

G W E N S H A M B L I N

EXODUS
devotional
Volume Two

- The True Vine -

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Introduction

Dear Seekers of Christ and His Kingdom,

Toward the end of Jesus' ministry, Peter spoke out and told Jesus that he was now aware that He was the Christ. Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. And He told them that He must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life. Jesus had been hinting all along that He would live and die for God because He loved God so much. So after letting the disciples know that He was going to face His death for God, He explained that if anyone was going to follow His example or if anyone would come after Him, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Him [Matthew 16:24].

Jesus went on to insist upon the following:

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."


—Luke 9:24-27

Jesus Christ is the Bright and Morning Star. He is pointing us up to God with His life, words and actions. He told us to pick up our crosses daily. That is a deep concept but the point that we cannot argue with is the word "daily." These words are

from God to point us inward and upward. Each time we make a change toward more righteousness and self-control, we are happier and more secure in the Kingdom.

This book is about daily doses of information that prepare your heart for giving up your life for your loving Father. May these readings help your life be the living sacrifice that it was pre-destined to be.

With love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Vernon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J" and a horizontal line extending to the right.

CLING TO THE TRUE VINE

This is one of my favorite passages for explaining your REAL job description in life...

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will 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. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”

—John 15:1-7

Your only REAL job description in life is to remain in The Vine—carrying out the will of the Father in Heaven. But you must remain even tighter into The Vine [Jesus Christ] than you think you need to. You do not want to get separated from this only Living Vine. But this is the problem: when things go well, you think you can walk on your own. You do not realize HOW dependent on God you must be. Get humble—you cannot do this without a great deal of learning, but lean not on your own understanding [Proverbs 3:5]. I love to depend on God! Pray today that everyone clings to THE VINE [Jesus Christ]!



STAY UNDER AUTHORITY

When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him." The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, "I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! It will be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that very hour.

—Matthew 8:5-13

Each person must stay under the earthly authorities that God has given them so that they can stay in The Vine, connected up to God [unless, of course, that authority has asked YOU to do something AGAINST the will of God]. Remember, being in under your earthly authorities is a test set up by God. God is watching to see if you will submit to your earthly authorities, for He knows that IF you will submit to them, then you would submit to HIM in Heaven. Show God that you are a true servant of His by submitting to every wish that you know He is asking of you and by submitting to your earthly authorities. Submit—then you will find the blessings that follow and the answered prayers.



THE LITTLE THINGS ARE VERY BIG TO GOD

I want to talk today about the little things. What may seem like a little thing to you is so important to God. God loves OBEEDIENCE more than sacrifice. God loves for you to follow each lead more than He wants you to go back and say, “I’m sorry.” King Saul lost his position when he missed the Lord’s lead through Samuel. If I ever feel like I miss a lead from God, it just makes me so nervous. Pray for me that I never miss a step in the Spirit!

And let us all pray for the rise of Sovereignty in the “little things,” which simply means that God is Lord every minute, in every location, at all times. This is glorious and takes more time and more focus. Find out what God wants. Do not resist His lead, do not rationalize His lead, do not second-guess a moral, and do not defy His gentle but perfect tap on your conscience. Do what is right in what seem like small things to you but are actually BIG things to God.

I praise God for TIME and for getting to slow down to make sure that I get everything right in ALL of the “little things” and to make sure that I fully instruct my children in all things as well. We need to live for the next generation. If we don’t get everything right, what will they have to look up to?? I want to stay nervous and humble before the Throne of God the rest of my living days so that I do not miss even ONE thing that He wants me to do...



