



Our Final Colour is Brown.

Jesus Is the Vine I am the vine. You are the branches. If you remain in me, and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. (John 15:5)

Our last colour is brown. Consider the things in nature that are brown such as dirt, tree trunks, dead leaves, and some animals. Good healthy dirt for growing lots of vegetables and flowers is usually a nice dark brown, sort of crumbly and not too hard.

Great garden soil combines regular dirt plus compost, which is decomposed organic matter like leaves, grass clippings, or cow manure. Some call compost “brown gold.” It is so valuable because it transforms the dirt in your garden into a “plant-growing machine.” Suddenly your tomato plants are producing so many tomatoes you can’t pick them fast enough. Flowers bloom continuously, and grapevines produce lots of grapes. When it comes to growing things, brown represents nourishment to bear fruit.

Read John 15:1-5.

What does Jesus call himself in today’s “I am” statement and how does He describe His followers?

What were the branches supposed to do? 46. The Jewish people were familiar with vines. There were grapevines everywhere planted in rows

on vineyard, and the vine keeper trimmed the branches or propped them up off the ground so they would bear more fruit. If any branch got bent or broken off from the vine, the vine wouldn't be able to produce grapes through that branch.

When you think about a vine and branches, the vine has its roots in the ground. It gets the nutrients it needs from the dirt and carries them to the branches connected to the vine. The vine nourishes or feeds the branches.

It is easy to understand this image of Jesus giving life to His followers.

Jesus is referring to the spiritual life He gives to believers now while they are alive on earth. That life inside of us should bear Jesus fruit in our lives. The purpose of the vine is to bear fruit through its branches. Jesus chooses to bear fruit through His followers.

Think about how fruit is produced on a vine. In the spring, the vine wakes up from its winter's sleep and first grows new leaves on its branches. Pretty soon, flowers appear on those branches. Then, in a wonderful way, the flowers are transformed into tiny fruit that keep growing all summer long until they are ripe for picking. The vine has done what it is supposed to do—give nourishment to all its branches so they can bear the fruit the vine wants to produce on them.

You know the kind of vine that you are growing by its fruit. You would pluck grapes from a grapevine, kiwi fruit from a kiwi vine, and blackberries from a blackberry vine. So, the fruit should match the vine.

That is what Jesus is saying about His followers, also. Their lives should match the kind of vine they are attached to—a Jesus vine. Anything that looks like what Jesus did when He was here on earth would be Jesus fruit. Jesus produces fruit through those who trust in Him and are His followers—the branches of His

What would Jesus fruit look like?

Jesus loved people. What would that kind of Jesus fruit look like in you?

Jesus talked to God His Father in prayer often, asking God to do whatever God wanted in His life. What would that kind of Jesus fruit look like in you?

Jesus spent time reading and studying God's word in the Bible He had, believing and obeying it. What would that kind of Jesus fruit look like in you?

Jesus fruit in you is you looking more like Him in how you live your life every day. Jesus lived His life to please God His Father. Jesus fruit in you can be seen as you live your life to please God your Father.

There's a key to doing this. Reread John 15:5. What must we as Jesus followers do in order to bear Jesus fruit in our lives? Jesus is the Vine? Why?

The "apart from me you can do nothing" in this verse refers to bearing Jesus fruit—living your life so that whatever you do or say looks more like what Jesus would do or say. Then people could say, "Hey, I can see that you are attached to the Jesus vine." The world will try to convince you that you've got power within yourself to do a lot of great things without relying on Jesus to do it through you. You can run a marathon on your two feet without being attached to the Jesus vine. You can do

hundreds of math calculations without Jesus. You can be a top salesperson without Jesus.

But, you can't love people as Jesus loved them. You can't trust in God as Jesus trusted in God. You can't understand the Bible and obey it as Jesus did. You can't live your life to please God as Jesus did. You can do none of those things without receiving something from the Jesus vine.

Jesus said to His followers, "You need something from me continually. You've got to remain joined to me." What do you think that could mean—to remain or abide in Jesus?

First, we have already learned that once you trust in Jesus to take away your sin, you have a forever relationship with Him that can never be taken away or lost. You have eternal life that begins now and continues forever that doesn't stop. And, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside you forever. So, this doesn't refer to eternal life.

You cannot become "unjoined" to Jesus and lose the life He's given to you. The word "remain" (or, abide) in this verse means to "dwell" in a certain place, to "make one's home" in that certain place or with that certain person. To remain in Jesus is to "make our home" in Him, just as He also "makes His home" in us.

Think about your home, the place where you live. What are the benefits of having a place to call home? What makes it special to you? Home is where you can relax, where your family is, where you feel loved, and where all the things that are truly important to you are. Home is where you get nourished with food and sleep so that you have the strength and encouragement to make it through the next day. It's where you learn how to grow up and live life that is worthwhile. Even when you are at

work or school, you are still connected to your home. If you share your home with others, they are likely thinking about you and caring for you when you are away.

That's what Jesus wants to be for you as His follower—your home, your dwelling place. Not a building like a house but a relationship like you have with a loving family at home. And, it's in that relationship that we grow as branches and bear Jesus fruit in our lives. Not by ourselves, of course.

We have the Holy Spirit within us doing that, nourishing us with Jesus' life. When you trust in Jesus Christ to take away your sins, His Spirit comes to live inside of you. You can't see Him but He is there from the moment you trust in Jesus. His job is to help us bear Jesus fruit so that we look more like Jesus in what we do and say every day.

The Bible says that the Holy Spirit transforms us to become more and more like Jesus. Just like the life of the vine transforms the flowers into fruit that represents the vine. We begin to look like we are attached to the Jesus vine, bearing Jesus fruit in our lives.

The Bible describes some of that Jesus fruit in Galatians 5.

Read Galatians 5:22-23. What kind of Jesus fruit does the Holy Spirit produce in your life?

All of the fruit in that list were produced in Jesus' life when He was on earth. He wants to produce this same fruit in your life. If you have these characteristics in your life, others will recognize that you are connected to the Jesus vine and that the Holy Spirit inside you is nourishing you with Jesus' life to transform you into someone who looks like Jesus in whatever you do and say.

One famous teacher put it this way: “Jesus Christ gave His life for you so that He could live His life through you.”

Read John 15:8. When we bear Jesus fruit, who is honoured? This honours our Father God and pleases Him. You as a person always please God because you are His child. But, what you do (attitudes, thoughts, words, actions) may not always please God. As you bear Jesus fruit, though, your life will please God every day. Jesus is the vine. He nourishes us with His life so we can bear fruit in our lives that represents our connection with Him.

Read John chapters 15-21 and reflect on what you read.