

# John 15:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

## Analysis

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Jesus declares 'I am the true vine' (ego eimi he ampelos he alethine), using alethinos (true/genuine) to distinguish Himself from false or inadequate vines. In Old Testament imagery, Israel is God's vine (Psalm 80:8-16, Isaiah 5:1-7), but Israel proved faithless. Jesus is the true vine, fulfilling what Israel failed to be. The second identification: 'and my Father is the husbandman' (kai ho pater mou ho georgos estin). The georgos (vinedresser, farmer) cultivates, prunes, and tends the vine. This establishes the Trinity's roles: Father as caretaker, Son as source, Spirit (implied) as sap flowing through branches. The imagery emphasizes organic connection - life flows from vine to branches. Separation from the vine means death. This metaphor addresses union with Christ as essential to fruitfulness.

## Historical Context

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Vineyards dominated Palestinian agriculture; Jesus' audience immediately understood the metaphor. Israel's vineyard failure (producing wild grapes despite God's care - Isaiah 5:4) forms backdrop. Jesus presents Himself as the faithful vine bearing good fruit. Early church understood this as ecclesiology - believers are incorporated into Christ as branches into vine. Sacramental theology saw baptism as grafting into the vine and Eucharist as receiving life from the vine. Mystical tradition emphasized abiding in Christ through contemplation. Reformers stressed union with Christ as foundation for justification and sanctification. The imagery appears in early Christian art - vine motifs in catacombs and church mosaics symbolizing life in Christ. Modern emphasis on personal relationship with Jesus

finds foundation here - Christianity is organic connection, not merely doctrinal assent.

## Related Passages

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**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does Jesus' claim to be the 'true vine' both fulfill and correct Old Testament imagery of Israel as God's vine?
2. What does the Father's role as vinedresser teach about divine activity in believers' lives?

## Interlinear Text

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Ἐγώ είμι ἡ ἄμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου  
I am G3588 vine G288 the true G228 and G2532 G3588 Father G3962 my G3450  
G1473 G1510 G288 G228 G2532 G3962 G3450

ὁ γεωργός ἐστιν  
the husbandman is  
G3588 G1092 G2076

## Additional Cross-References

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**Jeremiah 2:21** (Parallel theme): Yet I had planted thee a noble vine, wholly a right seed: how then art thou turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine unto me?

**1 Corinthians 3:9** (Parallel theme): For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.

**Isaiah 60:21** (Parallel theme): Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified.

**John 6:55** (Parallel theme): For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

**Isaiah 4:2** (Parallel theme): In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

**1 John 2:8** (Truth): Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

**Jeremiah 12:10** (Parallel theme): Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness.

**Mark 12:1** (Parallel theme): And he began to speak unto them by parables. A certain man planted a vineyard, and set an hedge about it, and digged a place for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

**Matthew 21:33** (Parallel theme): Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

**Hosea 10:1** (Parallel theme): Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.