



Depending on God for Everything: John 15:1-5



Why Do We Exist?



Why do we **exist**?

We exist to see and celebrate the manifest goodness and perfections of God, the height of which is his love that was displayed in the cross.

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Simply put: **We exist to glorify God.**

How can we glorify God?

- Depending on God for Everything;
- Reflecting God's Character; and,
- Fulfilling Christ's Commission.

John 15:1-3

¹ “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.”

John 15:4-5

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.

The 7 “I am” Metaphors in John

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Jesus is
saying,
“What you
need most,
I am.”

“I am the bread of life” (John 6:35)

“I am the light of the world” (John 8:12)

“I am the door” (or “the gate”) (John 10:9)

“I am the good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14)

“I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25)

“I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6)

“I am the true vine” (John 15:1, 5)



Psalm 80:8-11, 14-15, 19

“You brought a vine out of Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. You cleared the ground for it; it took deep root and filled the land. The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches. It sent out its branches to the sea and its shoots to the River.... Turn again, O God of hosts! Look down from heaven, and see; have regard for this vine, the stock that your right hand planted, and for the son whom you made strong for yourself.... Restore us, O Lord God of hosts! Let your face shine, that we may be saved!”

Jesus is the “true vine”

Israel became a defective, fruitless, “wild” vine
(Isaiah 5:5-7; Jeremiah 2:21; Ezekiel 19:10-14; Hosea 10:1).

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“Jesus is the true vine, the one to whom Israel pointed, the
one that brings forth the fruit God has always sought”

(D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*,
PNTC, Eerdmans, 1991, p. 513).

Two Types of Branches: Fruitful Branches and Fruitless Branches

“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away (*airei*), and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes (*kathairei*), that it may bear more fruit.

Already you are clean (*katharoi*) because of the word that I have spoken to you” (John 15:2-3).

What does it mean to be a “fruitful branch”?

“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you **keep my commandments**, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love” (John 15:8–10).

What does it mean to be a “fruitful branch”?

- “But the **fruit** of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Galatians 5:22–23a)
- “filled with the **fruit** of righteousness” (Philippians 1:11)
- “bearing **fruit** in every good work” (Colossians 1:10)
- “a **harvest** of righteousness and peace” (Hebrews 12:11)

What about the “fruitless branches”?

“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away (*airei*), and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes (*kathairei*), that it may bear more fruit.

Already you are clean (*katharoi*) because of the word that I have spoken to you” (John 15:2–3).

What about the “fruitless branches”?

“Every branch in me that does not bear
fruit he takes away (*airei*)”

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*Does John 15:2 teach that our salvation is
conditioned on us—in our own strength—remaining
perseverant in faith and good works?*

Reasons #1: Believers **already have eternal life**

- “[W]hoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has **passed from (metabebekev)** death to life” (John 5:24).
- “I give them [i.e., Jesus’s sheep] eternal life, and they will **never (ou mē) perish**” (John 10:28a).
- “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall **never (ou mē) die**” (John 11:25–26).

Faith in Christ is not something we generate. **It is a gift and not something we must maintain by our own striving:**

- “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and **this is not your own doing**; it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8–9);
- “For it has been **granted to you** that for the sake of Christ you should not only **believe in him** but also suffer for his sake” (Philippians 1:29).
- “Simeon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those **who have obtained ('received' [*lachousin*]) a faith** of equal standing with ours by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ...” (2 Peter 1:1).

Reasons #2: Believers are **kept** by God

- “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one” (John 10:27–30).
- “And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one” (John 17:11).

Reasons #3: Believers are to **abide**

- “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. 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” (John 15:4-5).

What does it mean to “abide”?

“Abide” means to receive Christ by faith (cf. John 1:11-12) and to dwell with and in him by faith, receiving from him sap that is needed for spiritual growth, that we might bear the fruit of righteousness.



What do we receive when we **abide**?

- **Jesus's Words**—"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you" (John 15:3).
- **Jesus's Power (through Prayer)**—"If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you" (John 15:7).
- **Jesus's Love**—"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love" (John 15:9).
- **Jesus's Joy**—"These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11).

What about the “fruitless branches”?

“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away”

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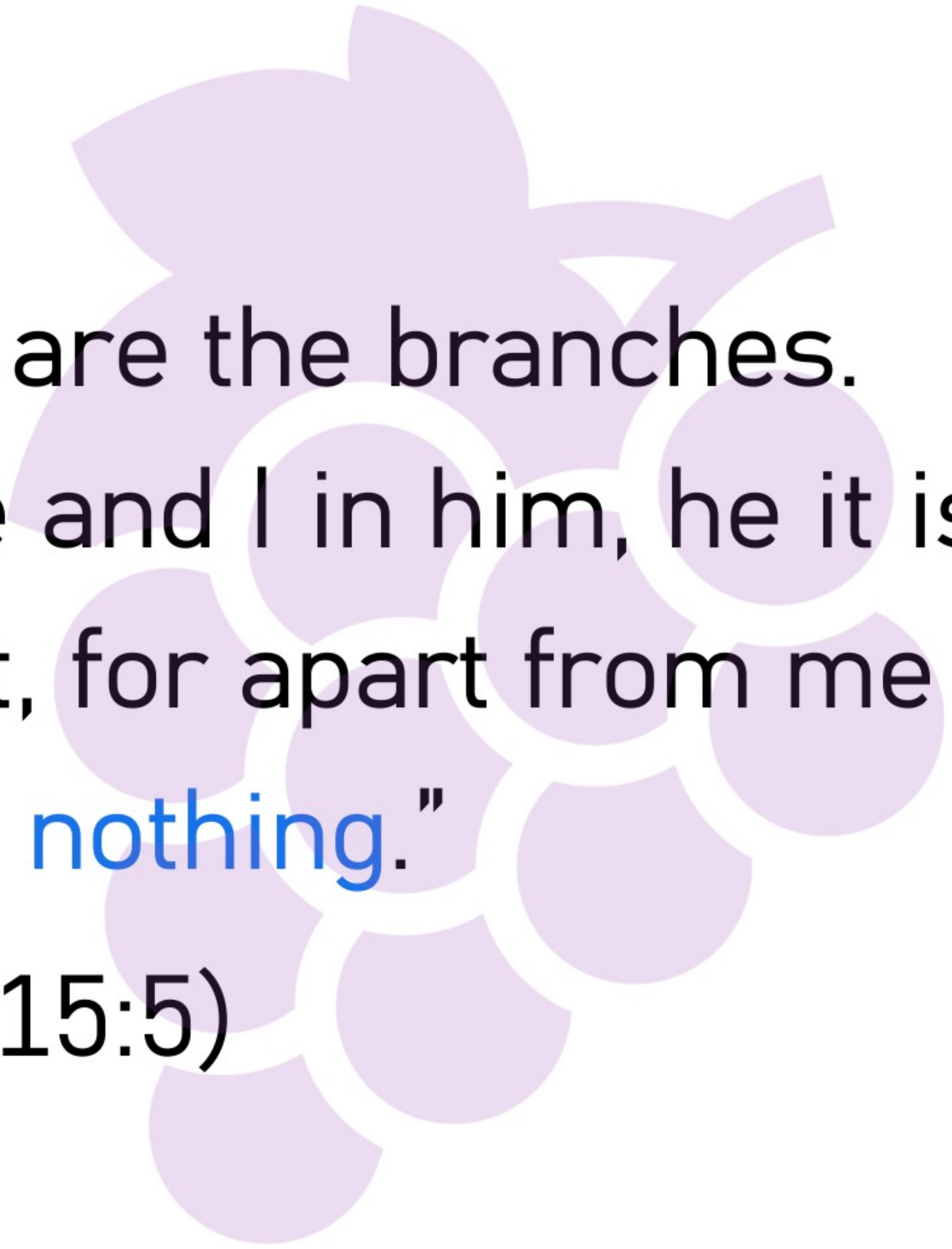
These are fake branches that, like Judas, put on a good show, but never had true faith: “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.

But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us” (1 John 2:19).



“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.**”

(John 15:5)



Conclusion

1. If we want to bear fruit that brings glory to God, we must become completely dependent on Jesus the Vine.
2. The fruit that ultimately brings the most glory to God is the fruit of love (cf. Matthew 22:34-40).