

Life on the Vine

John 15:1-8



Hampton Court—Henry VIII's 16th-century Tudor palace



- **The Great Vine at Hampton Court.**
- Planted in 1768, it is the largest and oldest known grapevine in the world.
- It is 13 feet around the base and the longest rod is 120 feet long.
- The average crop of black dessert grapes is about 600 lbs. each year.



The Great Vine at Hampton Court





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HAMPTON COURT PALACE
THE GREAT VINE

H. M. Office of Works

Life on the Vine— The True Vine

John 15:1-8



JOHN 15:1–8

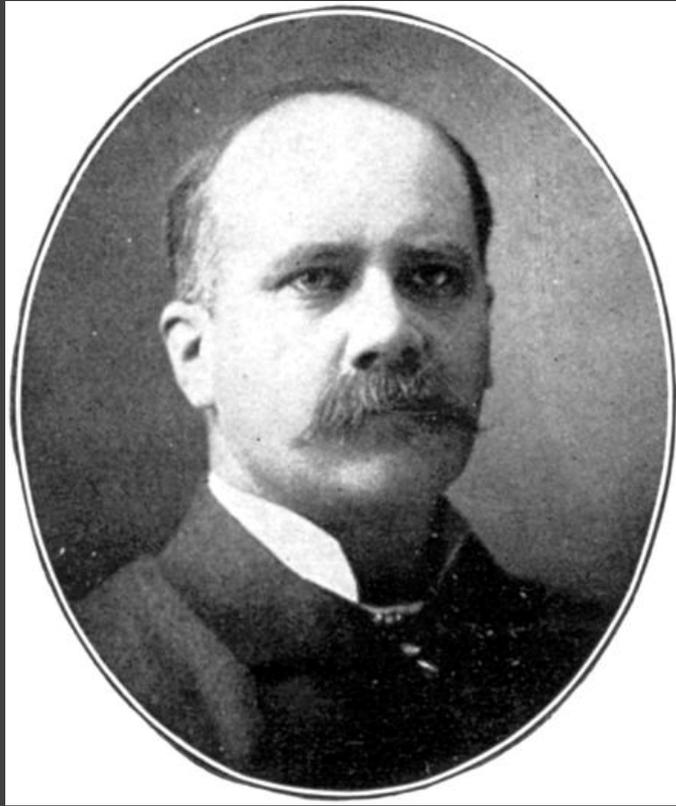
¹ “I am the true vine

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”

Jesus
describes his
union with
believers as a
*permanent,
living
connection*
between a vine
and its
branches.





In His Steps



Charles M. Sheldon

What would Jesus do?

- When I first read *In His Steps* as a teenager, it intimidated me.
- I knew a lot of things that Jesus **would do** if he were me—things that I **didn't do** and didn't think that I **could do**.
- And a lot of them I **didn't even want to do**.
- In the years since, I've concluded that I was right.
- It is **impossible** for me to live a truly Christian life.
- Impossible for you.
- **Only one person** ever lived a **truly Christian life**: Christ: Jesus Christ.

In the parable of the True Vine, the only perfect human being who ever lived offers to come live his life in you now.



1. Who is the True Vine?

- The True Vine is the Son of God—the Eternal Second Person of the Trinity—who **took on human flesh** so that his spiritual life and power could flow into **all flesh**.
- The Incarnation is the central fact and miracle of the Christian faith.
- The Son of God took on a human nature in such a way that he was both **fully God** and **fully man**.
- Because he was born of Mary, Jesus was **fully human**.
- Because he was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit, he was **fully God**.

Luke 1:30–33

³¹ “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the **Son of the Most High**. And the Lord God will give to him the **throne of his father David**, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”

Romans 1:1–4

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures,³ concerning his Son, who was **descended from David according to the flesh**⁴ and was declared to be **the Son of God** in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.

- His *miraculous entrance* into the world through the virgin birth and his *miraculous exit* through the resurrection and the ascension convey the same message.
- Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son of God, **came from God and returned to God.**

Jesus is the living *Word of God*,

- We have every reason to call him Master and Teacher.

Hebrews 1:1-2

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has *spoken to us by his Son*, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

Jesus Christ is the *Savior*.

- He bore our sins on the cross and in a single act of sacrifice reconciled us to God.

Romans 5:8

⁸ But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Jesus Christ is *Lord*.

- At his ascension into heaven, Jesus declared:

Matthew 28:18

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.”

- In John’s vision of Jesus in heaven, he is called “*King of Kings and Lord of lords*” (Revelation 17:14, 19:16.)

- *He is all of those mighty things—he's the **Son of God**.*
- *But he was also a **human being**—the perfect human being.*

Perhaps the most amazing thing Jesus is to us is *the True Vine*.

John 15:5

⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.

- **Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit in the heart of every believer, Jesus has actually come to live his life in and through us.**



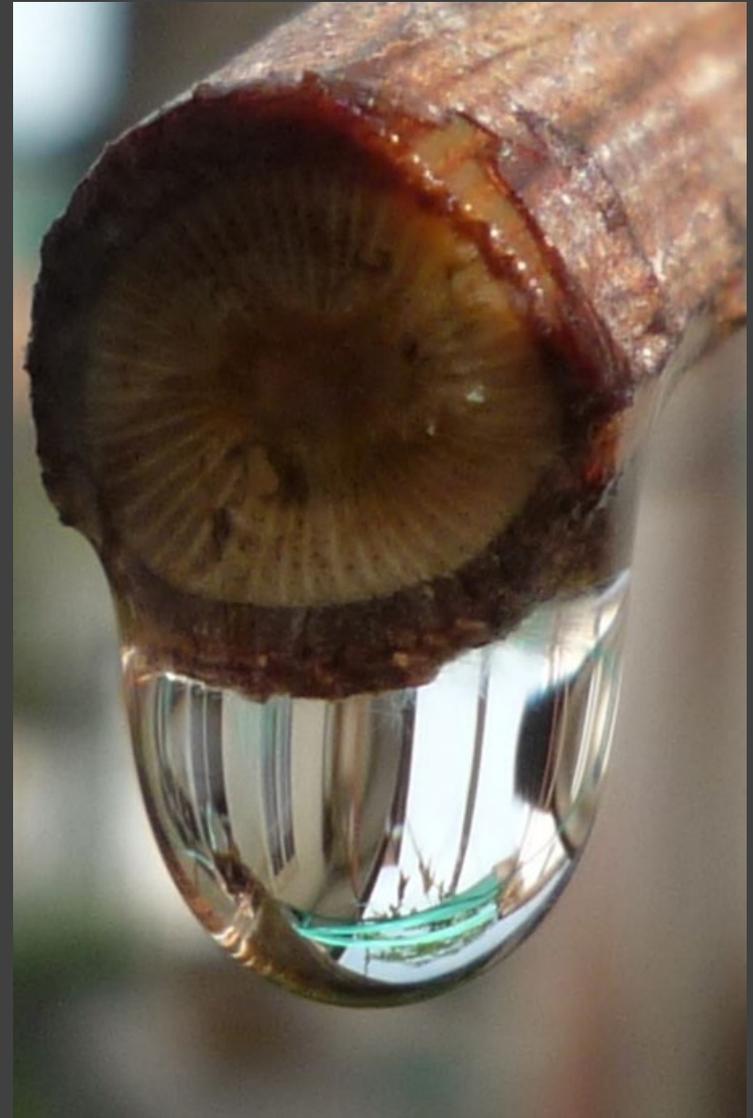
When you were saved, you were **grafted** onto Jesus the True Vine!



2. Christian living is the life of Jesus the True Vine being lived *by him in you* right now.

- Just as a branch owes all of its life and *fruitfulness* to the Vine, so Christ means for *his life and power* to *flow into* and *through you*.
- Eternal life is not just living forever—although it is that.
- Eternal life is **the power to live a certain kind of life** that is available only to those who have faith in Christ.

- As the *sap* from a grapevine *flows from the vine* to the branches, giving them *life* and *producing fruit*, so Jesus, through the indwelling of the **Holy Spirit**, is the believer's **source of spiritual life** and **power**.
- Sap **nourishes** (maple syrup).
- Sap **heals** (aloe vera).



- Only *one person* ever lived a *truly Christian life*: Jesus Christ.
- And the same way Jesus behaved in his own humanity for 33 years on earth he wants to behave in your humanity now.
- Not *tell* you how to live it.
- Not *help* you live it.
- But he's ready to *live it* in and through you.
- *The Christian life is nothing less than the life that Jesus lived then being lived by him in you now.*

How do I live the Christian life?

Matthew 22:36–40

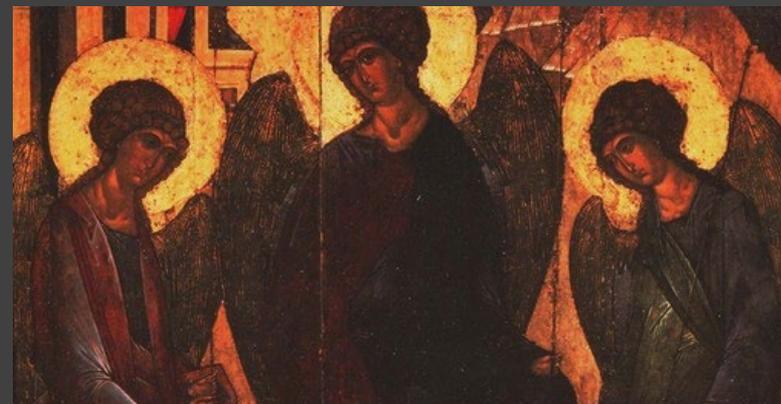
³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “**You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.** ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹ And a second is like it: **You shall love your neighbor as yourself.** ⁴⁰ On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

But how do / do that?

John 15:9

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. **Abide in my love.**”

“Previously Jesus has forged a link between his love for us and our love for one another. Here he extends that link. His love for us is connected to the Father’s love for him. Furthermore, he does **not** say merely that we are to love each other **because** the Father loved him and he loved us, or even that we are to love each other **in the same way** as the Father loved him and he loved us. Instead, he says, “Now remain in my love.” **We are to remain** in the very same love with which Christ has loved us, which is in fact the very same love with which the Father has loved Christ.



Life in the Trinity

AN INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY WITH
THE HELP OF THE CHURCH FATHERS

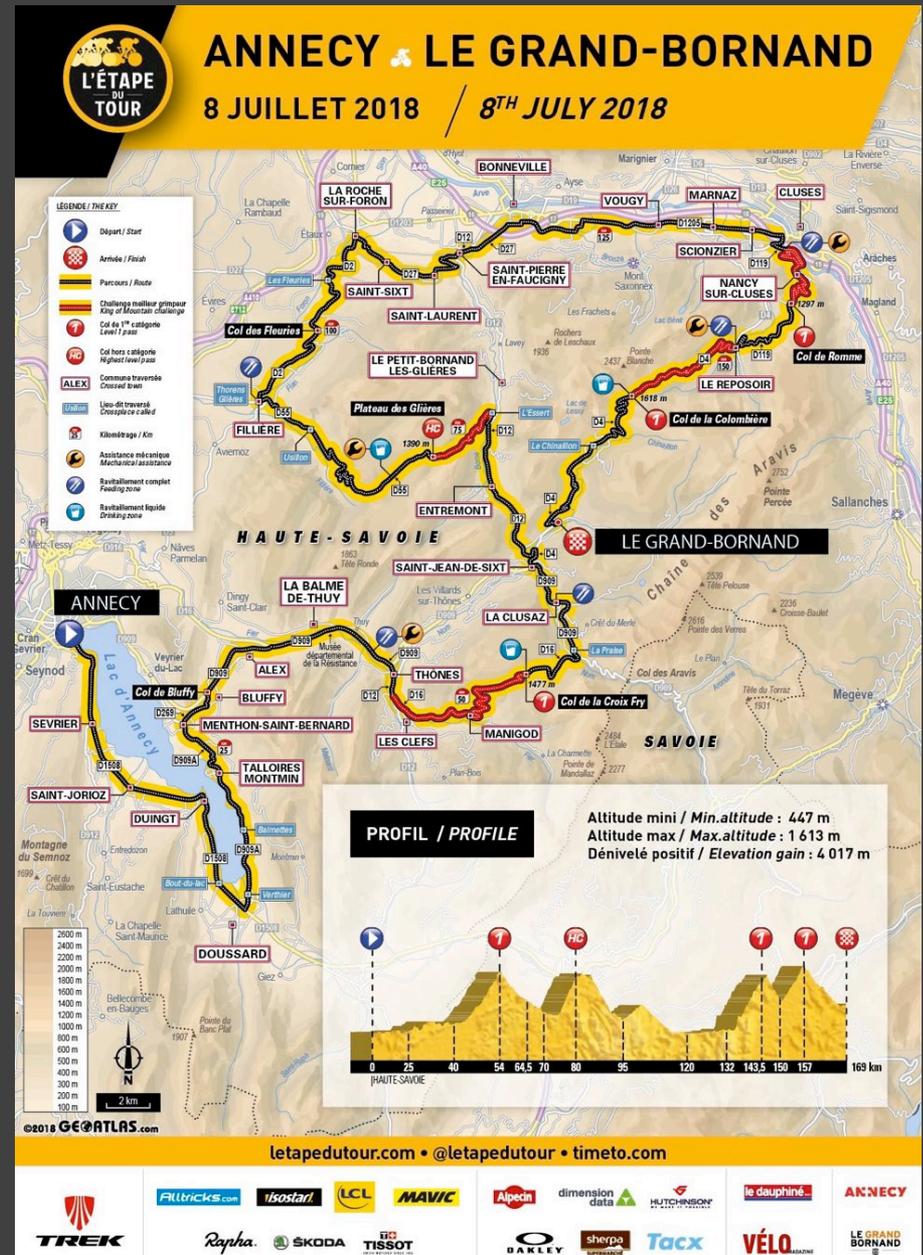
Donald Fairbairn



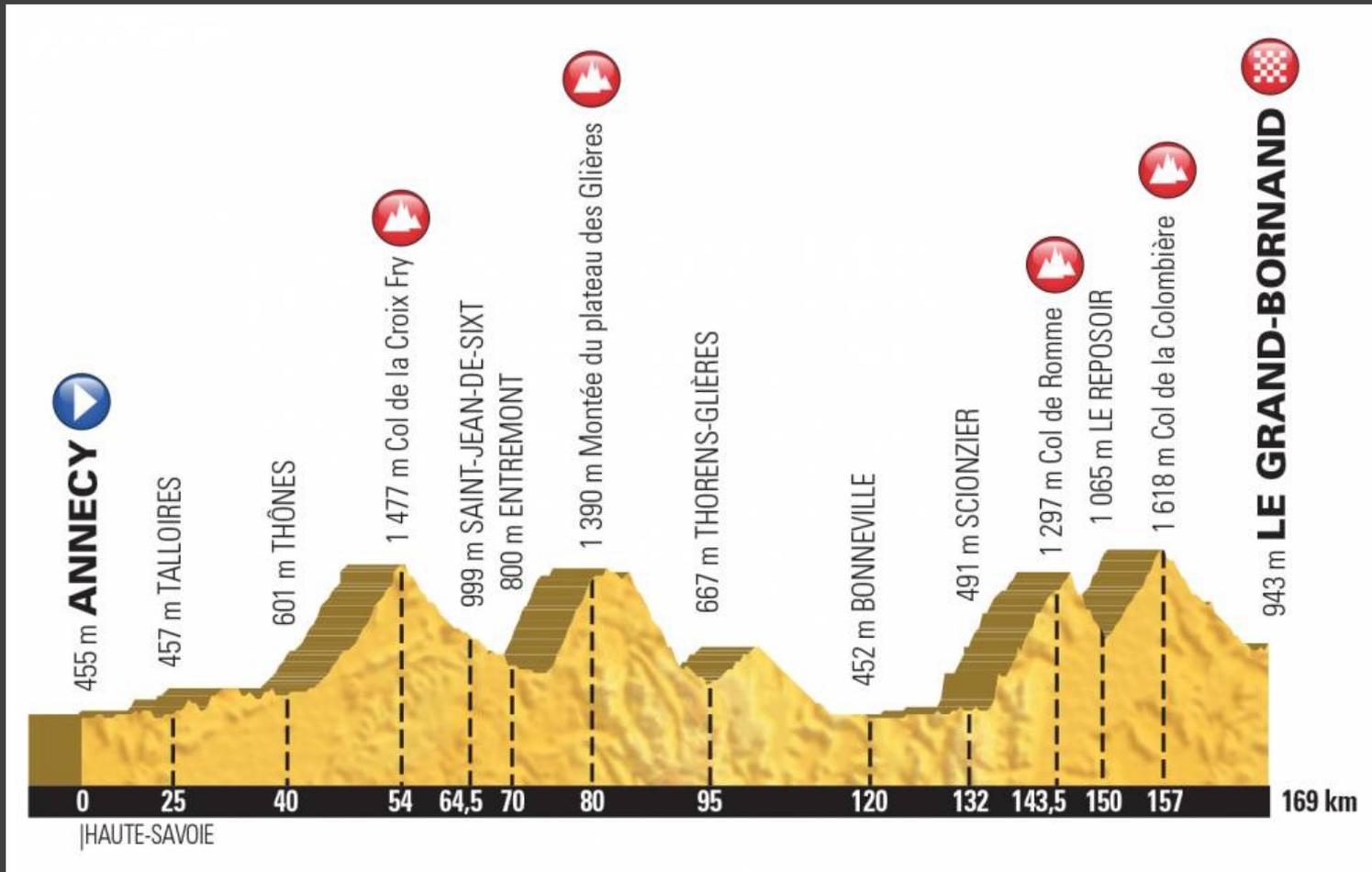
“Somehow we are **called to do more than simply imitate** God’s love. We are called to **remain in** and to carry forward to the world the very love with which the Father has loved his Son from all eternity. The loving relationship between Father and Son, the glorious presence of the Father with the Son, is **not simply a model** that we are to follow. That relationship is the substance of what Jesus says Christians are to **possess**. Christ is not simply giving us an example; **he is offering himself to us** as a person, that we might share in his most deeply personal relationship, the relationship he has with God the Father.”

—Donald Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity*

- What would it take for me to win a stage of the Tour de France?
- I got a taste of that in 2018 when I raced the Etape du Tour.
- 105 miles in the French Alps.



Four mountains. 13,180 feet of climbing.





9:31:28



Julian Alaphilppe
4:25:27



Application: How does this happen?

- The *power* for living the victorious Christian life is the *same power* that saves us in the first place: **faith**.
- It starts with . . .
 - **believing** that Christ *is living* in us, and
 - **surrendering** to his power to live his perfect life in us each moment.

- **Ask** him to fill you with his Holy Spirit. **Invite** him to come live his abundant life in and through you.
- Then **thank him** for doing it, and step out in faith acting as if you really believe that Jesus will do what he said he will do.
- Take the **first 30 minutes** of your day, open up your Bible and have a **conversation** with the Lord. When I read, the Lord speaks to me; when I pray, I speak to him.
- Ask him for what you need.

“Thank you, Father, that by faith I am a branch abiding in Jesus Christ, the True Vine, and that his life is flowing into me.”

