

**Word notes Sunday 30/5/2010 Tony Hodge**  
**Jesus –The True Vine**

**Summary** (read this bit out to remind cell members what was said on Sunday)

**Key Text: John 15:1-16**

In his “leaving speech” to his disciples, between mentioning the Holy Spirit in regard to being a comforter and coming to convict the world about him, Jesus tells the disciples to “remain in me”. He uses an illustration of a vine and its branches, not just an agricultural illustration but also reminding them that Israel is a vineyard tended by the Father. In the Old Testament we can read how Israel wandered away from God (Jer 2:21-24) and so Jesus tells them how to remain in the True Vine.

Remaining means:

- Being branches of the True Vine - When cultivating vines the branches are held up above ground for a number of reasons – one of which is to stop them setting root elsewhere – we too should remain in the True Vine, not feed spiritually elsewhere.
- Pruning – Vines need to be pruned for best yield (quantity & quality). In John 13 we see two kinds of pruning: Judas who leaves to betray Jesus and Peter who is told he will deny Christ – reaching rock bottom before being restored to bear fruit.
- Bearing Fruit – that’s what Jesus wants in our lives and in the life of his church.

How to remain:

- Love – As Jesus loves us. See the example earlier on in John of Jesus washing the disciple feet.
- Obedience – the acid test of our love for Jesus – will we do what he commands?

Promise – as we remain in Jesus, love as he did and obey his commands we will bear fruit and whatever we ask of the Father He will grant us (vv 7 & 16)

**Application** (this is the bit where cell members get to participate. Lead discussions around these points)

Choose one or more of the following topics for discussion:

1, Read Jer 2:21-24 - a stark and graphic description of how Israel wandered away from her relationship with the one true God. It’s hard to think we may be tempted to act like that yet Israel didn’t set out to do that from day one but got seduced away.

- What modern day enticements might there be in our lives that try to woo us away from staying in the True Vine?
- How do we combat them?

2, Sometimes pruning is like having your toenails clipped, sometimes more like having a root canal filling! What is the roll of the local church in supporting “one another” both through such times and also to avoid letting things get too deep seated? (NB the clue is in the quotes!)

3, Read 1 John 2:3-6 & 3:21-24.

What is the reality of these passages in our lives? How close is our obedience? Do we receive all that we ask for, do our “hearts condemn us” or do we “know by the Spirit he gave us” that our relationship is secure?

**Witness** (this is the bit where the cell talks and prays about how to share the Good News)

Well done everyone who got involved with the FunDay on Bank Holiday Monday. We saw more folk having fun, chatted to many and have invited some to coffee mornings, playgroups and Sunday meetings.

Did you make contact with anyone during the event? Discuss how you can maintain that contact, how else can you, the Cell, NCC show the love of Jesus to them and others?