

# Life on the Vine—Pruned by the Word

John 15:1-8



The symbol of the Vine is a powerful biblical picture of what the Lord means for our life with him to be.

- Jesus is the *Heavenly Vine*.
- We are his *branches*.
- The purpose of our living union with Christ is to *bear fruit*.
- The Father is our *Vinedresser*.

*God prunes us by his word so that we  
may bear more fruit.*



## JOHN 15:1–8

<sup>1</sup> “I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> 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. <sup>3</sup> Already you are **clean** because of the word that I have spoken to you. . . .

<sup>8</sup> By this my Father is glorified, that you **bear much fruit** and so prove to be my disciples.”



1. God's word is the *most powerful creative force* in the universe.

### Genesis 1:1-3

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.



## Psalm 33:6

<sup>6</sup> By the **word** of the LORD the heavens were made,  
and by the **breath of his mouth** all their host.



When God speaks, he can create things whose size is measured in light-years.



- Traveling at **186,000 miles per second**, a beam of light can circle the earth **448 times in one minute**.
- A beam of light travels **5,880,000,000,000 miles (5 trillion, 880 billion) miles** in a year.
- That distance is what we call a **Light-Year**.

- According to the best estimates of astronomers there are at least **100 billion galaxies** in the observable **universe**.
- The ***edge of the known universe*** is believed to be ***46 billion light-years away***.
- From here astronomers can detect quasars, high-energy sources of light just now reaching us. That light may emanate from the cores of still farther galaxies.

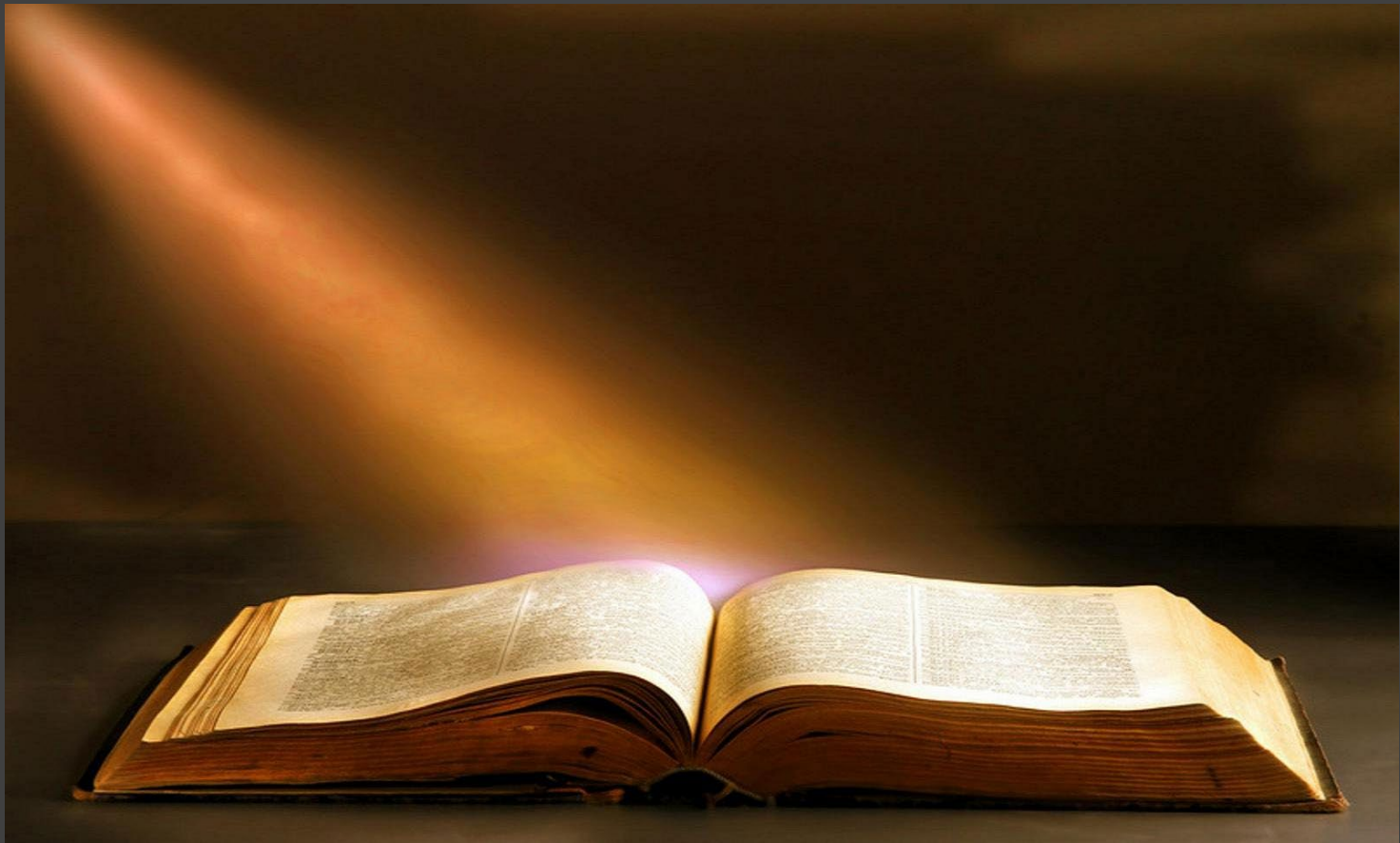
- On a clear night you can *see* about *a thousand stars* with the naked eye.
- Yet the known universe is *billions of light years across* and comprises *billions of galaxies* each containing *billions of stars*.



However vast  
the cosmos  
may really be,  
God created all  
of it in an  
instant of time  
simply by  
*speaking* the  
words “*Let  
there be light.*”







The same God who spoke the universe into existence also **speaks** to us from the pages of the **Bible**.



The Bible is like no other book in the world.

- God's written word is *alive*. It *unleashes* the *supernatural power* of God into the lives of people who read it.

John 6:63

“The words that I have spoken to you are *spirit* and *life*.”

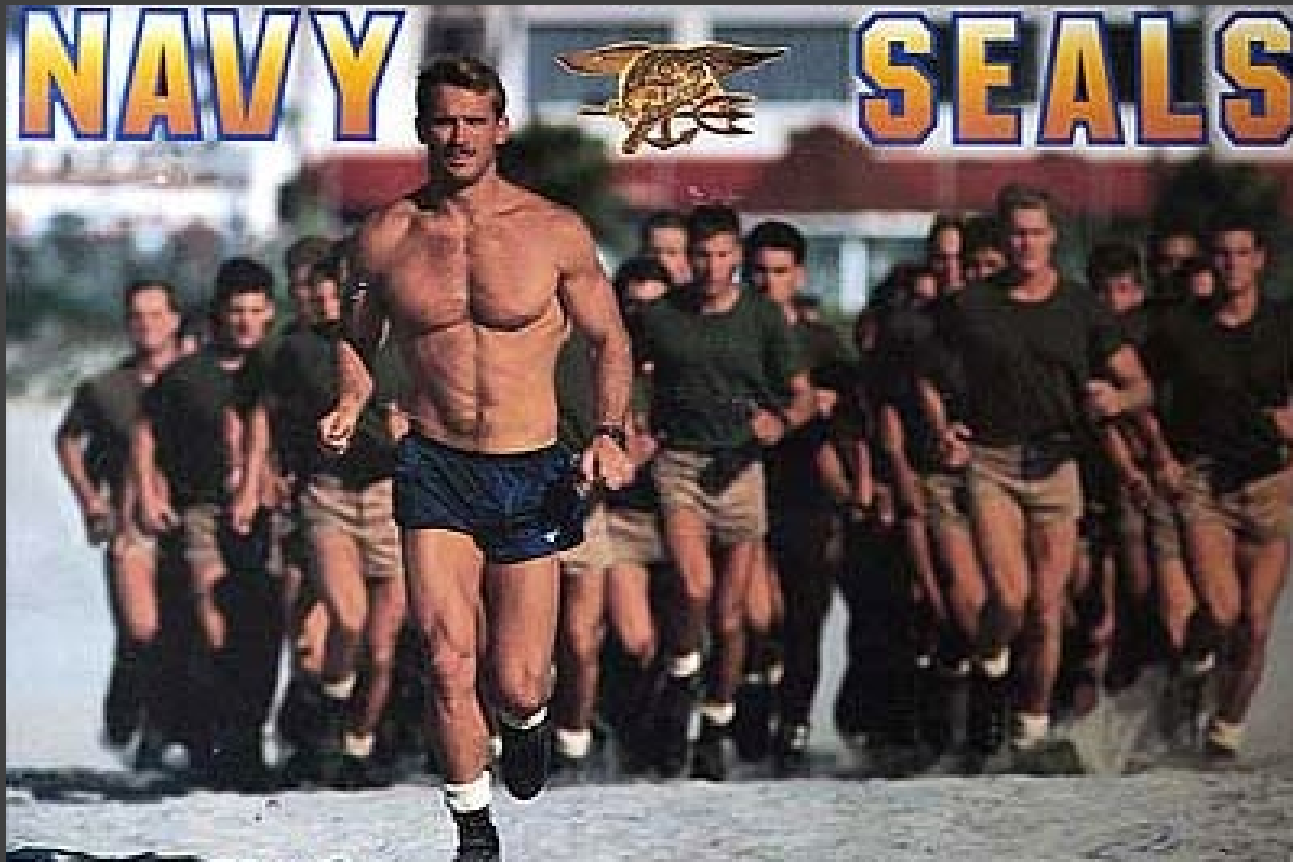
1 Peter 1:23

You have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the *living* and abiding word of God.

## Hebrews 4:12

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is **living** and **active**, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- The word translated “*active*” in Hebrews 4:12 is *energes*, the root of our word “*energy*”.
- The Greeks used this word to describe *soldiers* who are *fit for active duty*.





- Active *Land* that is under cultivation and producing a crop.



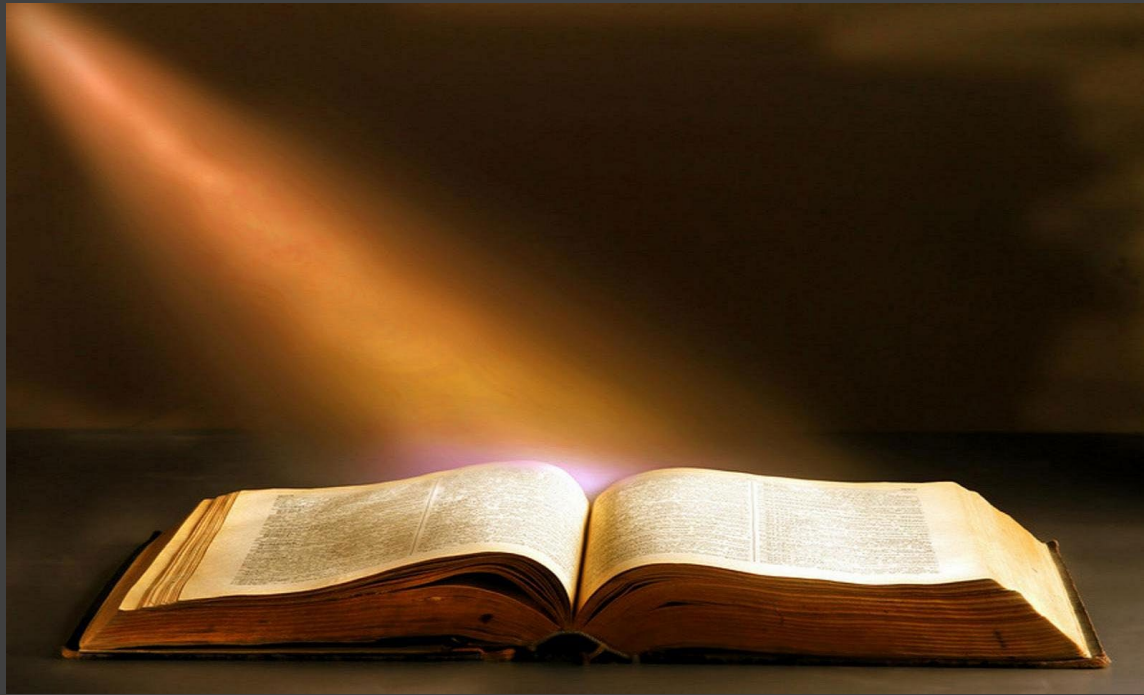


- An active *mine* that is producing minerals.





- Active *money or capital* that is earning a return and not lying idle.



- *Energes* describes something that is active, useful, and effective.
- The term is not used of potential power, but of **actual power**.





- Other books *inform* and *inspire*.
- But when a Christian, indwelt by the Holy Spirit, reads his Bible with a *believing heart* and an *obedient spirit*, God's Word does a *supernatural work* that no other book can do.



- Read with a believing heart the Bible produces a holy *love for God*, for God's *will*, God's *ways*, and God's *kingdom*.

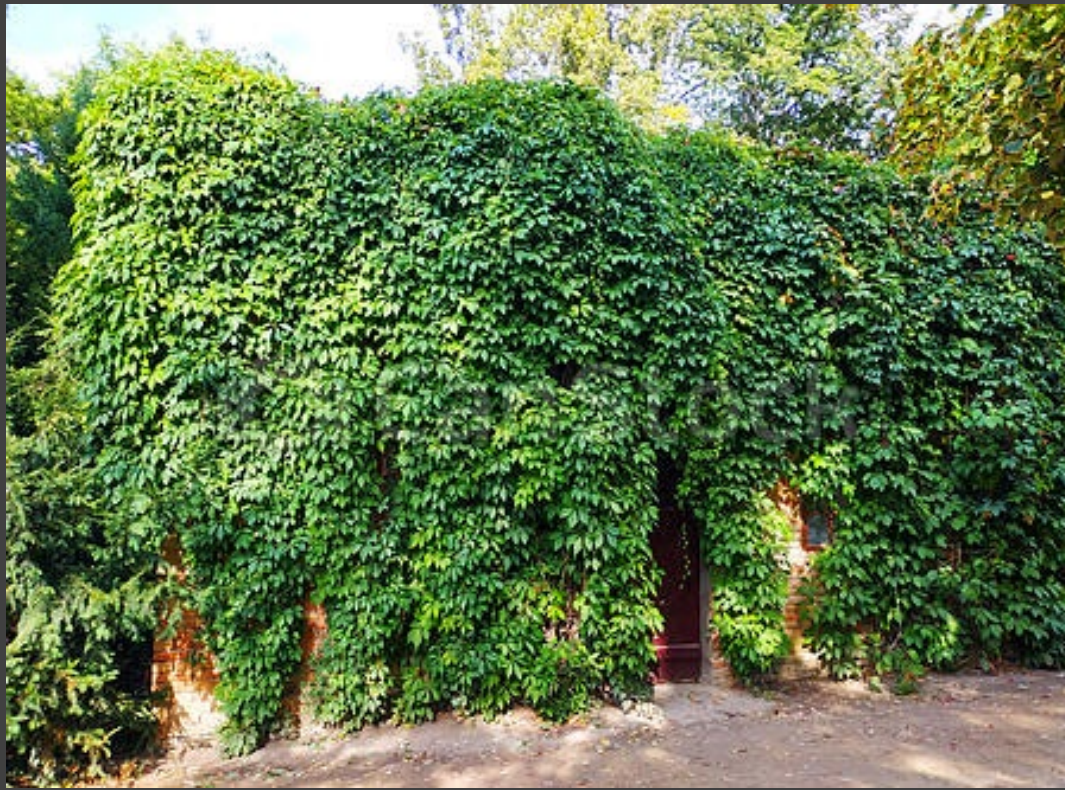
2. God's word is the **pruning knife** that prunes or "**cleans**" the branches on his Heavenly Vine.

John 15:1–3

<sup>1</sup> "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in me that . . . does bear fruit he **prunes**, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already you are **clean** because of the word that I have spoken to you. . . ."



- The verb for “**prune**” *kathairo* and the adjective “**clean**” *katharos* come from the same root.
- God cleans us by pruning us with his Word.



- Grape branches can grow very fast and very long (twelve to twenty feet).
- Wild vines are *unproductive* because they use up resources that could be channeled into making fruit.



- God *prunes our lives* with his *Word*, convicting us of *sin* and *exposing* things that cause us to be unfruitful.

## Hebrews 4:12

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and active, *sharper* than any two-edged sword, *piercing* to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and *discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart*.

## ***WHO REALLY KNOWS YOU?***

- Your husband or wife?
- Your best friend?
- But do they really know the real you?
- Do they know ***exactly*** what's going on in your innermost heart?



- Honestly, how often do **you** know what's really going on in your own heart?
- All of us suffer from some degree of *spiritual blindness*. And the biggest problem with spiritual blindness is that you are blind to your blindness.
- Well, God **knows it all** and his Word **finds it all!**



- God's word is like a *surgeon's scalpel*.
- It *dissects* our innermost thoughts and intents.
- It lays us *bare*.
- It *probes* our hearts.

- The Holy Spirit will use God's word like a surgeon's scalpel to cut out our spiritual tumors *wherever it finds sin*.

## How does this work?

- Suppose one morning your Bible study takes you through Ephesians 4:32:  
Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.
- Suppose that you have been holding a **grudge** against someone. That verse will judge your heart and convict you of your sin.



- Or suppose you are reading through Philippians 2:3-4:

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- Suppose you realize that you've been wrapped up in yourself lately, **looking after yourself** at the expense of others.
- That verse will put you right.

- Humans have an unlimited capacity for *rationalization*.
- One of the ways *Satan* keeps us in our sins is by deceiving us into thinking that what we are doing is OK, or at least that it isn't as bad as it really is.
- And as long as you hide in the *dark*, your *fatal attractions* will have power over you.

But God *loves you too much* to let you *live* in the *dark*.

- God's Word judges our thoughts. It **prunes** and **cleans** us.



- When you turn on the lights in a *dirty room* it's not pretty.
- But you *can't clean* a dirty room *in the dark*.
- You have to *turn on the lights*.





- When God's Word finds its way into some mess in your life that needs to be changed, you will be *pruned*.

# Application

1. Have a systematic, daily Bible reading plan and use it.



## M'Cheyne's



Published By Olive Tree Bible Software

Compiled By Robert Murray M'Cheyne

365 Days

**This one-year reading schedule was created by Scottish minister Robert Murray M'Cheyne in the 19th century to be used for both family and personal devotions. Each day has four readings with two from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, and one from the Psalms or Gospels. Through the course of one year, you'll read through the Old Testament once and the Psalms and New Testament twice.**

**Date Started: Jan 1, 2020**

**Projected End Date: Dec 31, 2020**

**Last Date Read: Apr 4, 2020**

has the disease. <sup>58</sup> But the garment, or the warp or the woof, or any article made of skin from which the disease departs when you have washed it, shall then be washed a second time, and be clean.”

<sup>59</sup> This is the law for a case of leprous disease in a garment of wool or linen, either in the warp or the woof, or in any article made of skin, to determine whether it is clean or unclean.

1 of 4 Complete

Next - Psa 15:1 - 16:11

## Laws for Cleansing Lepers

**14** <sup>1</sup> The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>2</sup> “This shall be the law of the leprous person for the day of his cleansing. <sup>3</sup> He shall be brought to the priest, and the priest shall go <sup>t</sup>out of the camp, and the priest shall look. Then, if the case of leprous disease is

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M'Cheyne's

Goal Progress:

2 readings ahead

27%

Next

95

96

97

98

99

Lev 8:1-36

Lev 9:1-24

Lev 11:1 -...

Lev 13:1-59

Leviticus 10:1-20

✓

Psalms 11:1 - 12:8

✓

Proverbs 25:1-28

✓

1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

✓

Reading Complete



2. *Pray as you read your Bible, and read your Bible as you pray.*

—Remember: “When I pray I talk to my Father. When I read my Father talks to me.”

3. *Expect God to prune you as you read his word.*

- *Set your heart* upon His desire for more fruit.
- *Trust Him* as vinedresser to work it.
- *Yield yourself* in simple childlike surrender to the cleansing work of His Word and Spirit, and you may *count upon it* that His purpose will be fulfilled in you.

- A Christian who is *awakened* to the *Word of God* and the *workings of the Holy Spirit* in his heart *discovers a dynamic and vital force* that will see *the life of Christ lived out* in his daily experience and actions.

- You will *think* what Christ thinks, *feel* what he feels, *say* what he says, and *do* what he does because Christ will be *thinking, feeling, saying, and doing* his life in you and through you.







