

Abiding In Him – Part 3

Remember we're in the Kingdom, came in through the doorway of salvation, explored the fuel of faith, and now we're looking at the topic called abiding. We looked at principles to abide by, to bring us closer into that place the Bible calls abiding in Him. We were dead, then through the cross, the blood of Jesus we're saved, but we're not saved in an abiding condition; we're saved in a pre-abiding condition. Then we've been given keys to the Kingdom of Heaven by which we are to walk from that point on, to come into a place of abiding in Him where we truly see Him as He is in all His majesty and all His holiness and from that comes the fruit of abiding what we call in a word, Christlikeness. The option for us is to apply these principles to come into abiding, to grow in Christlikeness or do nothing; because apart from abiding in Him, we can do nothing. And we looked more focally at not all, but some, of the principles by which we're to come to this place called abiding, working out your salvation, walking by faith, being faithful over every little thing, sowing and reaping, paying attention, always living in the light of: who do you say that I am, seek ye first, the principle of agreement, the principle of love, and binding and loosing. Now what is to abide? Well according to Webster, it says to stay, to continue in a place, to dwell. But it should be apparent we can't dwell somewhere that we have not yet come. So the topic of coming into abiding is what we've been addressing. So various Scriptures, I think, refer to this place in the spirit realm called abiding and refer to at least various aspects of it.

So let's first look at some examples of abiding. We'll look at people who either abided or had a clear cut foretaste of this place that the New Testament speaks of, of abiding. Enoch – Genesis 5:24 – And Enoch walked with God and he was not, for God took him, raptured him individually because of the intimacy with which Enoch walked with God. Walking with God, of course, conveys the fullness of faith and the fullness of obedience; because you can't walk with God without the fullness of faith in God and obedience to God. The next one, Noah – Genesis 6:9 – Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time. Noah walked with God—the same description as given for Enoch. Genesis 7:5 – And Noah did according to all that the Lord had commanded him. Imagine how all encompassing that statement is for a man to walk with God, he did all that the Lord had commanded him. The result: Genesis 9:1 – And God blessed Noah. Clearly Noah abided with God. Can you imagine the intimacy of these men walking with God to that extent when there was no written word? These men preceded Moses; who according to Jewish tradition wrote (the first five books of) the Old Testament. Yet with no written word to observe, they had such personal intimacy with God that they are described in the Word of God as having walked with God to the point where one was even raptured individually. Abraham – Genesis 15:6 – Then Abraham believed in the Lord and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness. Genesis 22:18 – And in your seed all the nations of the Earth shall be blessed. Why? Because you have obeyed my voice.

So when you look at these Biblical examples, I hope you understand why I'm not converting this into a works mentality in the age of grace; but even throughout the age of grace, we're given commandments and keys to the Kingdom as how to walk in obedience in order to enjoy utmost intimacy with God. You can't divorce one from the other in

regard to our call for participation in the Kingdom of God. Moses – Exodus 33:13 (Recall this is the verse that I've used for the crescendo of delight) – If I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know Thy ways that I may know Thee (not just your ways, but know Thee) so that I may find favor in Thy sight. And with each turn of the spiral, the crescendo goes closer and closer into intimacy with God. And what's the result of that prayer from Moses? The next verse – Exodus 33:14 – And God said My presence shall go with you and I will give you rest. That to me is abiding. In fact, the crescendo of delight correlates tightly with the principle of abiding. The pre-abiding principles that we talked about in the last couple of sessions equate to the phrase uttered by Moses, show me Thy ways; because these pre-abiding principles are the ways of God. The ways of God are shown to us after that original phrase, if I have found favor in Thy sight. God did find favor and saved us by His grace. The original entry into this cycle comes through the doorway of salvation where God delighted in us and saved us by His grace. Then we learn the ways of God which are the pre-abiding principles. But notice where the principles are to lead—the next phrase—that I may know Thee (up close, personal, and intimate). So the place of abiding is where we come to truly know God and not just know of Him from a distance; and not just know of His salvation as a theologic truth. Then our knowing Him brings even more delight to the heart of God and more delight to our own hearts as we live out the crescendo of delight that I've described in prior sessions related to the story of Susan and the ottoman.

Then we go from that point on as Moses did when God said My presence shall go with you and I will give you rest. That's how our continuation in the Kingdom of God is not just dreaded duty; because even as we do the work that He gives us to do, He has given us rest in Him in the process. So we are aggressively applying all of His ways, but in communion with Him, meditating on His Word, and having the inner peace that expresses itself in the fullness of rest in the process. That is the position of abiding. Job 42:5 (describing Job; this was after God, remember, said basically) – where were you when I created the Heavens and the Earth? And Job reached a point finally of saying I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now my eyes see Thee. In other words, I've known a lot about You, but I've never relished the fullness of Your holiness, of your other thanness, and now that I see that as you've undressed me with these rhetorical questions, I now see You as You are in all Your holiness and not as I previously thought You to be in my somewhat limited view. I may have had a closer view of You than any other man on planet Earth at the time, but I did not see You in Your fullness, because I spent half the book thinking if I could just argue my case before You, I would change Your mind. But now I can say I am vile, I spoke once, yes twice, but I'll not speak again. Why? Before I heard of You, but now I see You as You are. Job is coming into that place called abiding. That's where we see God and not just hear of Him as a cognitive thought. At that point I think Job was closer to abiding with God than he was before being given this revelation.

The example of David – Psalms 16:11 – In Thy presence is fullness of joy; in Thy right hand, there are pleasures forever. So David is either explaining what he has not experienced, but hoped for in Thy presence is fullness of joy, or he is explaining that which he has experienced. In other words, he's been there. Well I think he spent time

there. The verse Psalm 27:4 (that I've used before, how David engaged in these pre-abiding principles) – One thing I have asked from the Lord (but remember he didn't stop there), that I shall seek (that which he asked for, he aggressively sought). And what was that? That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. In other words, constantly abiding in the presence of God. To do what? To behold Thy beauty; to behold the beauty of God, not to get rewards from God, but to behold the beauty of God and to mediate in His temple. In other words, that which you observed, you now meditate on. You don't just observe and then store it away in your memory bank, maybe someday to retrieve it as perhaps having use in a later moment. But you meditate constantly as a lifestyle on the beauty of the Lord that you have observed in His presence; and you came into the presence to the place called abiding by seeking that which you have asked for. So clearly, David abided with God. He learned that this place that he is describing is where joy and where pleasure are found. The house of the Lord equates with the presence of God in Psalm 16:11. David tells us that the source of his joy and pleasure in the presence of the Lord is beholding the beauty of the Lord. But he didn't just behold it; he mediated on it as a lifestyle and he desired to dwell there, to abide there, to constantly live there. How long? All the days of my life; because once you've experienced it, you do not want to leave it. And that's the way that we are to function.

Psalm 46:10 (in the King James Version simply says) – Be still and know that I am God. Because you can memorize the Bible and know every fact that the Bible says about God; but it may have no impact on your life because you are not relishing the beauty of the Lord that you are studying about. So an act academician may quote the Bible from memory and have absolutely no worship in his heart toward God and have nothing to say about the beauty of the Lord. So before coming to the place called abiding, we thought we knew He was God; but when we get there we respond as Job did: before I heard but now I see. I was saved before but now I see Who this God is Who saved me. Now I have a deeper revelation of who this God is and what He is than I ever had before; although I was a saved child of God. So abiding in Him is not to be thought of as a second salvation experience, but is meant to be thought of as living out the fullness of that which Jesus purchased for us in the salvation experience. It's when you say, now I know, that I know, that I know that you are God and You are holy and You are to dominate every aspect of my thought life from this moment on. That's what comes from abiding.

I Samuel 13:14 – The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart (speaking of David). Now David was not a man after God's own heart because he was just like God. He was a man after God's own heart because he was in hot pursuit of the heart of God. He was after God. He sought to come into the presence of God and to dwell there every day for the rest of his life. Well, you know our covenant is better than the old covenant. But we look at God speaking personally with Adam. We look at God speaking personally relating to Enoch, relating to Noah, before there was a written word of God. So I don't think that what we're to experience in our New Testament Christian lives purchased for us on the cross is to be less intimate than that which was experienced by some of the Old Testament characters.

Moving to the New Testament – Paul: I Thessalonians 5:16 and 18 – Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in all things give thanks. Now all of us know that we are saved, yet all of us also know that we do not rejoice always, pray without ceasing and in all things give thanks. So clearly there is some difference between what Paul experienced and what we experience. We're all saved, that's not the difference. I think the difference is that Paul had come into greater intimacy in this place called abiding in Him more so than we have experienced. Peter: I Peter 1:13 (a verse we've used before) – Therefore gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. We looked at that and we looked at how to contend for the faith; because there's a sequence of branch points with commands that we're to walk in, to fulfill the life that's contained in this verse. Recall that's written by the same man who had denied Jesus three times within a few minutes or hours, profanely so and denied he ever even knew Him. Well what happened in the meantime? Before Peter heard, but now he sees. Before his hope was fixed on escaping physical death even by lying before the One Who is truth. But now his hope is fixed completely on the grace brought to him at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Before he spent three years with Jesus, in physical proximity to Jesus, hearing the words which are spirit and life, hearing the words which will judge him. What intimacy could a person have with Jesus during his time on Earth more so than Peter had? But he didn't see Him. He didn't see Him because he wasn't regarding Jesus as the resurrection and the life and the first fruit from the grave, else he wouldn't have been lying, denying having known Him. So he was physically there, he heard the words; he heard Jesus. But he didn't see Who Jesus was. He could give an occasional revelation from the Father, Thou are the Christ, the Son of the living God. But the next utterance, remember, out of his mouth he was arguing with Jesus not to do what He said He was going to do. That tells you that he heard, but he didn't see Who this Jesus was. He could give the utterance, but it didn't circumcise his heart; it didn't change his life; it didn't give him rest and so on.

Before we go to Jesus, let's look at a few other aspects that flow out of this place called abiding. Hebrews 4:10 – For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works as God did from His. So this place of abiding is this place of rest; it's where we once and for all rest from dead works. That's because we're now abiding in the presence of God, experiencing the love of God, and we're there by grace, through faith, and not by any work of our own. In fact, we're now living in the place that previously we thought works could bring us. So, no, we're not to nullify the grace of God; and there is rest in that place when once and for all you come in and you say be gone all those dead works that I thought could produce godliness in me. I'm engaging in the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven, walking by the principles that He's laid out for me, doing so in obedience because of Who He is, and because I'm beholding His beauty. And what greater calling can there be in my life than to be like the omnipotent God of Genesis 1:1 Who created the Heavens and the Earth in all of His character? And everything else shrinks into nothingness by comparison. You give it all up because it is dung by comparison because I've seen the beauty of the Lord, you see. Can you not rest in that position?

John 15:26 – The Holy Spirit will teach you all things. All things! He did write the Bible using human agents. He does bring the Words of Scripture alive for us. That's what we call the Logos; you know the written Word of God. In fact, applying the spiritual principles to come to this place of abiding are derived directly from the Word of God. But to be in the place of abiding is where the intuitive revelations and intuitive guidance begin to flow. What some people call the rhema, that is to say, the spoken word; the written Word gives us all of the general principles, but the written Word didn't call Ed to be a pastor. Ed received a specific intuitive call from God, superimposed on the truth of the written Word of God. The specific guidance is what we've all experienced in one way or another when we say I heard from the Lord. We don't equate that with the doctrine of Scripture; we don't try to make it doctrinal for others; we don't take our testimony and exalt it above the written Word of God; we never do that. But Scripture from Adam on is replete with God communicating with human beings and giving them specific guidance. Go into Macedonia; don't go to Jerusalem. Specific words and specific guidance for our specific callings, our specific giftings, our specific relationships and our specific circumstances. That is the communion with God that flows out of the place called abiding. Romans 5:5 – The love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit. Well the place of abiding in Him, beholding His beauty is where this occurs. Because when we finish going through this place of abiding, we will look at the abiding love of God which is a major part of beholding the beauty of God. And when we behold the beauty of God, including the fullness of His love, we will have the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. But it flows at that place called abiding.

II Corinthians 12:9 – My grace is sufficient for you. The place of abiding is where we truly learn that. And only then are we ready for what I call the third stage of Christianity. You can think of Christianity, remember, in three simple stages. God says I am and we say You are. We come into agreement that there is a God and I will seek Him. Then God says come and we reply simply, yes Lord. And coming has two elements: pre-salvation, you come for salvation. After salvation, you come to the place called abiding in Him (that I'm attempting to describe). That is our present journey as saved, born again, children of God. And then He says go in My Name; and we say I am willing, knowing You will enable. So why are we now willing? Because at the place of abiding, we learn that His grace is sufficient. And grace is unmerited favor, but remember one aspect of unmerited favor is the omnipotent power of God empowering you to do what He calls you to do, to be slapped on the cheek and turn the other cheek. Something that is humanly impossible except out of cowardice, but spiritually possible because it's more important at that moment to bear witness of the character of God than it is to respond with the revenge of the flesh. That's the empowering presence of God that flows from His grace which is sufficient. He says go in My name; and we then go as His representative. But we go while remaining in His name. That is to say while continuing to abide in Him; because once you come to that position, you're not to leave that position. That's part of His presence going with you as He told Moses. So we now know certain things about this place. It's there that His love is shed abroad in our hearts as we behold the beauty of the Lord including the fullness of His love. We learn that His grace is sufficient, that He has not sent us out to accomplish things on our own. We know that we can rest in Him, that we don't have to be driven by anxieties about the impossibility of

the mission because of the One Who sent us. And as He told Gideon, go in this your strength, did I not send you? If He sent you out, He will be there, His presence with you as you fulfill the command. And it's there that we learn the intuitive revelations flow for specific needed aspects of guidance. His presence goes with us. But it's also important to note that never, ever, ever, even when abiding, are we excused from walking by faith or excused from obedience. Because the way that we maintain this position called abiding in Him, is by walking by faith and by obedience, just as Noah was faithful to obey all that the Lord said to him.

Now go back to Jesus, remember, on the examples. Did Jesus abide? After all Jesus is our Savior, but also our model. We can't be called to Christlikeness without having Him be our model. John 15:10 – I've kept my Father's commandments and abide in His love. John 14:11 – I am in the Father and the Father in Me. That's the ultimate of abiding. John 10:30 – The Father and I are one. In fact, looking at love as a passion for oneness, it can also be expressed just as fully in terminology of abiding in Him. Our goal is oneness. Why do we want to hold onto anything that is outside the purposes, plan, and character of God? To have thoughts like those vain imaginations exalt themselves against the knowledge of God by our chosen preference, you see. So you've heard the phrase: the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. So the fulfillment of the love of God, the passion for oneness becomes when you are abiding, fully abiding, and doing nothing but abiding in Him. That's when Jesus is now, not just happy that you are saved, but living in the fullness of the desire of pleasure for intimacy with you, living fulfillment in you to the max. Then what's the result of such a state? John 5:19 – Whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. As He's beholding the beauty of the Father, how can the Son ever do anything contrary to the character or purposes of the Father? John 6:57 – I live because of the Father. That's a paraphrase for us. In the Father Jesus lived, and moved, and had His being. So I think we can safely say that Jesus abided in the Father. That's the same way that we're to abide in Jesus. Then we do in like manner whatever we see the Son doing as we abide with Him.

My last comment today, I'll take a few minutes, but I'm going to address this phrase called in My name; because I think it has two meanings and just like faith, I think we live in the light of one meaning while suppressing the light of the other meaning. John 14:13 – Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do. This is Jesus speaking to the disciples. The next verse, He repeats it; you know when God repeats something, it's important. If you ask me anything in My name, I will do it. So to understand where I'm going with this, let's regress to an earlier teaching, the phrase walking by faith. Remember we have a tendency to focus on the empowered by as the meaning of walking by faith; but it also means to walk in a manner consistent with, in accordance with. So the fullness of walking by faith has to be known by both frames of reference. We are empowered by; but we access the power by walking in a manner consistent with. And we need to hold both frames of reference in simultaneous tension.

It's the same way with this admonition to pray in My name. We've tended to view this as something like a verbal mantra like the eastern religions, meaning that whatever we pray, if we pray it followed by the utterance, in the name of Jesus, then it should occur.

That's certainly a form of praying in His name; but it's not the whole truth about praying in His name. The phrase, in His name, can also be thought of as a synonym for abide in Me. And I'm going to suggest that that is strongly suggested by the words of Jesus in John 15:7 (listen to this and then I'll compare the two) – If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it shall be done for you. Notice that the outflow of the verses compared to the prior ones is the same. Ask whatever you want and it'll be done for you. But in the first case, in John 14:13 and 14:14, it says if you ask Me anything in My name I'll do it. But in John 15:7, He says if you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you want and I'll do it. In other words, Jesus makes no distinction between in My name and abide in Me, you see. So to Jesus, the two phrases are synonymous. So when we speak the utterance in His name, it should be from a position of being in His name, meaning abiding in Him.

We know the truth of that from other Scriptures. Acts 19:13-16 tells us about the seven sons of Sceva. They were using the name of Jesus to exorcise demons. They said I command you to come out by Jesus Whom Paul preaches. Well that's certainly the Jesus of the Bible, that's Who Paul preached. Then the unclean spirit said I recognize Jesus and I know about Paul, but who are you? And then the man possessed by the evil spirit pummeled all seven of them and they fled naked and wounded. In other words, uttering in the name of Jesus was not sufficient. What the demon was saying effectively was, I know of Jesus, I recognize the presence of Jesus, He's not here. I hear His name, but I don't sense His presence. So He's not here with you, so you say in His name, but you are not in His name. You're not abiding in Him, thus you're operating on your own whatever you may utter. So there was no power over the demons because the seven sons of Sceva were not in the name of Jesus; although they were uttering in the name of Jesus. Likewise we're not ever to think that uttering in His name is the full meaning of that verse. We're to say in His name from a position of being in His name—that is to say while abiding in Him.

Another example and then I'll close. Matthew 7:21-23 – Lord, did we not prophesy, cast out demons, and perform many miracles in Your name? Then Jesus answered I never knew you, depart from Me. You were saying in My name and I was loosing enough power for you to do certain things, but you were never in My name. I never knew you, depart from Me. So they used the mantra in His name, but their hearts were never in His name. They never abided in Him. And so we're to live in the light of both frames of reference. The utterance is fine, it's Scriptural; but even more Scriptural is the position of being in His name—namely abiding in Him.

So my time is up and I thank you for yours.