

John 15 — The Knife Is His Word

John 15:1–3, 6 (with 13:10 · 17:17 · Hebrews 4:12 · Hebrews 12:6–11) · For posting on YouTube & Facebook. Use the overview for the description; add the prompt and links wherever they fit.

VIDEO OVERVIEW (post-ready)

There's a wordplay in John 15 that English can't carry. In verse 2 the Father "takes away" the branch that bears no fruit — *airei* — and he "prunes" the branch that does — *kathairei*. Same root, one syllable apart, opposite outcomes. Then verse 3 lands it: **"Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you"** — *katharoi*, that same root a third time. So what is the pruning knife in the Father's hand? It is the word of his Son. And that turns a common misreading upside down. When Scripture cuts — when you read something you would rather not have read — that is not God finishing with you. Pruning is what the fruitful branch gets. Nobody prunes a branch he is about to burn. And a vinedresser cuts hard: a well-tended vine loses most of last season's growth, because the fruit comes on new wood. **The cut you felt reading your Bible this week was a gardener's hand, not an exit sign.**

GO DEEPER — STUDY PROMPT FOR VIEWERS

Read **John 15:1–8**, then turn back one page to **John 13:10** — "You are clean, but not every one of you" — and notice Jesus used that word earlier the same night, about Judas, who had already walked out into the dark. Then follow the word forward to **John 17:17**: "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth." Read **Hebrews 12:6–11** and write down two things the writer says about pruning — what it feels like, and what it yields. Then do the hard part: pick one passage of Scripture that has stung you in the last year, something you read that you did not want to read, and go back to it three times this week with a pen. Write down what the Father may be cutting away.

KEY PASSAGES REFERENCED

Elsewhere in John: 15:1–3 · 15:6 · 15:8 · 13:10–11 · 13:30 · 17:17 · 6:63 · 6:66 · 8:31 · 5:39–40

Other Gospels: Matthew 3:10 · Matthew 7:19 · Luke 3:9 · Luke 13:6–9

Rest of Scripture: Isaiah 5:1–7 · Ezekiel 15:1–8 · Ephesians 5:26 · Hebrews 4:12 · Hebrews 12:6–11 · James 1:21 · 1 John 2:19

RESOURCES & FURTHER READING

Vine and Branches

Ligonier Ministries (Tabletalk)

<https://learn.ligonier.org/devotionals/vine-branches>

On John 15:1–5 — the Father's pruning as deliberate work on branches he intends to keep fruitful, not punishment.

Does John 15 Defy Calvinism?

John Piper — Desiring God

<https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/does-john-15-defy-calvinism>

Takes the hardest question in the passage head-on: who exactly are the branches in verse 6 that are taken away and burned.

Expository Thoughts on John — Chapter 15

J.C. Ryle — GraceGems

<https://www.gracegems.org/Ryle/j15.htm>

Ryle on pruning as the instrument God uses to make Christians more holy, and on the cleansing power of Christ's word.