



Life Guide

applying God's Word to life

5th Sunday of Easter Resurrection Hope Bears Fruit

John 15:1-8

"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. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."

1. Why does Jesus say he is the true vine? Consult Isaiah 5:1-7. What is the contrast between the true vine and the other vine the Bible speaks of?

The vineyard of Israel was given everything from God the gardener, but it produced bad fruit. God was forced to destroy his vineyard and cut off its vines but sending the people to captivity. Jesus is the true vine who stands in the place of Israel to bear perfect fruit.

2. Pruning involves cutting and snipping. How is the work of a gardener pruning vines like the work of God the Father pruning his children?
A gardener doesn't let every bud grow. Branches need to be snipped in the right places to shape and fashion them so that they don't just grow more branches, but bear fruit. The gardener must also get rid of tangled excess branches so allow room for the right growth. Sometimes God needs to cut things out of our lives so that we serve him more faithfully. That cutting may not always feel good. We may not understand it. But God knows exactly why it is good for us.
3. When Jesus says, "You are already clean," he is making a pun, since the word for "pruning" and the word "clean" sound very similar in Greek and the verb for "pruning" can also mean "cleaning". When did you first become "pruned" by the word?
When the word takes root in our hearts, the Father forgives our sins and washes them away. For many of us, that initial cleaning/pruning takes place at our baptism. If you came to faith as an adult, the pruning took place when God produced faith. He continues to prune us as we hear his word and receive the Sacraments.
4. What promises to we need to remember when God's work of pruning in our lives feels painful and hard?
God is pruning us to be more fruitful.
He is working all thing out for our eternal good.
He planned our lives from the creation of the world and uses everything bad in conformity with his plan of salvation to save us.
In the midst of trial, he knows just what we need.
He can empathize with us as one who has experienced far more pain than we ever will.
5. Agree or Disagree: When unbelievers donate to charity or help in the community, they are doing good works.
Without faith it is impossible to please God. No one can bear fruit apart from the vine. Unbelievers may do things

that look morally good or beneficially to others, but these works do not please God, since the people that do them are not connected to the vine. These good looking acts are called “civic righteousness”. God made use the actions of unbelievers to provide benefit for his own children.

6. In this section, Jesus masterfully weaves law truths and gospel truths together. Practice distinguishing law and gospel by making a list of each.
 - a. Law
 - He cuts off every branch that bears no fruit.
 - No branch can bear fruit by itself.
 - Branches that are cut off are thrown away and burned.
 - b. Gospel
 - You are clean because of the Word.
 - Jesus the Vine is your life source and he promises to remain in you.
 - The Father prunes you to be even more fruitful
 - You can ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.
7. Agree or Disagree: A Christian can have living faith without any good works.

Disagree- Faith without works is dead. Living faith produces fruit. Every branch that bears no fruit is cut off and burned.
8. Agree or Disagree: Since faith without deeds is dead, good works are necessary for salvation.

Disagree- The first part is true, but the second part makes a wrong jump. Good works are necessary. But good works are not necessary for our salvation. They do not contribute in any way to us being saved. If we make our own good works a part of why we are saved, we have made ourselves our own saviors and have fallen away from grace.

9. The disciples fell hard. After Jesus rose, he picks them up and restored them in the vine again. What comfort does this give you when you fail miserably in your Christian life?

The disciples were real sinners who sinned in big ways, just like each of us. We will fall and fail in our Christian life. Christ promises to remain in us and the Father promises to prune us. Jesus restored them in their faith and made them fruitful in his kingdom and he will do the same for you.