

JESUS—UNPLUGGED

(I AM THE WAY, TRUTH & LIFE)

November 15, 2009

FBC Port A

The book of John let's us in on at least 8 statements that many of that day, and today, call ridiculous. These statements are from Jesus, illustrating who God is and how He meets our needs. At the time Jesus made these statements, they could be viewed as incredible, incredulous, ridiculous and astounding.

This is the last of the "I AM" statements in the book of John in which Jesus is revealing Himself. The last day of Jesus' life is recorded in John 13-19. Before Jesus is taken away to an illegal trial, He spends some time with His disciples teaching them some valuable lessons about being a Christ-follower. Last week we looked at the passage where Jesus states that He is "the way, the truth, and the life". In doing so, He also gives some valuable instructions on His relationship with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

In John 15, Jesus changes subjects and imagery. The disciples and Jesus left the upper room where they had participated in the Last Supper. Before they reached the garden, they passed the Temple and on it was an elaborate embossed golden vine. The vine is an appropriate image because of the many grapevines that naturally grew and were cultivated in the area. The grapevine was also a biblical symbol for Israel.

Psalm 80:8 NIV *You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.*

Jer. 2:21 NIV *I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock. How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?*

The Gardener and His Garden

1. The Gardener **is active** in His garden.

John 15:1-2 NLT *"I am the true grapevine, and My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of Mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more."*

- A. Vine removal
- B. Vine pruning

Isa 5:1-2 NIV *I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.*

2. The Gardener **wants fruit** from His garden.

John 15:3-5 NLT *You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in Me. "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in Me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing.*

Gal 5:22-23 NLT *But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!*

Mat 13:23 NLT *The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"*

3. The Gardener **discards waste** from His garden.

John 15:6 NLT *Anyone who does not remain in Me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned.*

John 6:65-66 NLT *Then He said, "That is why I said that people can't come to Me unless the Father gives them to Me." At this point many of His disciples turned away and deserted Him.*

4. The Gardener **rewards production** from His garden.

John 15:7-9 NLT *But if you remain in Me and My words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted! When you produce much fruit, you are My true disciples. This brings great glory to My Father. "I have loved you even as the Father has loved Me. Remain in My love.*

1Cor 3:6-8 NIV *I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor.*

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