

# The Product of Right Thinking

## By Earl Radmacher

Earl Radmacher:

Father, we thank you that we have access to you through Jesus Christ, our Lord. We're so grateful that he is able to fill in with us, in all of us, our pain. And we know that right at this point, Dennis is experiencing that kind of suffering and pain and hurt that comes from the loss of someone very dear to you, in his case, the loss of his mother. And I pray that as he is making the trip to Oregon, that you'll give him safety and travel, and that, Lord, you'll give him peace of mind. And as he is there, that he will find it possible to Minister the Grace of God to those with whom he has contact, bring him back safely.

And as he engages in studies again, that this interruption will not put him behind too far. Lord, we thank you for the many things that you've opened our minds to this week from various speakers on the campus. We pray that you will help us now to absorb some of those things and to make them a working principle in our lives, give to us ability to understand during this hour and to pull together the pieces concerning right thinking, that we might think your thoughts after you and that our lives may portray better what our Lord Jesus Christ is really like. We'll thank you for that in his name. Amen.

Okay, I'm going to take a little different tack today rather than move on to the fourth session that we had scheduled on the product of right thinking, I'm going to, I think, spend the bulk of this time going back to John chapter 15, and then I want to give a little time for questions. It seems

like sometimes in these situations we give and give and give and give and you sit and listen and listen, and you never really have an opportunity to say, well, wait a minute, what about such and such? And to get a little dialogue going. And I think that would be helpful at this juncture, especially as it relates to John chapter 15. So let's go back to where we left off in the 15th chapter of John.

We were talking about the problem of right thinking, that there is a battle going on for our minds. The devil has a strategy. We looked at in two Corinthians, chapter ten, verses one to five, and Paul in that same passage reminds us, however, that we have weapons, weapons which are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds and everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God. So the real battle that is going on is with regard to our thoughts about what God is like, and the devil will seek to pull that down, and we will seek to elevate that, to continue to keep God in proper perspective in our minds. In trying to expand that last thought, how do we keep God in proper perspective while we look at his word and see what he says about himself. And I suggested that there is something to be learned from God the Spirit, God the Son, but also from God the Father as to what they are doing in our lives and that was particularly seen in John chapter 15.

John 15. Christ is giving to his disciples some background, some information on what God the Father is doing regularly in our lives. And he does it under the imagery of a grape vine. And I suggested to you yesterday a couple of things from verses one through three concerning the way the Father tends the vine. The Father in the identification here is the vine dresser.

Jesus Christ is the entirety of the vine, and we are branches in that vine. And so Christ says, every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away. And I suggested to you that an unworthy idea of God may be that God is forever looking for some reason to get rid of me, that his desire is to kick me out of the family. And therefore, as I come to that passage, I say, well, that certainly proves that every branch of me not bearing fruit he just takes away, he throws them out. And I suggested to you that such an interpretation may do a disservice to the cultural background in which this was stated.

Now, I have a slide. I don't know how this will work. You want to try that and see how well that will come across? Not too good yet. Let's see, what have we got there? He's going to run off with the machine. You can just go a little further back. Is that the idea? And hold it. Closer. Okay. Well, you should be able to do it from back there further so we get a better image. But you don't have a turn focus on that. That looks like a Hurricane.

I wanted you to see what a vineyard in Hebron looks like that is down and what it looks like when it's lifted. Do you see here, right there, for example, that's the stock on the ground. That's the way it is when it is not during the period of productivity. Back up on the top, up here, across there, you see a vineyard that has been lifted and it is now being ready for productivity. This one down here is still on the ground.

And when this one up here at the end of the season is finished with productivity, they will take those posts out and they will let those vines, those stocks, flop back down on the ground just like these are here. Now, there's a good example of cultural interpretation. You really cannot discern

that by grammar. The grammar won't help you a bit. The etymology of the word won't help you that much.

You need to look at the setting that Jesus was looking at, and that's the kind of thing he was looking at. When he says, Every branch in me not bearing fruit, he takes away that is the word very literally means to lift, to bear, or to carry. The first meaning of the word is to lift. So every branch in me not bearing fruit yet he lifts he lifts from what he lifts from the ground up onto the wire, where it will be away from the point of contamination, the dirt, and where it will be up in the light of the sun. Now, I think that's probably you've got the picture there.

At least you can see it. Thank you.

I suggested to someone after the session yesterday that another bit of data was given to me by one of the great growers over there. He said, if you leave the branch on the ground, it will produce leaves and it will produce grapes. But that branch on the ground will send little tiny roots into the ground, right from the branch into the ground, and it will produce little hard sour grapes. But if you get the branch up on the wire away from the ground, then it will get its sustenance from the vine, which sends long roots down into the moisture of the Earth, and will produce those tremendous bunches of grapes that they have in Hebron. And I think the picture is really appropriate with respect to us and Christ's prayer about us.

You remember in John 17, he says, Father, I do not pray that you take them out of the world, but I pray that you will leave them in the world, but that they may not be of the world. And that's

beautifully portrayed in that grapevine. The branch can get its sustenance from the Earth directly if you leave it on the ground. And it will produce hard, small sour grapes if you get it away from the ground. If you lift it up off of the ground, it will then get its sustenance from the vine that sends its roots down deep into the moisture of the Earth.

So the first thing the Father does is to lift the vine up, and he does that gradually. He does not jerk it up.

And I sought to give you the picture there of the vineyard tenders today who will go along meticulously from one stock to another of those stocks there that were on the ground. He'll take a rock like that, put it under one end, and then a few days later, slide it back. A few days later, slide it back, slide it back until he gradually gets that stock upright and thereby does not injure the channels of sap, moisture that carry that eventually from the root up to the leaves and up to the fruit that is on the branch. God does precisely that with us. He does not jerk us into a place of productivity.

He lifts us away from the place of contamination up into the places of fruit bearing, and he does that gradually. Fruit does not come like that. You've never seen a plant that produces fruit instantly. Fruit is the end product of a process in a living, healthy plant. Therefore, I will expect that there will be people in Christ not having borne fruit. Verse two.

So what does the Father do? The person in Christ not having born fruit, he begins in their life the process of lifting them from the place of contamination up into the light of the sun, whereby they

will produce fruit. And that's the first problem that we mentioned. The second problem we mentioned was the problem of contamination.

Once you get fruit on the vine, then you've got bugs to deal with. And the chore of the viticulturist is to get the fruit harvested from the vine into the harvest sheds without being diseased. And that's where the word translated prunes comes in. Now, again, it would really help if translators would understand culture better and not just grammar. Unfortunately, translators usually are linguists, and they are not students of culture.

And the Bible was written in a cultural setting as every other book is. And if you'll think about it for a moment, nobody prunes anything that is already bearing fruit.

If you prune it after it's already bearing fruit, it would bleed to death. That's not the time of pruning. Yet look at the phrase and every branch that bears fruit, he prunes. You don't do that. That's as strong as can be.

And the word should not translate prunes. And if you don't want to take my word for that, then just go back to your dictionary and look up "katharizo" and you'll find that it means better translated to purge, which has the idea of cleanse.

And we do that when fruit is on the vine, we have DDT. We have other kinds of things that we spray to protect the fruit from contamination.

And so he says that here, every branch that is bearing fruit, that's a whole different situation than the previous clause. Every branch bearing fruit, what does he do there? He purges it. He doesn't lift it. He purges it.

Why? In order that it may bring more fruit. Now, verse three is very strategic here because the word clean in verse three is the same as the word translated prunes in verse two, the same root. And I suggested to you that in English the word would translate catharsis.

And what does he say? He says, now you are already clean or you have been purged because of the word which I've spoken unto you. Christ word to them then is like DDT. It's a cleansing agent. He is saying to them, you have had contaminating thoughts, and those thoughts needed to be purged.

When Peter finished his statement, which you have recorded at the end of chapter 13, he probably had all kinds of foolish thinking going on in his mind. He probably thought he had blown it once and for all.

And I'm confident that Peter never dreamed that Jesus would come back with the statement that you have in 14:1, let not your heart be troubled.

You see, a lot of people, their idea of God would be at that point to come back and say, Peter, you are a downright dirty rat. I want to tell you the truth about yourself. You got a big mouth,

Peter. You boast greatly about all you do. But I want to tell you before the night is over, you're going to swear and deny that you even know me.

I mean, he could have made him feel like nothing.

But instead he says to him, when he's down at the bottom, Peter, let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God, the God who is and what he is like.

Now, he needed to have some cleansing of his mind about what God is like. And so Jesus says to him, I'll tell you what my Father is really like. And he gives them a whole chapter of Purgings, chapter 14. And all of these promises about prayer and peace and joy. And then he climaxes that with this beautiful illustration from the grapevine as to what my Father will do.

And that was a cleansing agent. Now you are clean through the word which I've spoken unto you.

Now, in verse four, you find a change of approach. You move from what God is doing to what they are going to need to do. In the scripture, there is always something for me to do. On the one hand, I need to recognize God's sovereignty. On the other hand, I need to recognize my responsibility.



God says something and I need to respond. I need to obey. I think one of the most practical songs in our hymnal is that song Trust and Obey. For there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. There is something for me to do.

God says something. I must believe it. Now, that's what verse four is saying. Look at it. All of a sudden you come alongside this word abide.

Abide, abide, abide, abide, abide. You haven't seen it before. Verse four. And now look at it. Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me and I in Him bears much fruit. For without me you can do nothing.

If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. And they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this, my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit. So you will be my disciples.

So from verse four on, you're not talking anymore about what God will do. You're talking about the response of God's child to what he has said. Will I believe it? Will I believe it? And that is of paramount importance.

Why? Because of the principle, I act in accordance with what I believe. Now I can hear what he says, but until I believe it to the point that it becomes action in my life, I will not experience it. Now, let me try to illustrate that. I've tried to think of ways to illustrate what it means to abide, to believe, to rest in.

And probably the best illustration I've come up with in my own life relates back to the days when I was a Navy chaplain, and I had a Yeoman that was a Red Cross lifeguard. And he was a great swimmer, and he was bothered that he was working for a chaplain in the Navy that didn't know how to swim. He thought that was a bit of a contradiction. He was afraid that one day they were going to pass me over on a high wire between the ships, and they dunk me in the ocean, and that'd be the end. And he thought I really ought to learn how to swim, so he would keep on me about that.

And finally, one day, I said, okay, Wayne, after Chapel today, I'll go down with you to the pool, and I'll let you teach me how to swim. We had a beautiful Olympic size pool on the air station, and so he was really thrilled about that. We were making our way down to the pool, and he was trying to comfort me by saying that, Chaplain, really learning to swim is really easy. He said, there's only one thing you need to really get hold of, and that is you got to get over the fear of the water. If you can just get over the fear of the water, there's no problem in learning how to swim.

So we got down to the pool. He said, now, all I want you to do, I want you to lie down on the water. That sounded rather simple. And so I did what he told me to do, and I went directly to the

bottom, and they fished me up out of the pool again and came up sputtering and laughing. And anybody can make a mistake once.

So he says, okay, Chaplain, he says, let's try it again. All I want you to do is just to lie down in the water. And I did precisely what he said, and I went directly to the bottom again. Well, this went on for a number of times, and after a few times, it became obvious that I was losing the joy in the process. I wasn't really happy about it.

And he came out with that instruction once more. Now, Chaplin, all I want you to do is to lie down on the water. And I said, Look, Wayne, you keep telling me to lie on the water. And I keep trying to lie on the water. And every time I try to lie on the water, I go right down to the bottom. Well, at that point, he continued to smile. But now it was through clenched teeth. And he said, that's just what's wrong with you, Chaplin. He said, I keep telling you to lie on the water. And you keep trying to lie on the water.

Now, will you quit trying to lie in the water and just lie in the water?

Now, you may think that there's a very small difference. Between trying to lie in the water and lying in the water. But for me it was a difference between the top of the water and the bottom of the water.

And I found that when I was trying to lie in the water. That my actions were different. When I tried to lie in the water. I would push my arms down into the water. And the further down I pushed them, the further down they went.

And I would hold my head up out of the water. And the further up I held it, the further down it went.

But when I really did what he told me to do. I let my arms come up and my head go back. And an amazing thing happened. The water that was previously drowning me, same water was now sustaining me.

A water hadn't changed one iota. The only thing that had changed in the process was my thinking, my attitude toward the water. And when I thought that the water would drown me, sure enough, it did. When I changed my mind about it and decided to trust it, it held me up.

That's abiding. It's one thing to hear all kinds of good things about God. It's another thing to believe it to the point of resting in it.

And I can't explain perhaps the mystery that is involved in that. I know that some people, they want to add all kinds of conditions then. And they'll say this is what it will be like if you're really trusting. They'll have a whole list of things and I can't buy that.

See, I don't want to add your package of results or my package of results to the requirement. The requirement is abide. And notice, he is not talking about Union here. He is talking about Communion. There's no question of Union. He assumes that right in the beginning, every branch in me not bearing fruit. That's Union.

And to the one in Union, he tells what the Father will do and is doing. But then, in order that I may experience what the Father is making himself available to do, I have to abide.

I have to believe it to the point of resting in it. And that is tremendously important. Some people's idea of God drowns them. Other people, it sustains them. Same guy, wrong ideas, wrong attitudes. J. B. Phillips wrote a book. It must be 25 years ago now called *Your God is Too Small*. In that book, he talks about God, the resident policeman. It's one chapter, God the Meek and the mild. Another chapter, God the pale faced Galilean. Another chapter, God, the resident policeman. God the managing director. All kinds of unworthy concepts of God and they don't sustain me at all. They drown me.

My ability to abide will be in direct proportion to my idea of God. I cannot trust a person any more than I know him. And that's why Jesus fills Peter's mind and the rest of the Apostles minds with these truths about what God is like. He said, I want you to understand my Father. Don't demean him by your unworthy ideas of him. Think right about God and your life will be transformed.

Voiceover 1

Please turn the tape to side two for the continuation of this session

Earl Radmacher:

Don't demean him by your unworthy ideas of him. Think right about God and your life will be transformed.

Go back again. Isaiah 26. Three thou wilt keep him in perfect peace. Whose mind is stayed on thee. That's a simple statement or Friar Lawrence's statement, "counting upon God as being never absent would be Holiness complete."

That sounds very simple, but I have to remind myself that I live in a satanic world system where other ideas are coming across to me all the time.

There was an article by Dale Kale, professor of English at Arizona State University. A great writer, by the way. He wrote this article in Christianity Today in January of 1975 entitled Sneaky Stimuli and how to Resist Them. And in the article he is talking about some of the ideas from Wilson Brian Key's book, Subliminal Seduction; Ad Media's Manipulation of a Not So Innocent America done in 1973 by Prentice Hall. And Key talks about the little experiment they did with a tachistoscope.

He notes that experiments with a tachistoscope, a film projector with a highspeed shutter that flashes messages every 5 seconds at one 3000th of a second have seemed to confirm subliminal influence in one six-week test. Advertising messages invisible to the conscious mind but planted

in the subconscious were superimposed over motion pictures. One such message, "Hungry? Eat popcorn," reportedly increased popcorn sales 57.7%.

In other words, they put on the screen a message "Hungry? Eat popcorn" that you could not see consciously, but it registered subconsciously and changed their action to the point of increased popcorn sales in the subsequent intermission by 57.7%. If I were the devil, I would specialize in subliminal seduction.

And I'll tell you something, I wouldn't be surprised if he does, because he's the most subtle of all God's creatures. So I am in the midst of a system thoroughly organized by Satan to capture my mind and he may do it consciously or he may do it subconsciously. We do know that there are sneaky stimuli. Key, in his book says this one very critical and disturbing consequence of subliminal manipulation has been demonstrated in dozens of experiences by changing the position or anchor point from which an individual evaluates the world about in anchor points may be described as the position between two opposed concepts from which an individual evaluates good or bad, moral or immoral, rich or poor, strong or weak, sane or insane, and so on. A subliminal stimulus and a posthypnotic suggestion both have the ability to move the anchor point between virtually any two such concepts in any direction desired.

You couple that together with Joseph Fletcher's Situation Ethics, in which he teaches that there are no absolutes and he keeps moving the anchor points.

A person that is not in the word of God has no basis for ever knowing what is right and what is wrong.

Subliminal seduction, and probably the keenest place that it comes across is through the Advertisement on the television.

I hear parents saying, well, we don't let our kids watch TV. The only thing they watch are the comics on Saturday morning. That's probably the worst.

I would suggest that the world system of Satan comes through more powerfully in the comics than just about any other place.

Kale says it has been estimated that the average US adult is exposed to more than 500 advertising messages every day.

He estimates that this adult consciously perceives only 75 of the 500 blacking out from consciousness, at least 85% of the ad messages, and daily acting upon an average of 2.5%. It has been further estimated that the average US adult views television six and a half hours a day and spends 32 minutes a day reading a newspaper or magazine. Such data, whether precisely accurate or not, clearly indicate that the Christian senses are bombarded during many hours of each day by a pagan world system. As a recent Saturday Review editorial expressed that nothing is more difficult in the modern world than to protect the Privacy of the human soul. So there is a real



battle for my mind, and it is something that takes my active concentration to abide or rest in what Jesus says about himself, about the Father, and about the Spirit.

When I do that, those are weapons that are divinely powerful to the pulling down of strongholds. Now look at verse six. What happens if a person doesn't think right? What happens if a person doesn't abide in him in what he is like? Notice it.

He is cast out as a branch and is weathered. Now notice something very carefully. There the change of pronouns from the first to the third. He is cast out.

Prior to that, Jesus has been saying, I am the vine, you are the branches, talking about the interactions between himself and the believer. Now a third person enters in.

If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered. And they. Now who is the they? And they gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned. Who is the they? Well, let me make a suggestion.

Keep your finger there in 15 and flip back to 13 for a moment to the key that Jesus gave the Apostles for evangelization. Notice it. A new commandment I given to you. That you love one another as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this, all well know. Who is the all? Those on the outside who are watching those on the inside.

By the way believers treat believers, unbelievers will know that they belong to Jesus. By this, all will know that you are my disciples if you have loved one to another. Now what is fruit in John 15? Love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self control. Now take the metaphor of chapter 15 and superimpose it on this statement in chapter 13 and read it this way.

A new commandment I give to you that you fruit one another as I have fruited you, that you also fruit one another.

By this we'll all know that you are my disciples. If you have fruit one to another. I do that so you will see the connection. The thing that he is commanding them in 13:34 and 35, he is pictorially presenting in the metaphor of the grapevine in 15. And so he says, if you do not abide in me, if you don't rest in, if you do not genuinely believe in your heart, the things that I am saying to you, then the sap will not be there that produces the fruit, and you will wither.

And what will they out there do? They will flick you out. They will say, there's nothing to him. He's an empty windbag. What is my purpose in bearing fruit one to another in order that they may know I belong to him? If I am not bearing fruit and he gives me the process for doing it, then they won't know. So I have destroyed the greatest apologetic for Jesus Christ. That's going.

That's why Fran Schaffer entitled his message on John 13:34 and 35, The Mark of a Christian.

Now read on. On the other hand, verse seven. If you abide in me, not if you are in me, that's Union. We're not talking about Union. That's an accepted fact.

We're talking about Communion. If you abide in me, if you believe what I am like, if you let that settle down in your heart and my words abide in you, if my words settle down in you, if they rest in you, you will ask what you will, and it shall be done for you. By this, my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciples, or the NASB has it better. How does your NASB read there? So will you prove to be?

Is that the way it reads? So will you prove to be? Now there's the apologetic. How do I prove to be disciple?

I prove it by the fruit that is evident between my brother and myself.

So John 15, one to eight gives you a pictorial presentation of how the command of John 13:34 and 35 is brought about. So he takes a group of discourses disciples. He gives them this tremendous input in order that they may think right about him before he is going to tell them that they're going to get kicked out of the synagogue and they're going to be killed.

This is not a good point at which to say, Furthermore, I'm going to kick you out of the family.

He knows what he's going to have to tell them. So he prepares them for what he's going to have to tell them. He prepares them by this kind of just elevating of their resources in Christ Jesus.

I've rather methodically plotted through that because I think it's a terribly important passage. Are there some loose ends hanging there that you want to raise a question about?

Yes.

Speaker 2:

[inaudible speaker 2]

Earl Radmacher:

I didn't get the last phrase.

Speaker 2:

[inaudible speaker 2]

Earl Radmacher:

Oh, "they."

Speaker 2:

[inaudible speaker 2]

Earl Radmacher:

Well, let's read back from verse six, see if we can catch the flow of that. If anyone does not abide in me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered and they gather them and throw them into the

fire. I would take it that they is the composite of the HES of the ones who are doing the casting out. If I could portray it in a picture, it would be something like this supposing I work at a particular place and I'm a Christian and there's another fellow there who has known me in that time and he observes my life and he doesn't see anything in my life that really wets his appetite at all.

And then later on we meet and at that time our expression of our faith is more dynamic and dramatic. And I say to him, oh, you remember we used to work together back such and such, and I didn't know you were a Christian. And he says to me, I didn't know you were a Christian either. And we both are saying to ourselves, neither one of us acted like it. Okay, what has happened in that process? If you take it from the physical to the ideological, what we have done is really cast one another out. We've thrown it away, it's useless.

So I take it that the he is cast out as a branch and withered is then the person involved that is casting out "the he" is the "they" that gather them. It simply is a picture of the whole testimony, of the whole statement of discounting my testimony some way I've got to get from the physical horticultural situation to the ideological situation. Question.

Speaker 3:

[inaudible speaker 3]

Earl Radmacher:

I think that the fire. Some have carried that over to one Corinthians three and talked about the burning of works.

I think I would just leave it as the metaphor here and not try to tie it together. I think it does fit one Corinthians three, that the person whose works are wood, hay, and stubble, they're burned up, but they're saved so as by fire. But I think we get into a problem when we try to cross over from passage to passage which have completely different cultural settings. Remember, in a metaphor or in a parable, in any kind of highly symbolic structure, you try to get the main thread, the main point that's going through and not make the parable or the metaphor stand on all fours. And so I would simply say it's a picture of destruction, burned up, it's useless.

No count.

Speaker 3:

[inaudible speaker 3]

Earl Radmacher:

To fill out the picture. And that's true in any parable or any extended figure of speech. And you can fit it in. It's not a problem to fit it in. It simply speaks of there's nothing there, there's nothing left.

It's worthless, it's gone, burned. So when I am not believing on Christ for what he really is, the things that I'm doing are useless. They count for nothing. They're just burned up, worthless.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible speaker 4]

Earl Radmacher:

Well, they lift the whole stock up. Christ is the whole of it. Root, stock, branch, twig, leaf, fruit.

He is everything.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible speaker 4]

Earl Radmacher:

Yeah.

Speaker 4:

[inaudible speaker 4]

Earl Radmacher:

In other words, he's got to get the whole thing up into the place of productivity. The whole thrust of the passage is production, isn't it? So you go from no fruit to fruit to more fruit to much fruit.

And then you have that all summarized in John 15:16 when he says, now you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and I have ordained you that you should go forth and bring forth fruit,

and that that fruit will remain. So what he has done in the first verses before that is to show us the process by which he gets to the product, which he States in verse 16.

And in order for that plant to bear good fruit, it has to be lifted up off the ground into the light of the sun and purge from the contamination that comes from the bugs, diseases, and so forth. Other question. Yes, sir.

Speaker 5:

[inaudible speaker 5]

Earl Radmacher:

Yes, I think what you're saying, that's a truth. One John five and potential of a believer staying in sin unto death. And certainly one Corinthians ten portrays that many of you are weak, many of you are sickly, many of you sleep, you've died because you have not judged yourself. But we so easily jump from passage to passage, and that gets very dangerous. I've got to think of who is he talking to here and what was their situation?

Their situation was a group of very discouraged disciples who in just a little bit of time were going to have their master gone. They were going to be kicked out of the synagogues, they were going to be killed. And it would hardly be good preparation to tell them. Now if you guys don't shape up and fly right, you're going to get wiped out. That misses the whole psychological setting of the passage.



And one of the problems of the comparative study of verses of scripture is that we do a disservice to the immediate context. And the two things that I see most often ignored by people who treat this passage. They ignore the psychological setting of the preceding context of the disciples and they ignore the horticultural understanding of the vineyard in Palestine. They give no time to that at all and they try to approach it from a grammatical standpoint only and then comparison with other passages. And I don't really think you can do that here.

I think you've got to stay with what he's talking about in the passage. Yes, sir.

Speaker 6:

[inaudible speaker 6]

Earl Radmacher:

I do not know why they let them down on the ground. Perhaps to protect them from the ravages of the winter.

I've not heard that. But for some reason they do let them back down again. And being down on the ground and close to the Earth during the non productive season, they would be kept warmer. They would be out of the winds and that kind of thing. Well, the upper room discourse is a phenomenal passage of preparation for dynamic Christian living.

And I think it's extremely instructive that Christ before he goes to his week of passion, which happens in chapter 18. Before that, he gives this very careful instruction about himself, his father and the spirit before he turns the disciples loose. Whatever else we may gain from that, it certainly is basic to understand that as a man thinks in his heart, so is he right thinking is basic to right acting. And right thinking starts by thinking right about God. And we live in a world system that is unlike God.

And therefore, I'll need to work hard to see that my thinking about God is not corrupted by the thought system that is around me. Let's unite together in prayer. Father, thank you for giving to us your word and thank you for the cleansing that we receive by your word and the power that is ours by resting in it help us to understand and to apply. And again, we would pray for Dennis as he travels and as he seeks to meet the needs of his family. Family in Jesus name, Amen.