**Sermon Date**: March 21, 2021

**Series**: I AM – the Vine, you are the branches

**Scripture**: John 15:1-7

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. 3 Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7 If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

**Big Idea:** Clinging to Christ enables life to flow in and through us

**Summary**: Our connection to Jesus is essential because life, real life, God-honoring life, selfless life, disciple life, disciplined life, and abundant life flow from Jesus to us. Our connection to Jesus is essential, it’s necessary, it should be our primary focus. Abide really means to stay, to remain, to dwell or live, and to cling. If we abide in Christ, if we stay connected to Christ, God is going to prune, cleanse, and clear out the junk. If we remain and stay, we will watch as God’s Word will reveal, revamp and restore us. If we stay, remain and abide in Christ we will experience spiritual growth, internally and externally. We will witness our lives being changed, our hearts being shaped, and our souls being rehabilitated. Our actions and our words will reflect the change that is happening inward. If we cling to Jesus, we will see growth in and through ourselves.

**Questions**:

1. Jesus said, “*Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit*.” What is the fruit that Jesus is talking about?

What does His fruit look like in our lives?

1. In the second part of that verse, Jesus says that God prunes the branches that bear fruit.

Why might we need pruning?

What effect does pruning have on us?

Why is pruning often painful?

Do you have an example of pruning from your own life experiences that you will share?

1. What does abiding in Jesus look like for you?
2. Another result of abiding in Jesus is spiritual transformation, internally and externally. What happens to us as we experience spiritual transformation?

Have you experienced spiritual transformation in your life? How so?

1. In verse 6 Jesus says, “If *anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned*.” This is a stern warning from Jesus. Why is it so dangerous to be apart from him?

How does Satan work in our lives to draw us away from Jesus?

1. Justin shared two ways to develop and grow our relationship with Jesus. The first step is to spend intentional time in God’s Word. Why is that essential to our relationship with him?

Justin said, “When we read God’s word, we should not just be growing in our minds but in our hearts as well.” What does he mean by that?

How do we accomplish that?

1. The second way to grow our relationship with Jesus is through authentic prayer. What topics do you include in your prayers?

“Prayer time should be filled with raw emotions, genuine praise, unfinished thoughts, and heartfelt confessions.” What changes do you need to make to bring about authentic prayer?