



"THE VINE"

Jesus said: "I am the Vine, ye are the branches." John 15:5

In the previous verse Christ had just said: "Abide in Me." He had then announced the great unalterable law of all branch-life, on earth or in Heaven—"not of itself"; "except it abide."

In the opening words of the parable He had already spoken: "I am the vine." He now repeats the words. He would have us understand—note well the lesson, simple as it appears, it is the key of the abiding life—that the only way to obey the command, "Abide in me," is to have eye and heart fixed upon Himself. "Abide in me ... I am the true vine."

Yea, study this holy mystery until you see Christ as the true Vine, bearing, strengthening, supply-ing, inspiring all His branches, being and doing in each branch all it needs, and the abiding will come of itself. Yes, gaze upon Him as the true Vine, until you feel what a heavenly Mystery it is, and are compelled to ask the Father to reveal it to you by His Holy Spirit.

He to whom God reveals the glory of the true Vine, he who sees what Jesus is and waits to do every moment, he cannot but abide. The vision of Christ is an irresistible attraction; it draws and holds us like a magnet. Listen ever to the living Christ still speaking to you, and waiting to show you the meaning and power of His Word: "I am the vine."

How much weary labor there has been in striv-ing to understand what abiding is, how much fruitless effort in trying to attain it! Why was this? Because the attention was turned to the abiding as a work we have to do, instead of the living Christ—in whom we were to be kept abiding, who Himself was to hold and keep us. We thought of abiding as a continual strain and effort. We forget that it means rest from effort to one who has found the place of his abode.

Do notice how Christ said, "Abide in Me; I am the Vine that brings forth, and holds, and strengthens, and makes fruitful the branches. Abide in Me, rest in Me, and let Me do My work. I am the true Vine, all I am, and speak, and do is divine truth, giving the actual reality of what is said. I am the Vine, only consent and yield thy all to Me, I will do all in thee."

And so it sometimes comes that souls who have never been specially occupied with the thought of abiding,

are abiding all the time, because they are occupied with Christ. Not that the word abide is not needful—Christ used it so often, because it is the very key to the Christian life. But He would have us understand it in its true sense: **"Come out of every other place, and every other trust and occupation, come out of self with its reasonings and efforts, come and rest in what I shall do. Live out of thyself; abide in Me. Know that thou art in Me; thou needest no more; remain there in Me."**

"I am the Vine." Christ did not keep this mystery hidden from His disciples. He revealed it, first in words here, then in power when the Holy Spirit came down. He will reveal it to us too, first in the thoughts and confessions and desires these words awaken, then in power by the Spirit.

Do let us wait on Him to show us all the heavenly meaning of the mystery. Let each day, in our quiet time, in the inner chamber with Him and His Word, our chief thought and aim be to get the heart fixed on Him, in the assurance: all that a vine ever can do for its branches, my Lord Jesus will do, is doing, for me.

Give Him time, give Him your ear, that He may whisper and explain the divine secret: "I am the vine."

Above all, remember, Christ is the Vine of God's planting, and you are a branch of God's grafting. Ever stand before God, *in* Christ. Ever wait for all grace from God, *in* Christ. Ever yield yourself to bear the more fruit the Husbandman asks, *in* Christ. And pray much for the revelation of the mystery that all the love and power of God that rested on Christ is working in you too. "I am God's Vine," Jesus says; "all I am I have from Him; all I am is for you; God will work it in you."

"I am the Vine." Blessed Lord, speak Thou that word into my soul. Then shall I know that all Thy fullness is for me. And that I can count upon Thee to stream it into me, and that my abiding is so easy and so sure when I forget and lose myself in the adoring faith that the Vine holds the branch and supplies its every need.

