

Why All You Have to Do in Jesus Is Abide

What some call the largest vine in the world grows at Hampton Court Palace in London. This "Great Vine," as it is called, was planted in 1768 and now produces an average of 600 pounds of black dessert grapes every year.

People wondered why the vine grew so large and produced so much fruit. After some investigation, they found it had snaked its way hundreds of yards underground until it found the banks of the Thames River. There in the slime of the riverbed, the roots found rich nourishment that allowed the vine to yield an abundance of grapes. Every fall, its branches fill with great bunches of large, blue-black globes sold exclusively in the palace shop.

The vine does all the work. All the branches have to do is depend on the vine and receive what it gives. Every time you see a grape, an apple or fruit from any tree or vine, remember that nothing happens without the vine. The branch is absolutely dependent on the vine. The vine must do the work. The branch enjoys the fruit of that work.

Jesus spoke about this relationship of dependency: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who remains in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit. For without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

The flow from the vine doesn't start and stop. Moment by moment, the sap streams from the vine out to the branch. All the branch does is abide. Such is the way of a kingdom worker. We only need to be a good branch. That's what Jesus wants us to understand.

The simple, blessed consciousness of our relationship with Christ fulfills the trust of our dependence. The vine waits in

full confidence of its supply. God provides life and power through the Holy Spirit. Moment by moment, the sap flows through the vine.

Morning by morning, week by week, year by year. I must abide in Him in the simple, utter helplessness of one who knows nothing. A true disciple longs to be nothing, to study and pray the Word, to worship God in light of nothing. As John says in his Gospel, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30).

Far too often, we become attached to things of the earth instead of the kingdom: our own desires, hopes, dreams, prospects and gratifications for ourselves, our family, our church, our work, our nation. We become attached to our own thoughts; we seem to have a million springs that encircle countless objects.

The danger lies in the fact that we no longer place the stigma of sin on worldly attachments like these. They feel innocent and somehow normal, even expected. And yet in thousands of ways, they hinder us and bind us to the earth.

"Therefore, since we are encompassed with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).

The Holy Spirit fills us exactly in proportion as we have eliminated our selfish desires for the affairs of the earth. When we die to self, we are filled with Spirit.

We must consider whether we build our days and our dreams on earthly expectations or allow the fruit of the Holy Spirit to fill them. If I am something, then God is not everything.

Instead of striving to get more, achieve more, do more, we must struggle to be absolutely dependent. This is the true secret of power in everything we do.

Think what would have happened if the roots of the Great Vine went their own way and tried to find their supply in a dry stream or the middle of a busy London street. Think what might take place if a branch willfully broke off, no longer desiring connection with the Great Vine, asserting that it could produce better fruit on its own.

Our efforts to go our own way often end in similar disaster or, at the very least, a barren condition. The mark of a living, healthy branch is a bountiful harvest of fruit. But the branch only gets what comes from Jesus. He provides the soil, the nutrients, the life-giving flow we need.

Without Him, we can do nothing.

DR. STEVE GREENE *is the publisher and executive vice president of the multimedia group at Charisma Media and executive producer of the Charisma Podcast Network. Find his book, Love Leads: The Spiritual Connection Between Your Relationships and Productivity, at , or at your local bookstore.*

CHARISMA is the only magazine dedicated to reporting on what the Holy Spirit is doing in the lives of believers around the world. If you are thirsty for more of God's presence and His Holy Spirit, subscribe to CHARISMA and join a family of believers that choose to live life in the Spirit. [CLICK HERE](#) for a special offer.