

Abide In Him

“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.”—John 15:4

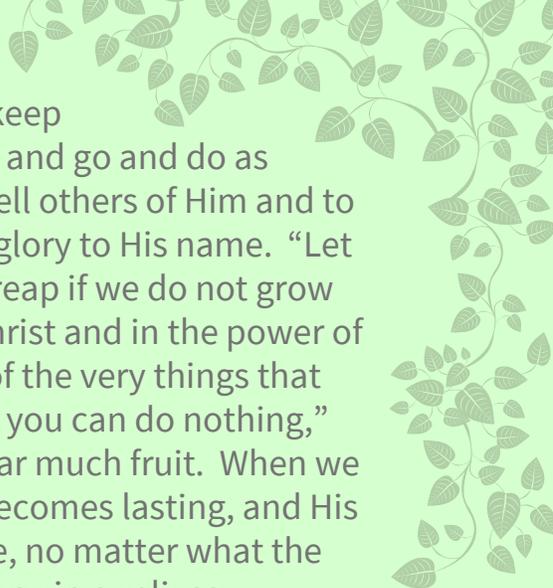
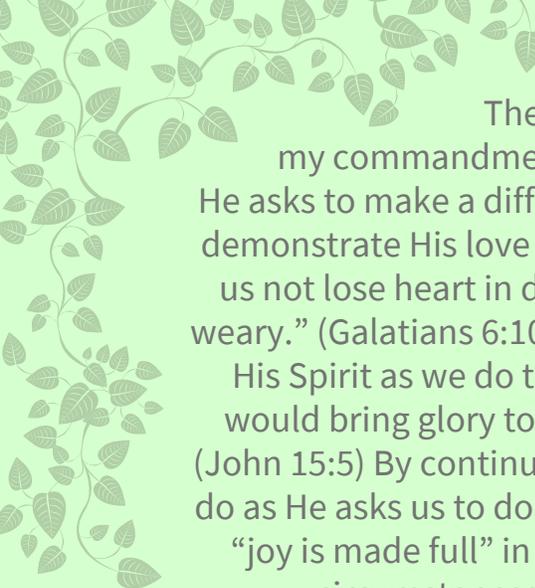
The first invitation from Christ is to “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28) When we do this, we find our burdens are lifted from the guilt that weighs us down, and we find peace at being one with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. This single event in our lives of asking Him into our hearts can be exhilarating, breathtaking, awe inspiring. We want to tell everyone He is our Savior and we have been set free!

The second invitation from Christ is to “Abide in Me, and I in you.” (John 15:4) This is asking Him to be Lord of our lives, not just our Savior. This word abide means “to stay, abide, continue, dwell, endure, be present, remain, stand, tarry” and “not to depart, to continue to be present, to be held, kept continually.” We are grafted into the vine and given life abundantly, if we dwell in His presence day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute.

Why do we find this so hard to do? Why do some wander away from the faith after a short season of time, becoming the seed that fell on rocky soil? Or some, after walking with Christ for a longer season of time, fall away to find their own way? Is it because the world, with all its glitz and glamour, has an excitement and an allure that abiding in Him does not? If this is true of you, know that this is fleeting and will not satisfy your deepest longings to be known and to be loved by Him.

The first step in this journey of abiding is to humble ourselves daily in His presence. Next, it is to brush off our dusty bibles and open His Word. There is relationship to be built upon reading it verse by verse, chapter by chapter, so can we soak up the nutrients from His truth that transforms our hearts and minds. We listen and learn from His still, small voice as He interacts with us, cleanses us, instructs us. The promise is not only that am I in Him, but that He is in me. When we do this, there is a filling up of our souls from which we begin to experience a deepening fellowship with Him.

As we hear Him speaking to us through His Word, our words back to Him in our prayer life begin to align with His will. Your will—not mine—becomes the cry of our lips. “Ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (John 15:7) is not a blanket statement by Christ to ask Him for anything I want and I will get it, but that my heart will beat as one with His and I will therefore desire the things He desires. And through these conversations with Him, we learn more of God’s character, so that, by faith, we will learn to trust Him more.



The third invitation from Christ is to “keep my commandments.” (John 15:10) We are to get up and go and do as He asks to make a difference in the world around us: to tell others of Him and to demonstrate His love by serving and sacrificing to bring glory to His name. “Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.” (Galatians 6:10). We must continually abide in Christ and in the power of His Spirit as we do this, or else we will become proud of the very things that would bring glory to Him and not to us. “Apart from Me you can do nothing,” (John 15:5) By continually abiding in Him we will then bear much fruit. When we do as He asks us to do, our love grows deeper, our fruit becomes lasting, and His “joy is made full” in us. (John 15:11) We trust Him more, no matter what the circumstances, no matter what God is pruning away in our lives.

Abiding takes time—it takes a lifetime. It is not glamorous. Moses led sheep around in the desert for 40 years to prepare him to lead the nation of Israel in the wilderness for another forty. Many will fall away, looking for the thrill of it all, the instant sprouting up, instead of allowing the roots to grow deep and the branches to grow strong attached to the vine. We must stay grounded in His presence, drinking in His grace and His wisdom. Then we will learn how to love others as He loves us, and then we will be called a friend of God.

“The most heavily laden branches bow the lowest down.”—Andrew Murray

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