

# **SERMON OUTLINE**

## ***'Who do you say I am?'***

### **The '*I Am*' sayings in John's Gospel - 7**

#### **John 15 v1 - 11**

Key Text (v1a) - "I am the true vine....."

Context - See 14 v31a. Jesus passing through the temple and seeing, surrounding its main doors, the sculpture of the golden vine.

Key Question - What does it mean to be a Christian?

### **1. THE ESSENCE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN**

Key Image (in answering the question - what is a Christian) - the vine which represented Israel, the people (the church) of God. See Gen 49 v22, Ps 80 v8, Is 5 v1 - 2a & v7a. Note - in these days the church had been corrupted as it lived for the material and the temporal and not the spiritual and the eternal. What Jesus was meaning, therefore, as He pointed at this golden vine, saying in the process "I am the true vine", was - 'What's important is not that you belong in there - that you belong to that, but that you belong to me!'

Notice how this 'belonging to Jesus' is expressed here. See v5a. Here we have one of the basic definitions of what a Christian is - a Christian is someone who is united to Christ, just as a branch is united (joined) to a tree. Of key importance - not just that we believe in Jesus, but that we are joined to Jesus.

Key Point - In order to live the life of the Christian you need the life of Christ. We can only receive the life of Christ by being united to Him.

This is the secret of Christian life and living - the life of Jesus (all that Jesus is) flowing into us by virtue of our being united (joined) to Him.

## **2. THE EVIDENCE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN**

It's not that we say all the right things, but that we bear fruit. See v8.

Note what God the Father (the gardener) does when He doesn't find this fruit. See v1 - 2a & Matt 7 v16 - 20. Think of Judas being cut off - he did seem to be the real thing.

What is this fruit, more fruit, and much fruit? It's (primarily) conformity to the image and likeness of Jesus. See Gal 5 v22 - 23.

Key Question - How do we come to be more and more fruitful?

### **A. BY SUBMITTING OURSELVES TO THE FATHER'S PRUNING**

See v1 - 2. God the Father prunes us by means of His word - see v3, and by means of the trials and troubles which we face, and which He uses - see Heb 12 v11.

### **B. BY KEEPING OURSELVES IN THE SON'S LOVE**

See v4 & 9. But how do we remain in the Son and in His love? See v10. Notice that this obedience is the source of Christian joy. See v11.