

At the beginning of the year

I taught a message called “**Abide to Thrive**”

& in that Msg – **I promised** to further **develop**
the Great Truth of **ABIDING** in Christ

& **not only develop** this Great & ‘Much Needed’ truth
but also **talk about** the **Big HOW** . . .

Not just **WHAT** “*Abiding in Christ*” is

But **HOW** do we “*Abide in Christ*” in the midst of this crazy world

& so – we’re going to **take a few msgs** (between books)
& **work** on this critical subject

If you **didn’t hear** the New Year’s Msg called “*Abide to Thrive*”
you should prob **Get That** – to lay the foundation for these msgs

Let’s Pray

Some of the **Motivation** - & some of the ‘**Concepts**’
in these Msg’s on **Abiding**

Come form a **Pastor & Missionary** from the **1800’s**
named **Andrew Murray** - & his book called “*Abiding in Christ*”

Let me start – by sharing with you

WHY this is such a **HUGE SUBJECT** for me

It has to do with **TWO truths** – **BOTH** found in **Jn 16:33**

After spending **FOUR Ch's** teaching his Disciples
how to **Live Victoriously** in the midst of this world (**Jn 13-16**)

AND – after teaching our **KEY lesson** on **ABIDING** (**Jn 15**)

After **ALL** that teaching – the **last thing** Jesus said in **Jn Ch 16** – was;

John 16:33 (ESV)

33 I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

& in this **FINAL** – Summary Vs
There are **TWO** Huge **Promises**

Right in the **middle** there – is the **FIRST PROMISE**;
In the world you will have tribulation

I have **SEEN** this promise **come true** (in varying degrees)
in **every Christian's** life that I know

But in the **opening** & **closing** of this Vs – is the **SECOND PROMISE**

& this **SECOND PROMISE** – I have **NOT SEEN** come true
in **every Christian's life** that I know

The **SECOND PROMISE** comes in **TWO Parts** -
at the **beginning** & **end** of the verse

in me you may have peace . . . I have overcome the world

Maybe we can better **understand** this promise - by **turning it around**

I have overcome the world – so - in me you may have peace

This is a very **clear PROMISE** –
Meant to Give us **PEACE** – in the **MIDST** of the world's Tribulation

The Reason I have seen the **FIRST PROMISE** in **EVERY** Christian
I know – is because it is **UNCONDITIONAL**

The Reason I have **NOT** seen the **SECOND PROMISE** in **EVERY**
Christian I know – is because it is **CONDITIONAL**

The **CONDITION** – that separates

Christians who **HAVE** that **Overcoming Peace**
from Christians who **DON'T** have it . . .

is in those **TWO** Critically **KEY** words - - **“IN ME”**

Coming out of **Ch 15** – We **know** Jesus is **referring** to the
Foundational Need in the Christian Life – To **“Abide In Christ”**

& at the **end** of this teaching – **Jesus** summarizes **WHY**
it is **so critical** - that we learn to **Abide in Him**;

#1) Because ***In the world you will have tribulation***

#2) By “ABIDING in Christ” - ***you can have HIS peace –
& HIS victory over the world***

The **PROBLEM** is – The **Overcoming Peace** Jesus Offers us
is **CONDITIONAL** on us **“Abiding in Him”**

THAT is **WHY** – you can see **Two Christians** Respond & React
SO **Differently** – to similar **Tribulations** in this world

There is a very **SAD truth** in the **Christian Church** - - & that is;

MOST Christians **respond** to difficulties –
pretty much the **same way** **NON-Christians** do

This is the **same** shocking **truth**
as the **similar comparison** we **hear** all the time

that the **DIVORCE** rate **INSIDE** the church, is sadly
the **SAME** as it is **OUTSIDE** the church

WHY are these **Sad Comparisons** **SO TRUE** ?

BECAUSE Most Christians
Have never learned **HOW** to **Abide in Christ**

They don't **HAVE** the **OVERCOMING PEACE** - Christ offers
so they **RESPOND** & **REACT** the **SAME** way **NON-Christians** do

Which is heart-breaking

On the other hand – I **HAVE** seen - & **AM seeing** right now
in this **Incredible Crisis** in **Michael Fattaruso's** life

I **HAVE Seen** Christians **RESPOND** & **REACT** & **LIVE**
Radically Different than Non-Christians

they **GO THRU** their Circumstances **Differently** - &
they **COME OUT** Of their Circumstances **Differently**

It's **NOT** that their **CIRCUMSTANCES** are Different
It's that they **COME THRU** their **Circumstances** Different

& **THAT** - is exactly what **Jesus** is referring to in **Jn 16:33**

*In the world you **WILL** have tribulation – **HOWEVER**
In Christ you **CAN** have **PEACE** that **OVERCOMES** this world*

This **GREAT NEED** – For Christians to **learn**
how to **HAVE** this overcoming Peace – BY “**Abiding in Christ**”

was the **Driving Force** of the previous msg “**ABIDE to THRIVE**” –
& **is the motivation** for these additional **msg’s**

But before we move on – **I believe** it is Critically Important

That We **FIRST** get this Foundational **NEED** (to Abide)
Firmly implanted in our **hearts & minds**

& **THEN** - - - We can get – to the **BIG HOW** !!

HOW – do we **ABIDE in CHRIST** – so we can **Respond & React**,
& **Come Thru** the **Tribulation** of this world - **Differently** ?

THAT IS – the **Primary Purpose** of these msg’s –
& **we will** eventually **get** - to the **BIG HOW** !!

But **FIRST** – Let’s make sure we **really understand**
our **VITAL NEED** – to **Abide in Christ**

You know . . . **During** Jesus’ **life on earth**
the phrase He used most often was – “**Follow Me**”

We’re very **familiar** with the Phrase – It’s **used** all the time in Church -
& it’s a **GOOD phrase**

The problem is . . .

Almost every time Jesus said "**Follow Me**"

He was **speaking** to **unbelievers**

& **when we use** that phrase - "**Follow Jesus**"

we're generally **referring** to **Salvation**

Which is obviously **THE** Big Deal - - **Epecially for Unbelievers**

HOWEVER – when **Jesus** was about to **leave** this earth

He gathered His **Disciples** together – **those** who had **already made**
a **permanent commitment** to Follow Him

He **gathered them** together, in an **intimate setting** - & He **said**
something **different** to them - He said – "**Abide in Me**"

Our Key Vs's for this Entire Study are Jn 15:4-5

4 Abide 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.

5 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.

When **Jesus said** this to His **disciples**

He was **preparing them** to go out into a **treacherous world**

where there would be **tribulation**, & **difficulty**

where there would be **persecutions** & **heartbreaks**

All thru the **upper room discourse (Jn 13–16)** – Jesus was **preparing**

His **Disciples** to live **Victoriously** in a world of **Tribulation**

& during this **intense preparation** – The **FOCUS** of Jesus was **NOT** on “**Following Him**” but on “**Abiding in Him**”

Because it is **ONLY** by “**Abiding in Him**” – that **WE** (as Christians) can live **VICTORIOUSLY** in this world

But **here’s the problem** . . .

Unfortunately – many of us **live** our entire Christian Lives Having made the choice to **FOLLOW** Christ

but **never understanding** The **GREAT NEED** or the **GREAT POWER** - - of **ABIDING** in Christ

We put our **Faith in Christ** initially – because we **recognize** our **need** to be **SAVED**

The need for Salvation is pretty easy to grasp;

we know we’re **sinners**, & so separated from God – we hear & **believe**, Jesus **died** to pay the **penalty** for our sin, & we **come** to the conclusion – **Man, WE NEED THAT**

& **when** we put our **Faith in Christ** - we generally **HEAR** – that **Receiving Christ** as our Savior **also means** “**Following Him**” as Lord

& so we **make a commitment** to **DO THAT** – to the **best** of our ability & **then** - **Unfortunately** – **many** Christians **stop** right there

We **receive Christ** as our Savior & we make **some level of Commitment** to “**Follow Him**” often in **OUR OWN STRENGTH** (which, is actually worthless)

& then we **STOP** right there
& **by stopping** there – Many, **Many Christians NEVER** experience

the **JOY** & the **POWER** of the **ABUNDANT LIFE**
which is actually **PART** of the **SALVATION LIFE**

Maybe – it's because we **really just wanted** our "**Forgiveness Ticket**"

& **then we wanted** to just **get back** to living for **ourselves**
& the **pleasures of sin** (*if that's you - please be afraid*)

Maybe it's because **no one** ever **told us** that **Following Jesus**
was **MORE** than a **raise of the hand** & a **quick prayer**

Or **MAYBE** - we actually do **LONG FOR**
the **JOY** & the **POWER** of the **Abundant Life**

We've **just never learned HOW** to "**Abide in Christ**"
in order to **Experience** it

John MacArthur – in his commentary on Jn 15 says

Abiding in Christ is the source of the abundant life *Jesus speaks of in John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."*

Abiding in Christ is the source of the abundant life !!

Please hear me

The **ABUNDANT Life COMES** – **ONLY** - by **ABIDING in Christ !!**

It **BEGINS** with Salvation

*Responding to Jesus' call to **"Follow Him"***

But then it **MUST GROW** – into **ABIDING** in Christ
- - which is the **SOURCE** of the **Abundant Life**

Jesus' Call to **FOLLOW HIM** – Was actually a **CALL** to;
COME to Him - & then **REMAIN** (**ABIDE**) in Him

Our **church culture** has done a **pretty good job**
with the **COME to Jesus** part

But far **too few Christians** are actually **experiencing**
the **ABUNDANT LIFE** that comes from **"ABIDING in Him"**

This truth is seen really well in **Mat 11:28-30**

Matthew 11:28–30 (ESV) → →

Matthew 11:28–30 (ESV)

28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

FIRST – Jesus says – ***Come to me, & I will give you REST***

THEN – Jesus says – ***Take my yoke upon you, & learn of me, & you will find REST for your souls***

We want to be **VERY CAREFUL** – **NOT** to **imply** there is something **ADDITIONAL** to our **Salvation** here – there is **NOT**

But there **IS** - (here & all thru scripture)
a **Deepening Experience** of “**ABIDING IN CHRIST**”

The **FIRST** “**Come to Me**” here - is **like** the call of **Salvation**

Jesus says: **COME TO ME** – w/ **NO Prerequisites, NO Requirements**
& **I will give** you Rest – in your **SALVATION** (forgiveness of sin)

But then look closely at **V.29** . . . Jesus says

***Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, . . .
and you will find rest for your souls***

This **SECOND** “**Rest for your soul**” (V.29)
is actually **CONDITIONAL** – It comes with **TWO requirements**

Take my yoke upon you - and learn from me, . . .

THIS - is “**Abiding in Christ**”

Take my yoke upon you – is easiest explained as
Relax & Submit to my will for your life

STOP demanding your own way - & receive the LIFE
that Jesus has made - to FIT YOU Perfectly

& Vs 30 (next Vs) says

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

The word “EASY” means Literally – Well Fitting

The life Jesus has for us - FITS US perfectly

And BECAUSE it fits us Perfectly - it makes our Burden LIGHT

That DOES NOT mean – there will be NO BURDEN

It means Jesus - Fits US to the TASK

& He Fits the TASK – to US

& so – when we surrender to that Perfect Fit
it seems like NO BURDEN at all

& V.29 says - *not only* **Take my yoke upon you,**
but also - *and* **learn from me,**

The GK word for LEARN here – is from the same word
that we get the word DISCIPLE

Jesus says – ALLOW Me to FIT your Life to YOU
& Become my DISCIPLE

& THEN - you will Find REST for your SOUL

Jesus is talking about **GROWING INTO**
the **ABUNDANT LIFE** that He has promised **YOU**

& **The SOURCE** of that **Abundant Life** -
is **Abiding in Christ**

& **CONTRARY** to what many of us **think** -
this is **not HARD WORK** – or **TREMENDOUS EFFORT**

Learning to **Abide in Christ** is really Mostly – About **SURRENDER**

Our Job is to **Surrender**, & **Abide in Him**

& then **HIS JOB** – is what **Phil 2:13** says **(ESV)**
13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

When we are **Surrendered to Christ** - & **“Abiding in Him”**
It is **GOD** Who is **Working** in us . . .

& **THAT** is why we can be **AT REST**

& **this REST** that Jesus is **promising** us here in **Mat 11**
is **NOT ABSENCE** of **ACTIVITY**
it is **ABSENCE** of **CONFLICT**

(again) Mat 11:29-30 (ESV)

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me (Abide in Me), for I am gentle and lowly in heart (so you can trust me), and you will find rest for your souls (absence of conflict).

30 For my yoke is easy (it fits perfect), and my burden is light (it's not a struggle).”

So – **there is** an Initial **REST** in “***Coming to Jesus***”
from the **Forgiveness of sin** & being **made right** with God

& **then** there is a **REST** for our Soul – that **comes from**
Abiding in CHRIST
Surrendering to His Life for you
Growing in your Knowledge of Him

Let me give you **ONE MORE Example**
Just to make sure I’ve **totally Over-Stated** my point

This truth - is **very similar** to the
“Peace **WITH** God” – vs. – “Peace **OF** God” truths

Rom 5:1 (ESV)

1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

By putting our **FAITH** in Christ – **ALONE**
we have Peace **WITH** God

as in “***we are no longer an enemy of God in our sin***”

& this Peace come **UNCONDITIONALLY** – By **FAITH** alone

But then - after we have Peace **WITH** God . . .

Philippians 4:6–7 Says → →

Philippians 4:6–7 ESV)

6 do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

The **First Peace** – Peace **WITH** God - is **UNCONDITIONAL**
it is “By Faith Alone”

But the Peace **OF** God – which *surpasses understanding,*
& *guards your heart & mind . . .* is **CONDITIONAL**

It is **conditioned** upon An **Intimate Communion** with God

Where we are **Casting our Cares** upon Him
Rolling our **Burdens** over to Him
Communing with Him in **Prayer & Supplication**
& **Being Thankful** in all our **requests** to Him

The **Peace OF God** that Surpasses understanding –
is something that is **DEVELOPED** in our lives

BY “*Abiding in Christ*”

Does all that **make sense** ??

What we **need to understand** (in our “Quick Salvation” culture) is;
the **ABUNDANT LIFE**
the **PEACE** that Passes Understanding
& **VICTORY** in the Midst of our Trials

DOES NOT automatically **come**
simply by us **SAYING** that we are **now a Christian**

AND – it **DOES NOT** automatically **come**
by us **ATTENDING CHURCH** once a **week** (or even twice)

It comes by us **LEARNING** (as Disciples)
HOW to **ABIDE IN CHRIST**

Psalm 16:11 (ESV)

11 You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

The Blessings of **LIFE & JOY & True PLEASURE**
ALL COME - from **Abiding in the Presence** of the Lord

Alright - **Maybe** some of you are **saying** about now . . .

OK – Let’s **Get on** with the **HOW**
Just tell me HOW I can **get** this - & how I can **get it FAST**

If you’re **saying that** (or thinking it) – then **maybe** . . .

You **MIGHT BE** looking for the same “**Microwave**” approach
to **ABIDING** in Christ – as we **TEND TO** apply to **Salvation**

We want to get people **SAVED** by the end of a ***45 min*** message
& **maybe we want** to get people **ABIDING** by the end of a ***45 min*** msg
& **MAYBE** – ***Therein lies the problem !!!***

If I told you – that **LEARNING** to **ABIDE** in Christ
is the **ultimate goal** of the **FOREVER school** of being a **Disciple**

Would you still want to **JOIN** ??

Do we want the “**Abiding in Christ**” prayer
to look like the “**Salvation**” Prayer . . .

30 seconds, repeat after me - & **baam**, you’re **ABIDING** ??

Guys, **Listen** – the **REASON** I am taking so long
going over the **NEED to ABIDE** in Christ

is **Precisely BECAUSE** we want everything **quick**, **fast** & in a **hurry**

& **If we try** to **BRING** our **American Culture** of
DEMANDING it **ALL** & **DEMANDING** it **NOW**

If we bring that “**Microwave**” approach to **Abiding in Christ** –
I **promise** - we will get **frustrated**, and **disillusioned**,

& we’ll **end up** running **right back** to the **sins** of the flesh
that **DO GIVE US** that “**Microwave, instant Pleasure**”

So – **Let’s remember** one very **critical thing**
as we **begin LEARNING HOW** to Abide in Christ

In the days of **Christ** (& I believe still today) In a **Vineyard**

it was normal - to PREVENT a vine-branch
from producing Fruit – For 3 years

In the FOURTH Year – after 3 Yrs of Careful Pruning
the Branch was Ready to Produce Quality Fruit (& still be pruned)

We think MICROWAVE – God thinks CROCK-POT

We say - - *I said the 30 Sec prayer 30 days ago*
WHY don't I have PEACE & JOY & VICTORY in my life yet

Jesus says – *Come to Me, Abide in Me, Take my yoke upon you,*
and learn from me, . . . and THEN you will find rest for your soul
(Mat 11:29)

We're going to spend some weeks talking about the Critical Need
EVERY Christian has – to ABIDE in CHRIST

& I Promise – we will get to the BIG HOW

But I wonder if Right Now – You would make a Commitment
to JOIN the Life Long School of Abiding in Christ

The HOW will come

But FIRST must come – the “All-In” Commitment

1 John 2:28 (ESV)

*28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears
we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his
coming.*

Let's Pray