

Whoever finds his life will
lose it, and whoever loses
his life for my sake will
find it.
Mt 10:39

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

April 20, 2007

“Abide in me”—Jesus teach me!—part I

5:55 – 6:05	1) Coffee & Donuts 2) Opening Prayer
6:05 – 6:25	1) Jesus tells us to abide in him, and then he will abide in us. <i>Abide in me, and I in you.</i> Jn 15:4 2) Abiding in Jesus seems to be central to what we are able to do as Christians. <i>I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.</i> Jn 15:5 a) NOTE: Paul defines “fruit” as the character traits of love, joy, peace, long suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control; against such there is no law (Gal 5:22). “Fruit” is NOT WORKS. Good works come from bearing fruit. 3) Abiding in Jesus seems to be central to our prayer life. <i>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.</i> Jn 15:7 a) This is an extraordinary promise!! 4) What does it mean to abide in Christ? a) Clue 1— <i>Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father...But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.</i> Jn 4:21, 23-24 i) True worship is: (1) Not defined by a time or place (2) In spirit and truth (a) God gives us his Spirit of truth—see Jn 15:1, God is the Gardener (b) We can only worship God because he has given us the Spirit (c) Truth means “authenticity”

b) Clue 2—

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. Jn 15:10

- i) God's gift of salvation is free, but we have obligations
- ii) Jesus' abiding in us is based on our obedience (faith manifest in our obedience)
- iii) NOTE: Abide ≠ Salvation...abiding is a relationship, it is a lifelong process

c) Clue 3—

- i) "I [Jesus] abide in you" = "My words abide in you"; therefore, Jesus and his words are equivalent
 - (1) "What God's words are to me is the test of what He Himself is to me, and so of the uprightness of my desire after Him in prayer." (Murray, 147)
- ii) Just as we use words to make our inner selves known to each other, God uses his word to make himself known to us
 - (1) I pray—I speak to the Father; I read—the Father speaks to me
 - (a) We can read the word in study, and
 - (b) We can read the word in the presence of God and by the leading of the Spirit and experience the real voice of God speaking to us—the living word

d) Clue 4—God wants to give us what we ask for

For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Mt 7:8-11

5) A few observations

- a) Jesus promises that I will get what I ask for if I abide in him...no other qualifications are added (Jn 15:7)
 - i) If my prayers are not being answered, there are two options:
 - (1) Jesus lied
 - (2) I'm not abiding in Jesus
- b) If you are "powerless," you are not abiding in Jesus
- c) If your prayers are not being answered, you are not abiding in Jesus
 - i) "Fruit" is evidence (see Jn 15:8)
- d) God wants to answer our prayers; we should expect to see them answered
- e) Our answered prayer should be a "measure" of our abiding in Christ, of our spiritual maturity (our will aligned with God's)
- f) "...our own feeble life has been the cause of our feeble prayers." (Murray, 151)

6) Some conclusions

- a) We must but God first and grasp that from him comes all things—see the order of the Lord's prayer: *Thy name, Thy kingdom, Thy will*; then give *us*, forgive *us*, lead *us*, deliver *us* (Murray, 30)
- b) We have justified God not answering our prayers by adding qualifiers (e.g., wasn't his will, his timing, etc.)
 - i) Sadly, this move simply allows us to excuse away that we are not abiding in Jesus
- c) Jesus is our example of perfect abiding in the Father and the Father perfectly in

	<p>him</p> <p>“[This should] bring us out from those refuges where we have comforted ourselves with unanswered prayer. It will discover to us the place of power to which Christ appointed His Church, which it so little occupies...Prayer that is really, spiritually <i>in union with Jesus</i>, is always answered.” (Murray, 145-146)</p> <p><i>If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.</i> Jn 15:7</p> <p>This promise is extraordinary!! God makes this promise knowing that anyone who abides in him will only ask for what God will do according to his will.</p> <p>Lord, teach us to pray!</p> <p>OUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN, HALLOWED BY YOUR NAME. YOUR KINGDOM COME. YOUR WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD. FORGIVE US OUR SINS (DEBTS) AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US (OUR DEBTORS). DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION, BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.</p>
6:25 – 7:00	<p>Interaction and prayer</p> <p>1) How did your dual challenge go this week? [1) 5 min reading the Bible, 5 min in meditation, 5 min in prayer; 2) praying with your family]?</p> <p>2) Jesus gives us a “heart test.” For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mk 6:21).</p> <p>a) What are your treasures?</p> <p>b) Where are they?</p> <p>3) Are you abiding in Jesus? What is the evidence?</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer

Further reading:

- The *Bible*
- McCall, Larry E. *Walking Like Jesus Did*
- Foster, Richard J. *Celebration of the Disciplines*
- Hybels, Bill. *Too Busy Not To Pray*
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Disciplines of a Godly Man*
- Murray, Andrew. *With Christ in the School of Prayer*
- Kaiser, Walter C., et al. *Hard Sayings of the Bible*