.15:8) “**By this**” refers to a specific part of the content of the allegory that brings glory to the Father (Gardener). **This allegory is not dealing with salvation but divine production.**

2. The specific part of the content is Jn.15:2-7 and the branches in Christ.

Three types of branches in Christ are mentioned, but **only one** will glorify the Father (Jn.15:2, 8).

- Branches without fruit (Jn.15:2)
- Branches with fruit (Jn.15:2)
- Branches with much fruit (Jn.15:2, 5, 8)

Which branch glorifies the Father? (Jn.15:8) _____

What did the gardener do to get “much fruit?” (Jn.15:2) _____

Which branch did the gardener prune? (Jn.15:2) _____

3. Jesus used a paronomasia in Jn.15:2. He used a play on words with the two Greek words: airo (take away) and kathairo (purge or prune).

- Branch that bears (phero / p.a.ptc.nsn) **NO fruit** He takes away (airo / p.a.ind.3ps) (Jn.15:2; 1:29)
- Branch that bears (phero / p.a.ptc.nsn) **fruit** He purges or prunes (kathairo / p.a.ind.3ps) (Jn.15:2)
- Why did He prune the fruit bearing branch? _____ (Jn.15:2, 8)
- Why did He throw away some branches? _____ (Jn.15: 6)
- He cut on both branches. What was the difference? _____ (Jn.15:2, 6)

4. In 15:3, Jesus told the eleven disciples that they were already clean (ede katharos).

Jesus had said the same thing in different circumstances to His 12 disciples **at the foot washing**

(Jn.13:10-11) “Jesus said to them, He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean (katharos); and you are clean (katharos), **but not all of you**. For He knew the one who was **betraying Him**; for this reason He said, ‘Not all of you are clean (katharos).’” (Jn.15:2, 6)

(Jn.13:18-19) “I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that **the Scriptures may be fulfilled**, ‘He who eats My bread has lifted up his heel against Me.’ From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I AM HE.” (Jn.14:29; 17:12)

(Jn.13:30-31) ‘And so after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night. When therefore he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him.’”

5. Once again Jesus told the 11 disciples that they were clean.

But this time it was by the word of God being cycled through their lives by faith

(Jn.15:3) “You are **already** clean (katharos) because of (dia+accusative of cause) the word (ton logos / asm) which I have spoken (laleo/ perf.a.ind.1ps) to you (dplm).”

The word of God working through the faith cycle is the productive link between the vine and the branches bearing fruit and the Father's glory. **Hearing** (Rom.10:17); **Believing** (Heb.4:2); **Applying** (2 Cor.5:7); and **Completing** (James 2:22)

They are headed for failure in the faith cycle before this night is over (Jn.13:18-38) [betrayal] (Jn.16:32-33) [Peter] (Jn.13:13-38; Matt.27:75).

6. The Greek word meno [abide / remain] is used seven times in connection between the Vine and the branches

(Jn.15:4-7) "Abide (meno / a.a.impv.2pl) in Me, and I in you."

Warning:

(Jn.15:4) Branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine.

(Jn.15:5b) For apart from Me you can do nothing.

(Jn.15:6) Withered branch is thrown away (**Greek tenses**) (Matt.13:4-5, 20-21).

Promise:

(Jn.15:7-8) "If you abide in Me, and My word abides in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. **By this** is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples"