

Abide in Me

Part 1

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] I am the true vine and my Father is the husband vine, every branch in me that there is not fruit, he taketh away, and every branch that bare a fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you, as the branch cannot bare fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that [00:01:11] abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me ye can do nothing. And verse 8, healing is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples. Now John 17, and the first three verses, these words speak Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power, authority over all flesh, that [00:02:10] he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, and this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I think I hardly need say, beloved, after the Bible reading we had together this afternoon, that we are suggesting these two passages to you, as a little follow up of the line of truth that the Lord graciously brought before us, the introduction by the Son of God, of the eternal life in this world, and its communication by his quickening voice, [00:03:02] in order that they may be found accompanied in this world, attached to him as John 15 so clearly shows, and are able to continue in this world, the very features that came to light, in the Son of God, and it is that we want just for a few moments, to point out in these two passages we have read together, the continuation in us, of that which came to light in the Son, that as he was here for the glory of the Father, we have the wonderful privilege of moving in this world for the glory of the Father. I know there are times when we think, there is that about the Son indeed as there must be, that you and I cannot possibly imitate, but there is that, beloved, let us remember, coming out in him in his perfect manhood in [00:04:01] this world, that we can imitate, and it is that we hope for a few brief moments, we might look at together, in these two passages in this Gospel. Most of us, I am assured, know the connection of these chapters together, from chapter 13 to the end of chapter 17, where as oft times it has been pointed out or called to us, the Lord's last words to his own. This very Gospel in its breaking up, as we find into sections, from chapter 1 to chapter 7, the main thought in those 7 chapters is light, a life coming from God. From chapters 8 to the end of chapter 12, light seems to be the outstanding feature, where as from chapter 13 to 17, love is the outstanding feature. These three marks that came to light in the Son of God when [00:05:04] in this world, life and light and love, in the revelation of the Father, and in the securing of a company, in which these things have been made good, in the power of the Spirit of God, consequent upon the Son, as we know at the end of this Gospel, leaving this world by way of the cross, going back to the Father, sending down the Spirit, that that which began in him might be continued, and I think these chapters that we read but a portion from have that objective in view. Chapter 13, you remember, the most prominent thought perhaps that springs to one's mind about that chapter, the feet washing by

our Lord Jesus Christ, and you remember his own words concerning that, but with me. And then in chapter 14, the opening out, the secrets of the divine [00:06:05] company, I mean the apostles, alone in that other room, the secrets as to where he was going into the Father's house, and their attachment to him in that place. But then at the end of chapter 14, the Lord arose from that room and with his disciples, moving on toward Gethsemane, chapters 15, 16, and 17 were all given on the streets, two as we know to his own, and last of all this wonderful prayer, at the end of this wonderful discourse, turning in heart to the Father, the Son, in communion with the Father, but yet thank God as we read down this chapter, having his own particularly in view, with a view to glorifying the Father. But without little preliminary, we must come down to chapter 17, and listen again to these wonderful words from the [00:07:07] lips of the Son. These words speak Jesus, I suppose referring to the previous four chapters, lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour has come, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. We spoke quite a little this afternoon about this, the Son moving here for the glory of the Father, here he is about to leave this world, he's going back to the Father, into the glory in which he was eternally, coming into manhood in this world. And we do well to ask this question, what then is the thought in his heart, as he is going back to that glory, glorify thy Son. Why the amazing thing we read in this next statement is, that thy Son also may glorify [00:08:09] thee. As he had ever moved in this world in perfect subject manhood, manifesting the Father, telling out the love of God, always doing that which conveyed the interest and the love of God to his creature, in every step of his pathway, glorifying the Father. Now when he is leaving this world and going back to the glory, his desire in this statement is precisely the same. He desires that from the glory, he might glorify the Father on this earth, just as he had ever glorified him when he was on this earth. And again we say beloved, we do well to question these statements, purely with the desire of trying to learn that which lies behind them. [00:09:02] How then is this going to work out? How can he, now that he has left this world, gone back to that glory, how is he going to continue to glorify the Father still on this earth? I believe you and I are part of that answer to that desire. It's in you, in me, in the saints of God left in this world that the Father is continually being glorified, certainly from the Son in heaven. But in this wonderful company, left in this world where he has been, that they may continue to glorify the Father. Don't let us shrink from these statements. We hear them said sometimes as though we cannot entrench into this sort of thing. We must leave it by itself. No beloved, we have brought into this. And if ever these requests are going to be carried out, it can only be with the desire [00:10:01] of heart that we have to continue in that path. And thank God we can, that the same features that came to lighten the Son of God, might come to lighten the saints of God who belong to him in this world. Glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him authority over all flesh, one of the terms we had, you remember, in our chapter this afternoon, authority over all flesh. How then is he using that authority today? We read, you remember, in a day that is coming, he'll use it in calling everybody out of their tombs. But that hasn't arrived yet. How has he used it with you, with me, this authority over all flesh? Why, by giving us eternal life, as he says, over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as thou has [00:11:03] given him. The Father's gift to the Son, no one can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me. Draw him, and again the Lord did say, I will raise him up at the last day. And thank God, in other words, you remember we read in that chapter, all that the Father giveth me shall come to me. And here we are tonight, the loved objects of the Father given to the Son, in order that the Son might give to us eternal life. And in this way, continue that wonderful work, not so much for our glory, but for the glory of the Father. And the only possible way that can be done, that the life that he lived, living on us now by the Spirit, coming out into manifestation, might reproduce in us the features that came to light in him, that the Father, having been glorified [00:12:01] in the Son, might continue to be glorified in the saints. That he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. This is the only time, as far as I'm aware, the Son of God ever used that

title about himself. Actually, it's a name and a title, Jesus Christ. But he does use it here, and the only place that I'm aware, that he does use it. The only thought I can deduct from it, you may have some thought about it, what has occurred to my mind concerning it, he doesn't present himself this time as the Son of God, but as that man in subjection to the will of God, Jesus Christ he calls himself, that they may know thee, the only true God, and the perfections of that wonderful man. Son of God indeed, as we well know, yet found [00:13:07] in this world, Jesus, the anointed of God, that he might move through this world, and in the perfection of manhood, and all that he did, and all that he said, glorify his Father who had sent him. There may be another reason for using that term, I do not know. The only time he ever used it about himself, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Now this is just a little foundation for what we have in mind, in chapter 15, if we can just carry it back, the Son leaving this world, going back to the glory, the first desire, there are four gifts of divine love in this chapter. The first one is, as to those whom the Father had given him, that he might give to us, that eternal life, the life that flowed ever in him, the true God, and eternal life, and I cannot doubt beloved [00:14:05] as we shall see, as with a view to them, reproducing in us, the features that came to light in this wonderful person, Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Turn back then to chapter 15, and there I think we see how, at least in one place, how this works out. I am the true vine, my Father is the husband vine, he doesn't say God, yes God he certainly is, but does it not seem to suggest immediately beloved, as we are now being brought in, pretty much on the line of Christian responsibility, to remember we are every one of us subject of the Father's care, subject of the Father's training, my Father is the husband one, just as the vine dresser, knowing all that is necessary in that vine, knows exactly what to do [00:15:06] with a view to producing fruit, let us ever remember, we are in the hands of the Father, as belonging to the Son, under the Father's care, to bring to light in us, that which came to light in the Son, my Father is the husband vine, the very circumstances of life through which we are going, the disappointments as well as the successes, the happy things and the sad things, be they what they may, let us never forget that we are in the hands of the Father, loved by the Father, and the one objective the Father has in view, in every one of us, is that more and more we might glorify him, how it might save us at times, complaining about the load we feel that we have to bear, only to keep in mind, if our desire is right, to be here for the glory of [00:16:01] the Father, to remember whatever may come across my path in this world, it's the Father who wants me to glorify him, that has brought this to pass, not only I'm moving in these conditions, as we shall see in a moment, I will find that that care, the husbandman care of the Father himself, can produce more fruit in me than ever I could produce in myself, apart from the husbandry dealings of the Father to produce it, my Father is the husbandman, every branch in me, you've probably looked up these terms, it's a graft twig, we all know I think what a graft is in a tree, it isn't a twig that has grown out of the tree, but a twig that has been brought and attached to the tree, that it might receive the life of the tree, the power of that tree, and producing that twig, what that tree is capable [00:17:05] of making it produce, it's a graft twig, oh yes we were never born into this tree, could not possibly be, but thank God if we believe the Gospel and belong to the Son, we are like graft twigs into that tree, that we might receive the nourishment, the sustainment, the very sap, the life-giving energy that is in that tree, to produce on that graft twig, what that tree is capable of producing, and could it be anything else but beloved, but his own blessed features coming to light in us, as the fruit of his life flowing through us, in the power of the Holy Spirit of God, every branch in me, that there if not fruit, they take it away, that's a sad thing to have to say isn't it, about genuine branches in the tree, and yet through failing to bear fruit, in the husbandary ways of [00:18:03] the Father, better to take them out of the world, than leave them here it may be, to cast gloom and cast, well we'll not use the word, instead of that glorifying the Father, only to bring reproach upon the testimony, when Christ himself ought to have been seen in that branch, sad that these things have to be brought in, but the Son of God does bring it in, every branch in me, that there if not fruit, he take it away, but every branch that there if fruit, he purges, he cleanses it, why do you

know I'm sure of this, there's never a moment in our lives in this world, but what we're in danger of defilement in this world, thank God it may not overcome us, but never let us forget beloved, we cannot move in this hostile, this filthy world through which we are going, without being in constant danger of defilement by it, we spoke about an instance [00:19:05] coming down in the train on the reading, we're not going to repeat it, but just the danger of being attached to that sort of thing, brought into it unwittingly, before one is aware, and feeling well thank God no I don't belong to that, keeping clean from these things, but let us remember there's never a moment in this world, that what we are always in danger of defilement from it, so long as we are here, but thank God the Father has us in hand, and he will cleanse us, purge of it, all with this objective in view, that we might bring forth more fruit, having begun then rightly, and if we produce fruit at all, it's a positive proof that we do belong to the Son, only in his life and nature, can we reproduce his features, and if we produce anything at all, it's fruit, as the fruit of that eternal life, in every one of our souls, but we can make progress [00:20:04] in it, more fruit, and we ask ourselves again this Boxing Day, am I producing more fruit now, than I was last Boxing Day, when perhaps we were together, I wasn't with you, but you were here again, it's a good thing to ask ourselves at times, am I any better, am I producing more fruit, am I further out of this world, is my service more for the glory of the Father, have I gained in any way, am I helping the meeting perhaps more than I used to do, these are the local things, in which we all have our setting, and not only capable of bearing fruit, but able to produce more fruit, under the care of the Father, as he would seek to teach us, and that we might learn, more and more, concerning his beloved Son, prejudice, cleanses us, that it might bring forth, more fruit, and the Lord can say about them, now are they clean, through the [00:21:08] word, which I have spoken unto you, sometimes of course we refer this verse, to chapter 13, when the Lord having washed their feet, do you remember, and Peter says, not my feet only, my hands and my head, he that has washed, needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean, every way, and I do not doubt the Lord referring, to the work that already hath taken place in their souls, through the word, that he hath spoken unto them, but beloved, we cannot just stop there, with this initial word, where we began, now are ye clean, says the Lord, through the word, which I have spoken unto you, if then there is that of God, in our souls, if there is the life, of the Son of God, in our souls, why not lay full hold upon it, as we ever can do, as the next verse [00:22:05] tells us, abide in me, seeking to always move, in touch with the Son, and with the Father, don't let us say that well, with home to attend to, with business to attend to, yes we've all got these things to attend to, but why break off these living links, in the spirit of our souls, with the Son, and with the Father, abide in me, said the Lord, don't sever yourself from me, whatever the circumstances may be, in the sphere of Christian responsibility, we're ever in touch with the Son, in his life, and his nature, and if only we seize hold of these things, in the faith of our souls, that is the power, whether it be in the home, in the business, in the meeting, that is going to produce this more fruit, that is going to be for the glory of the Father, and depend upon it, for the blessing of our own souls, as we do so, abide in [00:23:07] me, and I in you, as the branch can it, their fruit of itself, why this is the Son himself, warning us about these things, I may think I've gone far enough, I don't need this, or I don't need that, there's never a moment beloved, when you and I are beyond spiritual need, in attachment to the Son of God, constantly needing refreshment, enlightenment, guidance, direction, in regard to all that we are doing, even coming to a meeting like this, to ask the Lord, well not whether I should come to the meeting, but should I go there this time, as some of us have had to decide, go to this one, or go to that one, not whether we should go to a meeting or not, we never ask the Lord that question, but we may ask sometimes, if there's a choice, which one he would have us go to, a job comes along, asking the Lord, does the Lord want me there, a house comes [00:24:05] to light, or a home, does the Lord want me there, pardon me getting down to these things, but I'm certain beloved, this is where they come out, if left to oneself, perhaps the most of us would change immediately, our circumstances, the district in which we live, or things like that, let us just remember,

here we are, just where he wants us, attached to that vine, ever seeking to be controlled by him, and I believe it's in these practical ways, if we abide in him, and he in us, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in me, no more can ye, except ye abide, in the vine no more can ye, except ye abide in me, just one more verse or two, I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, need I ask you beloved, [00:25:06] wouldn't you like that to be true of you, I'd be mighty astonished if you said no to that one, I assure you I want it to be true of me, very much fruit, yes, but while I have the desire, I must listen to these words, and realize the only possible way that can come to light, is this constant attachment to the sun, in my spirit of my soul, living in communion with him, abiding in him, and he in me, and if this is done, as we've often heard I'm sure from this chapter, not only will there be fruit, and more fruit, but much fruit, for without me, the margin of my bible reads it, severed from me, certainly we found it's one of the strongest negatives in the Greek language this, it means falling apart from the thing, severed from me, or apart from me, ye can do [00:26:01] nothing, never to get up to preach the gospel, without asking light from the Lord, never attempting a simple word like this, without realizing we're absolutely dependent upon the Lord, why not even to speak to children without realizing, that if the Lord doesn't give me that word, I might as well save my time in speaking to them, but in touch with him, coming out of his presence, abiding in him, and it's in this way as the Lord tells us, we're going to bear much fruit, for without me, ye can do nothing, and then just this link in verse 8, herein is my father glorified, yes just as we read in chapter 17, that thy son also may glorify thee, as thou hast given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him, and this is life eternal, [00:27:01] that they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent, here in us shall we glorify the father, herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, oh don't let us be afraid of these words, there's an immensity about them my grandjo, don't let us give them up as hopeless, the Lord is practically saying here, you can live the life I've lived, you can glorify the father, as I have glorified him, you know when we make these statements, we keep the limitation of his divinity, and his communion with the father, that being the son, he only could have, but in subject dependent manhood, here in this world, reproducing the very features, that came to life in the son, herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my disciples, [00:28:01] we know don't we that disciples ever involve a teacher, and the disciples are learners, and here we are learners as it were at his feet, his disciples, thank God we have his life, we have his nature, the power of the spirit, we are attached to him in heaven above, and in the power of this eternal life, that he has given us, we can live in that sphere continually, and everything we touch, and responsibility, touch it as those who belong to him, touch it as those who are in communion with the father and the son, and so much beloved as that does come to life, in us these graft twigs in divine, so much the more will Christ be seen in us, and so much the more will the father be glorified.