



## **Worship at Home – Easter 5** **Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2021**

*Prepared by Rev Adam Pawley, Rector*

### ***A prayer to start***

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### ***Bible Reading (John 15:1,5-8)***

Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

**I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.** If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. **This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.**

### ***Thought***

In today’s reading, Jesus (the vine) is teaching his disciples (the branches) – which includes us – what the very heart of being a Christian and His disciple is. Being a Christian is about

1. **Knowing who we are** in relation to Jesus Christ – He is the Vine and we are the branches – with his help we can achieve lots of good (v5)
2. **Learning how to stay connected** to the Vine – or ‘remain’ in the Vine – or (as the older translations put it) ‘abide’ in the Vine (v5)
3. **Bearing fruit** – bearing fruit for God and His glory (v8)

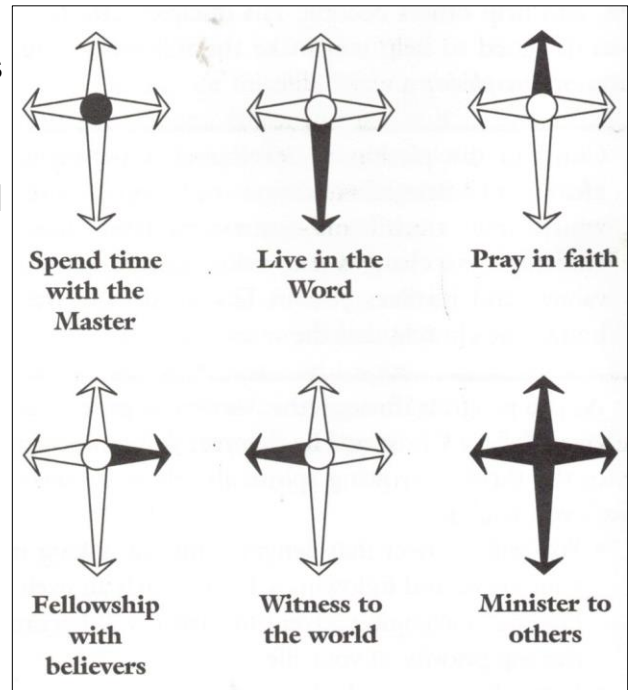
Twenty years ago, when I was a university student a friend introduced me to the idea of ‘The Disciple’s Cross’ by the (now) late baptist minister Avery T Willis Jr (1934-2010). The Disciple’s Cross, gives us six ways to live as a fruitful Christian disciple:

1. Spend time with the Master (God)
2. Live in the Word (reading, studying and living by the teaching of Jesus in the Scriptures)
3. Pray in faith
4. Fellowship with believers
5. Witness to the world (share the riches of our faith with others)
6. Minister to others (serving others)

Whenever I read today's passage from John 15, I always think of this Disciple's Cross, because in his book, Avery T Willis roots this Cross in John 15:5 (above). In his study book (that I've still got), he writes:

*"Christ said that He is the Vine and we are the branches. The branches are part of the Vine. We are part of Christ. He wants to live His life through us."*

I wonder what do you think about the idea that as a Christian you are a part of Christ? That Christ wants to live his life through you? (Think of the Holy Spirit like the sap in the vine running through and giving life to the branches). That the best way we can live our lives is by following Jesus? (Recall Jesus' promise in John 10:10 – just before he announces that he is the Good Shepherd and we his sheep (v11) – he says – "I have come that [you] may have life and live it to the full").



### **In your Christian living, I wonder how do you do these six things?**

Hopefully this 'Worship At Home' is helping you to do the first three. On the fourth, if you would you like to spend more time with Christians, then please get on the phone and call us. We can put you in touch with other Christians too. I wonder too, how do you share your faith and all its benefits, in word and deed, with others? For example, who do you pray for from your homes? Could you use the Prayer Page in the church magazine? Who is there who may be lonely, who you could you phone and cheer up? How do you serve and bless others? How are you becoming more like and living like Christ?

### **Prayers**

Loving God, thank you for the Vine, your Son Jesus Christ. Help us to know the work of your Holy Spirit in our lives, and grow as healthy branches on the Vine by following the six ways of The Disciples Cross. **Amen.**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*We hope you are safe and well. Please get in touch if we can help. (Adam 01978 760439, Gareth 07731 827988). This Sunday (2 May) we have Holy Communion services at 9:30am in Penyffordd and 11am in Hope. Please get in touch with Jane, Liz or ourselves if you'd like to reserve a seat. Thank you.*