

CINDY STEINBECK

GRAPES
of
Grace

The title 'GRAPES of Grace' is centered on the page. 'GRAPES' is in a gold, serif font. 'of' is in a smaller, gold, serif font. 'Grace' is in a large, elegant, cursive script font with a color gradient from orange to purple. The word 'Grace' is surrounded by large, flowing, decorative flourishes in the same color gradient.

**I am the vine; you are
the branches.** John 15:5

To you, fellow lovers of the vineyard and The Vine.

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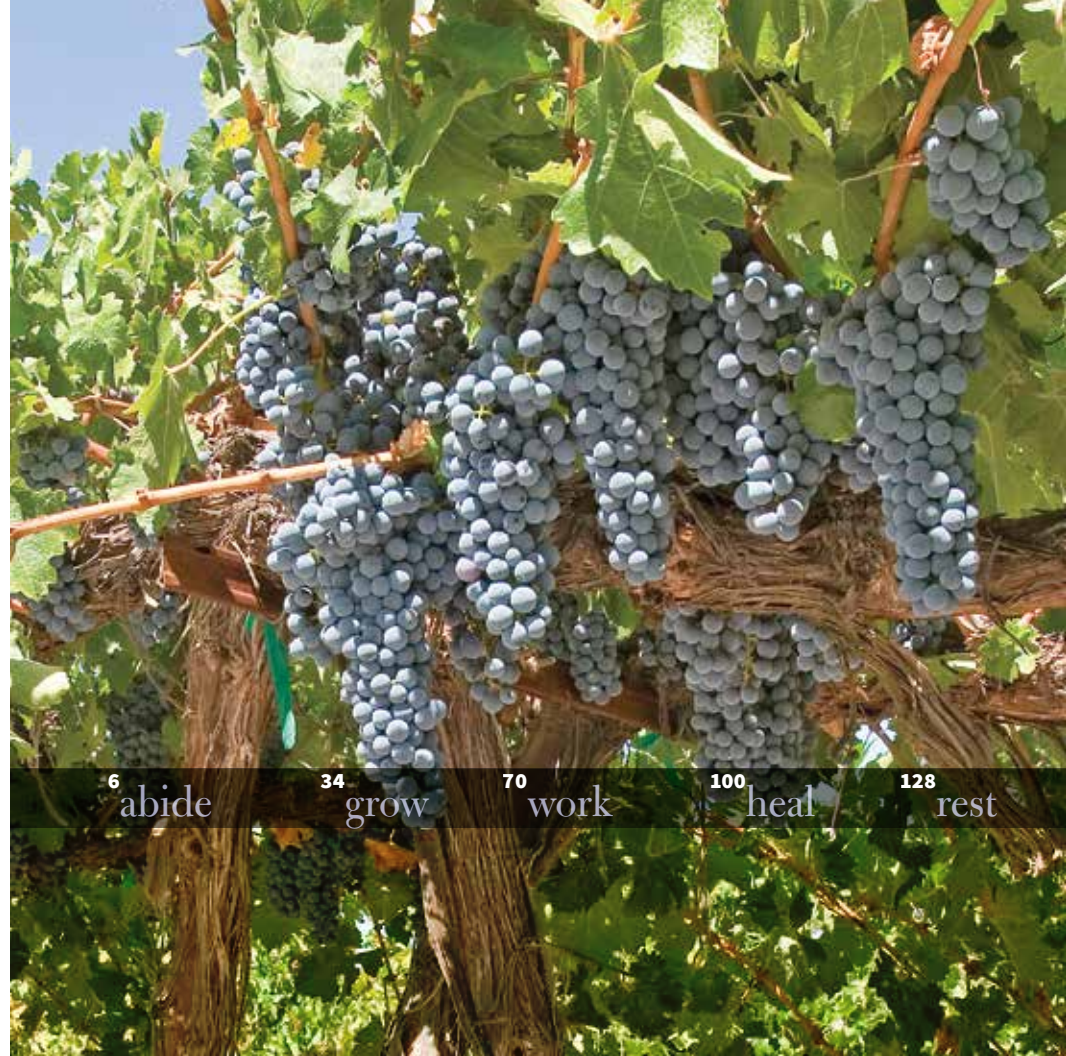
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Jesus provides rich imagery and meaning when He says, “Abide in Me, and I in you” and “I am the vine; you are the branches” (John 15:4, 5).

Jesus spoke the words to His disciples in the Upper Room in the confusing, challenging days just prior to His arrest and crucifixion. His passion for keeping His own close to Him in the midst of trying times is evident in the vine imagery. John recorded these words for us, for today. These words call us to grow in faith in the One who calls us to abide in His life.

Abide means to dwell, to remain, to stay, to have one’s abode, or to continue in a particular attitude or relationship. Abiding “in Christ” means that He is our dwelling place. We are grafted into His holy life when we come to faith in Him; we live in Christ now, and we live in Christ for eternity. Therefore, His life is our abiding place, and we live in relationship with Him.

These words from John 15 are alive for me because I live and work among the vines in my vineyard. The photos in this book, taken in my vineyard during different seasons and stages of growth, will show you the beauty I see. In these photos and through the words on these pages, you will grow—as I have—in understanding of His work for us and in us and through us.

The Vine—Jesus—speaks these profound images through the roots, the sap flow, the canes, the buds, the leaves, and the fruit. Meaningful imagery unfolds when we see the work of the vine on the branches and in the fruit. The narrative of the vine also shows, in rich Old Testament imagery, the

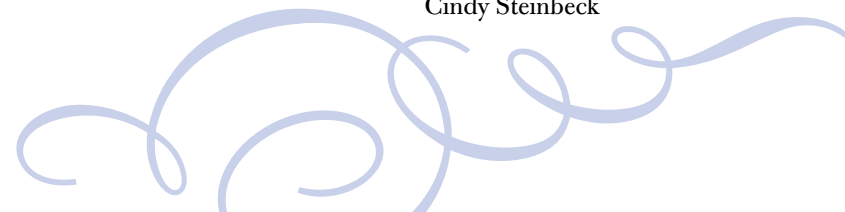
relationship between God the Father (the Vinedresser) and the Son (the Vine).

The branches receive the work of the vinedresser in order to be healthy and grow and bear much fruit. A grapevine’s bearing fruit is the natural result of healthy branches on a healthy vine, and a Christian’s bearing fruit is the natural result of abiding in Christ’s holy life. His life keeps us, cleanses us, provides nutrients and water; His life gives life and promotes growth. Health means embracing ourselves and those around us as multifaceted, wonderfully created human beings, whose lives are precious to God, the one who breathed His life into our being. He calls us to live, to life; He calls us to grow.

Growing means change, and change can be challenging. Sometimes we endure a pruning when God calls us to recognize our sin and to change. We fight it, but in faith we cling to the promise of the Vine’s life in us and our life in Him. We are grafted into Christ’s life; we are rooted and grounded in Him. We are alive in the Vine, and He is alive in us.

My prayer is that the images and the words on these pages be for your encouragement and hope in the True Vine, as they have been for me. I invite you to step into my vineyard and journey with me into deeper faith and trust in Him through the vines.

Cindy Steinbeck



*A*bide 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.

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.

John 15:4-5


This 33-year-old vine has grown to form the shape of the crucifix: arms lifted up, the face of Christ hanging down and to the right, the body and legs in the trunk.



Are we human beings
or human doings?

Does our being define our doing,
or does our doing define our being?





300,000 grapevines adorn
the hills of Steinbeck Vineyards
in Paso Robles, California.

Paul says that the energy of God at work in us
is the same energy that raised Jesus from the dead!
The sap flow in every plant is moving, bringing

water and nutrients—energy—to the vines.
Christ's life in us breeds life, breeds energy for us.
We work and we rest in that life.

*A*nd what is the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His great might that He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 1:19–20



Lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD will keep you from all evil; He will keep your life. The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

Psalm 121





Abiding fruit
is Christ's call.
Fruit that abides
is the natural result
of our abiding
relationship in
Christ, as branches
of a fruitful vine.

Cabernet Sauvignon
vines bear fruit,
ripe for the harvest.

Maturity in life is defined by many factors. God's Word calls us to be mature in Christ, to be mature in heart, soul, and spirit. The maturing process continues throughout life in Christ, the True Vine.



Ripe Viognier.

We live today's precious moments,
drawing wisdom and perspective
from life's valuable lessons, with
eyes constantly fixed on eternity
in Christ.

Eternity in Christ is now and forever.





*N*ow may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

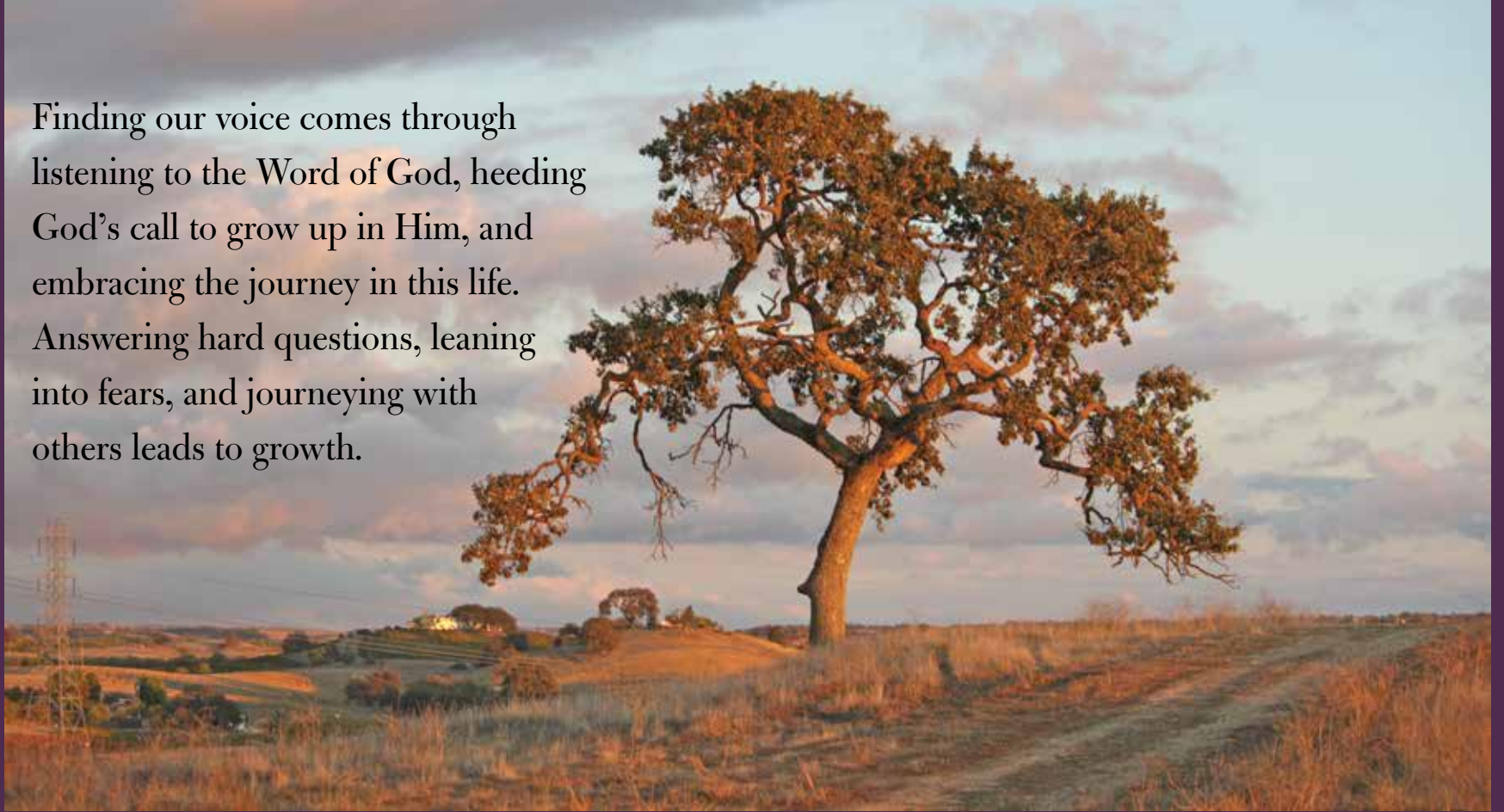
2 Thessalonians 2:16–17




God's call on our lives is that we grow
and be restored in all seasons of life.

He brings growth; He restores, flowing from
the intimate relationship of vine to branch.

Finding our voice comes through listening to the Word of God, heeding God's call to grow up in Him, and embracing the journey in this life. Answering hard questions, leaning into fears, and journeying with others leads to growth.





Gracious heavenly Father, Creator
of heaven and earth, Creator of the vine, speak
Your Word of truth into our hearts and lives.

Even as You show us Your Law and bring us
to repentance, You bring growth and under-
standing of Your love and mercy toward us.
Give us courage to receive and, in receiving,
the courage to give. In Jesus' precious name.
Amen.

*Y*ou did not choose Me,
but I chose you and appointed
you that you should go and
bear fruit and that your fruit
should abide, so that whatever
you ask the Father in My name,
He may give it to you.

John 15:16

Ripe Cabernet
Sauvignon
ready to be
picked into bins.

