

What Does it Mean to Abide in Christ?

By Rev. D. Earl Cripe, PhD

We have lived since Pentecost, and the apostles have given us the instruction to abide in Christ, though many don't really know what that means. But we want to lay out clearly some vital concepts:

1. We must believe that Jesus Christ is alive, seated at the right hand of God, making intercession for us, and is intimately interested in what is going on in our lives as Christians.
2. We must talk to Jesus Christ, to the father through Jesus Christ, and to Jesus Christ and the Father by the Holy Ghost, on a regular basis. This not only means daily (in the morning, or whatever time you set aside for your devotions) but it means to continue instantly in prayer as Jesus has told us. That means we must be ready to talk to God on a moments notice about anything that comes up. Prayer is an old English word and I have no problem with it. I do not want to see it taken out of the Christian dialogue and replaced with some contemporary term like *meditation*. But there is no magic in the word *prayer*; the supernatural power is in the concept. Talk to God, communicate with God, converse with God as with a friend, ask God questions about things for which you need answers, establish a good relationship with Him as friends do or as in a wholesome family between a mother and daughter, father and daughter, a son and a mother, or a son and a father. Prayer means to communicate with God effectually and fervently in real ways and with confidence. Prayer is a matter that has perplexed many godly men through the years and I do not mean to speak flippantly or make light of any honest endeavors. Even so, I feel the need to say that prayer need not be a formality. I have often said in my ministry that if many of us talked to

our fathers or our friends the way we talk to God we would never get anything and we would never get anywhere.

3. Abide in Jesus Christ through His Word. If you honestly pray and honestly study the Word of God, you will grow in godliness and usefulness in His Kingdom. If you stop praying and stop studying the Word you will stop growing. The Christian life is like a swimmer in a fast-moving stream going against the current. There is no neutral; if you stop going forward you begin to go backward in a hurry.
4. Practice the presence of Jesus Christ in your life. In your habits and your expressions be conscious of the fact that Christ is beside you, walking down this road of life with you. I would be dishonest if I did not admit that I have had my better times and worse times in terms of fellowship with Christ over the past 45 years. In my better times I have been conscious of never saying or doing anything that would hurt or offend Jesus my Savior. Abiding in Christ certainly includes that concept.
5. Abide in Christ with your plans, your schemes, your agendas, and your goals in life. If you are going to abide in Christ, the mission of the Church must be part of your plan. If you are going to abide in Christ, worship with other Christians and a sharing in the study of the Word must also be part of it.
6. A most important concept of abiding in Christ is given to us in Hebrews 11:6. We must believe that God exists, and that He rewards those who diligently seek Him. This may seem so elementary as to be almost meaningless, but before breeze past it, let us ask ourselves some questions. In the past year have you done anything dishonest? Have you said anything that you know you should not have said? Have you told lies about anybody to make yourself look better? Have you neglected study and prayer? Then apparently you do not believe that God is. How could you or I or any one do any of these things if we understood that all things are naked and open under the eyes of

God, and that we are doing them in the very sight and presence of God and in contempt of what He has told us that He wants out of our lives. The awareness of the reality of God and the assurance that when we ask for things that are right we will get those things, is an essential part of abiding in Christ.

God's Point of View ©2016