

## Transformed: The Source of Life

The message that is being communicated in this study is that we're being transformed into the image of Christ. But this transformation can only happen if we are grafted into the "Vine", where his life flows through us.

*"For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters." (Romans 8:29)*

### Text

*"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup> He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.*

*<sup>5</sup> "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.*

*<sup>9</sup> "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup> I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. <sup>12</sup> My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. <sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. <sup>14</sup> You are my friends if you do what I command. <sup>15</sup> I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you*

*friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. <sup>16</sup> You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. <sup>17</sup> This is my command: Love each other.” (John 15:1-16)*

In John 15, it records these statements from Jesus and we know that this will be just prior to his death on the cross. We don't know for certain, but it may have taken place as Jesus and his disciples were walking near or through a vineyard.

This was very familiar common imagery both in the Old and New Testaments. Jesus would often use metaphors to explain difficult things to understand. “The Kingdom of God is like...”

Here he is using the vineyard to explain some very important things to them and us. But understand this was a painful metaphor to the Jewish listeners. God told the Jewish people that he planted them and desired they would be fruitful branch to all nations...that was never fulfilled. It was painful and carried with it shame.

We know when you change the metaphor, you change the meaning. He was saying to them, “I am the vine”, Israel was a branch connected to the vine. The branches were not focused on bearing fruit, but just “being”...something relational.

Jesus was preparing to go back to the Father and simply says; “abide in me”. For the Jewish listeners a point of failure has become a focus of hope.

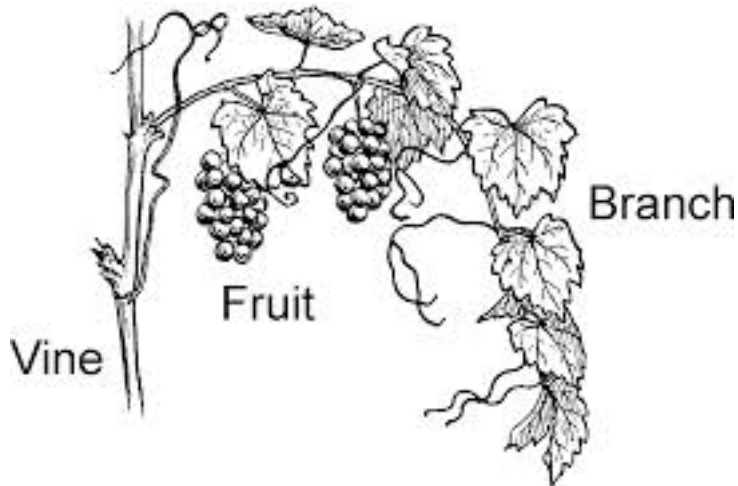
### **Transformed:**

- **The Model is Jesus.**

At times it is difficult for us to picture something, many times a model that is built to scale is helpful. Jesus is our model. It's not about trying hard, it's about hooking into the life source, (Jesus) and looking to him. It is not looking at the “blueprints”, but a person. This is not about being a better version of yourself with no life, but a new work with new life.

“Jesus doesn't just make bad people good. He makes dead people alive”

- **The Method is Abiding.**



To “abide” means to live with and to stay with. On the contrary if we are disconnected from the life source we die.

**We focus on abiding and Jesus will focus on transformation.**

The vast majority of us, the first thing we do in our culture today, is look at our smart phones. We immediately connect with the world and everything that is going on. Maybe our first act should be connecting with God?

- **Think and act relationally not religiously**  
We need to approach this the same way we would approach a marriage. It’s not about logging time or years, we need to approach it relationally.
- **Focus on association not imitation**  
It’s my life in Jesus instead of trying to imitate him. Although there was a great heart behind the “WWJD” movement we can’t do what Jesus would do without his life and transforming work in our lives. Only Jesus can live the life of Jesus. Apart from these two things we can’t do anything. It is an association, “in Christ” in you the “hope of glory”.

- **I can't but He can through me**

Grapes are the result of being connected to the vine. We don't have to strain and try hard, just abide. His life will not only flow into you but through you.

## Discussion Questions

- 1) On page 2 of your notes, Randy showed how Jesus would use a metaphor to help his listeners understand. As Jesus used the metaphor of the vineyard why would this be a painful metaphor for the Jewish listeners?
- 2) Also on page 2, Jesus changed the metaphor they were accustomed to, therefore changing the meaning. So when he said; "I am the Vine", how did this change things for his Jewish listeners? Also we know; the branches were not focused on bearing fruit, but just "being"...(something relational). What does this mean to you?
- 3) Also on page 2, we talked about Jesus being a model. It was pointed out that; "this is *not* about being a better version of yourself with no life, but a new work with new life. Also please discuss this quote; "Jesus doesn't just make bad people good, he makes dead people alive"
- 4) On pages 3 and 4, there is an important discussion about "Abiding". Please review and discuss what this means in your life.