

## Growing Spiritually

Reading - John 15: 1-8

### Introduction

Looking at our Church text and the passage around it starts a new Sermon series. It's called -'Growing Spiritually' and the series is also being followed in Livewires and Academy. I want us through the series to think about how we are growing in our spiritual lives and what we can do to help that growth.

We start with Jesus's picture of the Vine. It's the last of the 'I Am' sayings recorded in John's Gospel. I Am claims the name of Yahweh himself, first given to Moses at the Burning bush. Note that in the Old Testament Israel is often pictured as a Vine (Isaiah 5.1-7). A Vine was carved in one of the great Temple doors, vineyards dotted the landscape, it was certainly a symbol of the Nation just as the Thistle is for Scotland.

Jesus is deliberately saying of himself that now he is the true Vine, not the nation of Israel. Grafted into him both Jews and Gentiles have an equal place. His Father is the gardener and together they prune the branches that those who remain in Christ might be even more fruitful. Apart from Jesus we can do nothing that is spiritually productive.

### Discussion Starters

- What does our new Church text especially say to you? Put it into your own words.
- How do you understand remaining or abiding in Christ? How can you make sure that you do this?
- What do you think this spiritual productivity looks like? What does much fruit really mean for us today?
- Discuss what might be involved in the pruning of our lives today to produce more fruit. Is there often dead wood that needs to be cut out?

### Prayer time

Please do pray for any needs that are known to you. Pray also for this new series across the whole Church that God might use it to encourage real spiritual growth.

