

Abiding in Christ

produces fruitfulness



# **LIVING WATER RESOURCES**

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## *Abiding in Christ produces fruitfulness*

### **The abiding example of the Son of God**

*"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves. Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be*

*glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."* John 14:7-15

Has anyone ever claimed to be so united with God before Jesus? This is the most astonishing thing for the Jews to hear someone say. *"I am in the Father and the Father is in Me." "The Father abiding in Me does His works"*

The claim to be one with God in such an absolute way was indeed something new, and the completeness of this unity of Father and Son is what guarantees Jesus always reveals God the Father to all of us. It is this oneness of the life the Father and Son share which the Lord cherishes so much that it results in His obedience to the Father, so much so that the Son never acts independently or on His own initiative. The Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, inseparable by choice, indistinguishable in purpose, uncompromising in faithfulness, steadfast in commitment, and

determined to succeed in achieving their common goal of salvation for the world.

This eternally unified relationship means the Son will never speak a word which is not from the Father because the Father abides in the Son and the Son in the Father. There is never a hint of another opinion or another plan; therefore God does His work through the Son who shows us the Father at work.

The Son shows us that God only does His work because the Son abides in the Father while the Father abides in the Him. It is therefore impossible to suggest that the Son can do anything that is not from the Father, and it is just as impossible for the Son to do the work of the Father without abiding in the Father.

This absolute oneness of unity is what produces divine fruitfulness of Father and Son, (v10-v11) and it is the same fruitfulness which results from this uncompromising unity that the obedient believer can expect as they

abide in the Son. (v12-14) However God's fruitfulness working through the believer is dependent on keeping Jesus' commandments because we love Him. v15

This abiding unity is only possible because the believer is born again of God by God's Spirit. (John 3:3, 5-6) And because of that new birth, help is promised so the believer can be a vessel for God to work from.

There is no hint of spiritual life without rebirth. There is no possibility for man to have unity with God from below according to his own efforts. Spiritual unity is only possible when God acts on our behalf from above in birthing a new spiritual life in the repentant and obedient believer.

**The Lord Jesus promised divine assistance to those who abide in Him through rebirth**

*I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see*

*Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”*

John 14:16 26

### **Abiding in Jesus means divine intimacy is guaranteed**

*“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him. If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. But so that the world may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me.”*

John 14:18, 21-23, 31

Even before the Lord talks about abiding in the vine in the next chapter, He assures His disciples that their oneness with Him is secure on the stipulation that their obedience is forthcoming.

John 14:21, 23

From what the Lord has said, John 14 lays the foundation for our understanding of what it means to abide in the vine in the following section from John 15:1-17. From His teaching, we are to clearly understand that our abiding in the life Jesus Christ is meant to produce the fruitful work of God.

### **Consequently, the disciples must abide in Christ**

*“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so 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 in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in*

*the vine, so 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 bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My 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. These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full."* John 15:1-11

### **Failure to abide means destruction**

In John 15 the Lord expands on His explanation of unity with the Father by

introducing the image of the Vine, Himself, and the Father as the Vinedresser. v1

Every unfruitful branch, that is, those claiming to be in Christ but fails to produce the life of God, is removed by the Father, and every branch that produces fruit is pruned by the Father so it may bear more fruit. John 15:2

This word of removal of the unfruitful is not something new, as though somehow it is an unfair treatment; removal or rejection has been dealt with by the Lord, especially we see this in Matthew's gospel *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'*

Matt 7:21-23

The fruitful branch has been suitably prepared by God because the word the Lord has spoken has been received by the disciple. (v3) Now the Lord speaks of the need for abiding in Him if fruitfulness is to be the result. The failure to abide in Christ means nothing can be done that will please God. John 15:4

On the one hand, the consequence of a lack of abiding is that they will dry up; they will have nothing to offer and be rejected. Dryness only comes to the branches that fail to abide in the life giving vine by obeying His commandments. All the dead wood will be gathered with the others branches who are not inclined to obey Jesus to be burnt. John 15:6

### **Abiding means fruitfulness and approval**

On the other hand, abiding in Jesus means His works will be produced in those who attach themselves securely to Him. This abiding life in Christ follows the example of the Lord on the same basis of the unified life He has with the Father. Then we can ask what we will and

it will be done because it will be consistent with the life of the Father and the Son. The overall purpose of abiding in Christ is the bountiful fruitfulness which glorifies the Father; and it is this fruitfulness which proves the fruit bearing branch to be a disciple of Jesus.

John 15:8

### **Abiding means living in love**

Now the Lord Jesus speaks of the love He shares with God is also available to the abiding branches. As He abides in the Father's love and subsequently produces fruit, so we are commanded to abide in His love as we can produce fruit for Him. (John 15:9) The Lord calls on all those who would follow Him to follow the example of obedience to the Father. His obedience to the Father's commandments resulted in God working through Him. Now that valued fruitfulness which comes from obedience to Him ensures we will abide in His love; just as His obedience to the Father

guaranteed that He would abide in the Father's love. John 15:10

These words of explanation of a fruitful life through obedience which result in God's abiding love were for the benefit of the disciples so that the Joy of the Lord would be in them and their joy would be complete; they would be completely filled with happiness.

John 15:11

**As He remained in God's love, we can remain in His love if we keep His commandments.**

The example of the life of the Father and Son in John 14:7-15 is the example for our life in Christ if we are to imitate His life by abiding in Him so that the Father is glorified.

The fullness of this unity we have with the Father and Son through obedience is what guarantees we will always reveals the life of the Son of God in all we do. It is the oneness of life we share in the love of the Father and Son which we cherish so much that results in

our obedience to them. This obedience to the Son and our dependence on the Son to give us life means we never want to act independently of Him or rely on our own initiative.

The Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father, and we are in them because of the love God has poured out into our heart. Father, Son and branches are inseparable by choice, indistinguishable in purpose, uncompromising in faithfulness, steadfast in commitment, and determined to succeed in achieving the Father's will.

This eternally unified relationship we share with God means we will guard against speaking a word which is not from the Son, because we abide in the Son and the Father abides in us. As a result of our obedience the Son does His work through us and shows the Father and the Son at work for the benefit of the world.

We can only do the work of the Son when we abide in Him while He abides in us; so it is

impossible to suggest that we can do anything which is not from the revealed will of God, and it is just as impossible for us to do the work of the Son without abiding in Him.

This absolute oneness of unity with God who has reborn His image and likeness in us is what produces divine fruitfulness in our lives as we abide in the Father and Son through our complete obedience. Divine fruitfulness is the life of God by His Spirit. This Godly fruitfulness which results from uncompromising unity is what the obedient believer can expect as they abide in the Son.

The fruitfulness of God's word working through the believer's life is dependent on keeping Jesus' commandments because we love Him. If there is no fruitfulness, it is because obedience is absent. God is faithful, if we obey because we love Him, we will abide, and we will be fruitful. Lack of fruitfulness means we are separated from fellowship with the Son and the Father. So Abide in Him

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Come to the river

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

John15:4

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