

# Life on the Vine—The Helper

John 15:1-8



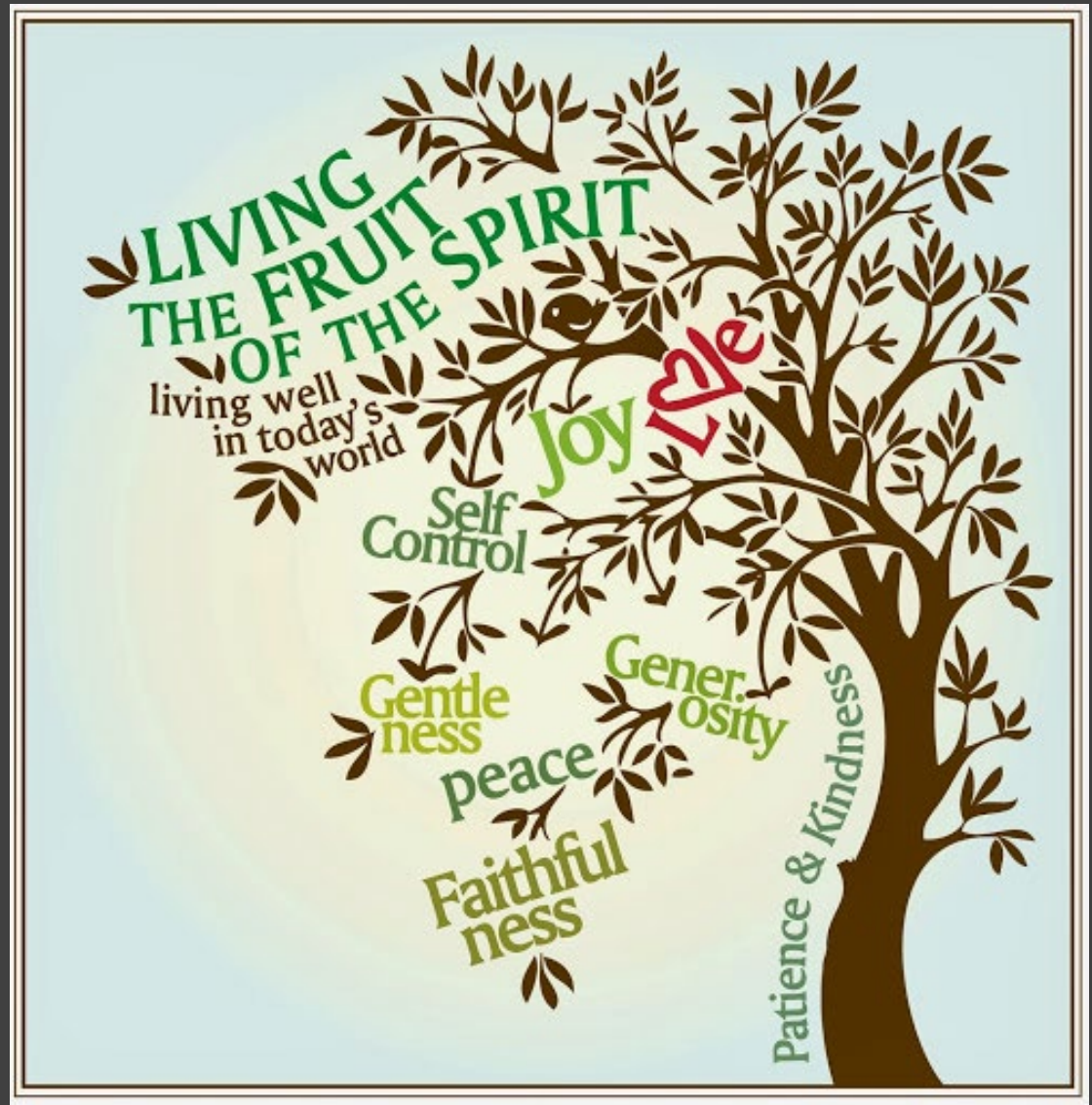
The symbol of the Vine is a powerful biblical picture of what the Lord means for our life with him to be.



- Jesus is the *Heavenly Vine*.
- We are his *branches*.



- The purpose of our living union with Christ is to ***bear fruit.***

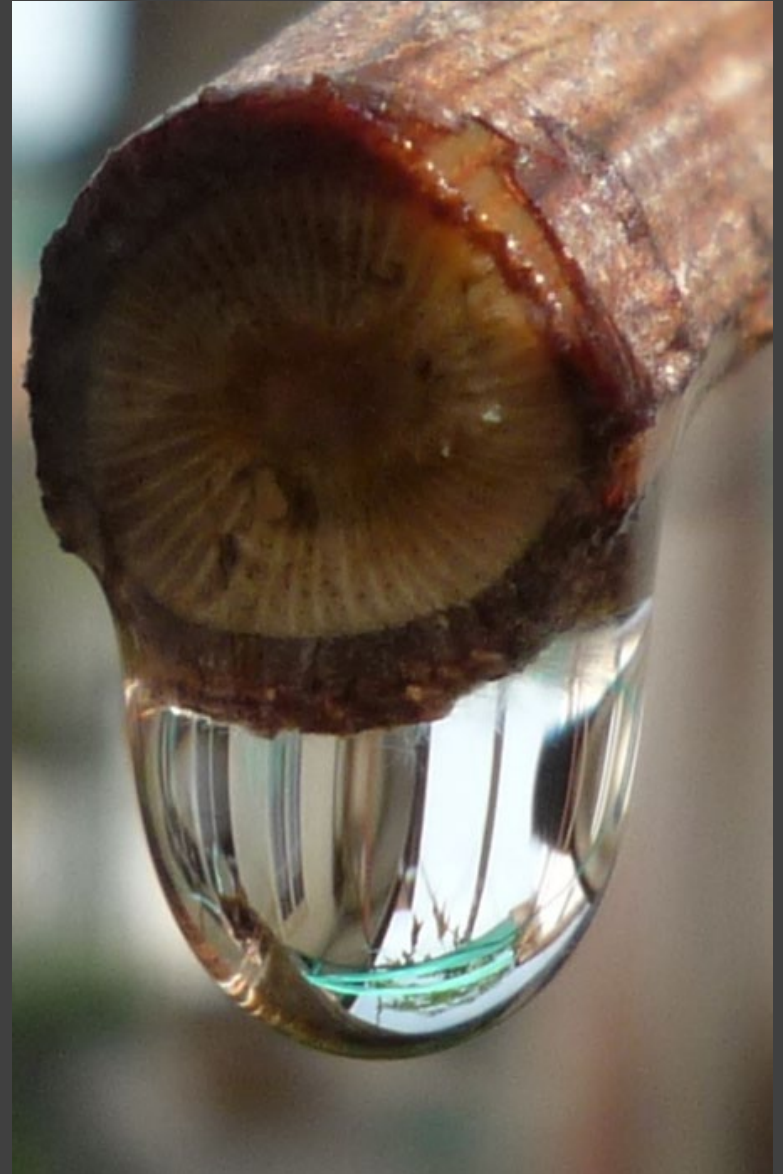




- The Father is our **Vinedresser** who provides for, protects, and **prunes** us by his Word.

# How does all of this come together?

*The Holy Spirit  
connects believers  
to the life and  
power of Jesus  
Christ the  
Heavenly Vine.*



## JOHN 14:15–17

<sup>15</sup> “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. <sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, <sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

# 1. Jesus said the Father would send “another Helper” to his disciples.

- The word for the Holy Spirit here, *parakletos*, literally means “one called alongside to help.”
- It is a hard word to translate because it has such rich meaning.
- Where the *ESV* and *NASB* translate it *Helper* here, the *KJV* has *Comforter*, the *RSV* *Counselor* and the *NRSV* *Advocate*.



# παράκλητος

- Jesus assured his disciples that *in addition* to all that he had been to them, that the Holy Spirit would be “*another Helper*” for them.
- When Jesus is called our “*advocate with the Father*” in 1 John 2:1, the word there is also *parakletos*.



- When he came, *the Holy Spirit* would be as **real** to the disciples *as Jesus had been to them* during his earthly ministry.
- As Jesus had come alongside to bring them to God, so too would the Holy Spirit.



- And not just to them, but to **all** who would come to *believe in Christ*.

2. The Holy Spirit is the gift of the Father, given at the request of the Son.

John 14:16

<sup>16</sup> “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper . . . .”



- On **the night before his crucifixion**, Jesus promised his disciples that after his Ascension, he and the Father would send the Holy Spirit to them.
- Then on **the afternoon of his resurrection** when Jesus appears to his disciples, he does this:



John 20:22

<sup>22</sup> And when he had said this, he **breathed** on them and said to them, “**Receive the Holy Spirit.**”

- Some early church fathers, such as Cyril of Alexandria, understood God's breathing the **breath of life into Adam** in Genesis 2:7 as God's giving him the **Holy Spirit**, thus bringing him into the intimate fellowship of the Trinity.
- Humanity lost this intimacy with God in the Fall, but during the upper room discourse, Jesus shows his disciples that the Spirit will soon restore us to that fellowship.





Just before he ascended back to heaven, the Lord repeated the promise:



Luke 24:49

“And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”



# The promise of the Holy Spirit was fulfilled on Pentecost



- In his *Pentecost sermon* in Jerusalem, Peter said of Jesus:

Acts 2:32–33

<sup>32</sup> This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses. <sup>33</sup> Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and **having received** from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has **poured out** this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing.



### 3. The Holy Spirit makes good Jesus' promise to be with us forever.

Jesus promised that although *he would return to heaven*, he would *never leave his disciples*.



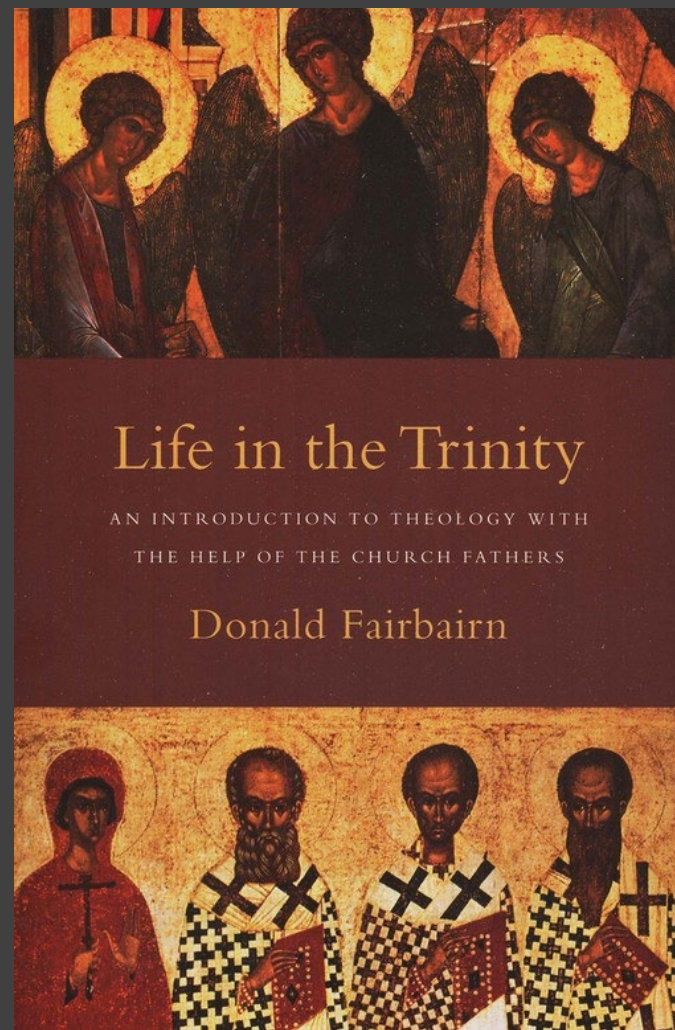
## John 14:15–20.

<sup>16</sup> And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,  
<sup>17</sup> even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and **will be in you.**

<sup>18</sup> “**I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.** <sup>19</sup> Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. <sup>20</sup> **In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.**



“Notice that the Spirit’s dwelling within believers is the key that enables us to know that **the Son is in the Father**, that **believers are in the Son** and that **the Son is in believers**. The mutual sharing of relationship between **Father and Son** and between **Son and believers** depends on the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the one who links us to that relationship by **uniting us to the Son**.”



Jesus' final words to them were:

“And behold, I  
am with you  
always, to the  
end of the age.”

—Matthew 28:20



- The Holy Spirit *guarantees* that no true follower of Jesus will ever be abandoned by God.
- The Holy Spirit *draws us into an even closer relationship with God* because he is now not just *with us*, but *in us*.

John 14:17

“You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”

# Application

- Believers, take heart.
- You have more help than you can imagine.
- Put your trust in God the Father who sends his Holy Spirit as the divine Helper to all who trust in his Son Jesus.



- In the Parable of the Vine in John 15, *only two verbs* are in the *imperative mood*—we are *commanded* to do just two things: *abide* and *ask*.

## I Am the True Vine

**15** “I am the <sup>r</sup>true vine, and my Father is <sup>s</sup>the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> <sup>t</sup>Every branch in me that does not bear fruit <sup>u</sup>he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, <sup>v</sup>that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> Already <sup>w</sup>you are clean <sup>x</sup>because of the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> <sup>y</sup>Abide <sup>z</sup>in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine; <sup>a</sup>you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that <sup>b</sup>bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in me <sup>c</sup>he is thrown away like a branch and withers; <sup>d</sup>and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If <sup>e</sup>you abide in me, and my words abide in you, <sup>f</sup>ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> <sup>g</sup>By this my Father is glorified, that you <sup>h</sup>bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> <sup>i</sup>As the Father has loved me, <sup>j</sup>so have I loved you. Abide in my love. <sup>10</sup> <sup>k</sup>If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as <sup>l</sup>I have kept <sup>m</sup>my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. <sup>11</sup> These things I have spoken to you, <sup>n</sup>that my joy may be in you, and that <sup>o</sup>your joy may be full.

*Abiding in Christ is:*

- *Making time each morning to stay with God for a while, talking to your Father in prayer and listening to him as you read his Word.*

- Making sure that the **first and most important appointment** on your calendar every week is being in with the Lord's people in the Lord's House every Lord's Day.
- **Surrounding yourself** with other believers who can **encourage, admonish, and model** the life of Christ for you and **hold you accountable** for living it yourself.



- Surrendering to him in instant, joyful obedience whenever you get the slightest, quiet nudge from the Holy Spirit about something you need to do or not do.
- The Holy Spirit has a quiet voice, so to hear him you need to dial down the noise around you and the noise within you, but if you do, you will hear him speak.

- We can **quench** the Holy Spirit.

1 Th 5:19.

<sup>19</sup> Do not quench the Spirit.

- We can **grieve** the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30

<sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Our challenge:

When we talk about **abiding in Christ**  
—or being **branches of the Heavenly Vine**  
—or being **filled with the Holy Spirit**,  
these are **spiritual realities** we cannot  
see.

## John 3:8

“The **wind** [**pneuma**] blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the **Spirit** [**pneuma**].”



I can't see the wind, but I can see what it does.



I can't see the Holy Spirit, but I can see  
what he does.