

Are You In Christ, or Are You In Christ?

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- [0 : 0 0] if you haven't already turned there, because we're going to be mainly in John this morning, in the Gospel of John, in 15 and some of the prior chapters as well. So John 15, the setting is the upper room, is Jerusalem.
- They're celebrating Passover. Jesus and his disciples have withdrawn to a private setting. We read this earlier, a few chapters earlier in John.
- And in John chapter 15, we sort of enter the conversation, the teaching, the intimate sort of setting that Jesus is having with his disciples.
- So if you were to back up a few chapters, in chapter 11, we read this. At the very end of chapter 11, the last three verses, John writes, Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves.
- They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, What do you think? That he will not come to the feast at all? Now the chief priest and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where he was, knew where Jesus was, he should let them know so that they might arrest him, arrest Jesus.
- [1 : 1 9] And so it's Passover time in Jerusalem. Throngs of people are returning to Jerusalem to celebrate this annual occasion. Passover, you're probably familiar with what Passover is, at least at a high level.
- The Jews are celebrating their delivery, right, from out of Egypt when they were in capture hundreds of years ago. Right? So it's a season, it's a tradition where the Jews come to Jerusalem.
- There's lots of buzz. There's lots of activity there. And you all know as well, right, as you've read through the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you know that as Christ walked through his ministry, those three years on earth when he was in his former ministry, he wasn't getting along with the religious leaders at the time, with the Pharisees.
- Right? We see a progressive antagonism between him and the religious leaders to the point where, as we read at the end of John 11, the religious leaders are seeking to arrest him because they want to kill Jesus.
- So everyone's asking, is Jesus coming to Jerusalem or no? Because if Jesus is found, he's going to be arrested. And so we see that at the end of chapter 11.
- [2 : 3 5] So beginning in chapter 12, so you're right there in that place. Let me read the first few verses in chapter 12. It says, So we're days away from the Passover celebration, from the actual meal.
- This is what happens in John 15, right? The upper room setting where they are celebrating that Passover, the night before Jesus is crucified. Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.
- So we see that Jesus indeed is returning to Jerusalem. But he first goes to Bethany. Bethany is a couple of miles east of Jerusalem. So he's not in Jerusalem properly yet, but he is coming to Jerusalem for the Passover.

We know to meet with his disciples and have final instruction for them. We're not going to read just for the sake of time. We're not going to read. I was hoping we could read just 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

And then we can say amen and be done, right? Just read scripture, right? But for the sake of time, we're not going to read chapter 12. But just let me remind you that here it is. As the timeline goes, we have six days before Passover.

[3 : 51] Jesus is meeting with Martha and Mary. And this is the account where Mary breaks the flask open of perfume and anoints Jesus' feet. We read that that ointment was worth a year's wage for a common worker.

A year's wage for a common worker. That's some expensive perfume and ointment, right? And then who else is on the scene during this account? Judas. Now, Judas, I'm going to keep bringing Judas up because that's actually a key in understanding John 15.

So Judas is there. And what does he do? Lord, is he just praising Jesus when he's there? And Judas is so happy that Mary has went through this extravagant act of anointing Jesus' feet.

No, yeah, you all are correct. All of you are nodding. No, no. Actually, what does Judas do? He scolds Mary and Jesus as well. And what does Jesus say back to Judas?

Leave her alone. This is verse 7. Leave her alone so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.

[5 : 00] So again, this is the context, right? This is the background leading up to John chapter 15. If we skip forward a little bit to verse 27 in chapter 12, let me do read this verse to you.

John 12, 27. Jesus says, Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour.

But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name. So what do you think? Jesus says, Now is my soul troubled.

Jesus Christ, 100% God, 100% man, the second person of the Trinity, God the Son. And He speaks and He says, Now my soul is troubled.

Now if we look at the word troubled, it literally means that He's stirred. He's agitated. He's bothered. And the tense of that Greek word pretty much translates that His soul has been disturbed and it remains being disturbed or troubled.

[6 : 13] So Jesus is troubled. Again, it's good context to know as we move forward to chapter 15. Why do you think Jesus is troubled? Right?

We'll keep thinking about that. We're going to get to that as to why He might be troubled. If we keep moving forward as we approach chapter 15, we go into chapter 13, right?

And chapter 13, verse 1 says, Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

We read that just a minute ago. So now we fast forward a few days. Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come, He knows that He will be obeying His Father, right?

And taking on the wrath of God because the sins of the world to all those who would be called to His name. Right? So it makes sense that Jesus is troubled.

[7 : 22] Right? He contemplates this wrath being poured out on Him. 2 Corinthians 5.21. Some of you may have this memorized, right?

2 Corinthians 5.21. Paul writes, This is what Jesus is contemplating.

That God the Father is going to make Him sin. Not sin in His essence, right? Because Jesus is perfect. But He's going to lay upon Him the sins of the world.

And then incur the penalty of those sins. God's wrath. Right? So in His troubled state, Jesus knows that His time has come.

We can rewind earlier in John and see His time had not yet come. That's a familiar phrase. Hopefully to some of you who have read through the Gospels, that when something may happen to Jesus, the writer will say, But His time had not yet come.

[8 : 33] Well, we've come to the point where Jesus realizes that His time has come. And so as we start chapters 13 and then go into 14, 15, and 16, and 17, the setting is, like I said earlier, is the upper room where Jesus and His disciples have retreated to celebrate Passover.

And then for Jesus, basically, to give His final words of instruction and encouragement to His disciples. All right. In 13, chapter 2, again, laying the context here because it's so important.

This is the one thing, as I was preparing for this sermon, understanding Judas' role and character in all this was just brought home to me in a clearer way this time.

And so I wanted just to share this, maybe as we go through these verses, it will for you, and you'll recognize, when Jesus in chapter 15, and we'll get to this shortly, when He talks about the unfruitful branches, you know, that is a connection to Judas.

But we'll get there. I don't want to get too far ahead of myself, but that's sort of where we're going. So chapters 13 through 17 are set in the upper room. If you were to read the very last verse, the last half of the verse of chapter 14, as Jesus has been teaching, He says, Rise, let us go from here.

[10 : 00] So some Bible commentators think, well, okay, well, that means chapters 15 and 16, when we see Jesus teach. And then chapter 17, the high priestly prayer, right when Jesus prays to His Father.

Some Bible commentators think, oh, well, this is Jesus and His disciples sort of making their way from the upper room across Jerusalem, past the temple, out to the east gate, and on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane.

Some commentators think that. Some think, no, no, no, rise, let us go from here, basically is sort of an indication that Jesus is inviting them to rise from where they are reclining at meal, because they've had the Passover meal, and maybe to retire to a different part of the house.

It doesn't really matter. What matters is what Christ is teaching. Okay? So that's the setting, is Christ is teaching and talking to His disciples.

By the way, if we were to look ahead to chapter 18, verse 1, after Jesus prays to His Heavenly Father, chapter 18, verse 1 says, when Christ had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples across the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden.

[11 : 08] So that reading would make you think, oh, yeah, yeah, they were in the upper room the whole time, maybe in a different room, and it was after that high priestly prayer that then they made their way to the Garden of Gethsemane, and you know there, where the disciples fall asleep, where Jesus is praying again to His Father, you know, sweating drips of blood, and then where Judas finally brings the officials to come and arrest Jesus.

Again, more of a technical note, but as you picture the setting, I sort of lean toward, based on what I've studied, that they're still somewhere inside and in a private place, again, listening to their Savior.

So Jesus is troubled because the wrath of God that He's to incur is hours away. But let's look at it, go back to chapter 13, let's look at verse 2 again.

So this is during the Passover Supper. So chapter 13, verse 2. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God, and was going back to God, rose from supper.

So verse 2. During supper, when the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him. So I can't explain this other than just when I read this, is Christ troubled?

[12 : 42] Is He agitated? Is He bothered that the final betrayal from Judas is about to happen? I mean, Jesus again, right? He's the Son of God. He knew from the beginning.

He knows all things. He knew from the beginning that even the chosen 12, He knew in His ultimate plan, in His sovereign plan, that one would betray Him. But I don't know.

Are you like, you know, you know that something's going to happen, but when it does happen, you know, you're sort of like, you're not ready for it, even though you know it was coming. I don't know. I don't necessarily want to presume to know the feelings of the Lord Jesus, other than what we read from Scripture.

But we do read that His soul is troubled. And as He thinks about this final betrayal of one of the 12, I just wonder if this is still something that is just very sobering to think about.

You know, the devil had already put it into his heart to betray Jesus. Look what Jesus says in verses 10 and 11, again in chapter 13. Jesus said to Him, The one who is bathed does not need to wash.

[13 : 49] Now, by the way, this is when Jesus is washing the feet of the disciples. I'm going to assume that you're familiar with that. That's one of the main actions that happened in the upper room where Jesus is being the example to His disciples to be a servant to one another.

But Jesus says, and He's talking to Peter. So you remember, He's talking to Peter, and Peter went, you know Peter, right? You all, who loves Peter, right? You know, loud, obnoxious. You know, He's ready to jump into the fight.

I want Peter by my side, though, right? If we're ever to have any sort of conflict or encounter trouble. So Peter is saying, well, Jesus, I don't, you, you're going to wash my feet.

Far be it. Don't, I don't want you to wash my feet. And then Jesus says, what I am doing, you do not understand now, but afterward, you will understand. Oh, and then Peter says, you shall never wash my feet.

And then Jesus answers, if I do not wash you, you have no share with me. So it's no surprise. What's Peter's reaction? Well, wash all of me then. Take the water and just wash me completely because I want all, you know, I want my share to be all of me for you, Jesus.

[14 : 59] And then Jesus replies, you know, the one who is bathed does not need to wash except for his feet. So, so this is not the part, you know, this is not, this is all freebie stuff.

We haven't gotten a sermon yet to John 15, right? So, but, but, but this is so, this is so, it's so crucial to, to understand chapter 15. But, you know, Peter, you know, oh, so Christ is saying the one who is bathed does not need to wash, right?

So, if you're a believer, you don't need continual washing, right? You have been saved. You are clean through the, through my word. He says, except for his feet. And so that sort of alludes to you are safe positionally, but you're still clothed in sinful flesh, right?

So we as believers, we do need his continual forgiveness, if you would. And so he's painting this picture here. But he, but Jesus says, you are clean. But get this, at the very end of verse 10, Jesus says, and you are clean, but not every one of you.

But you are clean. You are saved. You have eternal life in me, but not every one of you. Who's Jesus referring to? Judas. So Jesus knows.

[16 : 11] Again, I just point that out because this is no surprise to Jesus. He knows. He knows. Verse 18, let's, let's fast forward ahead. Again, this is focusing on Judas here.

Jesus is speaking again. He's teaching. Verse 18, I am not speaking of all of you. I know whom I have chosen, but the scripture will be fulfilled.

He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me. Interesting, interesting analogy there, huh? Interesting object. Lifted his heel. Do you hear echoes of Genesis a little bit?

Lifted his heel against me. So again, Christ knows. He knows that he will be betrayed. He who ate my bread has lifted his heel. And then do let me read verses 21 through 30 as I sort of wrap up just sort of the background before we get to chapter 15.

This is significant. So let me read chapter 13 verses 21 through 30. So after saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit.

[17:16] Here we go again, right? So we're reminded that Jesus, the Son of God, is troubled in his spirit. And Jesus testifies, truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.

Well, the disciples looked at one another uncertain of whom he spoke. And one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, that's referring to John, the author of this gospel, he was reclining at table close to Jesus.

So picture them around the table, right? And Jesus proclaims, one of you will betray me, right? And so all the disciples are sort of shocked. So Simon Peter motioned to him.

So of course, here's good old Simon Peter again, right? So picture, here's Jesus, here's John sort of beside him, and there's Simon Peter across the table. So as soon as Jesus, you know, testifies, one of you is going to betray me.

Well, you know, Peter's ready to jump across the table and find out who it is. And so, so Peter is motioning over to John, right? So it says here, so Simon Peter motioned to him, the one whom Jesus loved, John, to ask Jesus, of whom Jesus is speaking?

[18:28] So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, so this is John speaking, leaning back against the Lord Jesus, and he asked, Lord, who is it? And Jesus answered, it is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread that I have dipped it.

Oh, I'm sorry, when I have dipped it. So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered him, into him.

Jesus said to him, said to Judas, what you are doing, what you are going to do, do quickly. So you would think at this moment, right, Simon Peter, if I'm Simon, I think I'm jumping across, and grabbing Judas in a headlock, right?

And, you know, Jesus, the man who we have followed for three years, just told us that one of us is going to betray him. And Peter says, hey, John, ask Jesus who he's talking about.

And so, John leans over and asks Jesus, and Jesus says, the one whom I am to dip the morsel and give it to, that's who it is. And then it says here, so when he had dipped the morsel, he, Jesus, gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.

[19:44] And then after Judas eats it, Satan enters Judas, and then Jesus says, what are you going to do? What you are going to do, do quickly.

Now, here's what's interesting. Let's keep reading. Now, no one at the table knew why he said this to him. None of the disciples understood why Jesus said to Judas, what you are going to do, do quickly.

Verse 29, some thought that, well, because Judas had the money bag, that Jesus was telling him, buy what we need for the feast, or that he should give something to the poor.

So after receiving the morsel of bread, he, Judas, immediately went out, and it was night. So, as we look at this account, perhaps it's not as obvious as we think, right?

Perhaps it was John who leaned back and maybe privately asked, Jesus, who are you talking about? And maybe it was during the course of the meal that Jesus dips the bread and hands it to Judas, and Judas eats it.

[20 : 49] We don't know exactly. You know, when we read this, you think, wasn't it clear to the disciples? Wasn't it clear that Judas was the betrayer? And yet, when Jesus sends Judas out to do what he's going to do, which is to betray him, to go to the chief priest, and report him, and bring the guards there, they all think that Judas is just doing what he's supposed to do, going to buy more food for the meal.

So, so it's clear that even in this account, as we read this in God's word, it's clear to us, we have been given the privilege to sort of seeing this clearly.

But you put yourself in the disciples' shoes. For some reason that I can explain through my studies, the disciples, it sort of, they sort of missed this whole poignant moment of Judas about to betray Jesus.

Okay, so when, so in the disciples' eyes, Judas is still one of them, right? He's, he's going to do, he's obeying Jesus, going to get more food perhaps. And so, there is a perception still of the disciples that Judas is a follower of Christ.

Not even in their mind at this point, perhaps, that Judas is truly a betrayer. Okay, so this is the setting, this is the background that we have.

[22 : 17] So, Judas has departed, right? Interesting that, that John writes at the end of, of verse 30 that I just read, and it was night. You know, more ways than one.

It was dark. Not just, not just because the sun had set, but Judas is going to do his final act of betrayal. Darton, there's Darton there.

Satan has entered him. And that is indeed dark. So, that's sort of the setting. You know, one other thing before we move into chapter 15.

Put yourself in the shoes of the disciples, right? Christ has said, and we haven't, we didn't go over this, again, just for the sake of time, but, but the disciples have heard that one of you will betray me.

Jesus has also said in chapter 13, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, but where I am, you cannot go. So, Jesus is telling the disciples, I'm about to leave.

[23 : 15] And he's told them that in the past, but now perhaps it's ringing true, truer in their ears. And so, there's some, one of us is going to betray.

In other accounts, each of the disciples ask, is it I? Is it I? Is it I? You know, it's totally a new news, a surprise to the disciples. So, one of us is going to betray Jesus.

Jesus is about to leave us. We followed him. We've left everything, right? We've left our homes. We left our jobs. To follow this man, Jesus Christ. And now he's telling us that he's about to leave.

So, the disciples are fearful. They don't know what's about to happen to them or to Jesus. In chapter 14, here's the words of Jesus to the disciples.

A couple of times, in verse 1, in verse 27. Chapter 14, verse 1, Jesus says, let your hearts, let not your hearts be troubled. Verse 27, verse 27, peace I leave with you, my peace I give you, not as the world gives, do I give it to you.

[24 : 18] Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. So, when we hear Jesus tell his disciples, let not your hearts be troubled, we can infer that the disciples' hearts are indeed troubled as well.

So, we have Jesus' soul troubled and agitated. We've got the disciples sort of not knowing the future. And so, there's just lots of unknown, lots of just not knowing what the next few days and weeks holds.

So, now, we get to John, chapter 15, and his message regarding the vine and the vinedresser. So, let me read, let me read chapter 15, verses 1 through 11, and then I'll pray.

And with this background, with this context, then we'll go into chapter 15. And we'll do some of it today, and then we'll do the rest of it next week.

So, I won't keep you here too long. Alright? Sorry. Alright. So, here we go. Chapter 15. Jesus says, I am the true vine. I am the true vine.

[25 : 26] We'll get to that in just a moment. I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes that it may bear more fruit.

Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Remember that? Clean? Remember, we just talked about that. He told Peter, you're clean. So, he repeats this. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

Verse 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing.

If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

[26 : 30] If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. Just as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. So Lord, we just want to pause right now, Father, and thank you for your word.

Thank you for the privilege, for the opportunity, to have your word in front of us, that we can learn, and we can grow, and we can be conformed to your image, Father.

Teach us. Teach us through your word, and we thank you, Father, in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Thank you for your word. All right, so as we rewind back to verse one, perhaps you notice, now those of you who are English majors, right, you see a familiar figure of speech that Christ is using here, right?

[27 : 42] I am the true vine. Is Jesus Christ a vine? Literally. No, right? So he's using a metaphor here, right? And we see throughout Scripture, right, metaphors are used all the time, right?

And metaphors are used to compare two things, and the purpose of the metaphors is typically to bring a complex or a complicated concept or an idea to make it easier to understand, right?

Psalms 23, 1, the Lord is my shepherd. Oh, that tells me something, okay? The hearers at the time, they knew what shepherds were. Shepherds care and protect and love.

And ah, okay, so I understand a little bit of the Lord's character in that He is my shepherd. And so this is a familiar figure of speech that's used in Scripture. And so here, we see Jesus saying that I am the true vine.

Now, I'm not going to do this for every verse one through eleven, but I do want to take this verse word by word because it's important that we see what Jesus is saying here.

[28 : 46] And so the first two words in this verse, right, I am. Does that ring a bell to anyone, any of you who are a student of the Gospel of John, right? John shares with us seven significant I am statements that Jesus speaks.

And these I am statements are statements, they're metaphors, right? But they highlight they accentuate Christ's deity and His sufficiency, right?

In Christ, Christ is 100% God and He's fully sufficient for you, right? And so, don't turn here, but let me read these just to maybe re-familiarize yourself with Christ saying these significant I am statements.

So in chapter 6 of John, He says, I am the bread of life. In chapter 8, John writes and Jesus speaks, I am the light of the world, right?

The light dispels darkness. Chapter 10, there's two I am statements. He says, I am the door of the sheep. And then in verse 11 of chapter 10, I am the good shepherd.

[29 : 54] So I am the bread of life. I am the light of the world. I am the door or the gateway, if you would, of the sheep. I am the good shepherd. Chapter 11, I am the resurrection and the life.

Chapter 14, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. Clearly, Jesus is explaining His deity and His sufficiency.

There is, through no other person, no other man, no other action can you enter God's presence than through Jesus Christ. Jesus, I am the way, the truth.

And then here in chapter 15, He says, I am the true vine. Now if you notice, as I read those, I am the bread of life. I am the light.

I am the door. Right? So that third word, I am the. Right? Not a. He's not one of many options. Right? Christ is very clear that He, it's very exclusive when it comes to Him.

[30 : 56] He is the one and only way to eternal life in Jesus Christ. So He says, I am the, Him and only Him. And then He says, I am the true vine.

Alright? So when you hear someone say, well, I am the true something or this is really true. Right? Well, the inference is that there's things that are false. Right?

And so, again, we don't have time to study this, but when Christ says, I'm the true vine, He's basically saying, hey, there are other representatives, there's other false teachings, there's other ideologies that are out there that are false.

And be aware, my disciples, I am the true, true vine. Vine, imagery of a vineyard, vineyard, that's agricultural sort of setting, vineyards, are scattered all throughout the Middle East.

Right? So, again, He's using this metaphor in a way that's familiar to His disciples and to His hearers. Maybe not so much familiar to us. Has anybody worked in a vineyard before and knows much about vines and branches and pruning and that sort of thing?

[32 : 07] Maybe, you know, Michelle, you probably pruned other things, not vines at your home. But, so we sort of generally know, some of us may know a little bit about pruning and whatnot, but in this setting, the disciples, zeroed in, this man who we've followed for three years, who we've given ourselves to, he's telling us, he's reassuring us, he is the true vine.

Christ communicating affirmation and encouragement in this time that they are scared and not sure of the future. So, I am the true vine.

And then, Christ continues in the second half of verse one, and my father is the vine dresser. So, he extends that metaphor, right? So, Christ is the vine and then we have a picture here of God the Father as the vine dresser.

Now, as an aside, right? So, metaphors as are parables and analogies, they're only meant to sort of teach a specific point, right? Let's don't go too far and I am very hesitant to go too far with any sort of analogy or metaphor.

And so, there are many things that God the Father does, right? But in this particular metaphor in chapter 15, Jesus is highlighting two things that God the Father does, right?

[33 : 21] And what does he do? This is what verse 2 says, right? We're introduced to the two responsibilities of the vine dresser. He says, every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he, he the vine dresser, he God the Father, takes away.

And every branch that does bear fruit, he, he the vine dresser, God the Father, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. And so, I'd like to spend the rest of our morning this morning just sort of focused on this first branch, this fruitless branch that God the Father, that the vine dresser, takes away.

And to be able to get a complete picture of these fruitless branches, we also need to look at verse 6 as well. So, verse 2 and verse 6, sort of, our comment, they go hand in hand, if you would, in regards to these fruitless branches.

And so, verse 2 again, every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he, the vine dresser, takes away. Jump down to verse 6, and the branches are gathered and they're thrown into the fire and they're burned.

So, there's a cutting away, the vine dresser, cutting away those fruitless branches and then there's a destroying, right? those branches are burned.

[34 : 40] They are destroyed. It may harken back. If we read this, some of you may remember back in Matthew 13, and I'm going to turn here.

Feel free to turn here as well. Hold your place in John 15. But if we turn back to Matthew 13, and Jesus uses another metaphor to explain sort of a similar cleaning out, if you would, of dead things, in this case weeds.

And so, in chapter 13, verse 38, Jesus is explaining a parable that he spoke earlier in chapter 13, the parable of the weeds. And Jesus says, I'll pick it up in verse 38, the field is the world and the good seed is the sons of the kingdom.

The weeds are the sons of the evil one, and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the clothes of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the close of the age.

So we see Jesus teaching at least a couple of analogies, if you would, right? Of a gathering of weeds. Those represent things that are sown by the devil, by the enemy.

[36 : 01] And then here, in chapter 15, we see there being a cutting away and destroying of unfruitful branches. So, for those of you who have heard this passage taught, maybe, by other pastors, or maybe you've had Bible studies, maybe you've studied through the book of John, is this troublesome for you?

Have you worked through this? Right? The picture, this metaphor here of a branch that's in the vine, right? That's what verse 2 says, right?

Every branch that's in me. Now, wait a minute. So it's a branch, it's in me, it's in Jesus, but yet, it says here that God the Father is going to come and cut it and get rid of it and gather them up and burn them and destroy them.

So think of application, right? This is where you need to put your doctrinal sort of hat on here and think through what is Jesus teaching His disciples here? Is Jesus teaching that I can be in Christ but yet I can also lose that relationship and be condemned?

Right? Can a branch, a disciple of Jesus, have eternal life and then lose it and be condemned? Can a person be born again and then be lost?

[37 : 34] Can a person be a child of God through faith, and we read about that in the first chapter of John, and then be lost? Is that what Jesus is teaching here? Right?

What's the definitive answer here? The answer is no, no, no, no. And Jesus labors to teach us this, actually the opposite of this, you can have it and then you can lose it, right?

He labors throughout John and we're going to look at a couple of examples in John where Jesus labors to teach that that's not the case. And you all may be sort of catching on, right, that we're talking about eternal security, right, the perseverance of the saints.

And I want to sort of focus and just with our remaining time, again, camp out on this because this is a passage that those who promote and support the idea that you can be genuinely saved in Jesus Christ, but there's no assurance that you will keep that salvation, that you can lose that salvation.

And that is just, the Bible just does not teach that. And so I want us to spend a few minutes, I want to equip you, I want to teach you if you've never heard of this doctrine before and just show you what Scripture says about this.

[38 : 48] And for those of you who may be sort of familiar with it, I want to teach you so that you know where to reference and where to go so that you can combat this false teaching. And that's what we're going to do today and then we'll pick up John 15, the rest of it, next Sunday, Lord willing.

So you're in John 15, turn back if you would to John chapter 6. So I want to look just at a couple of examples where Jesus teaches that this is not the case, you cannot lose your salvation.

John 6, verses 35 through 39. I will read those verses. Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life.

That's one of the I am statements we just talked about, right? Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me shall not hunger and whoever believes in me shall not thirst, shall never thirst.

But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

[40 : 08] Underline that. For those of you who mark in your Bible, underline that. I will never cast out. Those of you who come to me. For I have come down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me.

And this is the will of Him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me but raise it up on the last day. Underline those verses.

Highlight those verses. Jesus is clearly teaching that He will never cast out, that He will never lose anything, anyone that is given to Him by God, His Father.

God has a people that He has chosen, right? In order for God to give a people to Jesus, that means God has to have this people to begin with, right? So God has chosen this people and He gives this people, Christians, genuine believers, to Jesus Christ, the Son.

In John 17, 6, so remember I shared that in John 15 the setting is the upper room and this is the teaching we're going through and then in John 17 this is the high priestly prayer when Jesus spends the whole chapter as we read with Jesus talking to His Father.

[41 : 28] In verse 6 let's read what Jesus says to His Father as He's praying to Him. Jesus has lifted up His eyes to heaven. He's talking to His Father. In verse 6 it says, I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.

Yours they were and you gave them to me and they have kept your word. Right? So Jesus has a people. He's given them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And all of them come. Right? Going back to chapter 6 verse 37 what we just read. All that the Father gives me will come to me.

Right? So Jesus has given the people to Jesus. I mean God the Father has given the people to Jesus. The people come and Jesus says whoever comes to me I will never cast out.

None are lost. None are cast out. John 6 35 through 39. Let's look at another example of Christ's teaching. Move forward to chapter 10.

[42 : 32] You want to mark this one in your Bibles. John chapter 10 verse 26. Chapter 10 verse 26. I'll read verses 26 through 30.

So 26 picks up and Jesus is speaking but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me.

I give them eternal life and they will never perish and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father who has given them to me is greater than all and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

I and the Father are one. Isn't that pretty clear? That's pretty straightforward. Right? That is pretty darn clear that Jesus is teaching that the people that God the Father gives to Christ His sheep hear Jesus' voice and they follow Him and Jesus says no one will snatch them.

He will not give them away. No one will be able to snatch them. Out of the Father's hand I and the Father are one. So these are two examples of where Jesus has clear teaching in this same gospel of the eternal security of the believer.

[44 : 00] So again we go back to the question that we just had. So wait a minute but in chapter 15 is Jesus saying that there is a branch in Him that is lost?

So the key to realizing this is that there are two kinds of attachments to Jesus. There's a kind of attachment, a kind of disciple, a kind of believing that is not saving.

That is there are believers who are not true believers. There are disciples but they're not true disciples.

There are those that are in Christ but they're truly not in Christ and thus my sermon title this morning, earlier, it was on the screen, the sermon title is Are You in Christ or Are You in Christ?

I think I had two or three of you. Great, is there a typo there? Is there a word missing? No, that was on purpose. Just to illustrate or sort of emphasize the point, when we look at this teaching, we have to realize that there are those that are associated with Christ that are in Christ but not in Christ from a salvific perspective.

[45 : 26] So Greg, you're confusing me, I don't understand, hang on, hang on, so let's go to John chapter 8. Let's go to John chapter 8 and I want to illustrate a couple of examples from scripture of where there's these seeming disciples but scripture shows us that they're not really disciples.

So John chapter 8 and we'll go down to verse 30 and we read in chapter 8 verse 30, again in John, he says, as he was saying these things, as Jesus was saying these things, many believed in him.

Alright, so there's some believers, they're believing what Jesus is saying. Alright, verse 31, verse 31, my disciples and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free.

Well, they answered him, we are offspring of Abraham and never have been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say you will become free? Verse 34, Note that.

Verse 38. So verse 30, there's many who've believed Him.

[47 : 06] Verse 31, Jesus is describing these people. So Jesus said to the Jews, I'm sorry, John. John's the writer. John describes these as those who had believed in Jesus.

Verse 31. But then Jesus says, You seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. Did you notice what Jesus said back up in verse 31?

If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples. This is what Jesus is going to teach us next Sunday, Lord willing, when we go through the rest of chapter 15.

And so we have an example here of where in Scripture, there are those who seem to believe Jesus, to believe what He's saying. And John even describes them, Jews who had believed in Him.

But that's truly not the case. believers, but not truly believers. Quickly, I want to turn to John 6. Chapter 6, verse 66.

[48 : 05] Here's another example. We read, after this, this is John writing, After this, many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with Him.

So the context here is Jesus is talking about He's the bread of life. And then He says these hard words, Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh and the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

And then He goes on to explain what that means. But yet it's hard teaching from some of those who are following Jesus. And then we read in verse 66, Many of His disciples turned back.

So Paul describes them as disciples, but they're not true disciples. You start to see there is a, there is a, what seems to be someone who's a disciple.

There seems to be someone who follows Jesus Christ. But they are not. Let me give you maybe a simpler example. Maybe it's home. It's a modern example.

[49 : 06] But you've heard of the term a fair weather fan. All right. You all follow baseball, right? You're not Atlanta Braves fair weather fans. You're hardcore, die to the end.

You are. Okay, not Jeff. Okay. So Jeff may be a fair weather fan, right? That's okay. That's okay. But the term, think of the concept of a fair weather fan, right? This is a simplified example. Don't take this too far.

But fair weather fan, right? So if you follow sports, if you follow your favorite personality, right? You're sort of a fair weather follower, a fair weather fan. When things are good, right? When things are going well, when your team's winning, it's easy to get behind them and cheer them on and be there for them and go to the games and spend money on paraphernalia that you wear, right?

But when that team just is no good, right? They're embarrassing to watch. They're at the bottom of the rankings. I'm not going to even say some sports names that come to mind because I don't have offended anyone, right?

But there are, but, right, the fair weather fans will sort of drop out and go find a more comfortable place to be. Maybe a team who is winning, right?

[50 : 17] Seems to be a fan of a particular sport or a particular tennis player, right? Right? But when that sports team or that tennis player isn't doing so well, what will fair weather fans do?

They're going to turn away and go somewhere else, right? So you seem to be a fan of something, but maybe you're not. Fair weather fan. Again, that's not a biblical example.

I hesitated mentioning this, but since it's modern, you know, current, maybe that will connect with some of you. Fair weather fans. All right. Well, on a more serious note, I do want to turn to Matthew 7.

And please turn with me to Matthew 7. And I think some of you may know where I'm going here. This is the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 7, verse 21 through 23.

And this is a much more serious, sober reading of what Christ warns.

[51 : 21] As we think about disciples or not true disciples, believers or not true believers. Matthew 7, verse 21. Jesus is speaking.

He's teaching. He says, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? And did we not cast out demons in your name? And did we not do mighty works in your name?

And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Sobering.

Sobering. Chilling. To live a life here on this earth thinking that you're a true disciple and you're a true believer.

[52 : 18] And at the end of the time, you learn that you're not. When you physically die and you learn quite soberly that you do have eternal life, but that eternal life is not in the presence of the Lord.

It's eternal damnation. It's eternal separation from the Lord. Jesus warns those who are listening here on the Sermon on the Mount, on those on the countryside listening to his teaching, that there are those of you who appear to be, have the appearance of, being my followers and my disciples, but you're not.

So, the point of application here is, how do you know? What branch are you? Are you the non-fruit-bearing branch that Jesus refers to in John 15 too?

Are you one of these that appears to be grafted into the vine to be a follower of Jesus Christ? And from the outside, all appearance is that you are.

But maybe you're not. Maybe you have no assurance of your salvation. Maybe you have looked in the mirror. You've looked at your life.

[53 : 41] And you just don't know whether you're a true believer this morning. And so, this is why I would ask you, again, in closing, if you look at your life, if you look in the mirror, and you just don't know that there are good works there.

If you don't know that you are abiding in him, we're going to talk about what that means next week. This is actually, I was so eager to preach this section because I've been wanting to learn and study and just to share with you what it means to abide in Christ.

So, we'll get there next week. But I had to get, we had to talk about this first in order to get to abiding. So, do you know whether you're truly abiding in Christ?

Do you know whether you're bearing fruit? Do you love Jesus? And I'm asking you, these things are not for you to earn your salvation.

There's one, and I should have mentioned this at the beginning. John 15 is not a salvation teaching. It's not. Jesus is talking to his disciples. And again, he's about to depart, send the Holy Spirit.

[54 : 51] The disciples don't know what to do. And it's sort of establishing what Christian living is to look like on earth when those are filled with the Holy Spirit. It's about Christian living. It's about sanctification.

It's not about how to be saved, how to be grafted in, if you would, to Jesus Christ. So, let me offer you, again, don't turn off.

Don't hit neutral right now. But let me just, in closing, just share with you the simple gospel message. And I'm going to share this with you. And if after I share this, and we'll sing, and we'll pray, and we'll wrap up our worship service this morning.

But if there's any doubt in your mind whatsoever, whether you're a true believer of Jesus Christ, I want you to grab me. I'll stay here all afternoon if needed. Grab Jeff. Grab some of the other folks in our church.

And let's talk through, today could be the day of salvation for you. Okay? And so, many of you are familiar with the gospel message through the process, God, man, Christ, and response.

[55 : 59] Men, we went over this a few meetings ago. I think, Jeremy, when we were at your house. And we talked about, basically, God is a good God, right? God is the creator of all things.

We read this in Genesis. He is perfectly holy. He's worthy of all worship. And God will punish sin, right? God created a perfect place.

Created Adam and Eve in a perfect garden. But sin entered the world. And that's man, right? So, we have God creating perfection. Then we have man. Sin entered the world through man.

All people, though created good, they have become sinful by nature. From birth, all people are alienated from God, hostile to God, and therefore subject to the wrath of God.

Right? This is what we talked about. This is what Jesus is about to endure for those who are truly His followers. Right? And so, we have man who, because of sin, they are hopelessly, no opportunity, no process, no way whatsoever to reconcile his relationship to the Lord.

[57 : 06] It's a hopeless state. But then, you know what happened, right? God the Father brought Jesus Christ to the world. Jesus Christ, fully God, fully man, lived a sinless life, died on the cross to bear God's wrath in the place of us, in the place of all who would believe in Him.

And not only did He die, that's the part that, you know, as I teach the kids, you know, Jesus died on the cross. Right? But here's the more glorious part. Right? He conquered death. He'd risen from the dead.

Right? He conquered death. He rose from the grave in order to give His people, His sheep, those who would recognize His name, and call on Him, would give them eternal life.

God, man, Christ. The following part, the last part, is response. Right? What would you do with that? You know, what is your response? God calls each of us everywhere to repent of our sins and to trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior in order to be saved.

And that's the gospel message. There's many ways to sort of share that. But I choose this morning to use sort of God, man, Christ response. Trying to keep it very simple. If you're in doubt right now, you can pray and you can receive Christ.

[58 : 22] Right? This might be the morning that God has illuminated your understanding, your eyes to see, your ears to hear. It's all Him. Right? He gives you the grace in order to respond.

So maybe this morning is the opportunity to respond. So let's pray. Let's pray. So Father, we thank You so much for Your Word. Father, we thank You that You teach us and You mold us and You guide us.

Oh, we thank You that we can read, that we can comprehend, that You do give us minds to learn and understand, that You give us eyes to see, that You give us hearts to feel.

Lord, we thank You for that. Lord, we thank You for that. Thank You for this good news. Father, I pray for every single individual here this morning that each of us would be identified with a fruit-bearing branch.

Lord, You prune fruit-bearing branches. You teach us that. And Lord willing, we'll talk about that more next week. But Father, if anyone here, You know, Lord, if there's anyone here that is a fruitless branch, that they're going through the motions of religion, that they may have been fooled into thinking that they made some decision as a child or somewhere earlier in their life, that perhaps they chose You, but then there's been no fruit whatsoever.

[59 : 49] Father, Your teaching is clear in John 15, that if there is a life that bears no fruit, that You will eventually cut that away and You will destroy that. So, Father, this morning, I pray that if there's anyone here, Lord, that is in that state, that You would give them eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand, Lord.

And that this morning, that they would reach out to You and acknowledge that they're a sinner and that they're totally hopeless and have a relationship with You, and that they would accept Your free gift of Your Son, Jesus Christ, that would pay the penalty of their sin, past sins, current sins, future sins, that Christ has already paid for those sins by dying on the cross, and that You would give grace to the ears, grace to the hearers to accept that free gift.

Father, that's what You teach us, Lord. And so this morning, would it be words of life? Father, for those who are the fruitful branches here this morning, Lord, Father, continue to grow us.

Continue to give us times of growing, Father, in times of pruning. May those be opportunities that affirm our faith in You.

And that as Your Scripture says, that You would prune us so that we may produce more good works, Father, to bring You glory and honor. So, Father, we thank You for Your Word. In Christ's name, amen.