



Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

October 1, 2023

"I am the true vine." – John 15:1"

"No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine." (John 15:4, NIV)

"I am the True Vine" – Reflection (John 15:1-8)

These verses remind me of two contemporary expressions: "moral compass" and "being grounded."

"Moral Compass" is an expression that I have heard used when someone was described as having lost theirs. There's a judgment: the person does have a rational or moral or ethical set of guidelines that control his or her words, actions, or behaviors. "He has certainly lost his moral compass – that's why he says the objectionable things that he does."

The other expression, "being grounded," means to stay connected to something healthy, non-injurious, right, and true. (A simple example: an electrical ground to prevent excessive current running through a wire.) I've often heard "being grounded" used in a negative sense too: "I can't imagine why he/she is acting this way. It's like they have totally lost touch with reality!"

We need to look no further than John 15 to find true grounding, an unshakable moral compass: the metaphor of Jesus as the vine and us as the branches...and God as the gardener. We are connected to a boundless source of nourishment and protection (the vine) and can flourish (as branches tended by the gardener), living the life God would have us live. We, as faithful Christians, draw our strength and purpose from our connection with Christ. The verses in John 15:1-8 are not an imaginary story: they represent a true picture of a vibrant, living connection. Our faith is about living, remaining, and staying deeply "grounded" in God.

So, let us reflect: Are we truly growing from the vine of Christ? Are we nourished by God's Word? Are we allowing God to prune away things that are harmful to us? This passage reminds us that a Christian life is not a once-and-done, point-in-time decision, but a lifetime of guided and grounded small steps and actions, allowing the vineyard keeper to do this work!

God's Blessings and Peace! - Vance

Other Important Messages in John 15

- This is My Command (vs. 9-17) – "Love each other as I have loved you." (vs. 12)
- The World Will Hate the Disciples (vs. 18-25) – "If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own." (vs. 19)
- The Work of the Holy Spirit (vs. 26-27) – "When the Advocate comes...he will testify about me. And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning." (26-27)

Prayer box: let us pray for our friends and family members facing surgery; those who have died in natural disasters and comfort for their families and friends. Lord, hear our prayer!