

# John 15:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

## Analysis

Jesus reiterates 'I am the vine, ye are the branches' (ego eimi he ampelos, hymeis ta klemata). This identifies believers' relationship to Christ - they are not independent entities but extensions of Him, deriving life from Him. The promise follows: 'He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit' (ho menon en emoi kago en auto, houtos pherei karpon polyn). The reciprocal abiding (believer in Christ, Christ in believer) produces abundant fruitfulness (karpon polyn). The stark conclusion: 'for without me ye can do nothing' (hoti choris emou ou dynasthe poiein ouden). The phrase choris emou (without me, apart from me) indicates separation. The absolute ouden (nothing) excludes any spiritual accomplishment independent of Christ. This is not self-deprecation but theological realism - all spiritual life, growth, and fruitfulness derive from union with Christ.

## Historical Context

This verse became foundational to Christian asceticism and mysticism. Desert Fathers and monastic movements structured life to maintain conscious Christ-dependence. Augustine's theology of grace relied heavily on this verse - apart from divine grace working through Christ-union, humans can do nothing spiritually profitable. Pelagian controversy centered on whether humans could do spiritual good independently - Augustine cited this verse proving absolute dependence on divine grace. Reformation soteriology built on this: sola gratia, sola fide, solus

Christus - salvation and sanctification are entirely from and through Christ. Modern Keswick movement emphasized 'victorious Christian living' through abiding. Prosperity gospel's emphasis on human potential contradicts this verse's absolute negation of independent achievement. The verse establishes that Christian fruitfulness is not about willpower, technique, or effort but about maintaining vital connection to Christ.

## Related Passages

---

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

---

1. What is the nature of the 'much fruit' promised to those who abide - is it evangelistic results, moral transformation, or something else?
2. How does the absolute statement 'without me ye can do nothing' shape our understanding of human agency and responsibility?

## Interlinear Text

---

ἐγώ είμι ἡ ἄμπελος ὑμεῖς τὰ κλήματα ὁ  
I am the vine ye are the branches G3588  
G1473 G1510 G3588 G288 G5210 G3588 G2814 G3588  
  
μένων ἐν ἐμοὶ κάγὼ ἐν αὐτῷ οὗτος φέρει  
He that abideth in me and I in him the same bringeth forth  
G3306 G1722 G1698 G2504 G1722 G846 G3778 G5342  
  
καρπὸν πολύν ὅτι χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν  
fruit much for without me nothing ye can do  
G2590 G4183 G3754 G5565 G1700 G3756 G1410 G4160  
  
ούδεν  
G3762

## Additional Cross-References

---

**Philippians 4:13** (Parallel theme): I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

**Colossians 1:10** (Parallel theme): That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

**John 15:16** (Parallel theme): Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

**Galatians 5:22** (Parallel theme): But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

**Proverbs 11:30** (Parallel theme): The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

**2 Corinthians 13:8** (Parallel theme): For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.

**John 5:19** (Parallel theme): Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

**James 1:17** (Parallel theme): Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

**2 Peter 3:18** (Parallel theme): But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

**Romans 7:4** (Parallel theme): Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

---

From KJV Study • [kjvstudy.org](http://kjvstudy.org)