

# Abide in Me

by Richard E. Bieber

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*To abide in Jesus means to stay in Him, draw life from Him, rest in Him, and work with Him, resulting in bearing much fruit and glorifying God.*

**Duration:** 18:04

**Scripture:** John 15:2-21, Romans 8:10, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 2:12-13

**Topics:** "Abiding"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of abiding in Jesus and having a living relationship with Him. He highlights how the eleven disciples, who had seen Jesus in the flesh, continued to abide in Him even after His resurrection. The speaker also mentions how other men and women, like Saul of Tarsus, became branches on the vine and drew their life from Jesus. The sermon emphasizes the need to trust in Jesus as the only anchor in this world and to work with Him in bearing fruit.

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## Transcript

From John chapter 15, starting at verse 1, Jesus is speaking. I am the true vine, and my father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away.

And every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear more fruit. You are already pruned, made clean, by the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you. Unless you abide in me, and I in you. I am the vine, you are the branches.

He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing. If a man... Being sexist here, he's accused of being.

He's talking to all of us here. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and withers. And the branches are gathered, and thrown into the fire.

If you abide in me, my words abide in you. Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this, my father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.

Jesus spoke those words to 11 men as he was about to leave them to return to the Father. Less than 24 hours after he spoke those words, he was dead. They saw him alive from the dead on the third day in his

resurrection body.

And for 40 days, he appeared and reappeared and spoke and taught. And then, he left this earth. And their eyes saw him no more.

They saw him no more, and yet, this command, Abide in me, was branded on their hearts. As the branch cannot bear fruit, unless it abides in the vine, no more can you. Neither can you, unless you abide in me.

It was because these 11 men did this. They did abide in him, and his words did abide in them, that they had such an impact on the history of this planet. They were driven, not by a memory of Jesus, but by a living relationship with Jesus, which increased, deepened, clarified, heightened, after these eyes could see him no more.

And the thing spread. Pretty soon, other men and women, who had known Jesus in flesh and blood, became branches on the vine. They now got to really know him.

And being branches on the vine, they began to draw their life from him, and to bear fruit. Saul of Tarsus, who had seen Jesus in flesh and blood, watched him from a distance, and despised what he saw. Who had supervised the killing of the first Christian martyr, Stephen.

Came to know Jesus, when these eyes could see him no more, became a branch on the vine. Drew life, bore fruit. I'm crucified with Christ, it's no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me.

And the life I now live in this flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me. For me to live is Christ, to die is gain, said Paul. I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.

Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. These words are given, really, to every disciple of Jesus who has ever been born or will ever be born into the kingdom of God. They are spoken to people like you and me, whose eyes have never seen Jesus.

Our hands have never touched him. Our ears have never heard a word out of his mouth. And yet, he tells us that we can abide in him.

In fact, makes clear to us that if we are to live the kingdom life in this world, we must abide in him. There's no other way. Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit by 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, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered and thrown to the fire. You abide in me, and my words abide in you. Ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

By this my Father is glorified that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. Notice that word, abide, abide, abide, because it's the essential thing, if we are to have his life in us, his fire burning us, in us, abide in me. Now, the little branch on the actual grapevine has no choice.

It grows up out of the vine, and there it is. And as it draws life from the vine, it bears fruit. But you and I have a choice.

We can abide in the vine, or we can drift. We can draw life from Jesus, or we can draw synthetic life from a thousand other things. It's our choice.

It's up to us whether we're going to do this or whether we're not going to do this. And so he tells us, if you really want to know me, then you have to abide in me. So specifically, what's he getting at when he commands us to abide in him? What does he mean? What does it mean? Abide in me.

Abide in me means four things. First, abide in me obviously means stay in me, as the branch cannot bear fruit unless it stays in the vine. Neither can you unless you stay in me.

If the branch decides to visit the vine once every week or two, what happens to it? If the branch decides to split its time between the vine and the cherry tree, what kind of fruit is it going to bear? And so Jesus is saying to us, you have to learn to stay put in me, rooted and grounded in me, dwelling in me, living in me. All the time. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

The secret place of the Most High is Jesus. And we can only expect to live under the shadow of the Almighty, under God's protection, if we dwell in Jesus, live in him. Stay in me, he says.

Stay in me by a consistent prayer line. Stay in me by continuously bringing your thoughts back to me, centering them on me. Stay in me by unbroken fellowship with my body on earth.

Stay in me by walking with me under my yoke, learning from me, laboring at my side. Stay in me by listening to the word which I have put in your heart. That word which I have put there will never be silent unless you silence it.

Stay in me by doing what I tell you to do. Stay in me, live in me. That's the ascension.

Abide in me means draw life from me. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it draws life from the vine. Neither can you, unless you draw life.

It is the Spirit that gives life. The flesh is of no avail. The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are life.

Draw life from them. So we either draw life from the Spirit of God coming up through the vine, speaking those words, living words, or we draw life from the Spirit of Babylon and all its seductive images, especially religious Babylon, Babylon with a Christian coating, filling our minds with anxiety and lust and greed and vanity and suspicion and producing the fruit of Babylon. And when we produce the fruit of Babylon, ultimately the vinedresser has to come with his knife and lop it off and throw it on the pile ready for the fire.

And so his question to us this morning is, where are you getting your life? What are you drawing your life from? Are you drawing your life from me? Or are you getting a second, third hand distorted, a garbage of Babylon? Are you getting your life from me? I alone am the source of this life. I am the way, the truth, and the life. Nobody comes to the Father but I. Abide in me.

Thirdly means, rest in me. Trust me. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it trusts the vine.

Neither can you unless you trust me. And so the little branch rests in the vine. It trusts the vine and the vine holds it.

There it is. It won't let go. The wind blows all over the place.

The little branch doesn't go flying. Rain comes pouring down. The little branch doesn't worry about getting washed down to sea in the rain.

It rests in the vine. The only anchor I have in this world, the only anchor which can truly hold me, is the vine, Jesus. Only he.

He alone can hold me. Nothing else. The life I now live in the flesh I live by trust in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, Jesus, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress. He holds me.

My God, in Him will I trust. I will trust Him. I will trust Him.

Above all things. That's up to us. Finally.

Abide in me means work with me. And this is a missing part of the story in many places these days. Work with me.

As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it works with the vine. Work with me. That's what he means when he says, Get under this yoke with me.

How do I learn? I learn by working with him. We, he says, not I. We must work the works of him who sent me while in his day. Night comes when no one can work.

Working together with him, says Paul, we entreat you not to receive the grace of God in vain. And here's Peter. He's denied Jesus three times.

Now he's alive from the dead. Jesus is alive from the dead. Peter goes back to his old routine.

In the morning, no fish. Jesus is on the shore. Have you caught anything? No.

Here comes a miracle. After Jesus serves breakfast, he says to this man here, Peter, do you love me more than these fish? Lord, you know that I love you. Of course I love you.

And then Jesus said, feed my sheep. These fish over here, that's your work. Work with me, Peter.

See, Jesus works the life of heaven into us by the Holy Spirit. But we have to work it out of us. Work out the salvation which he works in with these action, clear thinking, bold words.

I will seek the lost. I will bring back the strayed. I will bind up the crippled.

I will strengthen the weak. That's his work and that's what he does. But we enter into it.

So now we seek the lost, just as he sought us. And we bring back the strayed, just as he brought us back. And we bind up the crippled, just as he healed us.

And we strengthen the weak, just as he strengthened us. There are specific people known to each of us here who need to be sought, who need to be brought back, who need to be encouraged, who need to be healed, who need to be strengthened. That's his work.

We enter into it. And as we enter into it, as we work with him, we abide in him. Abide in me.

Stay in me. Draw life from me. Trust me.

Work with me. As we do this, fruit begins to appear on the little branch. And this fruit may not look like much to the world, and it may not look like anything at all to celebrity Christianity.

But listen here. In the eyes of God. And God knows that that fruit will remain when all the other is burned up in the fires of trial which are soon to come.

One more thought. We're concerned about the need for unity in the body. Unity in the body manifested in any given congregation, including this one.

We know that the work God has given this congregation to do in this place at this hour will only be accomplished if we are one. But this unity is not something we manufacture. You don't engineer it all over the world if people are trying to create unity.

We can't do it. And every time we do, we fail. Unity is God's gift.

But he does it in only one way. If I abide in the vine and you abide in the vine, then we are one in the vine. And the vine holds us and guides us and insists that we work together in peace and wonderfully helps us.

Any other kind of unity, any other source of unity is going to fall apart with the next sifting that comes along, the next storm that sweeps over. So the call of the Lord Jesus. To each of us as an individual, to all of us as a congregation, which he is gathering and he alone can hold together, is so simple.

A vine, I am the true vine, and my father is the vine dresser. Every branch of vine that bears no fruit, he takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear more fruit.

You are already pruned, made clean, by the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit 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, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers, and the branches are gathered and thrown to the vine.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this, my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciple. Let's wait upon him and let his spirit speak.

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