

John Chapter Fifteen

Read **John 15:1-8** – The True Vine

v.1 “I AM THE VINE, AND MY FATHER IS THE HUSBANDMAN.”

Christ uses the grape vine here as a simple analogy. This was an analogy that, because of its vineyards, was well understood by anyone who lived in this region. It was also used in prophecy to describe the relationship between Israel and God Almighty:

Isaiah 5:7 “FOR THE VINEYARD OF THE **LORD** OF HOSTS *is* THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, AND THE MEN OF JUDAH HIS PLEASANT PLANT: AND HE LOOKED FOR JUDGMENT, BUT BEHOLD OPPRESSION; FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT BEHOLD A CRY.”

However, there are those today that seem to be unable to understand it. Some would claim that the branches of this vine are the various denominations that exist in the world. Is this true? If not, why not? There are a large number of reasons we'll look at two. First of all we will see in verse five that he's talking to individuals and calling them branches. To accept or to teach anything different is to deny the oneness of Christ and his church, his body, his kingdom that is spoken about in many places.

Secondly he states that God is the husbandman. The husbandman planted, watered, cultivated, nurtured, pruned and enjoyed the fruit that his vineyard produced for him. When a vine in the vineyard stopped producing, weakened and died and could not be saved or salvaged he was also responsible to remedy that situation:

Joel 1:7 “HE HATH LAID MY VINE WASTE, AND BARKED MY FIG TREE; HE HAD MADE IT CLEAN BARE, AND CAST *it* AWAY; THE BRANCHES THEREOF ARE MADE WHITE.

The husbandman would remove these plants, or vines, who do not produce the desired fruit and replace them with others. None of the denominations were planted by God.

v.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.”

Those who do not bear fruit are taken away. In the preaching of John the Baptizer we find some very strong words that tell us what this taking away means.

Matthew 3:10 “AND NOW ALSO THE AXE IS LAID UNTO THE ROOT OF THE TREES: THEREFORE EVERY TREE THAT BRINGETH NOT FORTH GOOD FRUIT IS HEWN DOWN, AND CAST INTO THE FIRE.”

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Then those branches, those individual Christians that bear fruit he “PURGETH”. What does it mean for God to purge us? The ASV says he “CLEANSETH” them, the NKJV and ESV read that he will “PRUNE” it. Basically, just as we prune or deadhead our flowers, especially roses to make them produce more blooms, God prunes, or purges us to help us bear more fruit. The term used by the Hebrew writer is “CHASEN”

Hebrews 12:7 “IF YE ENDURE CHASTENING, GOD DEALETH WITH YOU AS WITH SONS; FOR WHAT SON IS HE WHOM THE FATHER CHASENETH NOT? **v.9** “FURTHERMORE WE HAVE HAD FATHERS OF OUR FLESH WHICH CORRECTED **us**, AND WE GAVE **them** REVERENCE: SHALL WE NOT MUCH RATHER BE IN SUBJECTION UNTO THE FATHER OF SPIRITS, AND LIVE?”

v.3 “NOW YE ARE CLEAN THROUGH THE WORD WHICH I HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU.”

How were Jesus’ disciples made clean? The same way all of us are made clean, through hearing and obeying his word. We see this a little further on in the prayer that Jesus spoke on this particular night:

John 17:17 “SANCTIFY THEM THROUGH THY TRUTH: THY WORD IS TRUTH.”

And it is recorded by the Apostle Peter that:

I Peter 1:22 “SEEING YE HAVE PURIFIED YOUR SOULS IN OBEYING THE TRUTH THROUGH THE SPIRIT UNTO UNFEIGNED LOVE OF THE BRETHREN **see that ye** LOVE ONE ANOTHER WITH A PURE HEART FERVENTLY.”

v.4 “ABIDE IN ME, AND I IN YOU. AS THE BRANCH CANNOT BEAR FRUIT OF ITSELF, EXCEPT IT ABIDE IN THE VINE; NO MORE CAN YE, EXCEPT YE ABIDE IN ME.”

Just as the branch of any fruit bearing plant cannot, of itself, bear anything we must also be a true branch of our Lord and Savior in order to bear spiritual fruit. Paul writes to the church at Colossae that they were once sinners of the worse sort but now had been reconciled:

“IN THE BODY OF HIS FLESH THROUGH DEATH, TO PRESENT YOU HOLY AND UNBLAMEABLE AND UNREPROVABLE IN HIS SIGHT: IF YE CONTINUE IN THE FAITH GROUNDED AND SETTLED, AND **be** NOT MOVED AWAY FROM THE HOPE OF THE GOSPEL, WHICH YE HAVE HEARD, **and** WHICH WAS PREACHED TO EVERY CREATURE WHICH IS UNDER HEAVEN: WHEREOF I PAUL AM MADE A MINISTER.” **Colossians 1:22-23**

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v.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."

Again we see that the individual disciples and therefore today it is the individual Christians are the branches that Jesus addresses. He also reminds them that without Him, without His word, we are spiritually powerless. Paul wrote to the church at Philippi that their well-being was:

"THAT YE MAY APPROVE THINGS THAT ARE EXCELLENT; THAT YE MAY BE SINCERE AND WITHOUT OFFENSE TILL THE DAY OF CHRIST; BEING FILLED WITH THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, WHICH ARE BY JESUS CHRIST, UNTO THE GLORY AND PRAISE OF GOD." **Philippians 1:10-11**

Then as he closes his epistle he reminds them of all of the hardships he suffered, yet he said:

"I CAN DO ALL THINGS THROUGH CHRIST WHICH STRENGTHEN ME."
Philippians 4:13

v.6 "IF A MAN ABIDE NOT IN ME, HE IS CAST FORTH AS A BRANCH, AND IS WITHERED: AND MEN GATHER THEM AND CAST **them** INTO THE FIRE, AND THEY ARE BURNED."

Again we see Jesus correlate "MAN" and "BRANCH", proving once more that the branches are individual Christians. Just like the branch of a tree or any other plant; when it is cut off from its source of life; when we cut ourselves off from our source of spiritual life we wither and die. The ultimate end of the dead branch and the ultimate end of the spiritually dead Christian is to be cast away and burned.

v.7 "IF YE ABIDE IN ME, AND MY WORDS ABIDE IN YOU, YE SHALL ASK WHAT HE WILL, AND IT SHALL BE DONE UNTO YOU."

This is a reminder of what he had taught earlier in this same setting.

John 14:13-14 "AND WHATSOEVER YE SHALL ASK IN MY NAME, THAT WILL I DO, THAT THE FATHER MAY BE GLORIFIED IN THE SON. IF YE SHALL ASK ANY THING IN MY NAME, I WILL TO **it**."

We see here the power of prayer. We may not be given everything we pray for, we will still have to endure the slings and arrows of this world, but we still know that:

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James 5:16 “CONFESS *your* FAULTS ONE TO ANOTHER, AND PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER, THAT YE MAY BE HEALED. THE EFFECTUAL, FERVENT PRAYER OF A RIGHTEOUS MAN AVAILETH MUCH.”

v.8 “HEREIN IS MY FATHER GLORIFIED, THAT YE BEAR MUCH FRUIT; SO SHALL YE BE MY DISICIPLES.”

Jesus says that if they bear much fruit then they will be his disciples indeed, without fail, without dispute. In order to accomplish this we must do as he taught earlier:

John 8:31 “THEN SAID JESUS TO THOSE JEWS WHICH BELIEVED ON HIM, IF YE CONTINUE IN MY WORD, *then* ARE YE MY DISCIPLES INDEED.”

And as we live life, walking in the way of God we provide to others a light to follow and we are to:

Matthew 5:16 “LET YOUR LIGHT SO SHINE BEFORE MEN, THAT THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD WORKS, AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN.”

Read **John 15:9-17** – Abide In Love

v.9 “AS THE FATHER HAS LOVED ME, SO HAVE I LOVED YOU: CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE.”

We see here the beginning of a lesson in perseverance. He says “CONTINUE YE IN MY LOVE.” The Apostle Paul writes this encouragement to the churches in Galatia:

Galatians 6:9 “AND LET US NOT BE WEARY IN WELL DOING: FOR IN DUE SEASON WE SHALL REAP, IF WE FAINT NOT.”

This continuing, this perseverance will cause us to grow stronger in the Lord as Job correctly stated in:

Job 17:9 “THE RIGHTEOUS ALSO SHALL HOLD ON HIS WAY, AND HE THAT HATH CLEAN HANDS SHALL BE STRONGER AND STRONGER.”

v.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.”

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Here we have the words of Jesus that refutes any teaching of mankind that God's love is totally unconditional and there are no works or obedience required of us. While it is true that God's love for mankind is freely given and unconditional; mankind has a duty to perform in order to gain the benefits of that love. Someone asks but how can that be? Doesn't God love all mankind, isn't God one who is not a respecter of persons, then how can you say that God's love for mankind is not unconditional? Jesus very plainly says that in order to abide in the Love of God we must keep his commandments.

John 14:15 "IF YE LOVE ME, (ye will keep, ASV) KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS."

And again:

John 14:21 "HE THAT HATH MY COMMANDMENTS, AND KEEPETH THEM, HE IT IS THAT LOVETH ME: AND HE THAT LOVETH ME SHALL BE LOVED OF MY FATHER, AND I WILL LOVE HIM, AND WILL MANIFEST MYSELF TO HIM."

v.11 "THESE THINGS I HAVE SPOKEN UNTO YOU, THAT MY JOY MIGHT REMAIN IN YOU, AND *that* YOUR JOY MIGHT BE FULL."

Jesus' words were to bolster and strengthen his disciples for the trials that they would soon face without him. No matter what trials or troubles we might encounter in this life if His "JOY" remains in us then the day indeed will come when our "JOY" will "BE FULL" the day we join him in glory.

v.12 "THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER, AS I HAVE LOVED YOU."

We are to love one another! Are we always lovable? If not, we should work at being loveable, understanding that we will have good days and bad. As Jesus very plainly states, this is not a suggestion, not just a good idea that we should consider but a commandment to be obeyed. The church at Thessalonica was apparently a loving group of people because Paul writes to them:

I Thessalonians 4:9 "BUT AS TOUCHING BROTHERLY LOVE YE NEED NOT THAT I WRITE UNTO YOU: FOR YE YOURSELVES ARE TAUGHT OF GOD TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER."

Peter writes as well that love is "ABOVE ALL", the most important element of our Christian living:

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I Peter 4:8 “AND ABOVE ALL THINGS HAVE FERVENT CHARITY AMONG YOURSELVES: FOR CHARITY SHALL COVER THE MULTITUDE OF SINS.”

v.13 “GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN THAN THIS, THAT A MAN LAY DOWN HIS LIFE FOR HIS FRIENDS.”

Jesus had taught them that he was the good Shepherd:

John 10:11 “I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD: THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVETH HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP.”

Now he is continuing to prepare his disciples for the events that are to come before this night is out. Jesus not only gave his life for us but went further than that:

Romans 5:7-8 “FOR SCARCELY FOR A RIGHTEOUS MAN WILL ONE DIE: YET PREADVENTURE FOR A GOOD MAN SOME WOULD EVEN DARE TO DIE. BUT GOD COMMENDETH HIS LOVE TOWARD US, IN THAT, WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.”

He gave his life for those who were enemies of God, sinners that God can not tolerate until they were cleansed.

v.14 “YE ARE MY FRIENDS, IF YE DO WHATSOEVER I COMMAND YOU.”

When told that his mother and his brethren were waiting to speak with him; Jesus response was that:

“FOR WHOSOEVER SHALL DO THE WILL OF MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN, THE SAME IS MY BROTHER, AND SISTER, AND MOTHER.” **Matthew 12:50**

We are his friends, his brethren, when we do that which he has commanded.

v.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.”

Jesus speaks here of their relationship. Since he is God the Son then they could expect to serve him as servants but now as a following comment to that of laying down his life for his friends, he includes them in that circle of friendship. He is continuing to teach them that he will die and they need to understand and be able to deal with that when it happens. As his friends he has held nothing back from them but rather taught them all that God had given Him to teach. When Paul met with the Ephesian elders at Troas he told them much the same thing:

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Acts 20:27 “FOR I HAVE NOT SHUNNED TO DECLARE UNTO YOU ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD.”

He had given them all that God had given him through the Holy Spirit to give them. Therefore, knowing of the apostasy that was to come, he reminds them that there is no new revelation to come. Anything that a false teacher could bring that was new or strange was just that, False.

v.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: THAT WHATSOEVER YE SHALL ASK OF THE FATHER IN MY NAME HE MAY GIVE IT YOU.”

Here we see that he is speaking of the twelve, those that he had chosen specifically for the purpose of bring the gospel to mankind. They are to go forth and “BRING FORTH FRUIT”, how were they do to that? By preaching and teaching the gospel:

Matthew 28:19 “GO YE THEREFORE, AND TEACH ALL NATIONS, BAPTIZING THEM IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY GHOST.”

Their fruit would be those that become Christians. Our fruit is the same today. Their “FRUIT SHOULD REMAIN”, that is, it should be continual, with those converted converting others and living for God and with God eternally. Albert Barnes states in his “Notes” on this verse “*The Christian, especially the Christian minister, is devoted to the Saviour for life. He is to toil without intermission, and without being weary of his work, till God shall call him home. The Saviour never called a disciple to serve him merely for a part of his life, nor to feel himself at liberty to relax his endeavours, nor to suppose himself to be a Christian when his religion produced no fruit.*” (Notes on the New Testament, Luke – John, pg. 241)

v.17 “THESE THINGS I COMMAND YOU, THAT YE LOVE ONE ANOTHER.”

Simple, straight forward, plain and easy to understand, we are to love one another.

Read **John 15:18-27** – The World’s Hatred

v.18 “IF THE WORLD HATE YOU, YE KNOW THAT IT HATED ME BEFORE *it hated* YOU.”

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The world expressed its hatred for Jesus by refusing to hear him, persecuting his disciples and eventually killing him. Those that follow him today should also expect to endure many of the same things. As the Islamic religion continues to expand its influence the day will come when Christians⁴ will be in physical danger.

v.19 "IF YE WERE OF THE WORLD, THE WORLD WOULD LOVE HIS OWN: BUT BECAUSE YE ARE NOT OF THE WORLD, BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU OUT OF THE WORLD, THEREFORE THE WORLD HATETH YOU."

When we look at our own lives what do we see as our relationship with the world? Are we loved by those that are worldly or are we just sort of ignored or maybe even looked down upon? Oh, yes, we live in the world, but we don't need to be "OF THE WORLD", following its morals, views and practices. Isaiah urged those who would hear the gospel to come:

Isaiah 52:11 "DEPART YE, DEPART YE, GO YE OUT FROM THENCE, TOUCH NO UNCLEAN *thing*; GO YE OUT OF THE MIDST OF HER; BE YE CLEAN, THAT BEAR THE VESSELS OF THE **LORD**."

The Apostle Paul told the church in Ephesus:

Ephesians 5:11 "AND HAVE NO FELLOWSHIP WITH THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, BUT RATHER REPROVE *them*."

They and we are the "CHOSEN" ones, they were chosen personally by Jesus for to serve his kingdom. We are "CHOSEN" because he "ADDS" to these "CHOSEN ONES" all those who choose to obey his commandments (**Acts 2:47**). Paul writes:

Ephesians 1:4 "ACCORDING AS HE HATH CHOSEN US IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD, THAT WE SHOULD BE HOLY AND WITHOUT BLAME BEFORE HIM IN LOVE:"

And as the "CHOSEN" we can expect that the world would hate us just as Isaiah prophesied:

Isaiah 66:5 "HEAR THE WORD OF THE **LORD**, YE THAT TREMBLE AT HIS WORD; YOUR BRETHREN THAT HATED YOU, THAT CAST YOU OUT FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, SAID, LET THE **LORD** BE GLORIFIED: BUT HE SHALL APPEAR TO YOUR JOY AND THEY SHALL BE ASHAMED."

And Luke recorded these words of Jesus:

Luke 21:17 "AND YE SHALL BE HATED OF ALL *men* FOR MY NAME'S SAKE."

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v.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.”

When God called Ezekiel to prophesy to Judah in captivity He warned him:

Ezekiel 3:7 “BUT THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL WILL NOT HEARKEN UNTO THEE; FOR THEY WILL NOT HEARKEN UNTO ME: FOR ALL THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL **are** IMPUDENT AND HARDHEARTED.”

They were ignoring God, and they would ignore the prophet, they ignored Jesus and they would ignore his disciples as well and they will ignore us today. We really have a true opportunity to teach very few, even among those that contact us seeking God's Word.

v.21 “BUT ALL THESE THINGS WILL THEY DO UNTO YOU FOR MY NAME'S SAKE, BECAUSE THEY KNOW NOT HIM THAT SENT ME.”

These things will be done because the disciples wore the name of Jesus, belong to his kingdom. And they will be done because men, in general, do not know God. Paul writes that when he preached Christ:

II Corinthians 4:3-4 “BUT IF OUR GOSPEL BE HID, IT IS HID TO THEM THAT ARE LOST: IN WHOM THE GOD OF THIS WORLD HATH BLINDED THE MINDS OF THEM WHICH BELIEVE NOT, LEST THE LIGHT OF THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL OF CHRIST, WHO IS THE IMAGE OF GOD, SHOULD SHINE UNTO THEM.”

v.22 “IF I HAD NOT COME AND SPOKEN UNTO THEM, THEY HAD NOT HAD SIN: BUT NOW THEY HAVE NO CLOAK FOR THEIR SIN.”

Some folks have a lot of trouble with this verse but the three commentators I checked all agree. They all teach that there will be degrees of reward in heaven and degrees of punishment in hell measured by our opportunities to serve God.

Those who live in total darkness without any opportunity to see the light of heaven or hear the gospel of Christ will receive a lesser punishment. Those who accept Christ but are weak in their faith and practice, those who know the law of God and transgress that law will be judged with a more severe judgment because they know the law, they know what is required of them. Those who hear the gospel of Christ, and reject him completely will receive the harshest punishment of all. It is not that those who are totally ignorant of the Word of God have no sin but their sins deserve lesser punishment because of their lack of opportunity.

Jesus said in his condemnation of the cities of Galilee said:

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“WOE UNTO THEE, CHORAZIN! WOE UNTO THEE, BETHSAIDA! FOR IF THE MIGHTY WORKS, WHICH WERE DONE IN YOU, HAD BEEN DONE IN TYRE AND SIDON, THEY WOULD HAVE REPENTED LONG AGO IN SACKCLOTH AND ASHES. BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, IT SHALL BE MORE TOLERABLE FOR TYRE AND SIDON AT THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THAN FOR YOU.” **Matthew 11:21-22**

“AND THOU CAPERNAUM, WHICH ART EXALTED UNTO HEAVEN, SHALT BE BROUGHT DOWN TO HELL: FOR IF THE MIGHTY WORKS, WHICH HAVE BEEN DONE IN THEE, HAD BEEN DONE IN SODOM, IT WOULD HAVE REMAINED UNTO THIS DAY. BUT I SAY UNTO YOU, THAT IT SHALL BE MORE TOLERABLE FOR THE LAND OF SODOM IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THAN FOR THEE.” **Matthew 11:23-24**

v.23 “HE THAT HATETH ME HATETH MY FATHER ALSO.”

If we love our fellowman and our Savior we love God as well. So it is only logical that if we hate our fellowman, our Savior and his word we hate God as well. John writes in:

I John 2:23 “WHOSOEVER DENIETH THE SON, THE SAME HATH NOT THE FATHER: *[but] he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*”

v.24 “IF I HAD NOT DONE AMONG THEM THE WORKS WHICH NONE OTHER MAN DID , THEY HAD NOT HAD SIN: BUT NOW HAVE THEY BOTH SEEN AND HATED BOTH ME AND THE FATHER.”

Here Jesus is speaking of those who had seen his works while on this earth. An example is Nicodemus:

“THE SAME CAME TO JESUS BY NIGHT, AND SAID UNTO HIM, RABBI, WE KNOW THAT THOU ART A TEACHER COME FROM GOD: FOR NO MAN CAN DO THESE MIRACLES THAT THOU DOEST, EXCEPT GOD BE WITH HIM.” **John 3:2**

Because they had seen the works that Jesus performed, proving his divinity, and rejected him in spite of this knowledge they suffered from a greater sin than those who did not. In fact they saw Jesus and by seeing Him, they saw the Father as well as Jesus taught them repeatedly. (**John 12:45, John 14:9** ff)

v.25 “BUT *this cometh to pass*, THAT THE WORD MIGHT BE FULFILLED THAT IS WRITTEN IN THEIR LAW, THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.”

Jesus here refers to the prayer of David when being pursued by his enemies:

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Psalms 35:19 “LET NOT THEM THAT ARE MINE ENEMIES WRONGFULLY REJOICE OVER ME” *neither* LET THEM WINK WITH THE EYE THAT HATE ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.”

And we see very similar verbiage in **Psalms 69:4**.

v.26 “BUT WHEN THE COMFORTER IS COME, WHOM I WILL SEND UNTO YOU FROM THE FATHER, *even* THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH, WHICH PROCEEDETH FROM THE FATHER, HE SHALL TESTIFY OF ME.”

“WHEN THE COMFORTER IS COME”, the apostles would have the power of God with them throughout their lives and their ministry. They would be able to exercise many of the same power that Jesus did to confirm the source and the binding truth of their teaching just as he did.

Just before he ascends back to the Father he assures them again:

Luke 24:49 “AND BEHOLD, I SEND THE PROMISE OF MY FATHER UPON YOU: BUT TARRY YE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, UNTIL YE BE ENDUED WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH.

And that power was manifested for the first time on Pentecost:

Acts 2:33 “THEREFORE BEING BY THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD EXALTED, AND HAVING RECEIVED OF THE FATHER THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY GHOST, HE HATH SHED FORTH THIS, WHICH YE NOW SEE AND HEAR.”

v.27 “AND YE ALSO SHALL BEAR WITNESS, BECAUSE HE HAVE BEEN WITH ME FROM THE BEGINNING.”

Jesus tells them that the Comforter is to come upon them so that they can bear witness to His deity, His power and the truthfulness of His word. He reminds them again before his ascension:

Acts 1:8 “BUT YE SHALL RECEIVE POWER, AFTER THAT THE HOLY GHOST IS COME UPON YOU: AND YE SHALL BE WITNESSES UNTO ME BOTH IN JERUSALEM, AND IN ALL JUDEA, AND IN SAMARIA, AND UNTO THE UTTERMOST PARTS OF THE EARTH.”

It is for this reason that Peter and John testified before the Sanhedrin:

Acts 5:32 “AND WE ARE HIS WITNESSES OF THESE THINGS; AND SO *is* ALSO THE HOLY GHOST, WHOM GOD HATH GIVEN TO THEM THAT OBEY HIM.”

The Apostle Peter uses the fact that he was a witness of the things which he writes in both **I Peter 5:1** and **II Peter 1:16**.