



Finding Home

Jesus' Invitation to a Transforming Friendship

"Make your home in me, and I will make my home in you."—Jesus

Spiritual Direction

The potential for spiritual misdirection is tremendous if we identify "fruit" with cultural values of achievement, accomplishment, or success. Jesus' claim to be the "true vine" means he is taking up God's mission in the world where Israel left off. The "fruit" his followers will bear is the fulfillment of what Israel never realized: Living out God's purpose and possibilities for their lives. At stake is how we understand the meaning of our lives.

Exploring

The Old Testament often describes Israel as a vine:

*You transplanted a vine from Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it.
You cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land.¹*

But Israel's prosperity only fueled spiritual adultery and corruption:

*I had planted you like a choice vine of sound and reliable stock.
How then did you turn against me into a corrupt, wild vine?²*

Collectively, Israel's *purpose* was to bring the good news of God's salvation to the world.³ Individually, those belonging to this vine were called to live out God's *possibilities* for their lives, for example, justice, mercy, and humility.⁴ Israel failed at both.

Just before making his journey to the cross, Jesus contrasts his followers with Old Testament Israel by using the allegory of a vine. Jesus announces that he is the "true vine," acknowledging Israel's failure. As the true vine, Jesus invites us to participate in God's renewed (collective) purpose and (individual) possibilities for our lives.

Question

What do you feel as you consider the idea of "purpose and possibilities" for your life?

¹ Psalm 80:8-9.

² Jeremiah 2:21. See, Ezekiel 15:6; Isaiah 5:2; Mark 12:1-12.

³ Galatians 3:7-9.

⁴ Micah 6:8.