

John 15:1-11 | The True Vine Pt. III: Abiding and Remaining

Pt. I: Removing and Pruning

Pt. II: Cleansing and Purifying

Pt. III: Abiding and Remaining

Pt. IV: Bearing Fruit

Pt. V: Love and Joy being made complete

Congregational Reading

Matt. 19:4-12 'Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together let no man separate.'

They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND HER AWAY?"

He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.

And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery."

The disciples said to Him, "If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry."

But He said to them, "Not all men can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given.

For there are eunuchs who were born that way from their mother's womb; and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men; and there are also eunuchs who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to accept this, let him accept it"

Prayer.

Responsive Reading.

Q48: What is the church?

A48: God chooses and preserves for Himself a community elected for eternal life and united by faith, who love, follow, learn from, and worship God together. God sends out this community to proclaim the gospel and prefigure Christ's kingdom by the quality of their life together and their love for one another.

Q49: Where is Christ now?

A49: Christ rose bodily from the grave on the third day after His death and is seated at the right hand of the Father, ruling His kingdom and interceding for us, until He returns to judge and renew the whole world.

Q46: What is the Lord's Supper?

A46: Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of Him and His death. The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst; bringing us into communion with God and with one another; feeding and nourishing our souls. It also anticipates the day when we will eat and drink with Christ in His Father's kingdom.

Q47: Does the Lord's Supper add anything to Christ's atoning work?

A47: No, Christ died once for all. The Lord's Supper is a covenant meal celebrating Christ's atoning work; as it is also a means of strengthening our faith as we look to Him, and a foretaste of the future feast. But those who take part with unrepentant hearts eat and drink judgment on themselves.

John 15:1-11. '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.** Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.'

Intro.

Over the past few weeks we have been looking at the True Vine discourse and today we look at the main premise of abiding in Christ.

We have considered His first statement of those who are removed and those who are pruned. Last week, we looked at the statement in v. 3, that the disciples are already clean, they have been made clean by the word that Christ has spoken to them.

That is important because it communicates about 3 main things to us; 1. That the disciples are already saved, 2. That the way in which they are saved is that Christ spoke His saving word to them and 3. That this all occurred through the power of the Word.

The Spirit that saves works through the word that endures. And in enduring, that disciples are kept in the vine, they are pruned, they are cleansed, and they bear much fruit.

It is the pattern and the practice of a fruitful life.

Today we are going to focus on v. 4-7 '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.

Logos. Ethos. Pathos. The Head. The Hand. The Heart. All matters of abiding in Christ.

What we think, what we do, and how we do it.

Q: What is abiding?

μενω. Abide. Remain. Stay. Last. Persist. Continue to live in a certain condition.

Aorist active. Meaning it is an active state of living. It is not an action that you merely accomplish and are complete with the task. Instead it is a state, an enduring task, a mindset, a pattern of life.

As the concept pertains to this passage, it means to abide, remaining in Christ, stay in Christ. Despite circumstances, lasting in the Christian faith.

'fight the good fight of faith, finish the race, keep the faith' 2 Tim. 4:7

BDAG.

Abiding is a matter of staying in the right place. Being in the right place and the right time produces the right results. As Christ puts it, it bears fruit.

Acts 27:31 'Unless these men stay in the ship, you cannot be saved'

The theological significance of abiding is what is called the Perseverance of the Saints. When all the other criminals on the ship, in route to Rome, came into the danger of the storm, it was the saving grace of Paul that provided a buffer of common grace to all of the non-believers in the proximity of the problem.

Q: How do you know if a person is saved? They believe, faith in Christ. If they believe, they abide. If they abide, they are pruned. If they are pruned, they bear fruit. If they bear fruit, they are kept by the Father. How do you know if a person is saved, they persevere in the faith, they endure until the end. It's a major point of the True Vine discourse.

The person who perseveres is the person who is pruned, and the person who is pruned is the person who is provided for, protected by, and persevered by the Father. **'if you abide ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you' John 15:7**

In **1 Tim. 2:15**, Paul writes as a consideration for Timothy to teach the women of the church that they **'will be saved if they continue in faith, love and holiness, in self-control'** and this was done through the the illustration of child bearing.

As it is, I want to outline this passage in **3-part**. The Mind of Abiding. The Work of Abiding. The Heart of Abiding. The Head, the Hand, and the Heart. All of which need to abide in Christ to bear fruit.

The thought of the Head, the work of the Hand, and the love of the Heart is all evidenced through fruit.

It is the fruit of the vine that demonstrates the life of the vine.

Attitude Fruit and Action Fruit.

You can have the right attitude but wrong action and that is cheap grace. You can have the wrong attitude and the right action and that is legalism.

But the intersection of abiding in Christ is the right action, the right attitude, and that leads to righteous fruit.

To simplify this, there are **three primary attitudes and actions** that we are called to abide in as Christians. We see this throughout the Bible, but Paul culminates its importance in 1 Cor. 13, in his 1st letter to the Corinthians.

'now abide in these, faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love' 1 Cor. 13

What is interesting about that is that Paul nestles the abiding of faith, hope and love, inside the context of living in the body of Christ and displaying spiritual gifts of service to the body of Christ.

John's theology on Abiding.

John 5-15 and 1 John 2-4.

The Attitude of Abiding in Christ and the Action of Abiding in Christ.

I. The Mind of Abiding.

There is a certain mindset to abiding in Christ.

You've probably heard that someone is 'smart as a whip.' Or 'clever as a fox' 'astute as an owl' 'quick as a cat' 'bright as a button' – that person's mind is razor sharp.

A Christian overtime develops a mind of abiding. It is a mindset that has results. The mindset of abiding develops wisdom and discernment.

Matt. 10:16 'I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be as wise as serpents and as innocents as doves.'

The simile is that in abiding in Christ there is a wisdom of being a Christian.

Proverbs tells us that 'as a man thinks so shall he become'. Our thoughts, our mind, has a lot to do with where and how we abide.

In the mindset of abiding there is a wisdom that comes from God.

It is a wisdom that realizes you grow where you are planted, and you don't grow if you are not planted.

It's a wisdom that recognizes there are no results without work, there is no produce without pruning, and there is nothing lasting without longsuffering.

The fruits of the Spirit come from the work of the Spirit and the work of the Spirit comes from the work of the word that has already been spoken.

There are practical considerations of abiding in Christ. Practical things to consider about abiding in God's will.

Practical consideration of abiding in Christ.

John 7:8-9 'I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come.' Having said these things to them, He stayed/remained/abided in Galilee.' In order to abide in Christ you will have to say NO to abiding in other things.

Learn to say yes to abiding in Christ, and No to abiding in the things that take you away from Christ. It is very likely, that God is testing you, God is disciplining you, to prune your life of the things that cause you to not abide in Christ.

Acts 9:43 Peter abided in Joppa for the sake of Christian ministry and in doing so stayed with a tanner named Simon which would have been taboo in the culture. Peter forfeited cultural image in order to pursue conversions.

Acts 20:15 Paul forfeited a trip to the church at Ephesus in order to return to Jerusalem for Pentecost.

Where you stay, where you abide and remain, speaks volumes about what is going on in your mind. The priorities that are taking place in your mind, play out in the places that you abide. Where you continue to go, what you continue to do, will results in the fruit that comes into your life.

The practical point being is that decisions have to be made. Decisions have to be made to abide and be pruned or be removed and destroyed.

John 15:6 '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.'

John 11:54 – abiding in Christ by avoiding a pressing problem.

II. The Work of Abiding.

In the NT there are 118 occurrences of the call to abide. 40 of those occurrences occur in John's Gospel. 27 of those occurrences. 3 References in Matthew. 2 in Mark. 7 in Luke.

23 of those 67 occurrences of abiding in Christ occur in chapters 2-4 of 1 John.

Let's look at 1 John I'm going to outline in 2 chapters these occurrences of abiding. Each occurrence is central around one theme, obeying God's commands, His word abiding in you, .

I'm going to show you 23 examples of how to abide in Christ, that's nearly one per day of the month. You can print this off. Put it on your night stand and pray every day that each one of these truths would abide in you so that you abide in Christ.

Here they are...

The Head, the Hand, and the Heart of Abiding.

Outline of 23 examples of how we abide in Christ in Head, Hand, and Heart.

- 1. 'whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.' 1 John 2:5-6**
- 2. 1 John 2:10 'Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.'**
- 3. 1 John 2:14 'I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.'**
- 4. 1 John 2:17 'the one who does the will of God abides/lives forever'**
- 5. 3x, 1 John 2:24 'as for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in**

the Father.” 3 x John tells the people how they will abide in Christ. By holding to the original message of Jesus Christ. Docetism – the early heresy that Jesus Christ did not actually come in the flesh. It was a false impression of Jesus Christ. This is why John says, ‘do not believe every spirit’ – The message of Christ, and the truth of the message is what gives eternal life. Abide in this.

- 6. 2x, 1 John 2:27 ‘As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him’**

This passage has been often misrepresented by people who would prefer not to be well-integrated into church life. This passage by no means is contradicting the need for sound bible teachers, INSTEAD, what it does mean is that the Spirit is not dependent on human wisdom for learning God’s will. And the Spirit, which is eternal, continues to abide in the same eternal truths by which we are saved.

- 7. 1 John 2:28 ‘Now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming’**

- 8. 1 John 3:6 ‘No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.’**

- 9. 1 John 3:9 ‘No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.’**

Now, you and I both know that Christians sin. So what does John mean here. First, he means that Christians do not habitually sin. They do not willfully sin. They do not agree with sin. Yet, the sin nature of all of us persists. As Paul writes ‘I know what I should do and I do not do it, and I know what I should not do, yet I do it, what wretched man that I am’ – can’t we all identify with the common theme of Paul’s life as well. I know I should do better. I know I shouldn’t procrastinate or I know I should be more complimentary to others. I know I shouldn’t think ill of others. I know I shouldn’t eat this or say that. But yet I do. Q: So how do we reconcile that?

It’s this, God prunes your life! ‘you are already clean by the word’ that abides in you, But you are not done.

You can do nothing apart from Christ.

- 10. 1 John 3:14 ‘He who does not love abides in death.’**

We’ve been told in Scripture that the wages of sin is death. Death is the fruit of sin. That is where it comes from.

Yet, we have been saved from sin and saved from death. So the result over our life is not defined by sin, nor is it determined by death.

Our life is not defined by Christ, and determined by His love.

11. 1 John 3:15 'Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.'

Murder is the first law God gives told mankind in the Ten Commandments. 'thou shall not murder' Ex. 20

But Christ says, you shall not even say a word against your brother. Because if you even say, you fool, you are guilty of hell's fire. Matt. 6

12. 1 John 3:17 'whoever has the world's goods and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and in truth.'

13. 2x, 1 John 3:24 'The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know that by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.' - the commandment is that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ.

14. 1 John 4:12 'No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another; God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.'

15. 1 John 4:13 'By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us His Spirit'

16. 1 John 4:15 'Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.'

17. 3x, 1 John 4:16 'We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected in us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment'

1 John 2-4

III. The Heart of Abiding.

The Head. The Hand. The Heart. All of this found in the pruning of God, the cleansing of God, the Spirit of God, leading to the fruit of love through the working of the word in the believers life.

Love is the product of abiding. Love is the reason for abiding.

It is the love of Christ that you abide in Christ. It is the love of Christ that you continue to do all of the things that obey Christ.

Because you love Him, you obey Him.

Let's pray.

Closing benediction.

Rom. 8:38-39 'I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

Rom. 11:33,36 'the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.'

Rom. 15-6

Email

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Kids/Small Groups Questions.