

John 15.1-8 English parallels

1

Ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ἀμπελος ἡ ἀληθινή καὶ ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ γεωργός ἐστίν.

NASB "I am the true vine, and My Father is **the vinedresser**.

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

ESV "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

NRS "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower.

NET "I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener.

TNIV "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

NJB I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

CEB "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vineyard keeper.

NLT "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener.

MSG "I am the Real Vine and my Father is the Farmer.

MGVH "I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

- What are the other “I am” (Ἐγώ εἰμι) statements in John? In Accordance, search the NA28 Greek text for: "εγω ειμι" [RANGE john] [John 4.26; 6.20, 35, 41, 48, 51; 8.12, 18, 24, 28, 58; 9.9; 10.7, 9, 11, 14; 11.25; 13.19; 14.6; 15.1, 5; 18.5-6, 8](#) (This saying resonates with God’s self declaration in Exodus 3.14.)
- There are no parables in John, but this passage should remind you of Jesus’ parable of the vineyard owner in Mat 21.33ff; Mark 12.1ff; Luke 20.9ff.
- This passage also should remind you of the “Song of the Vineyard” in Isaiah _____ [5.1-7](#) (Use cross reference tools [Info Pane in Accordance] to find the chapter and verses.)
- Highlight in yellow how each version translates what the Father = **ὁ γεωργός** is. Note that the word is a generic term for anyone who works the ground, but if you check the word’s usage (in Accordance use the NT Word Study Dictionary), you’ll see that it was used in the parable of the vineyard to refer specifically to those who worked in the vineyard.

2

πᾶν κλῆμα ἐν ἐμοὶ μὴ φέρον καρπὸν αἶρει αὐτό, καὶ πᾶν τὸ καρπὸν φέρον καθαίρει αὐτὸ ἵνα καρπὸν πλείονα φέρῃ.

NASB "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.

KJV Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

ESV Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

NRSV He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to make it bear more fruit.

NET He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me. He prunes every branch that bears fruit so that it will bear more fruit.

TNIV 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.

NJB Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more.

CEB He removes any of my branches that don't produce fruit, and he trims any branch that produces fruit so that it will produce even more fruit.

NLT He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more.

MSG He cuts off every branch of me that doesn't bear grapes. And every branch that is grape-bearing he prunes back so it will bear even more.

MGVH Every branch connected to me that is not producing fruit, God removes. And every one that is producing fruit, God cleans it up, in order that it may produce more.

- πᾶν κλῆμα ἐν ἐμοὶ = “every branch in me” > What does that mean?
 - Most English versions just render it that way, but do you know what a “branch in me” is?
 - Note how the NET has associated it with the fruit instead of branch.
 - Note how the CEB, NLT, and MSG render it.
 - I’m thinking ἐν ἐμοὶ is saying more than a simple possessive (“my branch, branch of mine”), so my proposal is an attempt to stay close to the Greek but making it more understandable.
 - What do you think is the best way to render this phrase?
- Note that the NASB capitalizes “Me” and “He” when refer to God or Jesus. This is intended as showing a sign of respect, but is it good practice in translation? Cf. [HERE](#) for an argument about why we should avoid such capitalization.
- Search for the use of καρπὸς in John. “Bearing fruit” is an ongoing theme. [John 4.36; 12.24; 15.2, 4-5, 8, 16](#)
- Inclusive language: Every version here, including ones that are intentionally trying to use inclusive language (NRSV, CEB, MSG, MGVH), use “he.”
 - The reference is back to “my Father” in the previous verse, so it’s natural to use “he” here to make the connection. Or, we could understand the reference to be the “farmer,” and in antiquity that would be a male worker.
 - There has been reluctance, even among those attentive to inclusive language, to eliminate references to God as “Father.” (Think especially of the Lord’s Prayer.) There is also the socio-historical awareness that fathers in antiquity were related to differently than mothers in the patriarchal culture of Jesus’ time. (Authority, power, identity, status, inheritance...)
 - How do you want to translate?
- Highlight in yellow how each version translates καθαίρει. It is a word with a root sense of purify or clean. In reference to trees, it can prune or trim in the sense of cleaning out the unwanted parts.

3

ἤδη ὑμεῖς καθαροί ἐστε διὰ τὸν λόγον ὃν λελάληκα ὑμῖν·

NASB "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

KJV Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

ESV Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.

NRS You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you.

NET You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you.

TNIV You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

NJB You are clean already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you.

CEB You are already trimmed because of the word I have spoken to you.

NLT You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you.

MSG You are already pruned back by the message I have spoken.

MGVH You all, already you are cleaned up because of the word which I have spoken to you.

- Note the emphatic pronoun ὑμεῖς
- καθαροί (same root as καθαίρει in v2) does mean “clean,” but in this context does it refer to purity or to the pruning of the vine? **my suggestion of “clean up” in vv2-3 attempts to hint at both meanings**

4

μείνατε ἐν ἐμοί, καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν ὑμῖν. καθὼς τὸ κλῆμα οὐ δύναται καρπὸν φέρειν ἄφ' ἑαυτοῦ ἐὰν μὴ μένη ἐν τῇ ἀμπέλῳ, οὕτως οὐδὲ ὑμεῖς ἐὰν μὴ ἐν ἐμοί μένητε.

NASB "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.

KJV Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

ESV Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.

NRS Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

NET Remain in me, and I will remain in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.

TNIV 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.

NJB Remain in me, as I in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, unless it remains part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me.

CEB Remain in me, and I will remain in you. A branch can't produce fruit by itself, but must remain in the vine. Likewise, you can't produce fruit unless you remain in me.

NLT Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.

MSG "Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.

MGVH Stay connected to me, as I also am connected to you. Just as the branch is not able to be producing fruit of itself unless it remains connected to the vine, likewise, neither can you unless you remain connected to me.

- μείνατε: The language of “abide in me” is familiar, and it is a literal translation, but what does it mean? It’s part of the metaphor of vine and branches. Which translation do you think is the best?
- ... ἐὰν μὴ μένη...: Present general condition > No implication being made about whether one is remaining or not.
- Note that the parallelism requires the idea of: “... neither can you *bear fruit* unless you abide in me.”

5

ἐγὼ εἶμι ἡ ἄμπελος, ὑμεῖς τὰ κλήματα. ὁ μένων ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν αὐτῷ οὗτος φέρει καρπὸν πολύν, ὅτι χωρὶς ἐμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν.

NASB "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

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.

DRA I am the vine: you the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.

ESV I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

NRS I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.

NET "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me— and I in him— bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing.

TNIV "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.

NJB I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing.

CEB I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, then you will produce much fruit. Without me, you can't do anything.

NLT "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.

MSG "I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing.

MGVH I, I am the vine. You all, you are the branches. The one who is staying connected to me and I to them, that's the one that bears much fruit, because apart from me, you're not able to do anything.

- Note the emphatic pronouns ἐγὼ and ὑμεῖς

6

ἐὰν μή τις μένη ἐν ἐμοί, ἐβλήθη ἔξω ὡς τὸ κλῆμα καὶ ἐξηράνθη καὶ συνάγουσιν αὐτὰ καὶ εἰς τὸ πῦρ βάλλουσιν καὶ καίεται.

NASB "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

KJV If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

DRA If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and case him into the fire, and be burneth.

ESV If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

NRS Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.

NET If anyone does not remain in me, he is thrown out like a branch, and dries up; and such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, and are burned up.

TNIV 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.

NJB Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a branch -- and withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire and are burnt.

CEB If you don't remain in me, you will be like a branch that is thrown out and dries up. Those branches are gathered up, thrown into a fire, and burned.

NLT Anyone who does not remain in me is thrown away like a useless branch and withers. Such branches are gathered into a pile to be burned.

MSG Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire.

MGVH If anyone does not stay connected to me, they will be thrown out like a branch and dry up, and they will gather them and throw them into the fire and be burned.

- ἐὰν μή τις μένη ...: Present general condition > no implication whether anyone remains or not
- Note the way versions try to use inclusive language to avoid third singular masculine reference. TNIV and CEB switch to second person. NJB, NLT, and MGVH switch to third plural.
- Who is the “they” who will do the gathering? **It appears that this Johannine text imagines a similar type of situation as imagined in the parables of weeds and wheat or net of fish in Matthew 13.37-43 and 13.47-50.**

7

ἐὰν μείνητε ἐν ἐμοὶ καὶ τὰ ῥήματά μου ἐν ὑμῖν μείνη, ὃ ἐὰν θέλητε αἰτήσασθε, καὶ γενήσεται ὑμῖν.

NASB "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

KJV If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

DRA If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will, and it shall be done unto you.

ESV If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

NRS If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

NET If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you.

TNIV If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

NJB If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for whatever you please and you will get it.

CEB If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.

NLT But if you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask for anything you want, and it will be granted!

MSG But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon.

MGVH If you stay connected to and my sayings stay connected to you, whatever you want, ask, and it will happen for you.

- ἐὰν μείνητε ...: Present general condition > no implication whether one remains or not
- Search for the lexeme αἰτέω in John and note how it is an ongoing theme. [John 4.9-10; 11.22; 14.13-14; 15.7, 16; 16.23-24, 26](#)

8

ἐν τούτῳ ἐδοξάσθη ὁ πατήρ μου, ἵνα καρπὸν πολλὸν φέρητε καὶ γένησθε ἐμοὶ μαθηταί.

NASB "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.

KJV Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

DRA In this is my Father glorified; that you bring forth very much fruit, and become my disciples.

ESV By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

NRS My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.

NET My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples.

TNIV This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

NJB It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit and be my disciples.

CEB My Father is glorified when you produce much fruit and in this way prove that you are my disciples.

NLT When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father.

MSG This is how my Father shows who he is-- when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

MGVH In this is my Father glorified: that you produce abundant fruit and become my disciples.

- Search for the lexeme δοξάζω in John and note how it is an ongoing theme. [John 7.39; 8.54; 11.4; 12.16, 23, 28; 13.31-32; 14.13; 15.8; 16.14; 17.1, 4-5, 10; 21.19](#)