

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, 8-26-12 AM NOTES
"ABIDING IN JESUS"
JOHN 15:6-11
#60 in Series, "Verse-by-Verse Through John"

Isaiah 43:7 (NKJV) "Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created **for My glory**; I have formed him, yes, I have made him."

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV) "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

I. The Result of Not Abiding in Jesus (v. 6)

A. View One

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) "being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ."

John 10:27-29 (NKJV) "27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand."

B. View Two

1 John 2:19 (NKJV) "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us."

C. View Three

1 Corinthians 9:27 (KJV) "But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a **castaway**."

Matthew 5:13a (NKJV) "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned?"

2 John 1:8 (NKJV) "Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward."

Hebrews 12:5-6 (NKJV) "5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: '*My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;* 6 *for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.*'"

1 John 5:16b (NKJV) "There is sin *leading* to death."

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 (NKJV) "12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by **fire**; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's **work is burned**, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through **fire**."

II. The Results of Abiding in Jesus (vv. 7-11)

A. A Powerful Prayer Life (v. 7)

1. The Conditions (v. 7a)

- a. We Must Abide in Christ
- b. Christ's Words Must Abide With Us

Logos—The Word as a whole

Rhema—The specific promises, commands, precepts and principles in the Word

2. The Promise (v. 7b)

“The key to getting what we want in prayer is to want what God wants.”

B. The Father Is Glorified (v. 8)

John 15:8 (ESV) “... and so prove to be My disciples.”

C. We Experience Christ's Love (vv. 9-10)

Jude 1:21a (NKJV) “keep yourselves in the love of God...”

“How much does the Lord love us? As much as the Father loves Him. How much does the Father love Him? With measureless love, without beginning or end. There stood Simon Peter, about to deny Him, and Thomas, so full of doubts, and Philip, wanting to see things eternal, immortal, and invisible when all the time they were plainly set before his face. There were James and John, the ‘sons of thunder,’ and Matthew, not long ago a common publican, and Simon the Zealot, not far removed from nationalistic fanaticism. Jesus looked at them. He said, ‘I love you men. I love you very much. I love you as much as the Father loves Me. I love you with an everlasting love, with love that is stronger than death...’”

—John Phillips

D. We Become Partakers of Christ's Joy (v. 11)

Hebrews 11:25b (NKJV) “...the passing pleasures of sin.”

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What is the purpose for our existence? If you know much about the Bible, you can immediately give a correct response to that question. The purpose of our existence is to glorify God. **Isaiah 43:7 (NKJV)** “Everyone who is called by My name, whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him.” If our purpose for existing is to glorify God, then how do we glorify God? That is an important question! The Bible gives us several ways that we glorify God, but one of the primary ways is spelled out in **John 15:8a (NKJV)** “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit...” Follow the reasoning: The purpose for which God created us was to glorify Him. We glorify Him by bearing fruit. Therefore our purpose in life involves bearing fruit. Anyone that lives for a purpose other than glorifying God is plowing water and shoveling smoke. In other words they are wasting their life. What exactly is this fruit that we are to bear? Once we know what this fruit looks like, how do we bear it? This is important because the last thing any of us wants is to come to the end of our life here on earth and realize that for eternal purposes our life has been wasted. We may accomplish a lot of things and get accolades from man and leave behind a great fortune for our children, but did we glorify God by bearing fruit? John 15 is a passage about **how to bear fruit**. The central message of this passage is, “Abide in Jesus because He alone is sufficient to produce the fruit that you are to bear.”

By way of introduction and review, I want to answer two questions we dealt with in the last message. The first question is, “What does ‘abide’ mean?” Even though it is not always translated “abide”, this Greek word is used 11 times in John 15:1-11 (it is translated “remain” in verse 11). The word itself means to remain, to stay, to dwell in, or to continue in. To abide in Christ is to keep an intimate connection to Christ, to live in constant conscious dependence on Him, and to constantly be available to Him. To abide in Christ is to be **desperate** for His supply because I realize that without Him I can do nothing. I am abiding in Christ when I see every demand on me as being a demand on Christ in me and I look in faith to Him to supply that demand out of His fullness. The second question we must answer is, “What is fruit”? We saw last week that the Scriptures tell us that making disciples is fruit (Romans 1:13), a holy life is fruit (Romans 6:22), and good works are fruit (Titus 3:14; Colossians 1:10). Primarily, however, fruit is the product or the outflow of Christ in us. Since Christ is in us in the person of His Spirit, fruit is Christ-likeness in daily life. Fruit is Christ-like affection, a Christ-like disposition, Christ-like works, and a Christ-like approach to life. The clearest description of a fruitful life is the nine-fold description of the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23. A fruitful life is one where the Holy Spirit fills that life and produces love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. A fruitful life comes when we live in surrender to the Spirit of Christ in us and trust Him to live out Christ’s life through our unique personalities. **Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)** “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” Technically, fruit is not a “Christ like life”, but Christ’s life flowing through us.

With that review let’s focus today on the results of not abiding in Jesus and the positive results of abiding in Him.

I. The Result of Not Abiding in Jesus (V6)

The correct interpretation of this verse is hotly disputed. There are three basic views as to what this verse is teaching. I know that the first one is incorrect. Neither the second nor third view I am giving you contradicts other clear Scripture. Both truths are clearly taught in other passages.

A. View One

The first view says that this is a person who was a Christian, but has ceased abiding in Jesus and has ceased bearing fruit and is now no longer in Christ. The casting out is God putting them out of the body of

Christ and the fires picture Hell. I do not nor ever have believed that this view is correct, but it is held by numerous Bible teachers. The overwhelming weight of the Biblical evidence says that this cannot be what the verse means because it would contradict many other clearer passages. For instance, this view would contradict **Philippians 1:6 (NKJV)** “being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ”. That is a promise without exception for those who have savingly believed in Jesus Christ. This first view would also contradict Romans 8 where the message is that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Chapter 8 of Romans is the greatest chapter on the eternal security of a genuine believer in the whole Bible. Another reason I have to reject this view is that it contradicts **John 10:27-29 (NKJV)** “²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand.” Based on the weight of the Scripture which, being infallible cannot contradict itself, we must reject this first view.

B. View Two

This view teaches that the branches which are cast out and withered and then burned are those who were superficially attached to Christ, but had never truly been saved. Sometimes they are called “Judas Branches”. Just as Judas professed to be Christ’s disciple and looked like one for a time, he was a phony from the beginning. Jesus spoke of him in John 13 as having never been truly cleansed. These Judas branches are those spoken of in **1 John 2:19 (NKJV)** “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.” This interpretation of verse six certainly doesn’t contradict any other passage in Scripture and in fact this truth is taught clearly in many other places such as multiple passages in 1 John.

C. View Three

This view that I lean toward interprets these burned branches as true believers who have ceased to bear fruit. The sense of verse 6, I believe, is that if any branch continues to refuse to abide in Jesus and to bear fruit, the vinedresser (the Father) will bring chastisement on them and if that is not responded to, perhaps call them home. This verse is saying the same thing as **2 John 1:8 (NKJV)** “Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but *that* we may receive a full reward.” I believe that these branches are the ones who have resisted the vinedresser’s cleaning and lifting up. Perhaps they refuse to confess and repent of sin. Perhaps they became bitter over the vinedresser’s pruning and have continued to live for themselves thus bearing no fruit. The Father (here compared to the vinedresser) will not allow that rebellion to continue. These unfruitful vines will experience the Father’s chastisement and scourging (Hebrews 12:5-6). As I stated earlier, if they continue to be unfruitful, the Father brings them home. **1 John 5:16 (NKJV)** says “There is sin *leading* to death.” In the context, this is speaking of a Christian and the death is physical death.

What is the burning referring to? I believe that it is not referring to Hell in this passage, but to the time of the judgment of the believer’s works, called the Judgment Seat of Christ. The judgment Seat of Christ is not to judge sins; they have already been judged in Jesus. The Judgment Seat of Christ judges our stewardship of how we have built on the foundation of Christ. What happens there is described in **1 Corinthians 3:12-15 (NKJV)** “¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one's work will become clear; for the Day [the Judgment Seat of Christ] will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's **work is burned**, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.” Follow the reasoning here. A grape branch has only one purpose – bearing fruit (grapes). A grape branch has no other useful purpose. The only thing that you can do with a grape branch that is not fruitful is to make a bonfire with it. Let’s apply this to believers today. If you are truly born again, you have a desire to please God and bear fruit. If you get your priorities so twisted and allow the flesh to rule, God will discipline you and prune you, but if you refuse to walk in the Spirit and thus not fulfill the desires of the flesh, God will take you

home and at the Judgment Seat of Christ, your works will be worthless like wood, hay and straw. When your life's works are run through God's testing fires, they will be burned up. You will have wasted your life! You are saved, but left to stand ashamed before the Savior who loved you and gave Himself for you. All you have to show for your life here that was designed to give God glory by bearing fruit is a pile of ashes. Francis Schaffer used to call these "ash heap Christians" That is the result of not abiding in Jesus.

II. The Results of Abiding in Jesus (V7-11)

In a word, the result of abiding in Jesus is fruit. This fruit will result in a life compared to gold, silver, and precious stones in 1 Corinthians 3:12. When they are run through the testing fires of God at the Judgment Seat of Christ, they will be unscathed and will result in reward and hearing those words that every true Christian longs for – the Lord's "Well done good and faithful servant". Let's look at some of the details of this fruit in verses 7-11.

A. A Powerful Prayer Life (V7)

Let's break this verse down and see the conditions and the promise.

1. The Conditions (V7a)

There are two conditions to this promise.

a. We Must Abide in Christ – We have already examined what that means. We are living in constant conscious dependence on Christ in us and we are always available to Him to direct us and to produce the fruit through us that He desires to produce. To abide in Him is to live in intimate communion with Him and to deepen in our knowledge and love for Him.

b. His Words Must Abide in Us – The fact that "words" is plural is significant. In the Greek language there are two different words that are used when referring to the Bible. The first ("logos") means the Word of God as a whole. The second word ("rhema") speaks of the specific promises and principles and precepts of God's Word. "Rhema" is the word used here. In other words we are to be so filled with the promises, the commands, and principles of God's word that they consume our thoughts, guide our worldview, set our desires, and direct our decisions. Don't take that last statement lightly! That is a lifetime pursuit. This does not happen by simply taking a class or two and reading "The Promise for Today" in a devotional book! This involves being consumed with hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on the Scripture. Apart from His word abiding in you, your prayer life will be weak, anemic, and powerless. I don't understand Christians who don't have a daily time reading and studying and meditating on God's Word. I don't understand Christians who are not in a Sunday School class where the Word is taught, discussed and applied in lives as relationships are built and God's people love and minister to one another. I don't understand why some Christians would prefer to stay home on Sunday night and watch TV rather than hear God's Word taught and applied to our life. I know that we are not commanded to go to church on Sunday nights and that a lot of really good churches don't even have Sunday night services. I'm not speaking of some legalistic rule for you to keep; I am bewildered as to why you don't want to be here. One of the greatest Bible scholars of the first half of the 20th century was Dr. Donald Barnhouse. His grasp of the Word of God was amazing. One day he was traveling somewhere by train and was studying the Word of God. A young man was sitting across from Dr. Barnhouse reading a magazine. The young man said, "Excuse me sir, are you Dr. Barnhouse?" Dr. Barnhouse said "Yes, I am". The young man shared his admiration for Dr. Barnhouse's Bible teaching ministry and then he said, "Sir, I would give the world to know the Bible like you." Dr. Barnhouse said, "Son, that's exactly what it will cost you". Are the things of this world keeping you from the Word of God? If the answer is "yes", that is likely the main reason that your prayers are so weak.

2. The Promise (V7b)

Isn't that dangerous for God to promise to do what we desire? No, not when you see it in the context of the first part of the verse. If we are abiding in Him and His words are abiding in us, what we desire is the will of God! Even when we do not know what His will is in a situation, we pray for what we know is His 100% of the time will which is that God be glorified. The key to getting what we want is prayer is to want what He wants!

B. The Father Is Glorified (V8)

We focused in on this in the introduction. While this verse is very important, it requires very little explanation. When we bear much fruit, two things happen. First, the Father is glorified. That means that we make Him look good; we turn the spotlight on Him and He is made famous and is desired because of the fruit in our life. Second, bearing much fruit is indisputable evidence that we are for real! That is what that last phrase means in verse 8. The ESV translates that last phrase, “and so prove to be my disciples”. Just as good and abundant fruit on a tree doesn’t make it a good tree but evidences that it is a good tree, even so a life of fruit doesn’t make us His disciple, it evidences that we truly are a disciple of Jesus Christ.

C. We Experience Christ’s Love (V9-10)

Christ’s love for us never changes, but our awareness and enjoyment of that love can change. We read this same truth in **Jude 1:21 (NKJV)** “keep yourselves in the love of God...” On a cold day, the warm sun may be shining, but you are missing the benefits of it by standing in the shade. Abiding in His love doesn’t make Him love us; it simply makes us aware of it and allows us to reap the benefit of it. Jesus’ love for us is compared to the love His Father has for Him. That is amazing! John Phillips put it more beautifully than I ever could. He said: “How much does the Lord love us? As much as the Father loves Him. How much does the Father love Him? With measureless love, without beginning or end. There stood Simon Peter, about to deny Him, and Thomas, so full of doubts, and Philip, wanting to see things eternal, immortal, and invisible when all the time they were plainly set before his face. There were James and John, the ‘sons of thunder’, and Matthew, not long ago a common publican, and Simon the Zealot, not far removed from nationalistic fanaticism. Jesus looked at them. He said, ‘I love you men’. I love you very much. I love you as much as the Father loves Me. I love you with an everlasting love, with love that is stronger than death...” [John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospels – John*, Page 29]. The love He has for all who have repented of sin and savingly believed on Him and are following Him as His disciple. How do we walk basking in that love, reveling in that love, returning that love as much as is possible for a human being to do? We do it by abiding in His love. How do we abide in His love? Verse ten is clear. We abide in His love by a lifestyle of keeping His commandments. Keeping His commandments doesn’t make Him love us or even love us more. Keeping His commandments allows us to abide in and stay joined to His love. Don’t focus first on your love for Him. It is changeable and will discourage you. Focus on His unchanging love for you and in response to His love, your love for Him will flourish (1 John 4:19).

D. We Become Partakers of Christ’s Joy (V11)

Joy, real joy is manufactured in Heaven and God has a monopoly on it. It cannot be obtained from anyone or anything other than Him. We may find happiness in circumstances that go well, but remember that happiness depends on what happens. We may find temporary pleasure in good things or even sinful things (**Hebrews 11:25b (NKJV)** “...the passing pleasures of sin”). You find genuine joy only from God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The word translated “remain” in verse 11 is the same word translated “abide” in this passage. When we abide in Him, His joy abides in us. It isn’t a small dose; it is fullness of joy!

CONCLUSION

When we abide in Him and His word abides in us, we experience powerful answers to prayer, we experience and enjoy and delight in His love for us that is the same love with which the Father loves the Son, and we experientially know fullness of joy. The result of that answered prayer, God sized love, and full joy is that God is glorified. To glorify God is why You exist!