

*For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.*

Isaiah 28:10

First Love Ministries, Inc.

PRAYER STUDY #203

**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN  
CHAPTER 15**

1. The Vine and the Branches
2. New Intimacy
3. The world's attitude toward believers in Christ

**PART ONE-Verses 1-14**

1. I am the true vine, and My father is the vinedresser.
2. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.
3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.
4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abided in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.
5. 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.
6. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast those into the fire, and they are burned.
7. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
8. In this is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.
9. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love.
10. If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.
11. These things have I spoken unto you, that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.
12. This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.
13. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
14. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatever I command you.

The vine is a symbol of the nation Israel, and throughout the Old Testament, Israel is referred to as the vine or vineyard of the Lord, but almost always the vineyard has run wild. Jesus says that He is the true or genuine vine. Being Jews will not save the people. They will be saved only when they are grafted into the true vine, which is Jesus.

According to Barclay, there are three ways we can be useless branches: *“We can refuse to listen to Jesus Christ at all. We can listen to him, and then render him a lip-service unsupported by any deeds. We can accept him as Master, and then, in the face of any difficulties of the way or the desire to do as we like, abandon him. One thing we must remember. It is a first principle of the New Testament that uselessness invites disaster. The fruitless branch is on the way to destruction.”*

According to Rick Renner, the word used in John 15:7 for *ask* is the Greek word *Aiteo*. Renner says that this word means *to be adamant in requesting and demanding assistance to meet tangible needs, such as food, shelter, money and so forth.* This word *“destroys any religious suggestion that we are lowly worms who have no right to come into the Presence of God. It also destroys the picture that we must pitifully beg and plead for the things we need of the Lord.”* He tells us that we have the right to be bold and pray authoritatively but also must be respectful and honor the Lord. The key is to have the Word of the Lord take up permanent residency in you so that you are actually praying the Word back to God. The Lord is waiting for you to ask. In fact, James tells us, *“Ye have not because ye ask not”* (James 4:2).

In verses 10-14 we see what fruits of obedience are brought forth in our life. They are love, joy, and friendship with God Himself.

### **PART TWO-Verses 15-17**

15. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.
16. Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; and that whatever ye shall ask of the Father in My name, He may give it you.
17. These things I command you, that ye love one another.

Time Magazine reports that the most important factor in the degree of happiness in a person's life is not material possessions or position or money but relationships. I believe that the most important factor in

the degree of happiness in a Christian's life is the degree of intimacy he or she has in relationship with Jesus.

What is Jesus to you?

1. A historical figure
2. A Master
3. A Friend
4. A Brother
5. A Father

In this passage Jesus is taking His disciples to a new depth of intimacy with Him. He tells them they can be His friends. To be a friend of God was almost unheard of except for men like Father Abraham. These men knew they were not Abraham, and they must have been astonished that Jesus considered them friends. They did not even write out the name God but instead put G-d because His name was so much higher than lowly man. Yet now Jesus was calling them friends.

There are several types of relationship we can have with Jesus. We can know all about Him and recognize that He is, at the very least, a **historical figure**. Actually there is more evidence that Jesus lived, died and rose again than that George Washington was ever president of the United States. But some have head knowledge but never have really entered into relationship with Jesus. (*Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out demons? And in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from Me, ye that work iniquity-* Matthew 7:22-23).

To totally sell out to Jesus and become a **bond slave** is what every Christian should strive to do. (*From Paul, a bond servant of Jesus Christ -the Messiah- called to be an apostle, -a special messenger-, set apart to [preach] the Gospel -good news- of and from God-* Romans 1:1 AMP). (*There will no longer be any curse and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it [paradise] and His bond-servants will serve Him; they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads-* Revelation 22:3-4 AMP).

This passage speaks of friendship. Friends allow friends to get very close (Proverbs 18:26). A **friend** believes in his friend (James 2:23). A friend reverences his friend (Luke 12:4-5). Friends bless each other (Proverbs 29:4). (*And so the Scripture was fulfilled that says,*

*Abraham believed in-adhered to, trusted in, and relied on-God, and this was accounted to him as righteousness-as conformity to God's will in thought and deed-and he was called God's friend-James 2:23AMP). (Oh for the days when I was in my prime, when God's intimate friendship blessed my home-Proverbs 29:4 NIV).*

We can also love Jesus as a brother and be in relationship as **brothers and sisters**. (*For both He Who sanctifies –making men holy-and those who are sanctified all have one –Father-. For this reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren; for He says, I will declare Your-the Father's-name to My brethren; in the midst of the –worshiping-congregation I will sing hymns of praise to You-Hebrews 2:11-12 AMP).*

We can be His **children**. (*Neither can they-those who die in the Lord-die any more for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being children of the resurrection-Luke 20:36 AMP).*

And we can be **sons (or daughters)** of God. (*Therefore, you are no longer a slave-bond servant-but a son and if a son, then-it follows that you are-an heir by the aid of God through Christ-Galatians 4:7).* (*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God-Romans 8:14 AMP).* By scriptural definition of “sons”, we know that being a son or daughter implies a more mature relationship than children.

This passages also tells us that we are to love one another-it is a command-and that we will bear fruit that remains.

### **PART THREE-Verses 18-27**

- 18.If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.
- 19.If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore, the world hateth you.
- 20.Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also.
- 21.But all these things will they do unto you for My name's sake, because they know not Him that sent me.
- 22.If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin, but now they have no cloak for their sin.
- 23.He that hateth Me hateth My Father also.
- 24.If I had not done among them the works which no other man did, they had not had sin, but now have they both seen and hated both Me and My Father.

25. But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated Me without a cause.
26. But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, Who proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me.
27. And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with Me from the beginning.

These disciples lived these prophetic words of Jesus, and each one except John died a martyr's death. As we approach the end of the age, this passage of scripture will come to mean more and more to each of you. We are racing towards a One World government, and I assure you that it will NOT be based on Christianity. In fact, as we have said before, the Lord will not come until the Babylonian World System has fallen. It reminds me of one of my favorite choruses that is not well-known:

*I want to see Israel marching,  
I want to hear the kingdom call!  
I want to see Zion's mountain,  
I want to see great Babylon fall!  
I want to see Jesus reigning,  
Upon King David's royal throne.  
O, won't that be a glorious sight to see  
When Israel comes marching home!*

Here Israel types the Church of the Living God. Zion types the remnant company. Babylon types the world system. Israel, the Church, will come marching home only when Jesus is reigning upon King David's royal throne. Look for there to be an acceleration in the prophetic time clock towards the end of this calendar year. I am expecting things to begin to shift and not in a good way in the fall of this year. This is a personal opinion and not a prophetic word. Besides all that, it might be so deceptive that we are hardly conscious of what is going on. Yet I believe it will be on the world stage because of its intensity and destruction. All of history will climax when the Babylonian World System falls and Jesus comes back at the Second Coming. Between now and then, we most likely will see an increasing hatred and persecution of Christians, which, by the way, is going on NOW in many parts of the world. Increasingly people will hate you if you stand for Jesus in the climate where, according to Psalm 2, the heathen will be raging. Revelation 12:12 speaks of this time, I believe: *Therefore, rejoice, ye heavens and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down upon you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

**Who Am I?  
Rusty Goodman**

When I think of how He came far from glory  
Came and dwelt among the lowly such as I  
To suffer shame and such disgrace  
On Mount Calvary take my place  
Then I ask myself this question  
Who am I?

When I'm reminded of His words  
I'll leave you never  
If you'll be true I'll give to you life forever  
I know there is nothing I could have done  
To deserve God's only Son  
To fight my battles until they're won  
For who am I?

**CHORUS**

Who am I that a King would bleed and die for?  
Who am I that He would pray, not My will thine for?  
The answer I may never know  
Why He ever loved us so  
That to an old rugged cross He'd go  
For who am I?