

“Abiding and Practicing”

1 John 2:28-29

INTRO:

I have been watching the old JAG programs on DVD. Several things have struck me as I watched this series again. First, it struck me how much technology has advanced just since the 90's. Second, it struck me how these Navy lawyers defended some men and women who admitted quite openly that all he or she ever wanted to be was a Marine, or that the Navy was his or her life. When I heard these testimonies from those whose whole goal in life was to serve in the military, I began to wonder about me. Could I say all I ever wanted was to be all that God designed me to become? Could I truthfully say my life's goal is, ***“to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus laid hold of me?”*** (Philippians 3:12). I am convinced the way to do this is to abide and to practice.

I. Abide in Him (v.28)

II. Practice Righteousness (v.29)

I. Abide in Him (v.28)

A. In our study, we have learned about those who would steal our faith away from us. John calls them the antichrists. The key ingredient in the inoculation to protect us is our

“abiding” in the truth and in Christ. (1 John 2:24)

“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.”

John then turns to the idea of abiding to help us understand how to prepare for the Lord Jesus Christ's return to earth. (1 John 2:28)

“And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.”

B. Abiding in Him ensures that we will have boldness and not shrink away from Him at His coming. I want us to think of this against the background of Paul's statement in 2 Timothy 4; ***“Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”***

Abiding in Him is how we can love His appearing.

C. What does it mean to abide in Him? The word ***“abide”*** is one of John's favorite words. Perhaps the place to begin to understand what it means to ***“remain, live, or dwell”*** in Him is in the upper room discourse in the **Gospel of John Ch.15**. There are three aspects of abiding we need to seek there.

1. Abiding is Connection. (John 15:1-2)

"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, that it may bear more fruit."

Truly alive branches, branches that really abide in Him, are connected. This is a picture of salvation. If you are not saved by faith, you are not connected in Him and you cannot abide in Him.

2. Abiding is Fellowshiping with the Vine. (John 15:4)

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

I used the word fellowship to denote that we are actively in communion with Christ and draw our strength and life from Him.

3. Abiding is Fruit Bearing. (John 15:5)

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

One result and thus one evidence that we are abiding, dwelling in the Lord Jesus is that we are bearing fruit.

D. John continued this theme in his epistle. I want to hit the last point first.

In 1 John 4:12-13, John wrote:

"No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit."

How do we know that we have received the Spirit of Christ (the Holy Spirit)? We know because of the evidence that the Spirit of God leaves in our lives. (Galatians 5:22-23)

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness goodness faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."

If we are abiding this is the fruit we will be bearing.

E. In 2 John 9 we find a statement that speaks of abiding having to do with the doctrine (the teaching the Lord gave us in His Word).

"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."

II. Practice Righteousness (v.29)

A. If we are going to love His appearing, we must abide, dwell, and live in Him. We are talking a relationship with Christ that begins with salvation, grows in the Word of God and in the ministry of the Holy Spirit changing us to be like Jesus. Then John adds a little different perspective to this matter. (1 John 2:29)

“If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.”

B. What was John saying? Did he suggest that we must be sinlessly perfect to be ready for His coming? Always remember that John began his epistle with **1 John 1:8-10**. Demonstratively, John does not believe we can never sin. So, what is he saying?

He wrote about those who “do righteousness.” John did not write about those who were righteous, but those doing righteousness. The idea is that these folks try to make it a habit to do what Jesus declares to be righteous. Do they fail? Absolutely, but they pick themselves up, confess their sins, receive His forgiveness and try all over again. I took guitar so I learned the importance of practice. We are called to practice righteousness and godliness.

How is our practice going?

I want to conclude with a verse in **Colossians 3:4**.

“When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.”
Is Christ our lives? Is He your life? Is He mine?

We began our study talking about those who all they wanted was to be a Marine. How can we reach the point where Christ is our life? How can we truly say like the Apostle Paul;

“For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain?” (Philippians 1:21).

John tells us, we must abide, live, dwell in Him, and we need to actively practice righteousness.