

The Gospel of John 15:1-11

I The Organism of the Triune God

- A. The true vine—Christ the Son—with its branches—the believers in the Son—is the organism of the Triune God in the divine economy to grow with His riches and express His life. (1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 3:9; John 15:1, 5a) The function of the true vine as a sign of the Son is for the Triune God to have an organism in the Son for His multiplication, spreading, and glorification in His divine life. (vv. 8, 16)
- B. The Father is the Husbandman, i.e., He is the *cultivator, land worker, farmer*; in fact, to Christ, the Father is the source, the planner, the planter, the life, the substance, the soil, the water, the air, the sunshine, and everything. Therefore, He the Father is the source and the founder of the vine; God the Son is the center, the embodiment, and the manifestation; God the Spirit is the reality and realization; and the branches are the Body, the corporate expression. (vv. 1, 4-5, 26) All that the Father is and has is embodied in Christ the Son and then realized in the Spirit as the reality (16:13-15). All that the Spirit has is wrought into us, the branches, to be expressed and testified through us; in this way, the processed Triune God is expressed, manifested, and glorified in the church (Eph. 3:16-21).
- C. The organism of the Triune God in John 15 is the Triune God united, mingled, and incorporated with his chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people (14:20). The Father, the Son, and the Spirit co-inhere with the disciples mutually, for the Triune God and the disciples are united, mingled, and incorporated into one. (15:4-5) The goal of God's economy is this enlarged, universal, divine-human incorporation of the consummated God with the regenerated believers.

II The Branches as the Multiplication of Christ

- A. As the branches of the true vine, we are the multiplication of Christ, the duplication of Christ, the spreading of Christ, and the enlargement of Christ. (vv. 4-5, 16) Christ, the infinite God, is the vine, and we are His branches; we are branches of the infinite God, organically one with Him. (1Cor. 6:17) Because we are branches of the divine vine, parts of the organism of the Triune God, we are the same as God in life and nature. (1 John 5:11-12)
- B. When we believed in the Lord Jesus, He branched into us, and we became branches in Him (John 3:15). For us to be branches in the vine means that Christ has become our life (11:25; 14:6; Col.3:4). The vine is everything to the branches; from the vine and through the vine, we receive everything we need to live as branches (John 15:4). Christ as the vine does everything through the branches; without Him we can do nothing, and without us He can do nothing (v. 5).

III Branches Needing to Abide in the Vine by the Mingled Spirit

- A. As branches of the vine, we need to abide in the vine (vv. 4-5). To be in the Lord is a matter of union; to abide in the Lord is a matter of fellowship (1Cor.1:9, 30). Our abiding in Christ as the vine depends on seeing a clear vision that we are branches in the vine; once we see that we are branches in the vine, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord (John 15:2). The Christian life is a life of abiding in the Lord (1 John 2:24, 27-28; 4:13). Our abiding in Christ is the condition of His abiding in us (John 15:5a). Apart from the vine, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing (v.5b). Only when the branches abide in the vine can the vine be everything to them.
- B. To abide in the Lord is to be one spirit with Him, that is, to live in the mingled spirit (1Cor. 6:17). The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit—mingled together as one spirit (6:17; Rom. 8:4). The word joined in 1 Corinthians It refers to the believers' organic union with the Lord through believing into Him (John 3:15-16; 15:4-5). The expression one spirit indicates the mingling of the Lord as the Spirit with our spirit. All our spiritual experiences, such as our fellowship with the Lord, our prayer to Him, and our living with Him, are in this mingled spirit. The union of God and man is a union of the two spirits, the Spirit of God and the spirit of man (1Cor.2:11-14); the union of these two spirits is the deepest mystery in the Bible.
- C. By being one spirit with the Lord, we can experience Him as the all-inclusive One. (1Cor. 1:2, 24, 30; 2:8, 10; 3:11; 5:7-8; 10:3-4; 11:3; 12:12; 15:20, 47, 45) We can experience Christ and take Christ as everything because we have become one spirit with Him. When we are one spirit with the Lord, we enjoy the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (v.9). For anyone who is one spirit with the Lord, the supply is inexhaustible. To be proper Christians, we must know that the Lord Jesus today as the embodiment of the Triune God is the Spirit indwelling our spirit and mingled with our spirit as one spirit (2Cor.3:17; 1 Cor.15:45b; 6:17. Ultimately, the Bible requires only one thing of us—that we walk according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:4: The key to everything is found in the wonderful Spirit who is in our regenerated spirit and who has become one spirit with our spirit. The mutual abiding in John 15:4-5 is the practice of being one spirit with the Lord.