

Sermon Series: “Tap into God’s Rich Supply”—Lord of Life Lutheran, Westfield, IN----11/11/2007

Title: “Remain in Me”

Text: John 15: 1-5

Intro.: Ills.: video

Theme: Tapping into God’s rich supply is about being connected to His reservoir of grace not our pool of goodness so that we continually live a faith which produces the fruits of faith.

Be connected to Jesus

- It is about Him and a personal relationship with Him
 1. Connection is passive on the way into a relationship with Jesus
 - a. *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. vs. 5*
 - b. You and I do not decide to be a part of Jesus any more than a branch decided to be part of the vine
 - c. *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1:12-13*
 - d. A saving relationship with Jesus = unconditional surrender to His saving, transforming activity within us
 2. Connection to Jesus is active after He is in us and we in him
 - a. *Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. James 2: 17*
 - b. Generosity in giving resource/time/energy are obvious and natural result of a soul alive and responsive in Jesus
 - c. *Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 2 Cor. 9:13*
- Connect through the power source
 1. It is His Word (*You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you vs. 3*)
 - a. *"If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." John 8: 31-32*
 - b. No short cuts get it done — it is investing the time, the energy, the weekly/daily training
 - c. **Ills.: A lunar Lord’s Supper**
 2. God’s promise connected to his Word
 - a. *For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:10-11*

Remain in Jesus

- Your Christianity must move from a ***recreational hobby*** to an ***ongoing habit***
 1. ***Abiding in Jesus*** so that you never lose Jesus
 - a. **Ills.: Take my hand so that you don’t get lost**
 - b. Setting up shop with Jesus — coming with the intent to stay — not just to visit
 2. Allowing Jesus to prune so that you are not ruined
 - a. *He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. vs. 2*
 3. Submitting your whole life to a pattern of **REFLECTION – REPENTANCE – RENEWAL**
 - a. **Ills.: God’s pruning of the trees in the fall**
- Measuring the progress of your faith’s growth in terms of ***multiplication*** not ***addition***
 1. *He prunes every branch so that it will bear even more fruit. Vs. 2*
 2. Sometimes we are too timid with the exercise and expectation of our faith
 - a. **Ills.: Southern Indiana grape vines**

3. Jesus doesn't just want to see some fruits of faith but more fruits of faith than he saw last year
- a. **Ills.: Parable of the talents in Matthew 25**
 - b. *Each of you must examine your own actions. Then you can be proud of your own accomplishments without comparing yourself to others. Galatians 6:4*
 - c. *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, be all glory in the church and Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Eph 3: 20-21*

Ills.:

A lunar Lord's Supper

Apollo 11 landed on the surface of the moon on Sunday, July 20, 1969. Most of us are familiar with astronaut Neil Armstrong's historic statement as he stepped onto the moon's surface: "That's one small step for man; one giant leap for mankind." But few know about the first meal eaten there. Buzz Aldrin had brought aboard the spacecraft a tiny Communion kit provided by his church. Aldrin sent a radio broadcast to Earth asking listeners to contemplate the events of that day and give thanks. Then, in radio blackout for privacy ... [Aldrin] read, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, bears much fruit." Silently, he gave thanks and partook. **Dennis Fisher, "Communion on the Moon," Our Daily Bread (June/July/August 2007);**

John 15:1-5

¹"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵"I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [NIV]