

Abide in Christ

by Bill McLeod

The sermon emphasizes the importance of abiding in Christ and keeping ourselves in the love of God through prayer, faith, and trust.

Duration: 48:40

Scripture: Psalm 1:2, Psalm 1:4, John 15:5, John 15:7, Colossians 3:16, 1 John 3:6

Topics: "Abiding"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of spending time with the Word of God. He highlights how many Christians nowadays spend more time in front of the TV than with the Bible. The speaker challenges the audience to examine their own lives and consider if God is satisfied with the amount of time they dedicate to studying the Scriptures. He shares a personal testimony of how he typed out the New Testament and parts of the Gospel of Matthew to ensure he could read and understand it clearly. The speaker concludes by stating that many of the problems in our lives stem from our ignorance of certain things in the Bible.

Transcript

We're going to read from the Gospel of John, chapter 15, and beginning at verse 1, John 15, and verse 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that bears not fruit he takes away, and every branch that bears fruit he purges it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can you except you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

He that abides in me, and I in him, the same brings forth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you.

Continue you in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

In God so enabling, I want to speak on the subject of abiding in Christ. My text will be the seventh verse of John 15. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you.

Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit. So shall you be my disciples. The word abide occurs ten times in the verses that we read.

And if you include some other equivalents, probably twelve or thirteen times. What does it mean to abide in Christ? Sometimes we've made it much more difficult than it really is, and certainly much more difficult than the Bible says it is. What does it mean to abide in Christ? Let's attempt the simple definition at the beginning.

To abide in Christ is to walk in a sweet, unbroken fellowship with him. And of course, the thing that breaks fellowship with him is sin. Whether the sin is unbelief, or perhaps the fruit of unbelief, which most sin is.

So to abide in Christ then is to live, to walk in a sweet, unbroken fellowship with Jesus Christ. Isaiah 59, you recall that verse? It says, the Lord's hand is not shortened, it's not atrophied or dried up, that it cannot save. God isn't powerless.

His ear is not heavy, his ear is not thick. God isn't hard of hearing that he will not hear. But it says your sins, your iniquities, they've come in between.

So God can't hear and God won't work. This is what destroys fellowship with God. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another. That is, the Christian with his God, not the Christian with another Christian. That's not in the context.

The Christian with his God. And the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. But it's sin that comes in between.

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins, in the light of thy countenance. And you know what happens. When there's unconfessed sin, secret sin in my life, God has set it in front of his own face.

So that when I pray, my prayers hit that pile of sins, my sins, and they bounce back into my own face and God can't hear. So I have to deal with the sins that separate between me and my God and prevent God from blessing me and destroy the fellowship that God intended we should all have with him. Christ said, Abide in me.

It's a command, isn't it? Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can you except you abide in me. He goes on to say that he that abides in me, the same brings forth much fruit, or the text.

If you abide in me and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit, so shall you be my disciples. Now there are a number of beautiful texts that illustrate this concept of abiding.

In Psalm 91, he that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. In the Old Testament, quite frequently, the idea of fellowship is illustrated by God being a tree and the believer just resting under the shadow of the tree. He that dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Or the song of Solomon, chapter 2. Christ speaking, I am the rose of Sharon, the rose for beauty and for fragrance, and the lily of the valley, the lily for purity. As the lily among thorns, the highest form of human love is like a thorn compared to a lily. If you compare man's love to God's, as the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.

Now the believer speaks as the apple tree among the trees of the wood. If you were hungry, would you rather sit under a spruce tree, a birch tree, a poplar tree, an elm, an oak, or an ash, or a maple, or an apple tree to ask us to answer? As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. That's Christ.

I sat down under his shadow with great delight. Do you? Do you enjoy, really enjoy, those times of fellowship with Christ? Under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me to the banqueting house, and the Hebrew language here says, he brought me to the house of wine.

And wine, as you may know in the Bible, is a symbol of the spirit of God. And Jesus Christ is the only one that can lead a Christian into a spirit-filled life. He brought me into the house of wine, and his banner over me was love.

You want to be filled with the spirit of God? What you're really asking is this. God, destroy self, and fill me with your love. Because love comes when self is annulled.

To be filled with the spirit is to be filled with love. And if my experience of being filled with the spirit of God is not an experience at the same time of being filled with the love of God, then the experience I've had is not of God. It's a self-induced thing, or it's from Satan.

It's not from God. The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace. But first of all, love.

The love of God is shed abroad, poured forth, other translations say, into my heart by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us. Then Hosea 14.7, they that dwell under his shadow shall return. God said, return unto me, and I will return unto you.

Shall return. They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine. The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

And how does it all start? It all starts when the Christian begins to abide. They that dwell under his shadow shall return. They shall revive as the corn.

Then what growth? And grow as the vine. And what's the result? The scent thereof. There's a fragrance goes out from that life that the world becomes aware of.

They took knowledge of people in the early days of the church, that they'd been with Jesus. Why did they sense that? Because there was a scent there, a fragrance in their life, that only Christ could put there. And there will be in the life of that person who takes the time to learn the secret, to walk this way, to live this

way, dwelling under the shadow of the Almighty.

It's a beautiful thought. Then, the Bible also talks, as it does in the scripture we read, about dwelling in the love of God. He said, continue, and the context shows they might just as well have used the word abide.

Continue you in my love. If you keep my commandments, you shall abide. Well, continue.

You shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. How do we abide in his love? It says by keeping his commandments. If I disobey, I disrupt the fellowship.

And I find myself drifting out of the love of God. In the book of Jude 20 and 21 we read, it says, but you, beloved, and you know the word beloved means divinely loved ones. What a special people we are.

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God. What manner of love. That we poor lost, and I mean that.

How poor and how lost should be called the sons of God. What manner of love. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

Going back to Jude, beloved, but you, beloved, in contrast to the world, we've been talking about the world, these be they who separate themselves or cause divisions, these be they who separate themselves, sensual, carnal, having not the spirit, but you, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God. Now he didn't say keep yourselves saved. He said keep yourselves in the love of God.

There are many Christians, they're saved people, but they're not kept, they don't keep themselves in the love of God. They get sour, they get cranky, they get cold, they get critical, they become carnal, and they're no longer walking in the love of God. Keep yourselves in the love of God.

Don't let anything, no matter what happens to you, don't let anything drive you out from underneath the shadow of the Almighty, that secret place, the place where He keeps filling us, His banner over me was love. Don't let anything drive you out from that. I say again, no matter what happens.

A pastor whom God was greatly using in a certain Canadian church some years ago, we were talking about the church. Because not long before this man became pastor, the church was just gasping its last. A building as large as this, somewhat larger I would think, seating probably seven or eight hundred.

The congregation, because they'd been scrapping so much, they were such a scrappy outfit they could have written their own history of the wars of the Lord. So sixteen left one time, and twenty left another time, and eight left another time, and twelve left another, and just went down, down, down, down. And the pastor that was there at the time, and I'm not criticizing him, God forbid, he loved the Bible, he was a sound, solid, strong preacher.

But he allowed the situation in the church to get to him, and he became bitter. And he got to the place where he didn't love the people. And I was in his office one day when somebody phoned.

I don't know what they were talking about really, because I only heard half the conversation. But I was so embarrassed at the way the pastor was talking to that person, one of his parishioners, on the phone. He was finally, literally, yelling at them on the phone.

And he told me, he said, this church is finished. God has written Ichabod over it. It will never recover.

Well, he left the church. Shortly thereafter he had a stroke, although a young man in his forties. He never preached for twenty-five years, and then he died.

Now, to go back to what this other pastor was saying to me. He became pastor of the same impossible situation, and in five years they went from eighty to over five hundred members in the church. They had Sunday school rallies where there were fourteen hundred people in the Sunday school rally.

I mean, what made the difference? The other pastor said it was finished. No, it wasn't finished. But you know what this pastor said, and he said it very kindly and lovingly about the previous pastor.

He said, if he had only kept his soul sweet in Jesus, this would never have happened. Not long ago a pastor told me he'd been in a church fight. Is there anything as bad as Christians when they get fighting? They can lie worse than the world.

They've got claws longer than a tiger. Teeth like a shark. Terrible.

And he said like he left this church, this pastor, took another church, and he told me he said for three months I wasn't fit to preach a sermon. Why? Because he allowed what happened in the previous church to get to him. We should never do that, no matter what happens.

Don't let it get to you. Keep yourself in the love of God. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

I remember years ago a lady came for counseling, and she said, I've got a very bad problem. She was probably close to 30 in her late 20s, and she said, my husband's a drunkard, an absolute alcoholic, hopeless. She said it's so bad, he can't hold down a job.

We don't have any money. And she says, people are helping me out. But she said the worst of it is he's getting abusive.

He's been beating me up. He's been beating the children up. And we've been advised to kick him out.

What do you say? I said, don't do that. Don't do that. I know a case where a gal did this.

She left the guy, and he took a gun and blew out his brain, you see, because his wife was his last hope. And when he realized this fellow that his wife no longer believed in him or loved him, he figured it was all up. So he took a gun and blew his brains out.

I said, listen, sister, don't do that. She said, what can I do? It's dangerous. I said, it isn't dangerous if God's there.

If God be for us, who can be against it, a drunken husband or not? I said, listen, here's what I told her. I said, stay with it and love him to death. No matter what he says, no matter what he does, love him to death.

She said, boy, you better pray for me. I'll do it. And I forgot about that.

I was back in the church two years later and this gal came sailing up. And I didn't just remember for a moment. And she says, I've got to tell you what happened.

She said, it was rough. But she said, he never lasted two years and he not only got saved, she said, he's the hottest Christian in the church. Praise God.

Keep yourselves in the love of God. No matter how your employer treats you. No matter how your husband or your wife treats you.

No matter, I remember a fellow came one time and he told me a Christian man, he was going to leave his home. His wife was a Christian. He said, I'm going to leave my home.

I can't stand it the way my wife sneers at me. So what? Let her sneer. Let her sneer.

She can't do it forever. Love her to death. Love never fails.

He brought me to the banqueting house, the house of wine, the Holy Spirit. And his banner over me was love. And to stay filled with the Spirit of God, we have to stay filled with the love of God in all these human situations.

And we're all party to them. We all rub shoulders with people, you know, that are hard to get along with, that are critical. And Satan tries to use them to get to you and to get to me.

And the closer the person is to you, the better the devil likes it. If he can just get you out of the love of God. But you, beloved, building up yourselves in your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

And others say with fear, he goes on to say, win people to Christ. Share the gospel with them. Abide in me and I in you.

Now what does it mean, I in you? What part do I have to enable Christ to abide in me? Now that's more difficult to understand perhaps. And I struggled with that at one time and then the Lord came to my rescue, as He always does. You know, I found this, that when I come up against something in the Bible that I don't understand, all I have to do is to ask God for wisdom.

He may not give it to me then, but eventually He will. Maybe through some other person. Maybe through a book.

Maybe He'll just come to me in the quiet of a moment and suddenly spring the thing on me and there it is, I see it. God has marvelous ways and He never forgets when somebody prays. He never forgets.

Ask and it shall be given you. Ephesians chapter 3, 14 and on. Paul.

For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man. Why? That Christ may abide in your hearts by faith. That's why.

And how does that happen? It happens through prayer and the power of the Holy Spirit. I bow my knees, he said, that God, that He would grant you to be strengthened with power by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may abide in your hearts by faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, there it is again, always linked together, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge that you might be filled unto all

the fullness of God. What does it mean for Christ to abide in my heart by faith? One translation, rather a loose translation perhaps, but it does throw some light on it, that Christ may settle down and feel at home in my heart by faith.

May I ask you this question? Knowing yourself the way you do, okay, knowing yourself the way only you know yourself, do you think Jesus Christ feels at home in your heart? Now He can, if you're not a truthful person. He can't if you've got unconfessed, secret sin in your life. He can't if His restitution He's indicating you should make, and you're not willing to make it.

If He finds envy and jealousy and lust and pride, do you think He settles down and feels at home there? No, He doesn't. He just can't. He is disquieted.

He flutters around, a dove. He can't feel at home, because there are things in that life that are totally foreign to Him. God is love, and God wants to destroy in your heart and in mine anything that wasn't born for eternity.

Those things in your life that we're not going to find in heaven, why don't we get rid of them now, and enjoy a heaven on earth now? Because in the context you remember we read just a little while ago, Christ said, I've written these things that you might experience my joy, that my joy might remain in you, fill you. And here, of course, is how it happens. Oh, that Christ may abide in your hearts by faith.

You know, sometimes even in the Christian life there's lust when there should be love. And sometimes we call lust love. All these Christian books written about the various ways of doing it.

Funny thing, you know, nobody ever writes a book on that verse in 1 Corinthians chapter 7. Defraud you not one the other, except that you be with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your lack of self-control. Nobody writes a book on that, because nobody would buy it. It doesn't talk about the ten different poses for sex.

I'm just saying again that many times, even in this intimate and what ought to be holy relationship, there's a lot of lust. And it grieves the Spirit of God. And Christ can't and doesn't abide, that is, settle down and feel at home.

Then the seventh verse, If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, then what? Well, he says, then you'll ask what you will. What you will and it shall be done unto you. How much of the word of God do you have stored away in your heart? You know, the Old Testament kings were instructed in Deuteronomy that they were to handwrite a copy of the law of God.

Why? That their heart would not be lifted up above their brethren. In other words, it would be an antidote to pride. And as Dick pointed out so beautifully last night, pride, that's our basic problem.

And the antidote to pride is to fill ourselves with the word of God. That's what it says in Deuteronomy. Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord.

And in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in the season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so. They are like the chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

Do you meditate in the law of God day and night? Dear Wheeler, he worshiped me sometimes in Crusades, and a few of you here will know him, an excellent pianist, one of the best I've ever heard. And he told me a little while ago that he was writing his own copy of the Bible. He hasn't been going at it long, but he's got, I think, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the Gospel of John done.

Now he's working on the Book of Proverbs. And he's handwriting it, not typing it. That's interesting.

What's he doing that for? He's a busy student in university, taking his Masters in Music currently and so on. What's he doing that for? Well, he's doing it because he wants the Word of God to fill his life. He's a young man, but God challenged him.

And please, pardon and then forget a personal testimony. God laid this burden on my heart some while ago. And my handwriting is so abominable, not even an angel could read it.

I mean, not even with a code book. So I type. So I've got the New Testament, well, Acts to Revelation completed, and most of the Gospel of Matthew.

So I've just got the rest of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. What a joy! What a blessing, dear people, it's been. And I challenge you to do the same.

You answer this question, do you think God is satisfied with the amount of time you spend with the Word of God? All the problems in our life, some way or other, they're due to the fact that we're ignorant of certain things in the Bible. That's not always so. But the answer to any problem in the Christian life is found somewhere in the Word of God.

And the Word of God is living and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner. The Greek word there is kritikos, a critic, a friendly critic, a discerner, a critic of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And our ears hear a word behind it saying, this is the way.

Walk you in it when you turn to the right hand and when you turn to the left. But that doesn't happen when you're not, when you're not really in tune and in touch with God through the Bible. So what do you know about it? I mean the Bible.

Would you, let me ask you this, if you were trying to encourage a new Christian to get into the Bible, would you tell him to do exactly what you're doing now while reading the Bible? Would you dare? Some of us wouldn't dare. We're going to tell this new convert, we'll spend five minutes a day with the Bible? Is that what we're going to tell him? You know, we sit down and yawn our way through a chapter and thank God that's over and then we pick up something that's more interesting. And dear people, we grieve the Spirit of God.

Let the Word of Christ dwell in you. There's the word abide again. Dwell in you richly.

In all wisdom, Colossians 3.16. Do you do that? I know the average Christian nowadays spends more time in front of the TV set than he ever spends with the Word of God. And I wonder sometimes how we can live with our conscience living the way we Christians do. I wonder what Christians in Korea would think if they

knew how the average Christian in North America lived.

If they could watch one of us for a whole day. Paul said, Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ. Would you dare say that to anybody? If the answer is no, are you prepared to make a change so you could say it humbly to the glory of God? We are made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.

And sometimes we're a spectacle in a good sense and sometimes a spectacle in a bad sense. Make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way, but let it rather be healed. They have made them crooked paths, whosoever goes therein shall not know peace.

And sometimes sinners, I mean if a sinner is following an average Christian, he'll get so weary following those crooked paths he'll give up. He'll just give up. All right.

Abide in me, and I in you. The branch, if it's severed from the tree, it can't bring forth any fruit. But we all know that.

Abide in me, and I in you. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you shall ask what you will. People complain, I pray and God doesn't answer.

You ask them, well, how much time do you spend with the word of God? Do you really expose yourself to God's word? Ever spend an hour, two hours, three hours in prayer? Ever spend three hours, four hours, with the word of God at one time? And they throw up their hands in horror. And they say, I don't have that kind of time. And you know what? You're too busy.

I heard a fellow say years ago, you think you're busy when you're only buzzing. Now, we want to make this as simple as possible. You know, sometimes I read one book and it was 10 Steps to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, 7 Steps to the Sanctified Life, 5 Steps into Revival.

And man, it's hard to remember those steps. I don't remember them all. I just can't.

And I heard a story recently about an old grandpa that had a long beard. And they went at Christmas time to visit one of his sons, and the children were so excited over Grandpa's beard. And so, they talked to him and said, Grandpa, when you go to sleep at night, do you sleep with your whiskers on top of the blankets or under the blankets? Well, he'd never thought about that.

He said, I don't know. I'll find out tonight. So he went to bed and he laid his whiskers on top of the blankets.

And he laid there for 5 or 10 minutes. He thought, well, that doesn't feel quite comfortable. So he took them and he stuck them under the blankets.

Laid there for 5 or 10 minutes and still didn't feel comfortable. So he pulled them out and stuck them on top. You know what happened? He never slept a wink that night trying on his whiskers.

And we've made the spiritual life so complicated that we're like Grandpa with his whiskers. A little story I heard, too, about a mama bear taking her cub walking. She said, we're going to go for a walk in the forest.

And the little baby bear said, Mama, when we start this walk, do I put my left foot first or my right foot first? And she said, Shut up and walk. And I'm not trying to make it overly simple. But I want to make it as simple as Christ makes it.

And our text is very simple. If you abide in me, you don't have to know 10 steps or 7 or 6 or 5 or even 4. If you abide in me and my words abide in you. That's just 2, isn't it? I think we could remember 2 steps.

You shall ask what you will and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified that you bear much fruit. So shall you be, my disciples.

Now, when we learn this and begin it, here are the blessings that flow from it. And I don't have time to give them all, of course, but here's one. Whosoever abides in him sins not.

He doesn't practice sin. In the measure that I abide in Christ, in that measure will I live above sin. Whosoever abides in him sinneth not.

In 1 John 3, he doesn't make a habit or practice of sin. 1 John 3, 6. Alright, that's one thing. Here's another from our text.

You'll bring forth much fruit. Are you living a fruitful Christian life? Often I hear Christians saying, I don't know of anybody I've ever been a blessing to. And I knew a man who sang, oh, how he could sing.

Preach, he could preach as good as any preacher I've ever heard. He wasn't a preacher, but he was a real intellectual and all of that. But he said in 25 years as a Christian, singing and preaching as much as he did, he never knew one life he'd ever been a blessing to.

And then one day God showed him his sin. And then he made another discovery that sin was an extension of self. I mean, that's all it is.

Sin is an extension of myself. I sin because of what I am. And after struggling with sin for three weeks, he said, I've confessed all the sin God has shown me.

I've got completely to the end of that. God has dealt the sin of my life. But my problem, he said, is myself.

He said, how in the world do you deal with this big rotten self? I said, you have to slay it by the power of God. If you live after the flesh, you shall die. If you through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.

And John wrote concerning those that were seducing those Christians, deceiving them, leading them astray. He said, the anointing which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you. But as the same anointing teaches you of all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him.

As the anointing has taught you, as the Holy Spirit has taught you, you shall abide in him. So it's the spirit of God that slays self. And don't you think he has enough power to do it, if I'm willing to cooperate with him? Oh, yes, he has.

He's waiting for your yes. That you want to die, except a kernel of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abides alone, fruitless. But if it die, it brings forth much fruit, much fruit.

All right. If you abide in me, my words abide in you. You shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you, herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.

So, so shall you be my disciples. And I should have concluded my story about the man. He met God at the cross.

I mean, I was so privileged I felt ever since. It was such a privilege to be there when he prayed, because I've never heard a prayer like it. I don't know if I ever will hear a prayer quite like it again.

When he asked God to smite self, I never heard anyone pray with such intensity of soul. He threw everything there was. God, God, I've tried, I can't.

God, you can. Do it now. God, do it now.

And then, in the next 18 months, God used that man in 400 different people's lives. Some of these were people he led to Christ. Others were Christians he led into a fully committed life.

As a matter of fact, the next Sunday, after he met God that day, he was preaching in a church. And halfway through his sermon, a revival started, and a lady got to her feet and said, Sir, can you stop preaching? I've got to get my life straightened out now. So he stopped preaching, gave an invitation, and all kinds of people came forward and knelt at the front.

And he phoned me long distance. It cost him a lot of money that night. And talked for 40 minutes.

More had happened in one meeting in his life than had happened in all the 25 years he'd known Christ. Because now self was where it ought to be, crucified, dead, and buried. And now Christ lives in me.

Alright. And then here's another thought. 1 John 2.28, Now, little children, abide in him.

Why? That when he shall appear, and he will someday, maybe soon, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before him at his coming. Christians who are not abiding in Christ will be ashamed when Christ returns. Because they know their life is not right.

And it drains a person to have to live day after day with a conscience that's constantly accusing and condemning. Brethren, if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knows all things. I, the Lord, search the heart.

I try the reins. God gives to every man according as his works shall be. Here's one other result of abiding in Christ.

It has to do with the coming judgment time. We Christians, we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that everyone may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done, whether it be good or bad. Every one of us in this room will give account to God on bended knee.

Isaiah said it and Paul quoted it in Romans 14. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. To all seven churches in Revelation, God said one thing to every one of those churches at the beginning of the message, I know your works.

I know where you're at. I know where you stand. I know what you're doing.

God knows that about you and I too. Of course, I know your works. The fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

If any man's work abides which he has built thereupon, that is on Christ, he shall receive a reward. So let's put it this way. If I abide, my work will abide.

It will abide the fire of God and that's some test when God tries my works and God tries yours. It's just about the most solemn thing I can think about for myself that my works will have to go through God's fire and I know that if I don't abide in Christ, my works will be licked up. Do you remember when Elijah prayed and the fire of God fell and consumed the sacrifice, the burnt offering, the wood, the stones and licked up the water in the trench and the fire of God will be like that in your works and mine.

Will your works go through the fire? What will be left when the fire of God sweeps over your works? If you've been abiding in Christ, your works will abide the fire. Gold, silver, precious stones, ore, wood, hay, stubble, which is it in your life? That's 1 Corinthians chapter 3. And to sum it up and to make it just as simple as we can, Colossians 3.11. Christ is all and in all. Christ is all.

Christ is all I need. It's totally uncomplicated, completely uncluttered, God's teaching of the abiding life. It's Christ is all.

He's the center. He's everything. Christ is all and in all.

I am crucified, Paul said. Literally, I have been crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live.

Yet, not I, but Christ lives in me. Christ lives in me. I get so excited sometimes thinking about that.

It's written of the Savior, He could not be hidden. But some Christians have managed to. He's well hidden in their life.

And people being around them would never know that Christ, the Son of God, lives in their heart. Would people know that being around you or being around me? That Christ lives in me? Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can you except you abide in me.

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