



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

**Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053**

## True Branches of Christ

Marvin L. Weir

The fifteenth chapter of John portrays Christ as the true vine and individual Christians as the branches. One who obeys the Gospel is a branch in Christ. Man-made denominations are not the branches spoken of by John as is made clear in verse five. The disciples who are followers of Christ are the branches under discussion. Each child of God has the responsibility to produce fruit as a branch in the kingdom.

Denominations teach that these “branches” are different “churches” in a futile attempt to justify denominationalism. The context, however, will not allow such an erroneous interpretation. It is individual people under consideration and not different religious groups. Man-made religious bodies are desperate to find New Testament Scripture to back up their existence but they will search in vain. There is only “one body” (Ephesians 4:4), and one does not mean many!

Only those who obey the Gospel (Romans 1:16) are branches “in Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:17). One puts on Christ in the act of baptism (Galatians 3:27). A penitent believer who obeys the Gospel plan of salvation is “baptized into Christ” (Romans 6:3) and “raised” to walk “in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

One who does not bear fruit is not maturing in Christ. The apostle Paul identifies the fruit that every child of God is to produce as being “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self control” (Galatians 5:22-23). The Christian who is bearing fruit for the Master will continue to mature as Peter demonstrates in saying, “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (2 Peter 1:5-7). A Christian will also strive to teach others the Gospel in planting and watering as the opportunity arises (1 Corinthians 3:6).

When the Word of God is proclaimed, the seed of the kingdom is sown (Luke 8:11). The Gospel is still to this very day God’s power to save souls from sin (Romans 1:16). No one has ever been saved by the wisdom of man (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:20-25), and this truth strikes a deathblow to all the gimmicks that are employed today by religious shysters to draw a crowd. A true follower of Christ who is bearing fruit for the Lord will preach the Word and be content to let God give the increase.

The Word of God has the ability to clean and make pure. The apostle Peter says to brethren, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:22-23).

It has already been noted that a person puts on Christ at the point of immersion into Christ (Galatians 3:27). One who is in Christ must choose to continue to abide in Christ (John 15:4). If one fails to “walk in the light as he is in the light” (1 John 1:7) or “goeth onward and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ” (2 John 9), he does not “abide in the vine” (John 15:4) and cannot bear fruit. Many today pretend to be “branches” while refusing to do the Lord’s will. Jesus notes this truth in saying, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:21-23).

May we submit to the Master’s commands so that we will not hear Him say at the judgment, “And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)? John 15:6 says, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” This makes it clear that Jesus is speaking of individuals and not “churches.” One is obligated to remain in the vine. Whatever is required to do he must do or be purged from the vine. This shows that man can apostatize and lose his soul.

One cannot claim to follow Christ while refusing to obey His commands. A true branch of Christ abides in His Word and enjoys fellowship with the Father and the Son and all others who are content to abide in the teaching of Christ. May we strive to be true branches of Christ!

I am the Bible, God's wonderful library.  
I am always — and above all — the truth.  
To the weary pilgrim, I am a strong staff.  
To the one who sits in darkness, I am glorious light.  
To those who stumble beneath heavy burdens, I am sweet rest.  
To him who has lost his way, I am a safe guide.  
To those who are sick in sin, I am healing strength and forgiveness.  
To the discouraged, I am a glad message of hope.  
To those who are distressed and tossed about by the storms of life,  
I am an anchor, sure and steady.  
To those who search for salvation, I reveal the Savior of the World.  
I am the Bible, God's holy Word.

## Eddy Craft

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“We should take a look, once in a while, at what has been accomplished instead of brooding over what we have not yet succeeded in doing.”

<div>Schedule of Services</div> <div>Sundays</div> <div>Bible Classes. . 9:30 AM</div> <div>Worship . . . . . 10:30 AM</div> <div>Worship . . . . . 5:00 PM</div> <div>Wednesdays</div> <div>Bible Classes. . 7:00 PM</div> <div>Website: oologahcofc.org</div>	Assignments			
		Wednesday, Apr.19	Sunday, Apr. 23 AM	Sunday, Apr. 23 PM
	Announcements	Paul Praschnik	Russ Earl	Paul Praschnik
	Song Leader	Doyle Jackson	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen
	Prayer	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson	Bill Dilks
	Lord's Supper (speaker)		Russ Earl	Chris Nelson
	Lord's Supper		Ross Swearingen	
	Lesson	Ross Swearingen	Russ Earl	Russ Earl
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Chris Nelson	Paul Praschnik	Russ Earl