

# Abiding

Tuesday, February 14, 2012  
9:01 PM

## Scripture to Read

1. Psalm 80
2. Hosea 14
3. Romans 11

## I. Introduction

### a. Introduction

- i. Since John 13-17 is one discussion (or two closely-related discussions) on one night, we have been going through John 13-17 topically
  - 1) So far we have done:
    - a) Washing and Betrayal
    - b) Going
    - c) Coming
  - 2) We are going to do: (Lord willing - the current plan)
    - a) Abiding
    - b) Trinity and Unity
    - c) Love
    - d) Enmity and the World
- ii. This week we are looking at the topic of 'abiding'
  - 1) The last two weeks (Coming and Going) we saw that both Christ's coming and His going was to prepare an ABODE - the noun
  - 2) This week we are looking at Christ's command to ABIDE - the verb
  - 3) Two related concepts
    - a) One is looking at the objective work of Christ (creating an ABODE)
    - b) One is looking at the our participation in the work of Christ (ABIDING)

### b. Passage - Read John 15:1-17

### c. Proposition and Outline

**Proposition:** Christ commands His disciples to abide in Him, so we must live as part of His household

**Outline:**

- 1) Introduction
- 2) What does 'abiding' mean?
- 3) Why must we abide?
- 4) What are the benefits of abiding?
- 5) How do we follow the command to abide? (APPLICATION)
- 6) Conclusion

## II. What is abiding?

### a. Some initial observations about abiding:

- i. Abiding is not the cause of salvation (**verse 3**)
  - 1) They are already clean - harkens back to **John 13:10**
    - a) ΥΜΕΙΣ ΚΑΘΑΡΟΙ ΕΣΤΕ (you clean are)
    - b) Same exact phrase used in both verses
  - 2) So, our action in abiding is not 'meritorious' to salvation
- ii. Abiding is necessary to salvation (**verse 6**)
  - 1) Not abiding is not salvation
  - 2) So our action is necessary to salvation
- iii. Abiding is something we are elected to (**verse 16**)
  - 1) Christ chose us that we should bear fruit and that that fruit should abide
  - 2) Just like the rest of salvation, ultimately, abiding is a sovereign act of God

### b. But what is abiding?

- i. A picture of a household (word study)
  - 1) **John 4:40** - he abode there two days
  - 2) **John 7:9** - he abode still in Galilee
  - 3) **John 8:35** - the servant does not abide forever, but the son does
  - 4) **John 10:40**- and there he abode
  - 5) **John 11:6** - he abode there two days
  - Abode could be translated dwelling place, or with whom we dwell
  - So abiding in Christ means living as part of Christ's household
    - ◆ Household, I think, echo's both the 'dwelling place' concept and the concept of 'with whom we dwell'
    - ◆ So Christ (and by derivation Christ's people) is the place of our fellowship
    - ◆ So Christ (and by derivation Christ's people) are where we find nourishment and rest
    - ◆ So Christ (and by derivation Christ's people) are where we store our treasure
- ii. picture of a vine (**verses 1-6**)
  - 1) There are two ways the picture of the vine is intrinsically used
    - a) Grafting (**Romans 11** - actually an olive tree, but the two symbols are used almost interchangeably) - the picture of the vine means we are taking part in something that is not intrinsically ours
    - b) Nourishment (**verse 5**) - the picture of the vine means we are receiving nourishment from something other than ourselves
  - 2) Historically, the vine was associated with Israel (**Psalms 80**)
    - a) Israel, the nation, was the vine planted by God
    - b) The branches were the individual people of Israel
    - c) Christ, claiming to be the vine, claims to be the true Israel, the vine planted by God
      - i) Notice, even in Psalm 80 it mentions the son of man whom you have made strong
  - So, abiding means being grafted into Christ - being 'in Christ'
    - ◆ Christ is the true Israel, and thus, being in Christ is being a branch of Israel
    - ◆ Christ, being the vine, is where we get our nourishment, our sustenance

- iii. A picture of the Trinity
  - 1) Abide is the same word used for the action of the trinity
    - a) **John 14:10** - The Father abides in me
    - b) **John 17:20-21** - The word abide is not used, but the same symbolism is used
  - 2) In abiding, our communion is with Christ, the Father (**14:23**), and the Spirit (**14:15-17**)
  - 3) Just like the Trinity, when Christ has done something, we have also, in some way, done it (**Romans 6:8-11, II Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:26, Ephesians 2:4-9**)
    - So, abiding means having what is sometimes called a 'mystical union' with Christ, similar in many ways to the union of the Trinity

**c. Summary - Abiding is:**

- Necessary for, but not meritorious to, salvation and is something that we are elected to
- Living in Christ's household
- Being grafted into Christ's vine
- Having a mystical union with Christ analogous to the Trinity

### III. Why must we abide?

- a. Because Christ commands it (**verse 4**)
  - i. This is plenty of reason to abide
  - ii. But we will look at the other reasons given
- b. Abiding in Christ is salvation (**verse 8**)
  - i. The fruit on the branch is evidence that the branch is alive
  - ii. In the same way, the fruit of abiding is evidence of salvation
  - iii. Thus, abiding is salvation
    - 1) This is especially clear when abiding is considered equal to being 'in Christ'
    - 2) Paul, especially, calls salvation over and over being 'in Christ' (**Philippians 3:9, II Corinthians 5:21**)
    - 3) Being 'in Christ' is salvation - Abiding is salvation
- c. Not abiding in Christ is rejection (**verse 6**)
  - i. Lack of fruit is evidence of not being in the vine
  - ii. Lack of fruit is reason for punishment
  - iii. Thus, not abiding is not being in the vine, not being 'in Christ', being rejected

#### IV. What are the benefits of abiding?

- a. Bearing fruit (**verses 4-5**)
  - i. Only 'in Christ' do we find our sanctification
    - 1) This includes both positive and negative sanctification
    - 2) Negative Sanctification = Not Sinning
    - 3) Positive Sanctification = Doing Good
  - ii. Without abiding in Christ, we cannot make any true progress in holiness and good works
  - iii. This is where the picture of the vine and the branches works best
    - 1) The branches bear fruit only as they are attached to the vine
    - 2) If the branches are not attached to the vine, they will never bear fruit
- b. Fruitful prayer (**verse 7**)
  - i. This is promised several times in John 13-17
    - 1) **14:13** - requirement = believing and asking in the name of Christ = part of abiding
    - 2) **15:7** - requirement = abiding
    - 3) **16:23-24** - requirement = asking in the name of Christ = part of abiding
  - ii. 'In Christ' that is, through abiding, we have access to the Father
    - 1) **Ephesians 2:18**
    - 2) **Hebrews 10:19-22, 4:14-16**
  - iii. Here the picture of the Trinity works well
    - 1) Just as the Son has access to the Father, so, in our mystical union with Christ we also have access to the Father
- c. Pruning (**verse 2**)
  - i. **Hebrews 12:3-11**
  - ii. This may not seem like a 'benefit' - but it causes us to bear more fruit which is to our ultimate benefit
  - iii. So, pruning is a benefit of abiding because only in abiding do we get pruned
  - iv. Again, the picture of the vine works well here
- d. Assurance (**verse 8**)
  - i. Bearing much fruit (which is the result of abiding) proves that we are disciples
  - ii. **John 2:3-6, 29, 3:14, 4:7-8**
    - 1) Those who keep His commandments (the result of abiding) KNOW that they know Him
    - 2) Those who do righteousness (the result of abiding) KNOW that they are born of Him
    - 3) Those who love the brothers (the result of abiding) KNOW that they have passed from death to life
    - 4) Those who love one another (the result of abiding) KNOW that they are born of God and know God
- e. Joy (**verse 11**)
  - i. When we abide in Christ and Christ in us, then the joy of Christ abides in us
- f. Understanding (**verse 15**)
  - i. **I Corinthians 2:14-16**
  - ii. When we abide in Christ and Christ in us, then the mind of Christ is opened up to us and we understand His Word and His work

## V. How do we fulfill the command to abide? (APPLICATION)

- a. Abiding is, primarily, the 'mystical communion' we have with Christ
  - i. Christ is the vine, we are engrafted branches
    - 1) This is something that we are elected to
    - 2) This is something the Spirit (and/or the Father) does to us (grafts us into Christ)
    - 3) **I John 2:27**
  - ii. But, Christ gives a command here, so we must have to do something
    - 1) These things do not cause us to be abiding, but they are strong evidence that we are
    - 2) Abiding is a change of status (being in Christ), that causes a change in heart (being nourished by Christ)
    - 3) But that change of heart will be evident - the nourishment of Christ will be evident
  
- b. So, if we are abiding, what things do we do? (Direct commands in the passage/rest of John)
  - i. We rest in Christ love (**verse 9**)
    - 1) **I John 4:14-19**
  - ii. We seek communion with Christ (**6:56**)
    - 1) **I John 4:13**
    - 2) Presupposes our discussion of the Trinity - will discuss next week
  - iii. We keep Christ's commandments (**verse 10, 14**)
    - 1) **I John 2:6, 17, 3:6, 9, 24**
  - iv. We live in the Scriptures (**5:38, 8:31**)
    - 1) **I John 2:14, 24, II John 1:9**
  - v. We love as Christ loved us (**verse 12**)
    - 1) **I John 2:9-10, 3:14-17, 4:12**
  - vi. That is, we abide by the household rules (Proposition: Christ commands His disciples to abide in Him, so we must live as part of His household)
    - 1) Christ is the head of the household and His love is the foundation of the household
    - 2) Christ is the head of the household and therefore should be loved
    - 3) Christ is the head of the household and therefore should be obeyed
    - 4) Christ Word is the rule of the household and therefore should be studied
    - 5) Our fellow believers are our brothers and sisters and therefore should be loved
  - vii. Again, these do not cause abiding, but are diagnostic of abiding
  
- c. So, if we are abiding, what things do we do? (Implications from other passages)
  - i. Abiding in Christ means we do not abide elsewhere
    - 1) **Philippians 3:20-21** - Abiding is having our citizenship in heaven
    - 2) **Colossians 3:1-4** - Abiding is having our 'life hidden with Christ in God'
    - 3) **Hebrews 10:14** - For here we have no abiding city, but we seek the city that is to come
      - The implication in these passages (if not direct command) is that if we are abiding in Christ, we will not abide in anything here
        - ◆ Set your mind on things that are above and NOT on things that are on the earth
      - So, (THE APPLICATION) could someone say that you have an abode here, that there is something here in this world that you are abiding in?
        - ◆ What do you have in this world that is precious to you?
        - ◆ What here in this world is your heart given to?
        - ◆ If there is something in this world that is precious to you and your heart is given to it, you are in grave danger of abiding in that and NOT in Christ
  - ii. Abiding in Christ means we should be humble
    - 1) **Romans 11:17-24** - so do not become proud but fear
    - 2) Being grafted into Christ is an act of the sovereign grace of God

## VI. Conclusion

- a. Abiding with Christ is
  - i. Being a member of Christ's household (the household picture)
  - ii. Being engrafted into Christ and receiving nourishment from Him (the vine picture)
  - iii. Having a mystical union with Christ similar to the union of the Trinity (the Trinity picture)
- b. Abiding with Christ is
  - i. Necessary to salvation
  - ii. Without abiding, there is no salvation
- c. Abiding with Christ brings
  - i. Fruit (sanctification)
  - ii. Fruitful Prayer
  - iii. Pruning
  - iv. Assurance
  - v. Joy
  - vi. Understanding
- d. Abiding with Christ means
  - i. Living as part of Christ's household
    - 1) Resting in the love of Christ
    - 2) Loving Christ
    - 3) Obeying Christ
    - 4) Listening to Christ's Word
    - 5) Loving the brethren
  - ii. Not abiding in anything else in this world
  - iii. Living humbly as engrafted branches