

Abide in Me

Upper Room Discourse Principles found in the New Testament A study for the College and Career Class of Gulf Coast Baptist Church 10-23-22 by Steve Thomas

Introduction

John the Beloved was used to write a gospel and three epistles. His first-hand accounts of the 4 passovers of Jesus's public ministry are a necessary study to understand Christ and the Incarnation. His short letters are filled with truth for the Christian seeking to live "in the light". He has given revelation for the Christian to live victoriously in his present-tense salvation.

Christ used the term "abide" 11 times in His Upper Room Discourse. We looked at several of those in the introduction. John uses the term 25 times in two of his epistles (22 times in 1 John and 3 times in 2 John).

Ought to Walk

In 1 John 2 John brings up the occasion of sin in the believer's life. This is a carry over from the end of chapter 1. The believer will sin, if he says that he has no sin nature, he is deceiving himself. When he sins he is to confess, and if he says that he has never sinned he makes God a liar. The believer should not focus on sinfulness, but on Christ who satisfied the payment for that sin. The believer's focus should be on walking as Christ walked. Christ ordered His life so that He could always do those things that pleased the Father. Christ filtered information through His spirit to show the believer how he is to live.

Vs 5 points the believer back to experiential knowledge of position In Christ. An understanding of one's position In Christ will lead to a practical living out of the new commandment. "Abiding" of being comfortable in the Body of Christ will lead the believer to deport himself as Christ did, seeking to do the will of the Father.

True in him and in you

The believer's life In Christ separates light from darkness (8-9). Here is another use of "abide". The believer cannot be "abiding" if he is showing hatred towards his brother. This is the definition of darkness. It is the living out of the new commandment to love as Christ loves that defines the light (9-11). To live any other way is to live in the darkness.

Passes away vs abiding forever

John contrasts temporary vs eternal in the next section. This part of the Christian life (loving the brethren) is what it is all about. Too many Christians focus on things that are temporal. This word from Christ will be our focus through the ages. The church building, the bus ministry, the various programs - they only exist as opportunities to direct the love of Christ towards the Body. These things tend to cause distraction in the Body because they are seen as the end, and not just the means to an end. Those that are focusing on the world system religious things are being deceived by the wicked one (vs. 14). Those that understand the purpose of the Church are allowing the word of God to abide in them and will remain into the age.

This is a reference to the work done for Christ. So much religious activity will end up as wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor 3:12). That which is done with the new commandment fully in focus will abide forever.

Them that seduce you

John is seeking to return the focus of the reader on position In Christ (24-25) and the God-quality of life that we have there. This quality of life is referred to as an “anointing”. The Holy Spirit is the down payment on the full quality of life to be received later when the believer is glorified (Romans 8:23). Here John focuses on the illumination that the believer can receive from the Holy Spirit through the anointing. In order to receive the benefit of this illumination or teaching, the believer must abide in the Body. Seeing himself as God sees him is necessary for the believer to understand the teaching that comes from the word. If the believer is not at ease in his position, there are those false teachers which will seduce him with false doctrine.

How many believers will be ashamed at the reunion with Christ because they have followed false teachers and are living something other than the victorious Christian life?

The one that keeps on sinning

John contrasts the individual who keeps on sinning and the one that doeth righteousness (3:6-7). Back in chapter one he dealt with the fact that believers will sin and what should be done when that happens. Here he is dealing with the individual who will not love the brethren. John begins this section with the wonders of sonship. The believer has position with privilege. There are no second class believers, God’s love is so amazing that He has called all believers to be sons. John reminds the believer of present tense and future tense salvation (3:1-2).

John is contrasting the children of the devil with the sons of God. The believer will not be allowed to continue in sin. He will be chastened or taken home (Heb 12:6-8). It is the child of the devil who continues to live without love towards the Body of Christ.

Seed remaineth in him

John gives proof that the believer will show a difference. It is nothing in the believer himself, but that which God has placed in him, the eternal life, which is proof that he is a born one of God (3:9). John returns to the purpose of the book in vs 11. Over the next few verses he demonstrates two different ways of living - Cain or the sacrificial Lamb (vs 12, 16). The love of Christ will give to others as needed. The Spirit will bear witness of the eternal life placed in the believer (3:24). When the believer is spiritual he will live as Christ lived, with Christ’s priorities and focus.

Conclusion

John does not depart too far from what he reported in the upper room. The believer’s focus should be on his position In Christ, and he should direct love towards the saints. John deals with some peripheral issues like sin, the world hating the believer and false teachers, but he returns to the crux of the matter, love one another and they will know that you are disciples of Christ. In order to do this, the believer must be comfortable in his position in Christ.