

ABIDING IN HIM

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We have been speaking for a few weeks about the importance of guarding our minds. They're under attack 24/7 whether we are aware of it or not.

Most of us are probably oblivious too often. Then we are vulnerable to the devil's strategies. Remember he goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour.

We have spiritual weapons and spiritual armour. We've looked at the Helmet of Salvation (to protect our mind) — the Hope of Salvation — as protection against discouragement ... one of satan's main weapons. Last week we looked at Joy — one of the Fruits of the Spirit — particularly useful against discouragement ... especially in trials and difficulties.

James 1:1-4

1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

2 My brethren, **count it all joy when you fall into various trials,**

3 **knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.**

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Count it all joy! Really?? Most of us won't count it all joy! Satan can't defeat us if we do this.

It is not natural ... Jesus had it and gave it to His disciples. One of Paul's letters is called: "The Epistle of Joy".

Galatians 5:22-25

22 **But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,**

23 **gentleness, self-control.** Against such there is no law.

24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 **If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.**

If we want the Fruit of the Spirit ... we know where to go.

John 15:1-11

1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

2 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.

3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

4 **Abide in Me, and I in you.** As **the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.**

5 "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.

6 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.

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.

8 **By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.**

9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

10 **If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.**

11 **These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.**

If we want to be fruitful — we have to abide in Christ.

Verse 7: "**IF you abide**" ... not guaranteed ... a decision is required. Then you will be fruitful.

Abide = Greek "Meno" — to remain ... to continue ... to sojourn ... to stay.

NIV: "**Remain In Me**".

CJB: "**Stay united with Me**".

AMP: "**Dwell in Me**"

The picture of the vine is clear. If we are not vitally united to the vine ... the branch dies. It doesn't matter if it's sincere or well-meaning.

Fruit comes (quite naturally) from being vitally united — to Jesus. It takes a living connection.

Most of the occurrences here of abiding in Christ show the responsibility is on us. Our decision. Our action. “IF YOU ABIDE”.

We all face many distractions — enticements — it is easy for us to wander off ... but Jesus explains we need to stick close ... so close we’re said to abide or dwell “in Him”.

A lot of Christians ... a lot of church goers ... know about God ... about Jesus ... but this is actually knowing Jesus ... a close personal relationship. Not just “near” Jesus — but “IN HIM”.

This is something we should probably be more conscious of? That we are actually “in Jesus”.

Because if we are “in Jesus” then Scripture tells us we have access to many spiritual benefits.

Those who are not “in Jesus” — don’t! Those “in Jesus” — do!

Well over 100 times the New Testament talks about those who are “in Jesus” ... “in Christ” ... “in Him” ... “in Whom”. It’s a major discussion point by New Testament writers ... yet how often do we think of it? Reflect on it?

One preacher went through his New Testament and marked up every such scripture ... which shows who we are “in Him” ... and what we have “in Him”. That tells us who we are “in Him”.

I can’t do them all — but will look at a few ... to get a flavour of what it means to be “in Christ” or “in Him”.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

17 **Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God.

21 **For He made Him who knew no sin to be a sin offering for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.**

WE ARE A NEW CREATION IN HIM. The old man is dead. Buried in baptism. Our past is gone. We may still sin ... but no longer live in sin as a lifestyle.

Also — God sees us as righteous if we're "in Him". As if we are clothed in Jesus' garments. God doesn't just see us carnally ... worldly ... as our fleshly selves — but ... "IN CHRIST".

2 Corinthians 5:16

16 Therefore, **from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh.** Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

Even though we're said to be a new creation "in Christ" ... we still do sin ... do experience failure in our Christian walk ... can look back every so often and wonder how we could be so stupid ... to make so many mistakes. It can be disheartening when we see our failures.

Romans 7:15 - 8:2

15 **For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.**

16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good.

17 But now, **it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.**

18 **For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.**

19 **For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.**

20 **Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.**

21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

22 **For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.**

23 **But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

24 **O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?**

25 **I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

So then, **with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.**

1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

NO CONDEMNATION IF WE ARE "IN CHRIST".

No punishment or judgment. Innocent. Can't be condemned (though satan may accuse and spirits remind us).

Jesus isn't facing condemnation — and we're "in Him".

In addition ... we should be separating more and more from the world's values and practices.

1 Corinthians 1:1-3

1 Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, **to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord**, both theirs and ours:

3 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are being sanctified "in Christ Jesus". Sanctified = set apart.

You and I are called saints (even as the Corinth Church was even though they were full of serious problems).

You and I need to see ourselves as saints in Christ. Not just losers!!

If we're "in Christ" ... we shouldn't be in the world at the same time!
Compromising is not good!

Colossians 1:27-29

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom,
that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

Christ in you (really?). Every man — all of us.

Mature or complete (would include being fruitful) “in Christ”.

2 Timothy 2:1

1 You therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**
(Grace = Favour ... power ... help)

2 Timothy 2:8-10

8 Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel,

9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, **that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.**

If we're not in Christ ... vitally united to Him ... how are we to access grace or salvation? We'd be like a branch cut off ... withering away.

There are a lot of benefits **if we're abiding “in Him”**.

Ephesians 1:3-7

3 **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,**

4 just as He chose us **in Him** before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

5 having predestined us to sonship as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

6 **to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.**

7 **In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace**

Every blessing — if we are “in Christ”.

Chosen in Him
Accepted in the Beloved
Redemption in Him

It only applies to those “in Him” ... and who abide “in Him”.

Colossians 2:4-10

4 Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words.

5 For though I am absent in the flesh, yet I am with you in spirit, **rejoicing to see your good order and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.**

6 **As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,**

7 rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

8 **Beware** lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.

9 **For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;**

10 **and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.**

Walk “in Him”

Rooted “in Him”

Complete “in Him” — we don’t need the world’s recognition and approval. We don’t need experts “insights”.

How can we be sure we are really “in Jesus” — “in Him”? How do we know?

1 John 2:1-6

1 **My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin.** And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 **And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.**

3 **Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.**

4 He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are **in Him**.

6 **He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked. (Ought to walk the same way!)**

It makes sense? How could we say we “abide in Jesus” ... are “vitaly united” to Him — then live a completely different lifestyle?

Jesus did good ... He controlled His tongue ... He showed compassion ... He walked in joy ... so should we if we’re “in Him”!!

1 John 3:22-24

22 **And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.**

23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

24 Now **he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit which He has given us.**

Keeping the commandments demonstrates we’re abiding “in Him” ... otherwise it’s just vain talk.

John 16:33

33 **These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.** In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

In Me ... you will have peace. Peace is the 3rd Fruit of the Spirit of God.

Even those believers who’ve gone before us needed to be “in Christ” if they hope to be in the Resurrection.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, **even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.**

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.**

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And **the dead in Christ will rise first.**

17 **Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.** And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Whether alive or dead — all of us need to be “in Christ”!!

Lots of scriptures talk of being “in Jesus” ... “in Christ” ... “in Him” ... “through Him” ... “by Him” — lots of permutations.

These scriptures tell us who we are ... what we’ve got ... where we’re going.

So it is a good idea to find these scriptures ... see them together ... ponder them.

We need to remember when the going gets tough ... discouragement beckons ... that we’re not just us on our own ... we’re actually “in Christ” ... “in Him”.

It is important to keep close — to seek to know Jesus ... not just know about Him.

Matthew 11:28-30

28 **Come to Me,** **all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

29 **Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.**

30 **For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”**

Matthew 11:28-30 THE MESSAGE

28 **“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me** and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest.

29 **Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.** I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.

30 **Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."**

That's Jesus invitation to us all. 'COME TO ME".

And once we're "in Him" — we are new creations ... no condemnation ... sanctified ... saints ... access to every spiritual blessing ... and on and on!

So — Jesus says "Come to Me". And we find Jesus in the scriptures.

Now it is up to us!