



new life fellowship

**Sermon Title: We Are the Branches**

**Speaker: Sherin Swift, Pastor of Connections and Equipping**

**Scripture: Luke 10:25-37**

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes<sup>[a]</sup> so that it will be even more fruitful. <sup>3</sup>You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup>Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

<sup>5</sup>"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup>If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup>If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup>This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

*(NIV)*

#### **Sermon Outline:**

In today's scripture, we see the dynamic between pruning and remaining. Jesus is referring to the life of a plant as he speaks to us in this scripture, but the dynamics of pruning and remaining also take place in our spiritual life. The acts of pruning and remaining lead to fruitfulness in our lives.

God's word in scripture is what cleanses us and guides us, putting us in the right direction. God's pruning takes place when He asks us to give up something so that we can receive from Him what is true and eternal. Pruning is like cleansing. It is an invitation to let go of certain things in our lives so that we can take hold of what is better for us.

Pruning is counter cultural because the world is telling us that more is better and faster is always better. Remaining and abiding is saying that slower and staying is better.

The spiritual life is not meant for the massive, constant, rapid movement that the world tells us is better. The invitation is for us to remain and abide, to step into the slowness that awaits us in a life with Christ.

We are alive in Christ when you are connected to Christ. It is because of Jesus's resurrection power that we are alive in Christ. Remaining in Christ is slow work, but life is still possible by allowing him to be your source.

Jesus is offering you something that no one or nothing else can offer you, the life that you were meant to live and designed for. This process can be long, slow, and painful at times, but we are in the hands of the Master Gardener who is faithful and true to his word.

Jesus is inviting us to a rich and fulfilling life in him, a life we can't imagine for ourselves. In order to receive what Jesus is inviting us to, we must trust in Jesus, and the fact that he has an abundant, amazing, fruitful life waiting for us.

#### **Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday, Sherin Swift, Pastor of Connections and Equipping, explores the ways Jesus guides us toward a rich and fulfilling life, how that path can be confusing and mysterious at times, and why this journey with Jesus is worth it.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. Pruning is never permanent. Maybe you are coming out of a season of pruning or are currently in a season of pruning. Do you feel the Holy Spirit inviting you to let go of something or release something which you feel is good in your life so that Christ can give you something that you were truly meant for, a life that you were designed for? Can you trust that on the other side of your pruning God has something better waiting and coming for you?
3. Renewal comes as we remain and abide in Him, which is something that no one else can offer you. The process of remaining and abiding can be long, slow, and painful at times, but we must remember that we are in the hands of the Master Gardener. The One who cares for us, protects us, and helps us grow. Are you willing to follow Jesus on the slow path, trusting him with your life and surrendering yourself to his care? Stick with Jesus, transformation and fruitfulness is coming.