



YEAR B – MAY 2, 2021

If I held up a picture of Uncle Sam and asked you what country he symbolizes, everyone here would say the United States.

If I held up a picture of a hammer and sickle and asked what country that symbolizes, everyone here would probably say Russia.

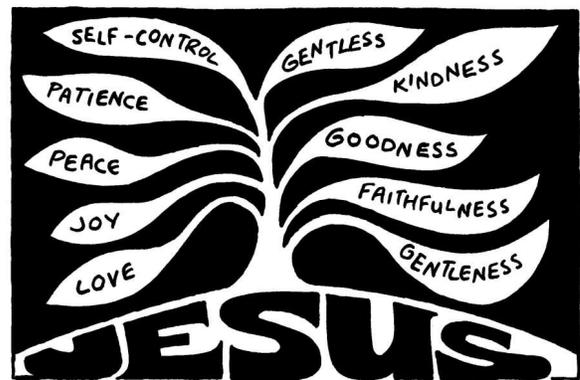
If I held up a picture of a maple leaf and asked what country that leaf symbolizes, many of you would say Canada. But if I held up a picture of a grapevine and asked what country the grapevine symbolizes, some of you may not know.

If you were a biblical scholar or a student of the Bible you would know because the Bible often used the grapevine to symbolize the nation of Israel - the Chosen people of God.

In a recent sermon for children, the priest told his kids, "I have here two branches. If you could be one of them, which one would you want to be?" He went on, "This branch in my right hand is healthy and looks alive. This branch in my left hand - is dead. The dead branch has been dead for quite a while - there is nothing we can do to save it. This branch in my right hand is still alive, but it too will soon die. What do you think it needs to stay alive?"

He had the kids' attention and went on to say, "What killed this dead branch is the fact that it was broken off from the vine last summer. The rest of the vine grew and grew, but this branch slowly withered and died - even though there was a lot of rain and a lot of sun. That will happen to this other branch too unless it is reattached to the vine. It can be reattached to the vine by a process called grafting. Then it will produce beautiful leaves and good fruit. Jesus compares us to these two branches. The branch that stays connected to the vine will live on and produce good fruit. The branch that is separated from the vine will die. He calls himself the vine. We are the branches. We need to stay connected.

When we are part of the vine - we are truly alive and produce good fruit - we do good things. But when we become separated from Jesus - we begin to wither and spiritually die. But if we turn back to Jesus in time - and become "reattached" - and allow his love to flow through us as sap flows through the vine and its branches. Then we will continue to live and produce the fruits of the Holy Spirit. What are they, you may ask.



You can see them in the picture on the right.

The neat thing about children's sermons; they do not need explanation.