



Volume 11, No. 3, March, 2023



I Want to be a Worker

*I want to be a worker for the Lord;
I want to love and trust His holy word;
I want to sing and pray,
And be busy every day,
In the vineyard of the Lord.*

*I want to be a worker ev'ry day;
I want to lead the erring in the way
That leads to heav'n above,
Where all is peace and love,
In the kingdom of the Lord.*

*I want to be a worker strong and brave;
I want to trust in Jesus' pow'r to save;
All who will truly come
Shall find a happy home,
In the kingdom of the Lord.*

Chorus:

*I will work (and pray)
I will work (and pray)
In the vineyard, in the vineyard of the Lord;
I will work, I will pray,
I will labor ev'ry day,
In the vineyard of the Lord.*

Isaiah Baltzell (1880)



**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.**

John 15:5



Abiding

The Gospel of John has 7 “I am” images describing Jesus. These help us get a fuller picture of Jesus for the purpose of coming to believe that *Jesus Is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you might have life in His name* (John 20:31).

The 7th image or description of Jesus is “I am the true vine” and is found in John 15.

The word “abide” (or remain) is used eleven times in John 15:1-17, as Jesus discusses the vine and the branches. Abide is a verb that means remain or stay. In these 17 verses, Jesus says (1) *abide in me* (2) *abide in the vine*, and (3) *abide in my love*.

The past tense and past participle of **abide** is **abode**. An abode is a place, residence, house, home, dwelling or habitation.

Our abode might be a house, apartment, condo, duplex, townhouse, or dorm room. Our abode is identified by an address that we use when filling out documents. The address lets others know where we live, where to send mail, and where they can find us. By putting an address into a GPS, we can drive directly to someone's house.

Think about the activities that are associated with our house or home. Our abode is where we eat, sleep, rest, and live with family or friends. Our house is where we receive nourishment each day. Our home is where we can totally be ourselves, feel safe, and enjoy freedom. Our family are the ones who know us best. They know when we are weary, anxious, joyful, energetic, frustrated, or sick. They know our habits, our strengths, and our weaknesses. Our home is the place we return to. We go to school, travel to our jobs, run errands, visit friends, and then return to our home. We've all had the

experience of returning from a long vacation or journey and thinking it's good to be home

Spiritually Jesus is our abode, our home. We are to abide in Him. We receive our nourishment from Jesus. We can rest in Jesus. With Jesus we are safe. We can totally be ourselves with Jesus as we converse with him in prayer. He knows every emotion we experience, every thought we have. He is the one that we constantly return to. Let's make sure we are abiding in Jesus every day. John 15 communicates great promises for us as we remain in Jesus. (Bearing much fruit, receiving what we ask, glorifying God, and joy).

There is one promise we can look forward to receiving if we continue to abide in Jesus. After this earthly life, we can look forward to an eternal home with the Lord. Abiding now, means everlasting life with Jesus.

Sally Shank, Edmond, Oklahoma

✠✠✠✠✠

Vines

Jesus said, "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 bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more." The people He was speaking to would have been quite familiar with grape culture, whereas most of us do not grow grapes. Thus, we lose much of the significance of what Jesus said.

In order to produce good quality fruit, a vine must be pruned heavily every dormant season. As long as the vine is green and growing, the new shoots produce high quality fruit. Only the new shoots produce fruit. When the plant becomes dormant, or non-productive, the old branches are pruned so new growth can appear and produce. As long as it is productive, it is left on the vine. Once it quits producing, it is pruned so the new growth can bear good fruit.

As Christians, I believe it is important for us to "prune" our old non-productive branches. Scripture tells us that if we do not, God will do it for us. We are not allowed to sit and be non-producing. What does that mean for us? First, I believe we must continue to study the scriptures and learn exactly what God expects of us. We cannot be good followers if we don't know where He is leading us.

Second, we need to utilize what we learn in our studies. It is vital that we know what is expected, but if we don't act on that knowledge, it is of little use. We must prune sin from our lives. It is not beneficial to our well-being or to others. It does not produce good works. It has to go.

Beyond pruning sin from our lives, we are told to love one another, but if we fight and quarrel, our branch is due for a drastic pruning. We are taught to be benevolent, but if we tell someone to, "'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' yet you do not give them what is necessary for *their* body, what use is that?" James 2:16. We are not to let our branches go dormant. We have work to do.

What are we doing to teach others about Jesus and His father? Not everyone can teach a Bible class. Some have never experienced children's classes and have no clue how to do that. Who among us can teach, and take those new Christians into our class and mentor them until they learn how to teach? Some of us are older and our bodies don't bend and move well any longer. We find teaching small children physically difficult, but we can still teach a ladies class, or we can mentor someone who is struggling. I know of one lady who is bedfast who faithfully sends cards of encouragement to not only her brothers and sisters in Christ, but to anyone else she may know of who needs a morale boost. Even from her bed her branch is still producing.

Grapevines produce fruit on new branches. What are you doing to renew your branch and keep it producing good fruit for God?

By Wilburta Arrowood, Napoleonville, Louisiana

✠✠✠✠✠

VINES AND YARN

The ultimate vine is Jesus. He said, "*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.*" (John 15:1). He also said, "*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.*" (John 15:5).

In south-central Missouri where I live, there are many vineyards that are carefully tended and are very productive. During harvest, travelers often stop along I-44 to buy grapes.



Various vines produce food for us such as grapes, watermelon, cantaloupe, squash, etc. These are good vines. Other good vines produce beautiful gourds of varied sizes and colors and are used by many as decorations. Vines must be tended to be productive. Like vines, our hearts must be tended carefully and pruned of bad habits to keep the tendrils of sin out. If our hearts are regularly fed God's word, we will be productive healthy vines in the kingdom.

Untended vines are thick and difficult to cut and can be destructive nuisances. Vines are strong and wiry, and their tendrils can cause problems—think of the tendrils of sin. Sin may start small, but left “unpruned” from our hearts, it will multiply and branch out in several directions just as vines do.

Similar to untended vines, yarn can become a tangled, snarled mess. While working with a youth activity years ago, a bunch of yarn had become hopelessly snarled. While the youth were busy with their activity, another lady and I spent a good part of an afternoon untangling the snarls in the yarn. Afterwards, we rolled it into a tidy ball of yarn that was then more easily useable.



Sometimes our lives, like the ball of yarn, become tangled and snarled messes. It may be by circumstances; it may be by carelessness in the way we live. It takes time, patience, and perseverance to untangle the mess we have made of our lives. When our hearts become entangled with sin, Jesus will carefully remove the snarls from our hearts *if we will let Him*. Encouragement and guidance from other Christians can also be helpful as we dis-entangle our hearts from the ways of the world.

It took two of us to unsnarl the ball of yarn. It takes the love and power of God to untangle the snarls in our lives. Just as in the untangling yarn process, we may go along great for a while, then run into a knot. It often takes help from others (prayers, encouragement) to untangle the snarls in our lives. We must not have divided hearts that try to live for God and live for the world at the same time.

May we work hard to rid our hearts of the entanglements of sin.

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, Missouri



I Am the Vine

“I am the vine and ye are the branches,”
Bear precious fruit for Jesus today;
Branches in Him no fruit ever bearing,
Jesus hath said, “He taketh away.”

“Now ye are clean thru words I have spoken,
Living in Me, much fruit ye shall bear;
Dwelling in you, My promise unbroken,
Glory in heav’n with Me ye shall share.”

Yes, by your fruits the world is to know you,
Walking in love as children of day;

Follow your Guide, He passeth before you,
Leading to realms of glorious day.

Chorus:

“I am the vine and ye are the branches;
I am the vine, be faithful and true;
Ask what ye will, your pray’r shall be granted,
The Father loved Me, so I have loved you.”

Words by Knowles Shaw



Knowles Shaw (1834-1878), a name familiar in many western households, was born near New London, in Morgan Township, Ohio, on the 13th of October, 1834. His mother's maiden name was Huldah Griffin, and by both of his parents he was of Scottish extraction. His early life was spent in Rush County, Indiana, where he first began to play the violin, furnishing the music for many a dance. While the ball was going on he was converted, ceasing to play in the middle of the piece he was performing. Very soon thereafter he entered the ministry of the Christian Church. On the 11th of January, 1855, he married Miss Martha Finley. Most of his time after entering the ministry was spent in the West and South, and on account of his wonderful vocal powers he was called the “singing evangelist.”

As a singer he was considered, in some respects, equal to Sankey and Bliss. Reporters of the press all spoke of his singing as something wonderful. Soon after beginning to preach, he began to compose and to write music. His first song was, “The Shining Ones,” still popular. He published at different times five singing books: “Shining Pearls,” “Golden Gate,” “Sparkling Jewels,” “The Gospel Trumpet,” and the “Morning Star.” “Bringing in the Sheaves” was one of the last songs from his hand. His last meeting was held in Dallas, Texas, in May 1878. He was killed by a railroad accident, going from Dallas to McKinney, on the 7th of June, 1878. During his ministry he baptized over eleven thousand persons.

via Hymnary.org

A graphic for the Sunrise newsletter. It features a scenic background of a snowy mountain landscape with evergreen trees under a soft, hazy sky. Overlaid on the image is the word "Sunrise" in a large, elegant, cursive script. Below it, in a smaller, sans-serif font, is the text "The Newsletter For Women By Christian Women".

Sunrise is a monthly newsletter written and/or assembled by members of the Rolla Church of Christ. Sunrise is printed and distributed (primarily via email) to individuals and congregations around the country. All previous issues can be accessed by going to <http://www.seekgrowserveLove.org>. Click on the Resources tab, then on Sunrise Newsletter. You will find the current issue plus all previous issues.

