

John 15 Part 1

This continues from the last chapter as Jesus is giving His disciples some of His final teachings before His death. He has just told them to rest in the peace He gives, and not to be afraid.

“Abiding in Christ – Our Present Mansion and Jesus’ Joy”

Hudson Taylor was the founder of the China Inland Mission, and under God was responsible in the mid-19th century for leading hundreds of missionaries into China’s interior for the first time. In 1869, when he was 37 years old, he came he entered a new phase of life. He began to drink more deeply at the experiential fountain of John 15:1–11. He was given a deeper, and more constant, more satisfying experience of abiding in Christ.

His son Fredrick Howard Taylor wrote in 1932,

Here was a man almost sixty years of age, bearing tremendous burdens, yet absolutely calm and untroubled. Oh, the pile of letters! any one of which might contain news of death, of lack of funds, of riots or serious trouble. Yet all were opened, read and answered with the same tranquility — Christ his reason for peace, his power for calm. Dwelling in Christ, he drew upon His very being and resources. . . . And this he did by an attitude of faith as simple as it was continuous. Yet he was delightfully free and natural. I can find no words to describe it save the Scriptural expression “in God.” He was in God all the time and God in him. It was that true “abiding” of John fifteen. - Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret

- 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.**
- 2. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:**

As we have seen before, believers are eternally secure in Christ (John 6:39-40):

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.”

“But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand. I and my Father are one.” – John 10:27-30

So what is this verse talking about?

- The context here is Passover, and Jesus’ last 24 hours. Judas has already betrayed Him (Jn 13). Jesus is addressing His Jewish followers. Israel was understood to be the vine, circumcision placing the child in the covenant of Israel (Gen 17:10-14), by the Jewish people, thus securing their spiritual destiny since they are a part of Israel. Jesus is putting this erroneous teaching to rest. The subject here is Salvation. Jesus has already established that children of God are ETERNALLY secure, Jn 6:37, 10:27-30. The analogy is clarifying the true believers from the false (Judas had been with them for 3½ years and was not a true believer) through evidentiary fruit.
- A Changed Life (fruit) is the result of True Faith
 - I. Fake Faith
 - 1 Jn 2:3-4 (Not perfect, but changed with a desire to please God)
 - II. Real Faith
 - 2 Cor 5:17, Eph 2:8-10
 - Characteristics of a Child of God
 - Produces GOOD Fruit - Matt 7:16-20
 - Attitude Fruit - Gal 5:22,23
 - Action Fruit - Phil 1:9-11
 - Chastisement - Hebrews 12:5-8
- This is speaking of those like the Jewish people of John 8, people like Judas, and the Hebrew “believers” who were professors, but **not** possessors.

- They may claim outwardly to believe in Jesus, but have not inwardly **received** Him.
- Those who claim to follow Jesus, but are following a false Jesus based on false doctrine:
 - Mormons
 - Jehovah's Witnesses
 - Roman Catholics
 - Those who don't truly believe that Jesus is the only way (Joel Osteen)

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, **The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.**"

– Matthew 13:24-29

"Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, **He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**" – Matthew 13:36-43

- Turn back to John 8:30 (as an example of professing "believers")

and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Abiding in Jesus does not prevent us from experiencing external trials and difficulties, BUT we can experience them WITHOUT a troubled heart! If we are abiding in Him, anything that would or could be hurtful or unpleasant will never be useless in God's plan for our lives! This is why we are told:

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

- James 1:2-4

"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?... For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." – Hebrews 12:6,10-11

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." - Rom 8:28,29

3. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

"Clean" here is from the same Greek word for "purge" in v.2. It is the **exact same word** Jesus used in John 13 speaking to Peter (v.3-11). It is identical (in Greek) to the phrase in v.10! We **are purged!**

The "word" Jesus is speaking of here, is His entire message of truth and redemption He has preached in His earthly ministry up to this point. It has everything to do with who He is, and what He has done, and will do.

4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

The one way to illustrate the concept of abiding can be thought is through the following silly illustration: (It is by no means a perfect metaphor).

Imagine a messed up family.

There is a husband, a wife, and two kids.

The dad is always working.

He takes extra hours all the time, and even when he's home, his heart and mind are at his job.

One day, a man shows up and claims that he is the father of one of the children.

The wife denies that this man (one of her old boyfriends) was the father of the child.

Once DNA results are received, we find that this man is not the father. **He is an imposter.**

He is one who claimed to be part of the family, but didn't bear "evidentiary fruit."

He is removed from the equation.

The real dad is really a part of the family, but he's never really "present" with them.

He doesn't really enjoy the wonderful benefits and joys he could have, if he would really "be there."

There are more "fruits of fatherhood" than just a DNA test, but this man was missing out.

One day, his wife has a nice long talk with him. This is the pruning. ☐

The dad realized he was really dumb, apologized to his family, and is now experiencing all of the joys of being a dad. He is now bearing "much fruit."

- 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**
- 6. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.**

This is illustrated in the parable of the wheat and the tares, quoted previously. Those that abide are the true believers, who are eternally secure in Christ. If they are "passively abiding," they will be pruned or purged. If they are actively abiding, they will bring forth much fruit. Those who don't abide were never saved, simply professors. They are lost, and the judgement spoken of is the Lake of fire.

7. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

This has a direct link to what Jesus said about "praying in His name" in the previous chapter:

"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." – John 14:13,14

This is not a blank check as long as we sign Jesus' name to it. It has a direct link to the previous context. "In His name" means for HIS fame, for HIS glory, lifting HIM up, for the purpose of HIS glory as we do these great works! This shouldn't be removed from the context of our God-given mission.

Look at John 14:16-23 to see an amazing connection between "abiding" and what Jesus teaches about the Holy Spirit.

- 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.**
- 9. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.**
- 10. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.**

11. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

We need to experience Jesus' joy and Jesus' peace! We do this by actively abiding IN HIM. If we do this, we will bring forth much fruit, and experience a joy and a peace that is not our own. Just as the father in that previous illustration was now experiencing the joy of his children, even so we, if we as true believers, actively abide in Christ, we will joy in HIS JOY!

