

## “ABIDE” 1 John 2:24-29

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**John 2:24-29** *24 Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life. 26 These things I have written to you concerning those who [try to] deceive you.*

*27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him. 28 And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. 29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.*

So far in this chapter, the apostle John had been warning the reader concerning the presence of the many "little" antichrists in the world and telling us as believers that we need to know the identifying mark of these antichrists (1Jn 2:22-23). And having already painted a clarifying picture of the pseudo believer, and in contrast, the authentic believer, ...having presented the photo of heresy in full living color, John is now giving us some defenses in which to protect us from falling into their hands...to guard us from being led astray.

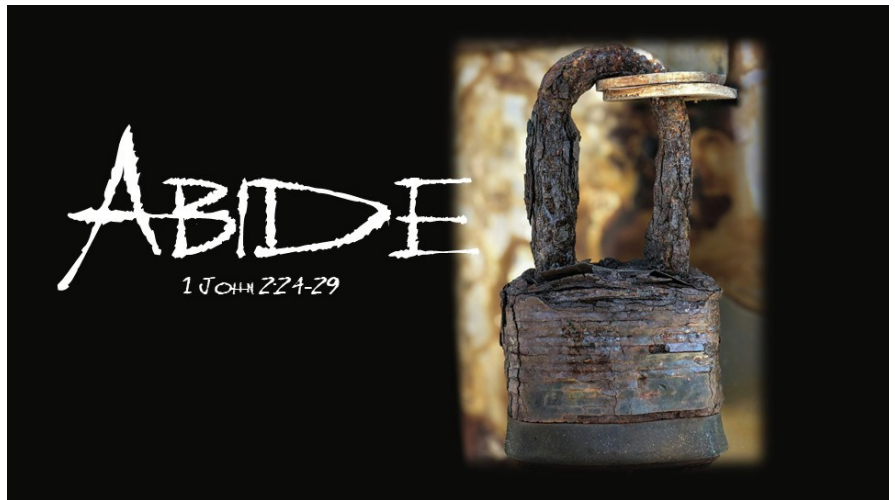
In order to successfully accomplish all of this, we are told that we must “abide.” “Abiding” is more than just remaining secure in one place. It is an active, continuous, and relational "taking up residence" within the core aspects of gospel living. It is a deliberate, persevering commitment that actually is anything *but* stagnant. Abiding in Christ is always and consistently moving forward, because HE is.

With that being said, there are two things that must ‘abide’ in us, ...two things that has to have “taken up residence.” One, the *message* which we have ‘heard from the beginning’ (1Jn 2:24) and secondly that initial *anointing* that we received from him’ (1Jn 2:27)." Firstly the "message"...the gospel, the scriptures as a whole, and then also the very Spirit of God indwelling in us. These must indeed have their birth in us, but they must also actually endure...remain... in our living, our walk, even as the years pass, even as we move from this life to the next. You see salvation may indeed be an “event”, but it is also a lifestyle, and definitely a journey. One can start this race, and never see the finish line. While genuine salvation is not the *prize for finishing*, finishing **IS** the testimony **OF** genuine salvation!

The ultimate test, therefore, as to the validity of our rebirth is the “abiding.” If we are true children of God, we will abide. Once again, we succeed at such because in the authentic disciple, the Spirit of God Himself abides in us! Essentially, we abide, because **He** abides! Jesus said, “*I will never leave you, and I will never forsake you.*” (Heb 13:5) The question, therefore, is not whether we can count on Him to have our backs, but rather can He count on us? The subject of this section of scripture therefore may be put under three headings: 1, Denying the Father and the Son (vs 22), 2, “Confessing the Father and the Son” (vs 23), and now 3, “Abiding in the Father and in the Son” (vs 24).

### Vs 24 - "Let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning..."

What is John referring to? What is it that we “heard from the beginning” that John wants us to dwell upon? John is clearly making reference to the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Mk 1:1). We as believers must remember always the truth and the magnitude of the Gospel! The stuff that led us to salvation in the beginning and holds us up now that we’re here. However, in our natural state...void of that anointing, we will eventually forget. We will



eventually return to our natural state. We cease to be thankful. We cease to be other centered. We stop serving...stop seeking the kingdom first, and we let it all float away.

"Abide" means to remain...to reside...to literally "stay put." But again...this is more than just hunkering down unmoving. The idea is that we literally "live there." Meaning we breathe and exist and move freely and interact all within the sphere of gospel influence and Holy Spirit power. We are called to "lodge," to "occupy," to "dwell" there in the hands of the spirit of Christ and His gospel. So many folks...those apparently void of John's prescribed "anointing," just never get that!

One word that encompasses this idea of abiding is the word "persevere." But do we? Are we? Because the fact is many of us live tumultuous "roller coaster" lives while claiming the umbrella of faith. Some of us slide into such a life after a time, and some...well, some have lived such from the beginning. They just never got on the "peace train." Thus something is amiss. Something is wrong. Are we daring enough to admit it? For we are not talking about merely a casual devotional life, but rather actually allowing the Spirit and the Word to literally possess you. It means that the Spirit of God is freely allowed to control our decisions, our priorities, our very living. It means He wins the priority decision, *every time*.

This speaks into the great quest to grasp what is our part and what is that of God in the journey of sanctification. It is clearly a scriptural expression that both parties are involved. That is a fact. The word "IF" in verse 24 indicates our responsibility. But who does what? John tells us that "If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father." Thus it goes without saying that if what I have heard is not committed to remain in me, then we do *NOT* "abide" in Him. One may stand strong in the "security of one's salvation" but this is one of those passages that should cause us to pause, and certainly not to be flippant about our salvation state.

Let it be understood, however, that this is not some sort of 'works' mandate. But in an authentic redeemed individual, there will be a natural thirst...a passion to stay close to Jesus...a passion to "abide." In light of the whole of scripture, this passage is not a "you have lost your salvation" text, but rather in many cases a "you never had it" text. They "departed from us, proving they were not one of us." (1 Jn 2:19) We also must stipulate that any and all believers will never find an earthly perfection from sin, so we also are not inferring that if you slip up, you're 'out.' John already covered that and ruled out a sinless life. This is speaking of a lifestyle and moreover a purpose and drive in one's life. But let us also make no mistake: in a truly redeemed life, progress will be evident. If none exists, then the individual should be gravely concerned.

### **Vs 25 - "And this is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life."**

The reward is clear and so is the guarantee. If God is really a God of all truth, you can take this promise "to the bank." Jesus promised (and John himself records it) that "If *anyone* loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We (the Holy Trinity) will come to him and make Our home with him." (John 14:23) Clearly the apostle John was no Calvinist with their selective atonement...no, John says "*anyone*."

"We will abide in him, we will dwell in him, we will move in him, we will go about with him wherever he goes. We will be with him at his work, we will be with him at his home, we will be with him in his relationships with others, we will be with him in his problems, we will be with him in his joys, we will be with him when he is confronted with temptations to anger and temper, we will be with him all the time. We will make our home with him. This is what John is saying. 'If what you have heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.'" (Ray Stedman)

There was this guy by the name of Bobo Holloman. You probably don't know the name Bobo Holloman, and there is a reason for it. Bobo Holloman was actually a baseball player, a pitcher, with the Cleveland Browns. When he was just a young player, he was often found bugging the coach for a starting assignment, and he

finally gave him one against the A's. Everything the A's hit that day was like a rocket, but everything was right at somebody, so instead of hits they were outs. In the eighth inning, the second baseman made a miraculous play to rob the batter of a hit. With two outs in the ninth, the first baseman caught a screaming drive down the line. The game was over. Hollomon had a no-hitter, the first twentieth-century no-hitter achieved by a pitcher in his first major league start. What an incredible start to his career. Great days were ahead for Bobo Holloman. Except, *not really*. Fact is, he never even pitched another complete game and by the end of the year he was back in the minors, never to see the major league again.

Bobo Holloman started well; he just didn't finish well. That happens to restaurants. There are appx 1 million restaurants in the United States with new restaurants starting each year. But roughly 60% of all new restaurants fail within the first three years. They start well; they just don't finish well. That happens to churches. There are approximately 375,000 church congregations in the United States. About 80% of all U.S. churches have either leveled out in attendance, are declining, or are dying. They start well; they just don't finish well. That also happens to "Christians." From the time of Paul's reference in his second letter to Timothy about Demas—"Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me" (2Ti 4:10)—the church has been plagued with the problem of people who claim to have faith but whose faith fizzles at the finish.

John warns, as I have on countless occasions, that there are those who will try to deceive you. There have been those who have come here amongst us that tried to deceive folks on this very issue of salvation and sanctification. They tried to tell folks that no part whatsoever was played by the individual...that such was all God and none of ours. It sounds so holy and so revering! Too bad it's a lie. It is a convenient pretense when one wants to go to heaven while living like hell. After all, if it is all God and I play no part, how can He hold me accountable if I fail to live for Him? It's God's fault! But the fact is "he has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness." And such is "released" unto our lives "through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue." (2 Peter 1:3) And if we love Him we will "keep His commandments." (John 15:10) And the scriptural support of the likes of these passages are as many as they are pervasive. But yet there remains those who want to lull you into such a damning lie.

**Vs 27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you;**

This does not mean we no longer need a teacher or to be taught. After all, this very letter from John is a teaching letter! It speaks rather of the discerning Spirit manifesting in a life that may even be absent official instruction on a matter. A situation where something just doesn't pass the "smell test" even though you are not exactly sure why. Reborn in Christ, we are factually in possession of all that is necessary for our self-defense on this matter, if we use the power which has been given to us. However your participation is significant. We must meet the attempts to lead us astray with some very real effort of our own. Warnings on this issue are of no benefit without our active response. For we not only have the anointing *from* Him, we have the anointing *of* Him. The person of Christ in Spirit form, to come and dwell in us and "make His home in us."

1 Corinthians 2:11 tells us that "...no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God." Thus without the Spirit, we are simply "flying blind." And when we walk away from Christ...when we are drawn away by false doctrine, false teachers, or false gods...when we are drawn away by lies, it only proves we are *not* in possession of the Holy Spirit. The only other possible explanation is we *do* know the truth but reject such out of love of sin and the flesh. Yet that too is confirmation of the lack of the Spirit of God, and the result is the same. Because Jesus promised us He would "never leave us or forsake us." He will never let go. If *we* let go, it is *our* doing, never His! If we are truly saved, we may falter, but we will never "depart." If Jesus *will* not...*cannot*, let us go once we are His, then if we do, we were indeed never His to begin with.

Further more, we will never truly grasp the scriptural and spiritual truths without Him. Without an illumination of the Holy Scriptures, no man can understand God's divine, infallible revelation because spiritual things are only spiritually—i.e., *by the aid of the Holy Spirit*—understood or discerned (1 Cor 2:11–14; Jn 16:13). There

will come into your life those who will say to you "God said to tell you..." When you hear that, be careful! I am not saying that there is not the gift of prophecy amongst us, but such will never go against scripture...that which you "learned in the beginning," ..and it will never go *beyond* scripture.

Plenty of folks like titles, including that of "prophet." I even had a guy give me his business card once introducing himself as "Prophet So and So." But such attempts are feeble in their endeavor to steal God's thunder. Remember...He has already given you "all things" that pertain to life and Godliness. You already have the stuff of kings...you just have to walk in it.

This 'anointing' John speaks of comes to us in the nature of a calm, constant, settled conviction. It rests on what has already been revealed, no longer looking under rocks for a deeper truth. Emotions, feelings, fancies, are all fluctuating, but God does not. How many folks throughout time found salvation with just a Bible? No commentary, no teacher/preacher, and no 'prophet' to guide them to the truth. No, it's all here in the Word. An individual...a teacher, may bless with clarity, but we can stop looking for a new revelation, because none is coming outside of a greater scriptural understanding.

### **Vs 27 "...you do not need that anyone teach you..."**

Once again, John is not saying however that we don't need teachers and that they have no value. After all...isn't that what John is doing at this point? Teaching? The bible continually calls forth spirit filled teachers! This is not anti teacher but rather pro Spirit and His subsequent discernment against *what* is false and *who* is false! It speaks of that certain "something" that tells us that "If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck." It speaks of the gift of discernment.

Some prideful and rebellious folks who fail to understand the sense in which John writes have been misled by its sound. Certain fanatics suppose it means that the Christian is independent of all preachers, and they have therefore taken up the position that all preaching and teaching is unnecessary and even unscriptural. But we need to read in context as to all of what John was saying.

If God called upon the apostles to "go forth and make disciples" then we are safe to believe that teaching and preaching still have their place at the table. The point John was making was that in reality...with the spirit of God leading us, we have no need to have anyone point out a false teacher, an unfaithful handling of scripture and a lying wolf. The Spirit will lead us, if we listen. If we have His Spirit and we have His Word, we are truly armed for battle.

### **Vs 28 "And now, little children, abide in him..."**

This is our part. This is ours to do. But will we? Westcott introduces this verse noting that now "John turns from the ideal view of the believer to the practical enforcement of duty: 'I have said that God's gift is unchangeable; and that the Christian continues living in that which he received, and so abides in his Lord; and now, in the face of your enemies, realize your life: do you abide in Him, and prove your fellowship by your action.'"

John has explained that a real Christian seeks to live a life of obedience, love, and truth. It is impossible to live in fellowship with God if you are disobedient, bitter, hateful or untruthful. Because sin will always lead you out of reality and into pretense. You will have an "artificial" life instead of an "authentic" life. (Wiersbe) A Christian will abide. His Word and His Spirit are here for every "believer." And embracing both will make us a "liver." A "functioning believer."

John was there at the Lord's own teaching about these things. In the Olivet discourse, Jesus spoke of a wise servant and a wicked servant (Mt. 24:45-51), and in His parable of the talents He contrasted the diligent servants and the sluggish one (Mt. 25:1-30). The sure way to guarantee being unashamed before the Lord at His return is to "abide in Him."