

# From the Desk of Denise

## CSCF Executive Director

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I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. (John 15:1-8)

When my family lived in Lloydminster, we lived in a rental house for a short period of time. As I reflect, it was probably one of the most relaxed and enjoyable times in our life, despite having a 12 year old, a toddler and a new baby.

The lady who lived next door to us was a precious Grandma in her early 80's. She was outside gardening from sunup to sundown. Our new "Grandma" had THE most beautiful tomatoes! I mean, every vine was weighted down with beautiful, vine-ripened, juicy, red tomatoes. I remember asking her, "HOW do you get such beautiful tomatoes?" Her response was very clear:

1. Make sure that they are in the direct sun - in a clay pot if possible so that they stay very warm, especially through the night.
2. As the vines start to grow, wherever there is a "V" in the vine, pinch off (prune) the tiny regrowth that sprouts out from the middle of the "V".
3. Support - make sure that you use either wooden dowels or broken hockey sticks with cotton to tie the vines to so that they are supported.

Seemed so simple! Well, needless to say, that year I had THE most beautiful tomatoes! We enjoyed salsa and spaghetti sauce for the rest of the year with all of the plentiful tomato harvest!

So how does that relate to our relationship with Christ, our school and our learning, Denise? Well, I believe that in order for us to grow we need to:

1. Go through some "fire" (challenges - "but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope." Romans 5:3)
2. We need to allow God to 'prune' us - be humble and shapeable for the Lord to shape us into His likeness
3. That we need "support" - the support of others who love us, will treat us with kindness, respect, and hold up our arms when the weight is too heavy to bear.

My prayer is that as we grow, that God would be glorified through the fruit that we bear, proving to be His disciples.

May God bless you and keep you, and make His face to shine upon you.

Blessings in Christ,  
Denise

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