

Pastor's Perspective: The vineyard and the grapes



By Guest Columnist John Vaughn, Pastor, Cross Roads Baptist Church

Special to Pelahatchie News

After a few years off because of the COVID Crisis, the Muscadine Jubilee is back on the schedule for our town! The Jubilee will be held on September 17 at Muscadine Park in downtown Pelahatchie. While it has been several years since the festival has been held, everyone is invited and encouraged to come and support the event this year. There will be local entertainment, food, craft vendors and activities for the whole family. So mark your calendar, and meet up with your friends at the Muscadine Jubilee this year!

The Muscadine Jubilee reminds us of our time as missionaries in Brazil. During most of the sixteen years that we served in Brazil, we lived in the city of Caxias do Sul in the southernmost state of Rio Grande do Sul. The area was settled by Italian immigrants in the 1800s. Even today, there are pockets of people out in the country who still speak Italian in their family conversations. Many customs and traditions that were brought from the "Old Country" are still being



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followed with conviction and almost a sense of reverence.

When the settlers came from Italy, not only did they bring their language and cultural customs with them, they also brought grape vines, because the area of Italy where they came from was prominently known for producing grapes and wine. The countryside in the Northeastern section of Rio Grande do Sul was also similar to their native land, with high rolling hills and rushing rivers in the valleys.

So the settlers soon had large vineyards producing abundant grapes. Even today, a drive through the grape producing hills is very picturesque, with grape

trellises stretching as far as you can see. And there are family vineyards that are proud of the fact that they still have some vines that were brought to Brazil by their forefathers.

Every even numbered year, the National Grape Festival is held in Caxias do Sul. Tourists from all over Brazil migrate toward the city for the fourteen day event. Caxias boasts the largest open air, covered pavilion in all of South America. Each year that the Grape Festival is held, the pavilion is filled with displays from the many manufacturers in the area, as well as displays of the many types of grapes that are grown in the region. The National Grape Festival is one

of those things that we miss about living in Brazil.

Several times during his ministry, Jesus spoke about the vineyard and the grapes that are produced there. In chapter 15 of John's Gospel, Jesus talks at length about the vine and the branches on the vine. He talks about the importance of the branches producing fruit. He also explains what should be done with branches that do not bear fruit.

Jesus said in John 15:5-6, "I am the vine, and you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit; for you can do nothing without me. Those who do not remain in me are thrown out like a branch and dry up; such branches are gathered up and thrown into the fire, where they are burned."

If you are a follower of Jesus, you must be careful to remain connected to him! And you must also do what he expects you to do and that is to "bear much fruit." If you are not doing those things, maybe it's time for you get started. And if you are not a follower of Jesus, there would be no better time than today to get connected to Him. Make plans to go to the Muscadine Jubilee this year, and also be sure to take your family to church on Sunday!

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