

Abide

To stay and make yourself at home

Abide occurs 48 times in the NT and comes from the Greek verb—*meno*. It is translated to dwell, to live, to remain, sit, lodge, tarry, sojourn, dwell, continue, endure, and encamp.

Other Definitions:

- ⇒ Maintaining unbroken fellowship with Christ
- ⇒ Practicing the presence of Jesus in your life
- ⇒ Cling to me. Live the life of close and intimate communion with me. Get nearer and nearer to me. Roll every burden on me. Cast your whole weight on me. Never let go of your hold on me for a moment.--Bishop Ryle, Expository Thoughts, p.135.

Our honeymoon was a disaster. I woke up in a pool of water that had collected around my face--the tent was leaking. It was windy cold and the rain just wouldn't let up. A local merchant had sold me firewood that was green. Ever try to cook over a green wood fire in the middle of rain? I had images of torching him!

This is an illustration that is opposite of what Jesus had in mind in John 15 when he teaches about abiding in him. We did not abide. We fled. We did not remain but vacated our soggy misery as fast as my car could get us out of there.

“Abide” is an old-fashioned word. Motel signs say “Stay here tonight” not “abide with us tonight”. Baseball announcers don’t sum up an inning with “one hit, two walks and two abiding on base.”¹

Abiding with Christ is different than having an occasional coffee break with him or going away on a periodic retreat. Abide is a relationship word and implies constantly spending time together.

We cannot say in the full sense of the word that you abide when you go camping or check into a hotel for a few days. Abide has the idea of permanently dwelling in

¹The author is F. Dean Leuking, pastor of Grace Lutheran Church in River Forest, Illinois. COPYRIGHT 1997 The Christian Century Foundation/ April 16, 1997.

a place. This is why the New International Version (NIV) substitutes *abide* with the word *remain*.

- **John 15:5—*If a man remains in me (NIV).***

Remaining is making a commitment to stay with something or someone over the long haul, to settle down, to keep on through hard times and good times. The absence of remaining and abiding diminishes us. Friendships break up. Marriage covenants are broken from the absence of a partner abiding/remaining in the marriage.

Jesus is said to remain/abide in us—he lasts, endures, continues, hangs in, and holds on to us. Praise God that our flawed staying with him will not stop his faithful abiding and remaining with us. See 1 John 4:12-15.

- **John 15:5-- *I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.***

Here Jesus shows us we are like branches connected to a vine. The result is that the life of the vine flows into our lives. This is simple but profound. The branch (you and I) will bear the same fruit as the vine (Jesus). Here's the implication:

- The vine can't be graceful and the branch judgmental.
- The vine can't be forgiving and the branch nasty.
- The vine can't be the prince of peace and the branch anxious-ridden.

Abiding in the vine means sharing everything together with Him, regularly sitting at his feet to be with Him. When He is the continual occupation of our hearts and is being leaned upon for everything then results called fruit will be seen.

This abiding implies utter dependence—drawing on Christ for all that we do. This means listening for his voice and waiting for the impulses of his lead. Abiding means walking, trusting, resting and asking for his help.

Abiding is acknowledging our inadequacy and inability to change us. It is not passive, fatalistic acquiescence and resignation. It is active submission of our whole being to Jesus so his power and presence can be released in and through us in every circumstance. The result is fruit! The Fruit of the Spirit is works and results that bring Him glory.

- **John 15:7--*If my words abide in you (KJV).***

In the above passage of Scripture, Jesus' talks about his words being at home in your life. Not just hearing them on the weekend or in your devotional life. But where they become a living part of your daily life.

For Bible Study:

Abiding is the key to fruitfulness in your Christian life. And fruitfulness is living a life that makes a difference (See John 15:4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11).

- See John 14:23 (JB) If anyone loves me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we shall come to him and *make our home* with him.
- See John 14: 10,17, 25. Note Abiding places: John 14:2 & 14:23.
- See 1 John 2:6, 10, 14, 17, 24,27,28; 3:6,14,15,24.
- See Matt 10:11 “stay” at his house; Matt 26:28 “stay here” and watch
- James 1:12 “to continue on even in the face of opposition.”

Question

What does it mean to abide in Christ? Am I abiding or am I resisting Christ?

"If you abide in My Word, then you are truly disciples of Mine" (John 8:31).
And you do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent" (John 5:38).

"He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him" (John 6:56).

You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16)

Abiding in Christ (verses 4-8) stressed belief, dependence, and endurance. The emphasis in verses 9-25 is on obedience. This is “how” we abide in Christ’s love: “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” (John 15:10).

"Cling to me. Stick fast to me. Live the life of close and intimate communion with me. Get nearer and nearer to me. Roll every burden on me. Cast your whole weight on me. Never let go your hold on me for a moment ..." [Bishop Ryle, *Expository Thoughts*, p. 335.]