

# Abiding in His Word

by Erlo Stegen

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*Abiding in God's Word is essential for spiritual growth, cleansing, and healing, and it brings us life and helps us to bear fruit.*

**Duration:** 1:11:07

**Scripture:** Joshua 1:8, Matthew 10:16, Acts 5:1, Hebrews 4:12

**Topics:** "Word Of God"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares the story of a man named Shayser who was given a Bible while he was in prison. Despite the prison warden's warning that he could only have the Bible for three weeks, Shayser read it and it deeply impacted his life. After the war, Shayser became a missionary to Japan with his wife and child. The speaker then transitions to discussing the importance of preaching the gospel and evaluating the growth of one's ministry. He emphasizes the need to seek God's face and pray for guidance when facing challenges.

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## Transcript

Let us pray. Lord we've heard that in your word it states that you've come to give us life and bring us life and that in abundance. The devil does not come to bring us life.

He's a thief. He's come to steal, to destroy and to kill. Now we pray Lord, please be with us now in this service and work through your Holy Spirit.

Amen. Amen. We'll read from John chapter 15 verse 7. Let me just start from reading, just let me read from the first verse.

I'm the true vine and my father is the vine dresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away. And every branch that bears fruit he prunes, 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 will abide in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, 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, bears much fruit for without me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is cast out as a branch and is withered and they gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned.

If you abide in me and my words abide in you, you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you. By this my father is glorified that you bear much fruit so you will be my disciples. What I'd like us to focus on are these words in verse 7, if you abide in me and my words abide in you you will ask what you desire and it shall be done for you.

If my words abide in you I cannot understand it that people who become Christian start following the Lord somewhere along the way they lose their strength, they go off the track, they just fall by the wayside and I say but what causes that? You find young people, they choose the Lord, decide for the Lord and after a while it just fizzles out, nothing is left of it. Even older people, you just find them losing strength and after a while there's nothing of that life left and I say but why is it? What causes it? How is it possible? And then I thought of this word, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, you will bear forth much fruit. It's something amazing that God's word abides in a person and that's what it should do, it should abide in you continuously and never stop in your heart.

When Joshua started his work after Moses, God spoke to him and said Joshua let my words never but depart from your lips and consider my word day and night. And Joshua found life and experienced life throughout his life, served the Lord faithfully because God's word didn't depart from his lips, what he spoke that was God's word and what he thought about day and night was God's word. God's word needs to abide in you continuously, not like some young people, like girls, when they go to bed it's not God's word that they consider and talk about but about boys and about worldly things.

The devil is in their hearts, they serving the devil, not the Lord. God's word should be on our lips. God's word should be on your lips all the time when you speak, no matter what others are doing and saying, but when you speak you should say this is what God's word says.

That God's word reigns. God's word reigns. Talking about girls who just have boys in their minds, the bible speaks of many things among others about the time will come when seven women or girls will run after one man and we're living in such times where it's the woman now, the girls that are running after the boys, not the other way around.

They woo the boys by the way they act, the way they dress, they are after them. And you find disgraceful things happening where a girl will run after the boy and even get into bed with him. She's the one that's after him.

Can you imagine such a disgrace? What is the problem? The problem is that God's word doesn't dwell and doesn't abide in a person's heart. God's word doesn't dwell and doesn't abide in a person's heart. In this portion we read where the Lord says you are clean because of the word I've spoken to you.

You see God's word is a cleansing agent. It cleans and sanctifies a person. His very word does it.

If you don't make progress spiritually and you don't grow in the Lord, I say it's because God's word doesn't abide in you. And if God's word doesn't dwell in you and abide in you, then the devil dwells and abides in you. You and your heart is his throne.

I know someone who when he reads the Bible, he reads just one verse and then he stops and he considers that verse and he reads it again. His desire is that this word will become part of him, that it will be in his mind and part of him throughout that day, that it dwells within him. And if he gets the chance during the day at lunchtime, maybe he gets in a moment, he'll go back and he'll read that same verse

again and in the evening again, and maybe for two or three days because he wants this word, this verse to saturate him that he gets everything out of it and it does something in his life.

And if God's word abides in you, you will never be lukewarm. You will never lose strength. You will be successful and God will prosper you as he did Joshua.

God's word is amazing. Hebrews 4 verse 12, it says God's word is powerful and sharper than any two edged sword. It separates bone from marrow.

Or it separates soul and spirit. Your soul is your emotions and your feelings. And God's word, a God's spirit will separate between that where you will, he will discern for you and identify things in your life which are not of God's spirit, but of your own feelings, your own emotions, your own thoughts.

God's word should dwell and be alive in our hearts. It's something great to have God's word. Jesus said, I didn't come to judge the world.

But God's, the word that I have spoken will judge you on judgment day. In fact, today should be like judgment day in our lives because it's God's word that will judge us. So as we ponder over God's word that speaks to us, so it should judge us even today.

In Corinthians where it speaks about communion, the Lord's supper, it says before you partake of it, test and search your life, that you will be judged, judge yourself so that you will not be judged one day. On judgment day, this word will be used, not something else, this is what will judge us. What will judge us is that word which we have with us, it's so tangible, it's with us, we read it, we consider it, and yet it's not like a newspaper that we read and throw away, but it's something that will be there eternally and that will judge us.

God's word should be alive in us throughout the day, not that we read it and then it dies, that it's like dead to us for the rest of the day, no, it should be alive, something that abides and dwells in us, it should drive us, direct us throughout the day, that it should be on our lips and in our hearts continuously. And if you see somebody, you consider or you approach him in the light of God's word, whether he's combed his hair, whatever he looks like, whatever his appearance is, you should look at him through the light of God's word. So God's word should be our instructor and the one that gives us direction.

And if you do that, God says he will prosper you in all your ways. And you'll find life. The Lord Jesus said man will not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

You cannot live by bread alone, bread will not bring you life, what will bring you life is God's word. As the body cannot survive without food, so our soul and spirit cannot survive without that spiritual food. And that spiritual food is God's word.

And God's word brings life and it also brings healing. In fact, it doesn't just heal your spirit. It can even heal your body because there are diseases that come about and are there because people don't let God's word abide in them.

Now I'm talking about God's word in general, but then God can also speak to you through one, through a very specific word where you pray and ask God speak to me. And he speaks to you very specifically through a specific word. And where he speaks to you like he says that he is the true vine and we are the branches and any branch that does not bear fruit, he will cut off and it'll be, it'll wither and it'll be eventually



waste oil, we better stop and close those services, there's something radically wrong there, the Holy Spirit isn't moving, and if he isn't working, then the devil is working, We should then stop and take stock of our situation, of our lives, and of our ministry, like someone who has a shop, he has to stop sometimes, take stock, and see whether he's making any profit at all in his business, and if he's not making any profit, then he'd be a fool to continue, He should rather just close the doors and stop what he's doing.

So this preacher, this minister said to the elders, we cannot let things continue in this way, let us stop and seek God's face, let's meet in the morning at 5 o'clock, and in summer make it 4 o'clock, and we go onto our knees and seek God's face, as to why we're experiencing this in the church. So for about a month or two, once a week, they got up early to go and pray, but nothing changed. Then one day, one of the elders came and said to the minister, it doesn't really help, we're not really achieving anything by coming, and it's also difficult to get up so early in the morning, we're so tired, shouldn't we rather just stop this, because it's not helping anyway.

And the minister said, no, on no account will we stop, instead, I think from now on, we should make this a daily thing, not just once a week. The deacon was disappointed, but the minister stood firm, he was a real man, he didn't wear a skirt, in that sense, and he said from now on, we'll meet every morning. So they met and they prayed, they cried to God, and they prayed, they said, Lord, what is it, what's the reason, can't your Holy Spirit work, what is the problem? And then this deacon got up and said, brethren, I've got to confess something, he said, brethren, there's a sin that I've committed and that I haven't confessed.

I had a friend, we were very close, he got sick, and it looked like he was going to die, and one day he called me and he said, brother, it looks like I'm going to die. My wife and children, they will be left behind and have nothing. And what will they eat? And he said, brother, I've got some cattle.

When I die, please sell them and take the proceeds of the sale and put it into the bank, into an account that will be interest, and then at least they can live off that. And the man said, fine, I'll do that. No problem, I'll help you.

And that man then died. And then he took the cattle and sold them as they had agreed. And he got a lump sum of money for the sale.

He went to the bank to go and deposit that money. And then he thought, well, you know, I've gone to so much trouble, I've gone and done all this for my friend, and I've had lots of expenses while I've been about it. Maybe there's no problem if I take some of the money now and just put it into my pocket, and of course the lump sum, the bulk of it will go into the account for the widow.

And then with tears in his eyes, he said, brethren, I'm a thief. I'm also a liar because I didn't keep my word. I wasn't faithful.

And I confess my sin before you all as we are here to pray. I'm the curse in your midst. I'm the reason that God cannot work here.

The following Sunday, there were more people in the church. The following Sunday after that, there were even more. Eventually the church was filled and overflowing.

If the church of the work of God doesn't progress, doesn't go forward, then it's because there's something wrong, there's sin. With Israel, with Achan, God said, Israel has sinned. All the time it was Achan that had sinned.

He had done something wrong. But God said, Israel has sinned. They were all guilty because they allowed this man who had sinned in their midst.

They tolerated him with a sin. If God's word abides in us, it works within us. It brings us life.

It cleanses us. It gives us strength. During the Second World War, the Americans were at war with the Japanese.

And there was a man, Jacob Teixeira. He went to Japan as part of the war effort. He then was captured while there.

On the 18th of April, 1942. He was an atheist. They captured him and imprisoned him.

There were three others that were with him in this prison. Two of them were put before a firing squad before his eyes. While he watched, they executed them.

The third one died of hunger. They just didn't give him food. The third one died of hunger.

They just didn't give him food. And for months, as he was in that prison, he thought always about the whole situation, saying, but why is it that the Japanese hate us so much and that I hate them the way I do? And then he thought about a long time ago when he had met up with some Christians and he heard about the gospel. They were talking about it.

He had just heard about it, and when he remembered that, he thought about it, and the next time the prison warden came, he said to him, Could you please organize a Bible for me? When he said it, the other prisoners that were with him in that cell laughed at him. They said, oh, that's a good joke. They thought it was just a joke.

He said, look, this is not a joke. I'm serious. Please bring me a Bible.

And they threatened him. They said, look, if you don't stop with this nonsense, you'll get into trouble. Because you're a nuisance to us.

But he kept at it. He didn't give up. He said, please, I need a Bible.

Please get one. After one and a half years, it was then in May 1944, one of the prison wardens brought him a Bible. He came in and he just threw the Bible at him on the floor.

He said, take it. I'm only giving it to you for three weeks. After three weeks, I'm going to take it away from you again.

I'll only let you have it for three weeks. Thereafter, I'm taking it away again. And he kept his word.

After three weeks, he came and he took the Bible again. And that was the last time the shahzai saw the Bible. But while he had the Bible, he read it and it struck home.

He committed his life to the Lord. After the war, he went back home again. In 1948, And then in 1948, the shahzai and his wife and their newborn child were on their way again to Japan, but this time as missionaries.

Because he had read the Bible. God's word changed his life. When he read it, it struck him.

It worked in his life. It changed and transformed him to the point that after some years, he was on his way back again as a missionary to share God's word with those people. You see what God's word did just in those three weeks.

That's what God's word can do. And yet you sit with God's word for yours. Maybe your Bible is full of dust.

You don't have time for it. You're just busy with the world, with the opposite sex. That's all you have time for.

God's word means nothing to you. That's why that double-edged sword, that sword will cut off you as a branch. You will wither and be burned.

And we know that the devil, even when he tempted the Lord, used the Bible, but the Lord responded by saying, yes, I know what you're saying. I know it's written, but it is also written. So he responded with the word again.

If you read the Bible, there is so much you will read about. Even about, talking about the times that we're living in now. Just look how God is at work, how he's even using AIDS and different diseases.

God works in different ways. These days, he even used hail. Do you see the works of God? All those things you read about even about hailstones and huge ones the size that will kill people and destroy homes.

Houses and buildings will be destroyed and read in the book of Revelation all the things that will still happen. God's ways we will never understand fully. If you think of the oceans, the seas, how were those waves that destroy many people.

Where you hear about what the tsunamis do and God's word speaks about that he will use even the seas. The works of God that he speaks through. God speaks in many different ways.

The cement that was used in the Galilee was 2.50 rand and now it's 70 rand. It's 72 rand If you just think of this building when we put in the foundations here we paid 2.50 rand for a bag of cement now it's over 70 rand. Read the Bible and you will learn to fear God and where you will fear to go against him to turn your back on him lest his wrath come upon you and your family.

Time flies. Let me just close with this. Pastor Nicholas Bengu is someone that I had and have a lot of respect for Wasupeka He went through much difficulty.

One day they were going somewhere on foot. He had no car, no motorbike or bicycle. They didn't even have money to pay for a taxi.

So they walked and at that time they had a little baby and this little baby died while they were on their way. And he dug a little grave next to the road. He didn't have money for a coffin so they just took the blanket which they had and wrapped the baby in the blanket and buried it just in a shallow grave next to the road.

He preached and he preached to the preachers and he's saying you want to be blessed. You want blessings but you've never learned what hardship and difficulty is all about. You first need to go through that.

That's where I started. They were very poor and went through much difficulty and one day they were on their way and they met up with a person who they didn't know from a bar of soap. This person was selling things or selling a sheet a sheet and this person this person wanted to sell them some sheets, some linen very expensive linen you could see that it was excellent quality but he wanted to sell it to them at a very cheap price What's a bulla? What's a sheet? You ain't got no money to buy a sheet.

Pants and a piece of sheet I am a sheet I am a sheet It was so cheap that they could afford to buy these sheets and they were thrilled that at last they could afford to get some sheets because up till then they only slept under a blanket they didn't have money to buy sheets. What's a bulla? What's a sheet? You ain't got no money to buy a sheet.

After that he preached but he noticed it was difficult and he then said to his wife let us pray and ask God to intervene that he works God had worked great things through this man in East London thousands got converted 3,000 and in Port Elizabeth as well up to 5,000 got converted in a service and then when they prayed and asked God to work and that he should come down and as he prayed and he said Lord please come down work through your Holy Spirit and God then spoke to him he said do you want me to come down in my Holy Spirit tell me those sheets that you sleep under how did you get them? and then he was convicted about these sheets because he realized that he could never have bought them at such a cheap price had that person who sold it to them not stolen them in the first place and he

knew those were stolen things and I should have known better he went to his wife and said God has convicted me about these sheets we are going to sleep without sheets again he took them behind the house and he burnt them Lord please come down work through your Holy Spirit tell me those sheets that you sleep under how did you get them? he said Lord please come down work through your Holy Spirit tell me those sheets how did you get them? he said Lord please come down work through your Holy Spirit tell me those sheets God has convicted me about these sheets I have no job about these sheets all the things that exist God that deceive me neither vodka nor wine best at deceiving people they say we so good they go to come to you they tell you about all their stories of whoa everything that's been

stolen and their wife has just had an operation and he needs money desperately and you give him money he doesn't go home with it no one gets the benefit of it he goes and he buys brandy with it and people will come and they tell you all their stories and you as a Christian think well I'm a Christian I must help him and he takes that money uses it on alcohol or on drugs or even maybe even on a prostitute and you have assisted him in being able to do that we live that wicked lifestyle instead of asking for discernment like some people say they will never give someone money they'll rather go and buy him some food and give him the food which is what he signed panning drinking yoke cotton even over bailing young I'm a trooper the Lord Jesus said you must be wise as serpents but meek as meek as

doves but Christians swallow anything and that's the problem with Christians they have no discernment and when you ask them but why did you do it they said oh sorry I didn't even think of it what do you need what will you eat what will give away to what will not go so soon I'm a sheet now pastor banger says the next morning when he looked out the window he saw that those sheets were still smoldering what you are who puts it on who shot go shoot it I'm a child money as you got a key quality with the big week I need to put on sheets who must have she hadn't shown my head and couldn't go to a seventh wobble it happened based on but sees a gun and he said that he could see from that that those sheets were real good German quality that they were not even ashes by the next morning it was so

it's such good quality but when he had done that he had made that right and gotten that out of his life God started working through a spirit again through his life oh my name is not like him not much we are much like a knee with a couple of good tea I'm not supposed to be so look who she piped a sailor I didn't get it to leave with satan we sail or a sailor wing gonna go satan so if you abide in me and my words abide in you and if God's word abides in you God's word will instruct you and teach you and remind you that a thief doesn't go to heaven he'll end up in hell go back when you think John John over and I'll do it all because you say and say because you say no well I only took that thing because I am so poor I have nothing I'm not really a thief it's just my situation and poverty that

drives me to it no it's not poverty that drives you to it it's the devil you don't steal because you're hungry you steal because you're a thief if a duck goes to water with ducklings they'll all go and dive into the water because they ducks but if a chicken goes to the water no matter how hot it is it won't go into the water will just drink something because it doesn't belong in the water so you you go into that sin because that's that's what you are like you're a thief that's why you steal so my question to you old and young father mother child does God's word abide in you from morning till evening and throughout the night all the time does it dwell and abide in you if not then he says he will cut you off and you will wither and be burned this morning when you woke up and you read the

bible you read the bible you read the bible what did you read can you tell us what you read when you read in your Bible this morning or did it was it just snatched away by the birds of the air or the rats and the mice just disappears it's nowhere you don't even remember it and that's throughout the day and throughout the day when you're drinking a cup of tea you will remind yourself of that word which you read it will abide in you it will be with you all the time and it will direct your life and control your your life and then I am sure you will never be guided by the fact that you're a you're a Zulu or you're an Englishman or you're an Africana or you're a German that won't be relevant to you all that's relevant is and that will control and direct your life is God's word that abides in

you let us stand up and pray Lord you tell us that your word should abide in us if we abide in you and your word abides in us we will ask what we desire and you will do it for us Lord work in an amazing way in every heart Amen

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