

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

February 5, 2017

SPEAKER

Brian Frost

SERIES

Fully Alive

PART

40

TITLE

I Am The Vine

SCRIPTURE

John 15:1-17



© 2017 Providence Baptist Church (Raleigh, NC)

Sermon transcripts may be used for preaching and teaching purposes, but may not be published or sold. While generally accurate, parts of this transcript may contain errors.

Providence reserves the right to correct and/or remove a transcript at any time.

I want to ask you to turn with me to John 15. If you're a guest with us, we're in a series called Fully Alive and were just walking through the whole gospel of John. The book was written intentionally. John tells us at the end, he says that he's compiled all these memories, all these thoughts of exactly what Christ did and what Christ said in order that you and I might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God and believing that we would have life in His name. If you brought a Bible, John 15. If you didn't, there should be one in a seat near you and if don't have one at home, please take that home as a gift. It is great to see you and it's wonderful to sing of that name. His is the only name that is worthy of our affection, of our worship. It's great to see you. Of course there a lot of you who have been praying. You guys have sent just a lot of very kind emails. I wanted to just thank you for your prayers.

I've just been sick for several weeks and I feel a lot better but I still have a cough drop in my mouth right now. I've actually learned to preach with a cough drop all through January. It's right up here in the left so it's not a chaw or anything like that okay? It's an actual cough drop. I'm not puffy or anything like that, it's just ... Hopefully that will help me from not coughing into this microphone. It is really good to see you. Let's pause and let's pray together. Father we love you. Jesus we admire you. We love you more than any and what you have made available to us is beyond words and yet it's words that you use to help us to understand more fully what you've made available. I pray that you would speak through weakness and bring glory to Jesus Christ by helping us to see why it's important that you Jesus are the true vine. Help us to believe what we read. Help us to understand it and to put it into practice. Would you give us grace, would you give us courage.

We need your help and we pray this in Jesus name. Amen. I'm now 43-years-old and for probably the last 20 or so years I've made it more of a practice to kind of keep up with what's happening in the world. Just watching news or at least reading news. It's an interesting thing that the older I get and the more days that seem to pass, it seems more consistent that when I get done watching or reading the news I confess with my mouth. Sometimes not out loud but at least in my heart. It's not suppose to be like this. I think we all know that the world is not suppose to be like this. There's an internal mechanism within us that Paul writes about. Paul writes in the 2nd chapter of Romans verse 15. It says that God, when He created us. It says that He etched His law within our own conscious. What that means is this, is that it doesn't matter where you go in life, in this world that you'll find people that recognize.

Whether it's in Africa or whether is here in Raleigh that when you see a mountain range or a sunset or something that's beautiful and we just naturally, instinctively know that that's beautiful and express that beauty by saying, "Wow" or "Look at that." There's something written upon our collective conscious when it comes to beauty. When it comes to love. When it comes to things like peace and joy. There's something in every single one of us that knows things are right but we also know things are wrong. In every culture there's certain things that it doesn't matter where you're from, how you're brought up, what your parents taught you.

Is that when you see certain things taking place, you know instinctively that's not right. When you look at the news today, your heart and your conscious naturally, because of God's law upon it, it's natural for us to say, you know? There's a lot of amazing things that are happening in the world that are beautiful things, that are wonderful things. In my life, in the lives of others, but a lot of what I see, I just don't think this is suppose to be like this.

You see, unless our conscious is so seared, Paul tell us, that our heart is now so numb to the law of God. We just naturally all know that it's just not right for ethnic groups to be exterminated. We all know, we all know that women and little girls should not be objectified. They should not be viewed and treated as commodities. We all know instinctively written upon our heart that a baby within the womb is something of value. We all know that justice should not be selective. We all know that strife should not be the hallmark of the home and anxiety should not be the hallmark of our heart. We all know that death is not suppose to how life is suppose to end. I went to a funeral yesterday. I'm sorry, Thursday. A man, 82-years-old, a believer, he loved God. He lived his life unto God and so his service was a celebration service of his life unto the Lord. Yet, even I sat there and said, "You know what? This is not how God intended this thing to end." This wasn't His plan from the beginning. Something's not right about this.

We all know, doesn't matter what culture, we all know that life should not be lived in separation from a relationship with our Creator. That's why it doesn't matter where you go in life there's religions. It matters not where you go in this world, there are people praying to God. We know these things aren't right and you can look at our response to the things and they all affirm it. We protest and we march. We hold up signs and we go to counseling and therapy. We ask friends for council. Why is anxiety and strife reigning in my heart or in my home? We take medicine and surgery because we want to extend life. We recognize these religions all over the world. We know it's not suppose to be like this. Yet, isn't it true that what you see in the world, in spite of all that you know isn't suppose to be there, you see this beauty of God's design. You see beauty, you see love, you see peace and you recognize how God was active in creating this in this amazing and wonderful way.

Then the Bible tells us that in spite of how He created it, we all sinned. The Bible tells us that what sin is is simply when we make a choice that's contrary to what God has written in His Word. Expressed in His will and He said, "This is how I desire for you to live." The Bible tells us that all humanity has sinned and this causes this an unusual brokenness to settle over the world. It's a brokenness that settles within our human heart. It's a brokenness that settles in our homes. It's a brokenness that settles in our countries and even on the globe and Romans chapter 8 even says that the weight of our sin is so heavy collectively that even creation itself groans under the pressure of having to hold all of you up. It's and amazing thing and yet you and I, we know things aren't this way. That we should be marching and we should be going to therapy and we should be doing things, but isn't it interesting that doesn't matter what fix we seek to find, they're all dead ends.

Even when they help for a time, we know they don't help forever. There's a unique Proverb, it's Proverbs 14:12 and it says, "There's a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death." When you look at the brokenness of the world, the fact is it doesn't matter how much we pool together our collective conscious and our collective expertise and our collective intelligence. It doesn't matter how much we know, we cannot fix this world. The solution is not internal, it has to be external. The Bible says, that's exactly what God did. He sent His son. The Bible calls this the Gospel. It simply means good news. That Jesus came and He did live a life that caused no brokenness to manifest itself on this earth. He lived a life of righteousness and love and mercy, compassion and sacrifice. Then He went to a cross to pay for our sin. He was buried in a grave and then He rose from the dead and then He extended to you and I and everyone in the world an invitation and that is that if we would believe in him and repent of our sin.

The word repent means to turn. What that means is that we are so geared on trying to be our own savior. He says, "This is their first act of repentance. You cannot believe in your accomplishments in order to fix this world, in order to fix your relationship with me. You have to repent of all of your effort. You have to repent of all your sin and you have to believe in me." Jesus says it very simply through the Gospel, through Paul to the church in Rome when he says, "You need to confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead. If you do you'll be saved." What's amazing and what we're going to find here in John chapter 15 is that the circle doesn't end there but because of God, because of His mercy. He's even allowed us to be able to experience what was lost. What was intended in the garden, what will be experienced in heaven that you and I, because Jesus is the vine we're allowed and enable to experience the kind of fruit and the kind of life that at very least resembles the life and all the benefits that we will all know and enjoy forever in heaven.

This is ultimately what John 15 is all about. He's just said to His disciples, "It's going to go down tomorrow night. I'm going to die. I'm going away. I'm going to make a way for you and so do not be troubled. Don't let your hearts be troubled. I'm going to send my Holy Spirit and I'm going to give you the opportunity to abide in me and if you'll abide in me you'll be able to experience the recovery that I'm making available to help you to experience some of God's design while you're still on this broken earth." Let's read it together. He says, "I am the true vine and my Father is the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine. You are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments you will abide in my love just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love.

These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, to someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing, but I have called you friends. For all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide so that whatever you ask the Father in my name He may give it you. These things I command you so that you will love one other.” As we even as we prepared to take the Lord’s supper and celebrate all that Christ has made available, I want to show you three things that are amazing gifts to us because Jesus is that true vine. The first is this, is that Jesus is the vine who secures our salvation. He’s the vine that secures our salvation. I think it’s really interesting. In fact, we saw last Sunday the end of chapter 14 in verse 30. Jesus wants us to understand and He wants His followers at this meal to understand that Satan was not in control even though he’s active.

The God the Father, His Father was in control. So He says, “You know what? Satan’s coming, it’s true, but he has no claim over me.” He says, “I’m doing what my Father has commanded. One of the things you have to understand about these passage, about this night is this.” This was not random, this was not an accident and Satan was not in control. The cross was not the fruit of Satan’s control. It was obedience. It was obedience from a son to his father. God the Father. What He does in chapter 15 is, He wants to give us a metaphor to explain the Father’s control over all things. The very first thing He says is, “I’m the true vine. I’m the source of life.” Then notice what He says about His Father. My Father is what? He’s the vine dresser. What does a vine dresser do? The vine dresser has control over not only the vine but also the branches. Each of you have probably at some point in time cut a little bit of a bush or a tree down right? You’ve pruned something. You’ve cut something back.

If you own a house, I hope you’ve pruned something in your life okay, if you own a house. I don’t have a huge yard, but there’s a lot of bushes in it. It’s interesting that we’ve live there now over 10 years and there’s not a single bush or tree that we have that I don’t know its unique growing patterns. Where it needs to be pruned. In what direction it naturally grows. How it responds to light and water. I just begin to know it. When I go out there with my shears and my clippers, there’s not a bush that says, “No not me.” They all have to bend to the blade. What He says here is, “My Father is in total control of the vine and all of the branches.” Then He tells us something that is startling to be honest with you. On a very stressful night it probably added to their stress. Verse 2 He says, “Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes.” In other words, everyone gets cut. If you’re near Christ, acknowledging Christ, thinking of Christ.

You will experience the blade of His Father. Those who do not bear fruit, He says get cut off. Those that do bear fruit get pruned so they bear even more fruit. The best of those two cases is still painful and that's pruning isn't it? I mean we talk about God's really pruning me. What that really means is, I'm really going through a hard time. I still believe God's sovereign. That's how He prunes us. He doesn't give us patience. When you ask, "God would you help me to be more patient?" He didn't just say, "Okay, I'm just going to give you patience." No, He gives you experiences that need patience. That's called pruning. Difficulty, traffic jams, traffic lights. God says, "All right, you want some patience? How about some of this? Let me prune you a little bit." All of a sudden it helps you to bear more fruit. Well that's the best case of the two. The other He says, is really really hard and He says the words cut off. "Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away."

Then you look at its parallel verse in verse 6 and he says this, "If anyone does not abide in me, he's thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered and thrown into the fire and burned." It's pretty amazing that on this most stressful night Jesus introduces a most stressful truth. We're suppose to, I believe have to ask the question, is John introducing the possibility that we can lose our salvation? You notice the words are both in me, the branch in me that doesn't bear fruit is cut off and the branch in me. Often times when you look at the word 'in me' you're like, "All right, that's a believer." You have to ask the question, is it possible to be born again and to eventually fall away, lose your salvation, be cut off? You have to ask that when you read verse 2. For guys that are hearing that Peter is going to deny Jesus three times before the sun comes up. This was probably really important. Judas has just been identified as the traitor. Can we lose our salvation? Of course my point says no.

That Jesus is the true vine that secures our salvation. I believe that John and Jesus go through great lengths within his book in order to bring comfort to us and help us to understand that every single branch that comes to Him and is grafted in to Him is that they bear fruit and those branches will be pruned and those branches will not lose their salvation. So let me just show you just a few of the passages in John that we've already looked at. John 6:37 Jesus said, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." John 10:27-30 says, "My sheep follows me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one." Tonight there's a good chance that one of the players are going to drop the football.

There's going to be other players that jump on that football and when other players jump on that football. Even if it's the same team, what you'll find is if somebody's hands are on the ball, if there's risk one of his teammates is going to come and he's going to wrap his arms and hands around his own player's hands and arms in order to doubly secure the football. This is what He is saying. He's saying, "My Father has the people and my Father is going to give those people to me and those people will never ever ever be cut off." He says, "No one is going to be able to take them out of my hands and so we're in His hands and Jesus has His hands closed and He says, "I'm not going to let go of you."

Then he says, "And nobody's stronger than my Father and you're not going to be able to get out of His hands either." What he's saying is, "My Father's hands are wrapped around my hands. My Father and I are one."

He's saying all of this in order to exhort us, to be encouraged about the security that we have in Christ so that when we go through the debilitating weaknesses and failures of our common day, that we don't spend all of our life thinking, "I'm in the family, I'm out of the family. I'm in the family, I'm out of the family." He wants us to know that we're secure just like you want your kids to know that they're secure. Who then is the branch that's taken away? Who is the branch that's cut off? In John we've seen at least on 3 different occasions 1 of the 12 who's no longer with the 12. Jesus says He called all 12 and in John 6:70 He says, "You know what though? Not all of you are clean. One of you is the devil." He's referring to Judas. Up until that point everybody around would have seen Judas as being in Jesus, as walking with Jesus, being associated with Jesus, a disciple of Jesus. Jesus says, "No actually he wasn't."

We've also seen believers who Jesus says are not genuine salvific believers and we've also seen disciples who He says are not true disciples. Let me show you those. In John 6:66, Jesus has just fed 5,000 people. They're all really happy about the free meal, so they come back the next day for another one. He says, "You've come back because you want more food. I'm not going to give you more food. Instead whoever wants to come to me must eat my flesh and drink my blood." For the common eye they think, "Wait, that's gross." We'll hear in just a minute the symbols of the bread and the cup, it's just that. What Jesus was saying is that, "You have to stop trying to be your savior. You have to trust in my righteousness and my future cross when my blood will flow on your behalf for you to be saved." At that moment John 6:66 says, "After this many of His disciples", not the 12 but a lot of other people who were following Jesus, "turned back and no longer walked with Him." We also see in John 8 another time.

Here it says that, "Many believed in Him. So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in Him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.'" He introduces the possibility of being a false disciple by saying, truly my disciple. The metric is, if you abide in my word and then 6 verses later He says to the exact same people that He had just spoken to and He says, "You seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you." We have seen this a few different times and so what we found within John is that some people in this world give impressions of being a branch. They love the miracles. They may even believe in historical Jesus. They may enjoy the association with other Christians and yet His word is not in their heart and His righteousness is not seen by them as mandatory for their eternity. Jesus says in verse 8, "This is how you're going to know." How do we know which branch we are? So Jesus says by what. He says, "By this my Father's glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples."

The fruit is not the wage that we pay to become a disciple, the fruit is the proof that we are. You have to ask the question, why on this night would Jesus introduce these truths to these men? This summer I took my son Seth to camp and when he was there he did some climbing. He was interested and they had a 40 or 50 foot kind of wall to climb up and down. They started, at least on the that day I was there, they took them all up. Of course they all had their harnesses on but they weren't tied into anything. They were just in their harnesses. They had them all look over to acknowledge the risk and to see the jeopardy of you need to be careful right? They presented them with an insecure moment. Then one by one when it was their turn, they'd walk over and they'd strap them in and then all of a sudden they say, "You see the risk, you see?" Yes. Then they'd yank on that rope that was connected to their harness and say, "But you're secure. You don't have to worry. It doesn't matter how high we are, you're secure."

And they'd push them off. This was Seth right. He's going down. He's secure, there's risk all around but he is safe. What Jesus is doing here, I believe is He's introducing them to the edge of a cliff in order to show them just how secure they are. You see that in verse 3. He says, "Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you." When He says, "Already you're clean." What He's saying is, "I've already told you the truth. I know you believe the truth. I've already forgiven you and you are already clean." He doesn't say this to everybody. He says it to them though. Isn't it interesting that for and I, we have kids and they make mistakes. Do any of us as imperfect parents want our kids to wonder if they're in our family day-to-day? No, so even when they make a mistake we affirm our love. If they ever doubt if they're a part of this family. If there's anything they can do you say, "No there's nothing you can do to take you away from this family."

Well if that's true of us as imperfect parents, think about the perfect dad. You see, to all His children He affirms their security even when we fail. In Romans 7, Paul he says, "You know what? The things that I want to do so bad I found myself not doing them. The things I don't want to do I keep doing those things." You get into chapter 8 and he starts where it says, "There's now no condemnation for those of us who are in Christ. Then at that moment when Paul wants reassurance from God, Paul reminds us the church verse 16. "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." If you know Christ, His Spirit lives within you and if His Spirit lives within you then His Spirit is confirming with your spirit, saying to you, "You're already clean. You're already forgiven. You've been justified. There's nothing that you can do to separate me from loving you. There's nothing you can do to take you out of my family." So Providence, let's trust in Jesus and rest in His security.

I know there's a lot of voices saying that there's many vines and when Jesus says, "I am the vine", it can look not only narrow, but it can look arrogant. If you're a guest or if you don't know Christ, I would encourage you before you weigh out the arrogance of a statement. You need to weigh out its truthfulness. For if Jesus is the only way, the truth and the life, and if Jesus is the vine and there's no other way, then it's not arrogant for Him to say it. It's humble and loving.



For you and I, even today, you can trust Christ as your savior and He will forgive you. He will say, "You were already clean. There is nothing that you can do to take yourself away from my love." So Providence rest in His security and go on bearing fruit, not to get into the family but as it says here as proof that you are His disciple. How do we bear fruit? This is the second thing. Jesus is the vine who enables us to bear fruit. 10 times from verses 4 to verse 11 Jesus invites us to abide.

It's a beautiful word, it means to reside, to remain, to stay. It's the opposite of you coming over to our house for coffee and then leaving. It literally means you bring all your stuff and you move in. It's where we get the word abode, a house, a residence. Jesus is saying, "Don't come and visit me. Abide in me. Don't visit me on Sunday. Don't visit me at 6am and think about me for the rest of the day. Abide in me." Then he creates this beautiful analogy. He says, "Jesus is the vine." When we trust Jesus as our savior, the Father, who's the vine dresser. He grafts us as a branch into the vine. I showed you the same picture a few months ago and I tried to find a cooler picture but I couldn't. This is still my favorite so I want to show you it again all right? There's a hand and this represents the Father. If you can look close enough to where the new branch is actually being grafted into the vine, both parts are cut. That's what you have to do, you have to cut it down to the heart.

Then what you do is you place the branch into the vine, connecting the heart of one to the heart of another. You tie it off and eventually what takes place is the sap from the vine begins to take all of the nutrients and all of the health and all the resources of the vine and it literally shoots it up and begins to feed the branch and eventually that branch actually forms enough bark to where it becomes part of the vine. This is the metaphor that He says, "I'm the true vine. You trust me. My Father is going to graft you into me and then my Holy Spirit who represents the sap in the analogy, is literally going to take all the endless resources that are found in Christ. Literally bring them up through the vine and place them into the branch so that you and I can bear much fruit and displays ourself as His disciples in the world." You see, this is His plan from the beginning. Is in the garden the whole plan was, "You connect to me and live life perfectly. In heaven the whole thing is, you connect to me and live life perfectly."

What Jesus is saying is, even in the interim, right now in this broken fallen world that we can abide in Christ and experience some of the fruit, some of the peace and the joy that we will know in heaven forever. So long as we abide in Christ. It's an amazing gift. You see, for branches that are abiding in Christ, nothings more natural than to bear fruit. For those who are not abiding in Christ, nothing's more impossible. That's what He says, "Apart from me you can do nothing." I love how Jeremiah chapter 17 speaks of this fruit. He says, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit." What kind of fruit can we anticipate seeing in our life if we indeed are abiding in Christ? When in this passage John points out 3. Jesus speaks of all of them. The first is obedience.

You see in verse 10 He says, "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love." I like to liken obedience to showing preference. Just this week my wife had a birthday and one of her friends called. She says, "What's one of your wife's favorite treats?" Now, why would she do that? Well, it's because she loves her. She's seeking to show preference. I can get her what I want to get her, but I want to get her what she would really love. It's the same thing with obedience. God says, "This is what would please me. This is how I made you to thrive and function. This is how I made the world to function." Obedience says, "Oh that will please you? Of course I would love to." That's what in 1 John, John says, "Obedience for those in Christ is not a burden. It's a privilege." Then you get to the idea of character. You see this in verse 11. He says, "These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full."

So you see the order? We connect to Christ and whatever it is in His endless resources comes into us so that we can enjoy it fully and that happens to be joy. In the 5th chapter of Galatians Paul writes, that that's not the only fruit of the Spirit. He says the fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and gentleness and self control. You and I have the opportunity that if we abide in Christ that when we need self control, all of a sudden all the resources of Christ perfect perfect self control. His perfect gentleness, His perfect kindness. Everything that's perfect about Jesus literally can come into us so that we can display and live out that self control in our lives. That kindness in our lives. So he says, "You'll probably see some obedience and you're going to see some character." But He also says, "You're going to see some evangelism." Telling other people about Jesus.

Look at verse 16. He says, "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide." The fruit that he's talking about is not love, nowhere in here does it say that characteristics are branches that are grafted in, people are grafted in. He's foreshadowing a command that he's going to tell us after He rises from the dead when he says, "Go therefore into all the nations and make disciples." See that when you and I are abiding in Christ, we enjoy showing him preference. We naturally begin to live out His character in our life and we naturally begin to like to talk about Him. He takes what we tell other people about Him and He helps them to believe so that they can be grafted in. So new shoots are always forming upon this amazing vine that is Jesus. So Providence, let's give ourselves to abiding in Christ. Isn't it strange how you and I, we wake up in the morning. We feel so far from God, sometimes so close to the flesh.

I like to think of Jude verse 21 when I think about abiding in Christ. It says, "Keep yourself in the love of God." Some of you look at me and go, "Wait a minute. Is there anything I can do to keep myself out of the love of God?" Well, sort of like most of you go to shower this morning. You turn on the water and when you first turn on the water most of us were not underneath it and so at first we enjoyed not of its benefits. We just had to pay for it. Water's running, we're over here, we're waiting for it to get warm. It's already warm, it's still running, it's still running, it's still running but until we get under the water we do not experience any of its pleasure.

Any of its refreshment. Any of its cleansing. It's the same thing with God. He loves you all the time, but if you pull yourself out from the love of God, He doesn't stop loving you but us stop receiving His benefits. The duty of our day has to be drawing near to God. To Him, to abiding in Him.

You see, if we are not abiding in Him we enter our day, every day, spiritually and emotionally hungry. Instead of Christ being our source for everything, we make Him our means for everything. We start treating Him like a Pinata that we whack for goodies. "God give me treasure." But what this is saying is Jesus is the treasure. To be near Him is better than anything. So Jesus is saying, "Draw near to me, pray to me. Open my Word every day, as you move through your day acknowledge me. Connect the dots of what I'm doing and what you're doing back to me. Wait for me. Watch for me. Walk with me." It's beautiful what He does. I don't have time, there's a third point but I'm not going to have time to get to it. In the last section, verses 12-17, He takes all those fruits and He says, "Now I want to zero it down to one and it's love." This vine allows us to love differently. He's already told us in chapter 13, he says, "By this all men will know that you're my disciples if you love one another."

Then he comes back to it again. He says, "You know there's a lot of people in the world who love." Even the Old Testament, the whole law was love as you love yourself. I want to give you a different metric that's going to distinguish you even in the way you love or how other people in the world love. That is, I want you to love as I have loved you. He loves sacrificially. He gave everything He had. He also loved graciously, meaning He didn't wait for us to perform. That's why it says that we didn't choose Him, He chose us. We didn't get all dressed up like a beauty queen and stand before Him and says, "Choose me, choose me." No, we were still walking away in sin, not caring what He thought and He still chose us. When we're walking through life and all of a sudden people behave in ways that are unlovely. If we're abiding in Christ, we can still love them as Christ love the church. We can love people who look like us and people who don't. Who vote like us and people who don't.

Who protest like us and people who don't. We can love. There is no greater display of that love than what Jesus has pour out to us. For those of us who are in Christ, God has given us this amazingly unique way to remember what He's done, it's the Lord's supper. I want to ask the guys that will be serving us, if you want to go ahead and stand up and head to the back and get ready. The Lord's supper, it consist of two elements. You know what they are. The bread is the symbolic of the Body of Christ. The cup which is symbolic of the Blood of Jesus Christ. What the Bible says is that when we take this, what we're saying without words to the people who observe that we're holding these things and taking these things, is that we believe in Jesus Christ. To take this literally says, "I'm telling all around that I am already clean in Christ. I've already been forgiven. It's not because of my merit, it's because of His. It's His accomplishment. "

If you've not trust Christ, we would love to talk with you after our service, but we would ask you at this time to just to let these pass, because to take these means that you treasure them. For those of us who do treasure the realities of Christ, I want to encourage you to do just what He says and that is to not take them until we've examined our hearts. As these elements are passed, take those few moments to confess your sin to God. Ask Him to forgive you so that you can take these things with a clear conscious okay? Let's pray together. Father in heaven, we thank you for your kindness to us. We thank you for your mercy that's been poured out through Jesus. We're amazed as all the generosity that you've given. We pray Father than you would help us to examine our heart now. Help us to see if there's any sin within us that we need to confess before we take these elements. We thank you Father for sending Jesus. Jesus we thank you for your sacrifice and for your invitation to come and to abide in you and experience so much blessing that we do not deserve, but to experience all the more. We pray Father that you would use this time to encourage our hearts. I pray in Jesus name. Amen.



© 2017 Providence Baptist Church (Raleigh, NC)  
Sermon transcripts may be used for preaching and teaching purposes, but may not be published or sold. While generally accurate, parts of this transcript may contain errors.  
Providence reserves the right to correct and/or remove a transcript at any time.