

THE VINE AND THE BRANCHES

Scripture:

¹⁵ 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² 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. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also 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 you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.'

John 15:1-8 (NIV)

- Read together John 15:1-8
- Sing or play the song 'Tend' to begin this time of connecting to 'the vine' corporately:

['Tend' - Emmy Rose, Bethel Music](#)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=HSB4poSt7UE&t

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- Print off or display the following lyrics from the song 'Tend':

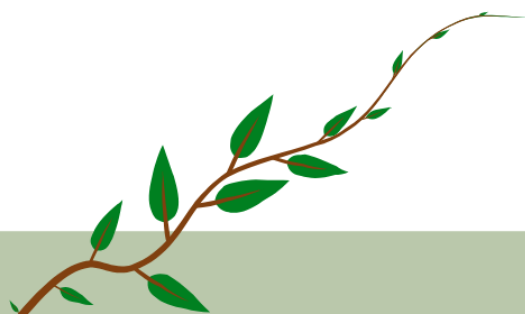
*In the landscape of my life
You don't rush through any season
You always take your time
A careful hand, a gentle guide
You take what's dead away
And you prune what's running wild*

*So be the gardener of my heart
Tend the soil of my soul
Break up the fallow ground
Cut back the overgrown
And I won't shy away
I will let the branches fall
So what you want can stay
And what you love can grow*

Give time to reflect on these words and turn this into a time of prayer and response.

- a. You may want to guide people with prayer points / starters:
Pray for the season that you are in and God's timing in that season.

Pray for God to prune what he doesn't want for you in your heart, character and life.

Pray for God to reveal to you what he wants to grow in and through you.
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Further suggestion:

- Buy your congregation members a seed pack or starter plant each with the challenge to keep the plant alive. As they tend to their plant, they may continue to reflect on the passage of John 15:1-8 and keep connected to their own life source daily. Let it inspire them to pray, worship and read the word.
 - a. Print off the accompanying Scripture resource of John 15:1-8 to hand out with the seeds/plant and make use of social media posts to keep momentum in the challenge.



Closing prayer:

Lord,

May you continue to reveal yourself to us through your creation.

As we watch the things of nature grow and flourish, we look to you as our vine, our life source, for our own sense of growth and nourishment.

May your fruits display within our hearts and lives as you prune what is no longer abundant.

As we become more like you, show us how we can be better stewards of your beautiful Earth.

Amen.

