

April 28, 2024

Pruning Potential

[John 15: 1–8](#)

“I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer. He cuts off every branch of me that doesn’t bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more. You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken” John 15: 1- 3 (The Message)

We live along a river in the forest. It is a beautiful peaceful part of God’s creation; nonetheless, we are constantly picking up branches from trees that fall during storms. The wind and snow help nature to self-prune dead growth allowing the fruit of the forest to provide a habitat for birds and wildlife while protecting the land and water. A fruitful forest is part of God’s creation.

Jesus said *“I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer” (worker of the soil)*. Disciples are only fruitful when connected to the true Vine. Our fruitfulness is dependent on our connectedness through community nurtured by the true Vine.

Jesus taught his disciples that vines with large bushy canopies may look heathy, but serious pruning is needed. A lush canopy results in poor fruit. The church in recent years has pushed “church growth” and too often we equated large numbers as a sign of faithfulness.

Jesus isn’t interested in showy churches or showy disciples. The standard for discipleship is bearing fruit through Jesus, the *“Real Vine.”* Pruning is required to bear fruit. Yet, often we see pruning as something to avoid in our lives. Pruning offers us the opportunity to grow excellent fruit to serve God’s world.

Connection, community, and pruning through Jesus, the *“Real Vine,”* provide us potential for a fruitful discipleship of love and service in God’s world.

Prayer: *May God’s love connect us when we need to be connected, prune us when we need to be challenged, and help us be fruitful in the community of Jesus, the Real Vine. Amen.*

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