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**“Life on the Vine”**

by  
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<b>What</b>	Branches share what tempts them not to abide or remain in the Vine.  Themes: Remain, Abide, Dwell, Rest, Vine and Branches, Contentment, Persecution
<b>Who</b>	Reader 1 Reader 2 Branch 1 Branch 2  Readers are neither gender nor age specific. Readers and Branches can be divided up to include more people.
<b>When</b>	Present
<b>Costumes and Props</b>	Readers can wear all black or street clothes. Just be sure to make your Readers coordinate.  Options for Branches are 1) street clothes, 2) gardening attire with tools, 3) brown & green with some leaf garlands around your body.
<b>Why</b>	John 15:1-9
<b>How</b>	Readers should read from actual Bibles but should be as familiar with it as possible so you can look up and out and engage with your audience. It would also be helpful to post the reference or the actual Scripture on the screen. Branches should memorize their parts.
<b>Time</b>	Approximately 3 minutes

Lights down. Readers move to a straight line in center stage with the Readers on each end of the line. Make sure each person is equidistant from the other and give your readers plenty of space to move their arms freely. You don't want your line to appear cramped. Readers begin reading from their Bibles while looking up and engaging as often as possible. Branches could take a tree position with their arms and legs and then come to life when they deliver their lines and return to a still position after their lines

Lights up. A projection screen could display a grape vine rich with fruit and the reference for John 15:1-9. A nature soundtrack of birds quietly tweeting and breezes blowing could also be included.

**Reader 1:** "I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener. He takes away every branch that does not bear fruit in me. He prunes every branch that bear fruit so that it will bear more fruit.

**Reader 2:** You are clean already because of the word that I have spoken to you.

**Reader 1&2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Reader 2:** Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.

**Reader 1&2:** I am the vine; you are the branches.

**Reader 1:** The one who remains in me—and I in him—bears much fruit, because apart from me you can accomplish nothing. 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.

**Reader 2:** If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you want, and it will be done for you. My Father is honored by this, that you bear much fruit and show that you are my disciples.

**Reader 1:** Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you; remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

**Reader 1&2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 2:** *(excited)* It's almost time! Wait for it...wait for it...My first fruit! *(excitement wanes little by little as he convinces himself but he's not angry though)* It's...it's...well, it's um...not exactly what I expected. It's not bad. It's...well, it's good. I just thought it would be bigger? And um, more purple? But really, it's still okay. The fruit's just different from what I thought it would be.

**Reader 1:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 1:** *(with a Southern American flair)* OUCH! I don't know if I'm madder'na wet hen or grateful as a chicken on Thanksgiving. I know I was all catawampus and lookin' like I been rode hard and put up wet. So I was needed the trimmin'. But that hurts like the dickens! Makes me as nervous a cat in a room full a rockers when he comes at me with them shears. But now that pruning day is over, I'm finer than frog hair split four ways. Might even do a jig.

**Reader 2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 2:** *(waving)* Shoo! Get away. Oooh, I hate beetles. *(wriggles around, slapping at his body)* Not today, you fuzzy caterpillar! Go get your little snack somewhere else. I'm sure there's a nice maple you could enjoy. *(looks off in the distance with horror)* Not again...no...noooo...not that pesky woodpecker again. *(rolls his eyes and stands still)* Yup. *(sarcastically)* It's the woodpecker. Go ahead, Woody. Make me your dinner plate. *(sigh)* Why do I have to suffer such persecution?

**Reader 1:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 1:** *(with a cool girl accent)* Bruh, look at that cherry blossom. It's, like, so gorgeous. I mean, like, the flowers and all. I would totally take a selfie with it. But my blossom's just green—plain green and boring. It's not like people travel miles and miles to see grapes during *(air quotes)* "grape blossom season." I'm so basic. *(sigh)* Cringe. I wish my fruit looked like that cherry's.

**Reader 2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 2:** *(not too sarcastic; like Debbie Downer or Eeyore)* Where? Where is it? I don't see it. Ugh...I never get to see the pretty birds from down here. What? Where? It's time? The sunset? Missed it again. Must be so great to see the sun rise and set each day. Hanging down here, all I see is grass and dirt and the occasional bug. Boring. Life on the top of the vine seems so exciting. Sometimes, I wish I could be a branch somewhere else.

**Reader 1:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 1:** *(dreamy, like Mr. Rogers)* Hmmm...so cozy here. My friends are all bunched around me. The soil is warm and rich. And the air is breezy but not too windy. I get just enough water and just enough sunshine. The gardener visits every day. He even talks to me! I love it here. *(pause)* But...sometimes...sometimes, I wonder what it would be like somewhere else. You know...on a different tree? Just curious what else is out there.

**Reader 2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 1:** (*angry and discontent*) Look at that family over there. (*mockingly*) Let's take a picture. And with a real photographer and everything. Why's no one taking pictures in front of me? I'm just as good. If people knew what I had been through, they'd appreciate me, too. Why does no one see how hard I work to have good fruit? Does it always turn out when I do it in my own strength? Well, not exactly. But still. Where's the love, people? I tried... (*pause; change to reflective*) It's not really about what I can do, is it? Apart from the vine, I can't do anything. Why do I always forget that...

**Reader 1:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 2:** (*worried*) Is it really worth it? The waiting? I mean, it's taking forever to see any fruit. It's coming. I know it is. So, it's a little slower than some of my branch-mates. But it is coming, right? All this hanging on during pruning and pests will be beneficial and productive, right?

**Reader 2:** Remain in me, and I will remain in you.

**Branch 1:** (*sincere & unsure*) This vine has an awfully lot to say. So many hard things: turning the soil, watering, pruning, fertilizing, picking fruit. It's a lot to take in. Life as a branch can be tough. With life so challenging, is the gardener really...good?

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Reader 1: Just as the Father has loved me, I have also loved you; remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love.

*Lights Down. Readers exit stage.*

SCRIPT

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