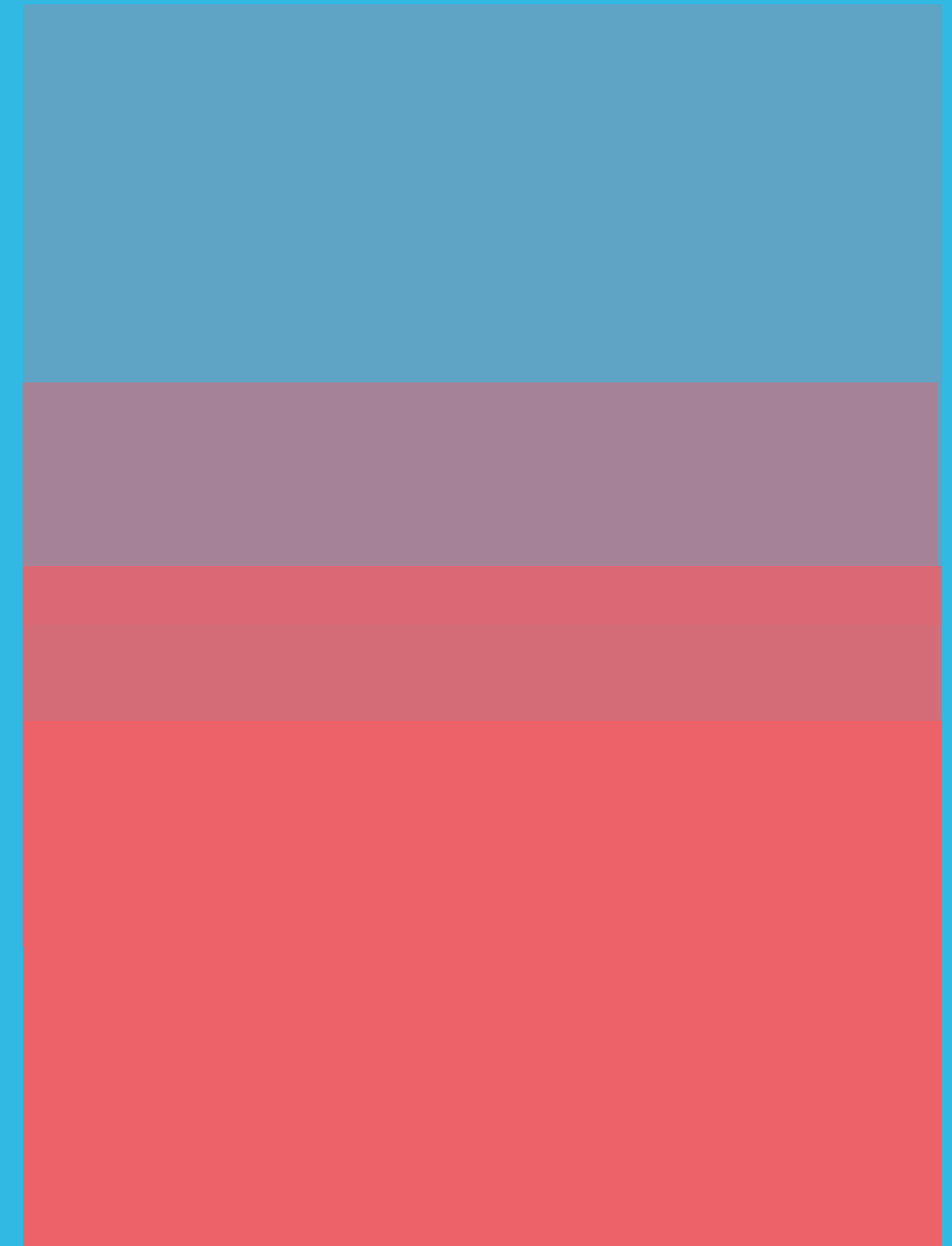


**Summer Series**



# **Metaphors for God**



Every ordinary thing is infused with  
mystery. I am an everyday mystic.  
So are you.

**Barbara Holmes**







John 15 *[page 752]*

John 15:4-5 *[page 752]*

It doesn't get more intimate than *in*.



“/ am the true vine, and my Father is the  
*gardener.*”

**Jesus**







A vine has to suffer...to make good grapes. You can't coddle it, or it will become lazy like a couch potato. He sits there and you feed him. He doesn't have to work. If the roots don't dig deep, there's trouble. They have to go down four or five metres. Then if it's dry for a couple of months, no problem. The vine will survive. A vine can live 100 years if you treat it right.

**Dd Poncheret, *A Year in Burgundy***



John 15:1-2 *[page 752]*



Pruning is not punishment.





John 15:4 *[page 752]*

If we take Jesus' words at face value, that "nothing" even includes our own work. We can't prune ourselves. The strength, impetus, desire, and discipline to engage our pruning come from outside ourselves. The "life force" sometimes takes the form of grace to be received. Our task is to stay close to the Source.

**Nelson Boschman**



Human beings may separate things into as many piles as we wish— separating spirit from flesh, sacred from secular, church from world. But we should not be surprised when God does not recognise the distinctions we make between the two. Earth is so thick with divine possibility that it is a wonder we can walk anywhere without cracking our shins on altars.

**Barbara Brown Taylor**

## Things That Are Not The Vine:

- **your favourite artist**
- **your favourite celebrity**
- **your favourite podcast**
- **your favourite follow on socials**
- **your favourite beverage**
- **your favourite restaurant**
- **your favourite vacation destination**



# Things That Are Not The Vine:

- **your phone**
- **your diet**
- **your workout routines**
- **your home**
- **your housemate or roommate**
- **your spouse or partner**
- **your school**
- **your degree/s**

# Things That Are Not The Vine:

- **your phone**
- **your resume**
- **your neighbourhood group**
- **your counsellor**
- **your therapist**
- **your spiritual director**
- **your pastor**
- **Artisan Church**



God isn't a loud, post-industrial influencer-type charismatic TV personality. God is gentle and humble, meek and kind. You won't find God shouting over the noise of our consuming, busy and hyper-stimulated lives. God's presence is quiet, subtle, but powerful and it takes us lowering the energy and pace of our lives to discover it.

Often, we feel God as absent or silent when really we're the ones who are, in effect, "absent". We're turning up the radio of our lives while God is gently speaking in the front seat beside us. Take a moment to breathe deeply, let your soul awaken to Love. God is engulfing you. May God have you in return.

**Strahan Coleman** [NJB edit]

We enter solitude, in which also we lose loneliness... True solitude is found in the wild places, where one is without human obligation. One's inner voices become audible. One feels the attraction of one's most intimate sources. In consequence, one responds more clearly to other lives. The more coherent one becomes within oneself as a creature, the more fully one enters into the communion of all creatures.

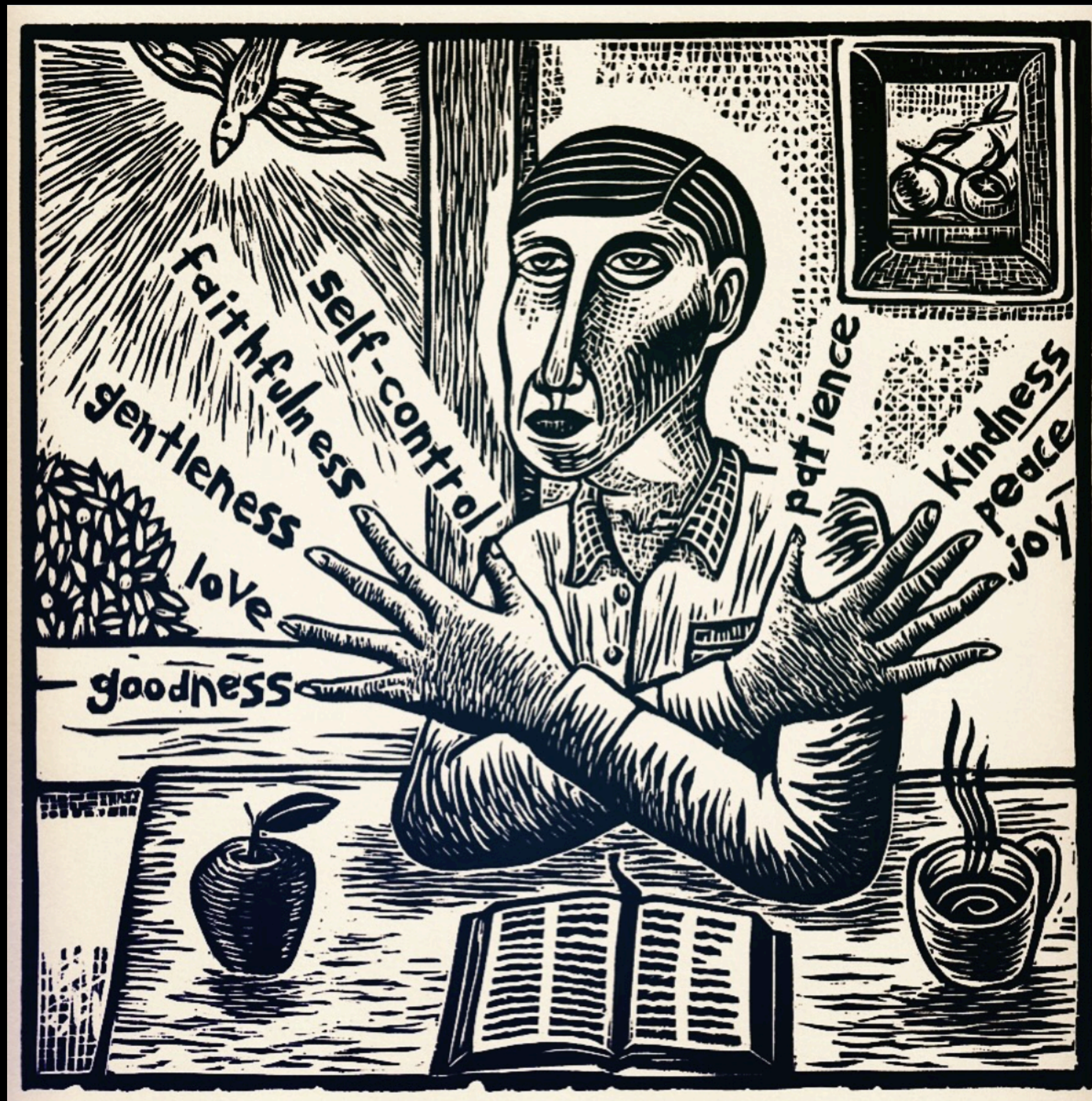
**Wendell Berry**



Here lies the paradox of solitude. Look long and hard enough at yourself in isolation and suddenly you will see the rest of humanity staring back. Sustained aloneness brings you to a tipping point where the pendulum of life returns you to others.

**Stephen Batchelor**





A Still Life (with fruit) - @Psalmprayers