

## THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

Bible Reading: John 15:1-14

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. John 15:5.

There is no one living who takes all of the Bible literally. This would be absolutely impossible. When Jesus said, "I am the vine, you are the branches," no one with any sense would think that He meant that He was a bit of vegetation. Everyone recognizes that He is giving a beautiful figure, comparing Himself to a vine and His followers to the branches. Just as the branches receive their sustenance from the vine, His followers are to receive their spiritual nourishment through constant communion with Him.

As you look at the vine, you may see the beautiful branches and the splendid, luscious grapes growing on them. You would think that these branches are all that matter. Cut them off, though, and lay them on the ground and within two or three days they are dry and dead. Only as they remain in the vine are they able to produce fruit.

If a Christian forgets his relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ and thinks of himself as an entity that has self-existence and that is worth something in itself, he soon finds that he is absolutely nothing.

As the life of the Lord Jesus Christ flows through a believer, He can produce most wonderful fruit. Jesus Christ, through a Christian who is yielded to Him, can produce the external fruit of leading souls into His kingdom. He extends His work through the Christian who is thus yielded. He also produces in the Christian who is thus yielded the beautiful internal fruit, the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc. All this can come if we abide in Him; without Him we can do nothing.