



BelPres Church

Remain in Me

Speakers: Becky Bastien and Annie Duncan

Disclaimer: This transcript was computer generated and may contain errors.

My name is Becky Bastien and I'm the elementary pastor here and as you can hear I am getting over a cold but with the help of Jesus we'll make it through.

Um, I just want to say to our elementary kids are here in worship with us and that is so wonderful. Kids, I'm so glad you're here. We have worship bags in the back if you need something to do while I'm talking and we have a play space up here and I just want to say the kingdom of God like we were talking about it is diverse. It is also loud and messy so don't worry if your kids make some noise. We are so glad that they are here worshipping with us.

Now a story about me as a kid being loud and messy to begin us.

Um, I wonder if any of you have ever been to SeaTac Airport and been on the underground train or tram that takes you from place to place. Nods yes, okay. So I grew up around here and I loved going on that train and I remember many a trip to the airport asking my parents if we were going to get to ride on the train and they were like, "Becky, I don't know. Just get in the car." But it was my favorite part and why was it my favorite part? Well, because of course I wanted when the train started moving to see how long I could brace myself for before I needed to grab the handrail.

Anyone else? Anyone else done that? Yes, few admitting, okay.

All right, but what would happen? The train would start moving, it'd go faster and faster, we'd take a turn and I would topple over of course usually taking like

my sister and our suitcases with us and I remember many times my parents saying, "Becky, just hold on to the handrail." And eventually I would realize every trip they were right and that I needed to hold on tight to that handrail to get where I was going safely.

Now today's scripture teaches us about holding on to God in the same way and in just a moment we will look at John 15.

So, if you want to open up your Bibles now, today's passage is a parable, which means it is a story that Jesus told to help us understand something important.

And today's metaphor or parable talks about a gardener, a vine, and branches. Let's take a second and look and see who is who. John 15, verse 1, Jesus is speaking.

Jesus says this,

"I am the vine, my father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch joined to me that does not bear fruit. He trims every branch that does bear fruit. Then it will bear even more fruit. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

Remain joined to me just as I also remain joined to you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain joined to the vine. In the same way, you can't bear fruit unless you remain joined to me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. If you remain joined to me and I to you, you will bear a lot of fruit. You can't do anything without me."

All right, pause there. God is the gardener, Jesus is the vine, we are the branches. Have you ever wanted to be the gardener?

You ever wanted to be the gardener in your life, have the plan and the control and the power? Jesus nips that in the bud pretty quickly here.

God is the gardener, Jesus is the vine, you and I are the branches.

Now, what is Jesus trying to tell us? To remain joined to him.

Not just once, not for show, not for good luck, but forever, a deep relationship that helps us to flourish and bloom when we are connected to the love of God through the vine of Jesus, who wants to be connected to us.

Today, as we have shared, we are doing baptisms and celebrating them across all of our services. And I always talk about baptisms with our kids first by saying, you know, this is not like a normal bath or like a normal hot tub, if you will.

This is something special. This is something important. This is a place where we draw near to Jesus. And it's a moment where we get to see a sign of what Jesus has already done for us. And just as the water cleanses us in baptism, we are celebrating that in Jesus, we are cleansed of all the things that keep us separate from God. And that's why I talk about sin with our kids. It's just all the things that get in the way of us having a close relationship with God.

Because when Jesus died for our sins, he took away that separation for us. And just as Jesus rose from the grave, we rise from the water alive in Christ and close to God.

In today's passage, we see Jesus is encouraging us to stay close to him and remain in his love.

So, how do we do that? How do we remain close to God's love?

Well, this question is important. I just want to say, if you were baptized as a baby, if you're baptized as a kid, an adult, last week, you're getting baptized today, or if you haven't yet been baptized, it's an invitation for all of us.

So, first, we need each other. We remain in God's love and are formed by being a part of the church and having friendships and relationships with other Christians. A lot of the people that are baptized today will be partnered with an anchor so that they have somebody in our church who's going to help them be connected to our church and pray for them.

And we want to be the church that supports you and your walk with Jesus, wherever you are on that walk.

Second, we need to accept that we are the branch and that we will never be perfect but will always have a gardener tending to us. And the mark of spiritual maturity is accepting that God always has something to teach us. And there is a next step on the path that he is calling you to.

Third, naturally then would be listening to God. If God is calling you to be baptized today, continue to listen to God. Don't let this be the end of the story. Or if you're already baptized, maybe today you ask God what he is calling you to next.

Last thing I want to share about this verse is that my favorite part was at the end. Jesus says, "You can't do anything without me." I know that is true for me. I need him. I need him daily. I need to hold on to him like the branch on a tree. I need to hold on to him like the safety rail on the train.

So, don't be like young Becky flopping around, knocking over suitcases and other people. No, grab on to the branch that gives us life. Grab on to the vine. Remain in God's love and live life close to him.

So, Jesus, we thank you for today. We thank you for the blessing of baptism, a time to celebrate the grace and salvation you offer to us.

Lord, would your spirit pour out on this water that it may be a place of rebirth in you. Wash away the sins of all who are cleansed by it. Raise them to new life in you, Jesus. Help us to hold tightly to that vine that brings us life through you. Amen.

Scripture Reflection Questions: Read this week's scripture together and discuss the following:

- What do we learn about God (e.g., traits, personality, what matters, priorities) in this passage?
- What do we learn about people, and ourselves in particular, this week?

Sermon Reflection Questions: Reflecting on this week's sermon, discuss the following:

- What rhythms or habits help you stay connected to Jesus in a meaningful way?
- How do you distinguish between being busy for God and actually bearing fruit?
- Why might Jesus emphasize that He is the *true* vine? What "false vines" do people tend to attach themselves to today?

Closing Question and Application: Given what we've discussed together today, how might God want you to apply these learnings to your life or in the life of your community this next week? Who might you share this with?

Closing group prayer: Spend a few minutes together in your group sharing prayer requests and then praying together for each other. Take the challenging

June 14, 2026

parts of your conversation to Jesus. Thank God for the time together, the conversation shared, the other people in the group, and for encouragement in the week ahead.