

GOD'S VINEYARD

(Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80; John 15:1-11)

CONTEXT: vines, branches, vineyards

A Prophetic Accusation—Isaiah 5:1-7

- Points back to the creation of the vineyard
- Points forward to a time of judgment

¹I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard: My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. ²He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines. He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well. Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit. ³“Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. ⁴What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad? ⁵Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. ⁶I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it.” ⁷The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the nation of Israel, and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

A Prayer for Restoration—Psalm 80

- Points back to creation and judgment of vineyard
- Pleads for the vineyard to be restored now

³Restore us, O God; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.... ⁷Restore us, God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved. ⁸You transplanted a vine from Egypt; you drove out the nations and planted it. ⁹You cleared the ground for it, and it took root and filled the land. ¹⁰The mountains were covered with its shade, the mighty cedars with its branches. ¹¹Its branches reached as far as the Sea, its shoots as far as the River. ¹²Why have you broken down its walls so that all who pass by pick its grapes? ¹³Boars from the forest ravage it, and insects from the fields feed on it. ¹⁴Return to us, God Almighty! Look down from heaven and see! Watch over this vine, ¹⁵the root your right hand has planted, the son you have raised up for yourself. ¹⁶Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire; at your rebuke your people perish. ¹⁷Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand, the son of man you have raised up for yourself. ¹⁸Then we will not turn away from you; revive us, and we will call on your name. ¹⁹Restore us, LORD God Almighty; make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

God's vineyard flourishes when its branches bear fruit by remaining connected to the True Vine

- God's vineyard is a metaphor for God's people
 - First, it was Israel
 - Now, it is us as Christians
- God attentively cares for his vineyard to promote fruit-bearing
 - He expresses care through planting and protection
 - He expresses care through pruning and cultivation
- God's vineyard can languish or flourish in any age
 - It languishes when it produces rotten, stinking fruit
 - It flourishes when it produces quality fruit

How can we ensure the Mount Joy Vineyard (MJCOG) flourishes now and in the future? (Don't replace the true vine and...)