

Abide in Me, 3

The longer I consider “Abide in Me” the deeper it gets, and right now I’m in over my head. I need more time to process it before the Lord - - to listen and receive insight.

For 50-plus years I’ve been trying to sort out how broken man can experience the abundant life of John 10:10 in a literal and practical way, not just what theologians, super-saints or best-seller books say. I’m sensing that Jesus’ “abide in Me” is revolutionary and potentially explosive for today’s church and I’m overwhelmed by the responsibility to present it in a Life-giving way.

THE HANDICAPS

Please disagree if you wish, but I think that the church in America sets us up for spiritual lethargy. We are handicapped from the moment we start.

We have redefined “Christian” such that there is little need to abide in Christ in order to fit into the church and fulfill its expectations. The worldliness of its members facilitates the campus, program and staff that make everyone look good even if we have little impact for the Kingdom of God. The goal seems to be that we are comfortable and happy now and go to heaven when we die. Preachers refuse to declare the strong words of Jesus because they mess with the game plan.

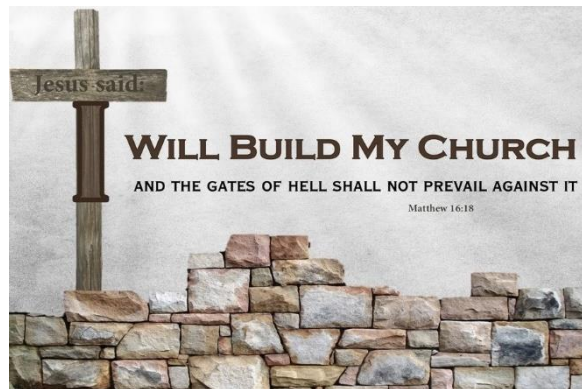
We are further handicapped by the fact that Jesus is spirit in nature, which means that “He that abideth in me, and I in him” (John 15:7) is speaking of spirit interaction. We have instead made Christianity a matter of “going to church,” being a good member, and believing the right things. We sidestep the truth that knowledge can’t transform - - only obedience can. We listen to sermon after sermon by our professionals and do Bible study after Bible study with little change because we are not called to obey Jesus in humble spirit-to-Spirit engagement.

BUT THERE’S HOPE

However, even now a Mt. 16:18 Church does exist, though usually in places where Jesus-followers suffer. Such a Church is fermenting in America and God is getting some new wineskins ready. We’re going to need it, and abiding in Christ is a key factor.

PLEASE PRAY

Please pray for me as I seek God for insight on this. I hope to be ready for another post early next week.



Secondly, please pray as I walk with a young man whom we love, and who has been bound by drugs, theft and lying for nearly 15-years. We are trying to help him get into a faith-based rehab and Christian-discipleship program, but part of the struggle is that he thinks that he’s messed up so badly that there’s no hope for him. I assured him again today that without Jesus there is no hope, but that with Jesus there is full hope for a good future. Yes, there is!

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Image from knowing-jesus.com