

Grace Bible Church
Pastor Teacher
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Tree of Life
Weekly Review
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Important principles regarding the vine and the branch analogy of JOH 15.

JOH 15:1-2, “I [Jesus Christ] am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch [believer] in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away [discipline]; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it.”

Now, our Lord begins to reveal some deeper truths or advanced doctrines concerning what the Bible says about pruning. We begin with some very vital principles and warnings.

1. Just like today pruning is necessary for the proper redistribution of the energy that we all need for the production of what the Greek says is *agathos* meaning good works Divine production in the natural realm along with the spiritual.
2. Spiritual pruning enhances spiritual growth by removing whatever inhibits spiritual growth.

3. There are times when pruning is very beneficial to us even though being pruned may hurt us and the some of the ones we love.

4. Spiritual pruning is not discipline for believers but, it is a reward not a penalty, a gift not a payment, a result of blessings earned not by cheating or stealing but by kneeling and healing.

5. Pruning is aimed to provide more space, to cut out older wood, and allow the development of new vigorous roots and shoots from the base of the plant.

6. Pruning is not a punishment for sin but it is a reward from God who is the vinedresser who prunes the life of everyone who abides in Christ; HEB 12:27-29.

Notice next: **HEB 12:1-3, Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down**

at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.

Notice the relationship between God the Father and all the believers in the Church-age, both males and female; who are called His sons or His children; **HEB 12:6, For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.**

All of this is for all believers because God loves them so much that He disciplines them, embraces them, and corrects them.

HEB 12:7, It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?

Prin: God uses discipline to educate us and that is why you must never quit because He's treating you as dear children. The trouble that we "may have" or "be having" or "will have," isn't punishment at all; it's training.

Just like our Lord said in **LUK 6:40, "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.**

I would venture to say that you have heard this passage before in **2TI 3:16-17, All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

In **HEB 12:8, But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.**

Only irresponsible parents leave children to themselves.

HEB 12:9, Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?

We respect our own parents for training and not spoiling us, so why not embrace God's training so we can truly live?

HEB 12:10-11, For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness.

All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have

been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

The writer of the book of Hebrews then challenges all of us in **HEB 12:12-17**, **Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, and make straight paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.**

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.

In a similar fashion, God knows the beauty that He hopes we can become when He says, “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says

the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope”, (JER 29:11).

7. God envisions us becoming part of His Royal Family especially when He prunes us and He has that vision in mind.

8. God’s Word is the perfect tool for pruning us.

9. God’s Word is sharp so that it can remove the unwanted “branches” in our lives without harming us.

HEB 12:25-29, See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned {them} on earth, much less {shall} we {escape} who turn away from Him who {warns} from heaven.

And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven.”

And this {expression}, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, in order that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we receive a

kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.

God also directs our pruning through the Holy Spirit.

10. God's Spirit guides us "into all truth," helping us to study what we need; **JOH 16:12-14, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.**

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you."

11. Pruning also helps us to see what God is working out in our lives; **PHI 1:6; 2:13.**

12. The Holy Spirit encourages us and directs us we are pruned in our spiritual lives, for we must "seek those things which are above;".

COL 3:1-5, If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above,

where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.

For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

Therefore, consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

13. In fact, it's also interesting that God is the vinedresser who prunes the life of everyone who abides in Christ and bears the fruit of Christ. Think about with me it for a moment.

According to JOH 15:1-8, our interpretation of the union with Christ is the work that God accomplishes in our lives, especially during times of trials which is directly related to our understanding of pruning.

This in turn affects our response to personal suffering and to others in their time of trials. If we view pruning as a **form of divine discipline** rather than a **form of restoration**, we lose sight of God's undying love toward us and we become

like Job's judgmental fake friends who were counselors who immediately assumed that God is punishing Job for his sins and failures.