

# 1 John 2:24 Commentary

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## FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN

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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - Charles Swindoll

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27		Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21	
Abiding in God's Light		Abiding in God's Love	
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			

From Talk Thru the Bible

1 John 2:24 As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning

**Greek:** υμεις ο ηκουσατε απ αρχης εν υμιν μενετω εαν εν υμιν μεινη ο απ αρχης ηκουσατε και υμεις εν τω υιω και εν τω πατρι μενειτε

**Amplified:** As for you, keep in your hearts what you have heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the first dwells and remains in you, then you will dwell in the Son and in the Father [always].

**Barclay:** If that which you have heard from the beginning remains within you, you too will remain in the Son and in the Father.

**Berkley** What you heard from the beginning, let that stay with you. If what you heard from the beginning stays with you, then you will remain in union with the Son and with the Father.

**Cambridge Greek:** 'Let the truths which were first taught you have a home in your hearts: if these have a home in you, ye also shall have a home in the Son and in the Father'.

**ESV:** Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father.

**HCSB:** What you have heard from the beginning must remain in you. If what you have heard from the beginning remains in you, then you will remain in the Son and in the Father.

**NET:** As for you, what you have heard from the beginning must remain in you. If what you heard from the beginning remains in you, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

**NIV:** See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father.

**NLT:** So you must remain faithful to what you have been taught from the beginning. If you do, you will remain in fellowship with the Son and with the Father.

**Phillips:** For yourselves I beg you to stick to the original teaching. If you do, you will be living in fellowship with both the Father and the Son.

**TLB:** So keep on believing what you have been taught from the beginning. If you do, you will always be in close fellowship with both God the Father and his Son.

**Weymouth:** As for you, let the teaching which you have received from the very beginning continue in your hearts. If that teaching does continue in your hearts, you also will continue to be in union with the Son and with the Father.

**Wuest:** As for you, that which you heard from the beginning, in you let it be constantly abiding. If in you there abides that which from the beginning you heard, both in the Son and in the Father you will abide.

**Young's Literal:** Ye, then, that which ye heard from the beginning, in you let it remain; if in you may remain that which from the beginning ye did hear, ye also in the Son and in the Father shall remain,

**KJV:** Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.

- **abide**., Ps 119:11; Proverbs 23:23; Luke 9:44; John 15:7; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 2:1, Hebrews 3:14; 2John 1:2; 3John 1:3; Revelation 3:3, Revelation 3:11
- **which**., 1 John 2:7; Luke 1:2; John 8:25; Philippians 4:15; 2 John 1:5-6
- **ye also**., 1 John 1:3, 1 John 1:7, 1 John 4:13, 1 John 4:16; John 14:23, John 15:9-10, John 17:21-24
- **Reciprocal References**., Proverbs 3:21 - let John 8:31 - If John 14:1 - ye John 15:4 - Abide 1 Corinthians 13:13 - abideth 2 Corinthians 1:20 - all James 1:25 - and 1 John 5:12 - that hath the 1 John 5:20 - and we 2 John 1:3 - the Son

## THE APPEAL TO THE TRUE BELIEVERS

(1Jn 2:24-25)

**Hiebert** introduces this section (the title above is from Hiebert) - The presence of the many antichrists demands that believers know the identifying mark of these antichrists (1Jn 2:22-23). Having identified them, they must use their resources to resist them (1Jn 2:24-25).

**C. S. Lewis** said that "The best safeguard against bad literature is a full experience of good; just as a real and affectionate acquaintance with honest people gives a better protection against rogues than a habitual distrust of everyone."

**Westcott** - The view of the true nature of the confession and denial of Christ is followed by a view of the power of the confession. The knowledge to which it witnesses carries with it eternal life (1Jn 2:25). ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**Classic Bible Commentary** - To the above doctrine he adds an exhortation and, so that it has more weight, he points out the fruit they would receive from obedience. (Edited by Owen Collins)

**T Mortimer** - THE DUTY AND PRIVILEGE OF THE CHURCH. What is the duty? "Let them abide in you." And what the privilege? "If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." Let it "abide in you": but it must first obtain admission. Ah! and not only so, it must take its mighty grasp of the heart. And so it does wherever it comes in truth; it enters there to have its own way, first, to resist sin, then to imprison sin, and ultimately, by the grace of God, to cast it out. ([Christian Doctrine, Duty, Privilege, and Hope](#))

**John Stott** summarizes 1Jn 2:24-27 as "**Safeguards against heresy**. Having distinguished between the false teachers and the true believers, and having exposed the nature and consequences of the heresy, John now draws attention to the two safeguards which will protect his readers from being led astray. If they are to be guarded against error, two things must 'remain' in them, first the message which 'you have heard from the beginning' (1Jn 2:24) and secondly 'the anointing you received from him' (1Jn 2:27)." (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

#### Teacher's Outline and Study Bible -

- 1 The test: Does the gospel abide in you? (1Jn 2:24)
  - a. It is the old unchangeable message (1Jn 2:24 a)
  - b. The evidence: You are continuing in the Son (1Jn 2:24 b)
- 2 The promise: Eternal life (1Jn 2:25)
- 3 The warning: Some seduce us away from Christ (1Jn 2:26)
- 4 The provision of God to protect us: The Holy Spirit (1Jn 2:27)
  - a. He is the anointing and He abides in us (1Jn 2:27 a)
  - b. He teaches us the truth (1Jn 2:27 b)
  - c. He seals us, assures us that we do abide in Christ (1Jn 2:27 c)

**W E Vine** sees a parallel in 1Jn 2:22-24 - The subject of this passage may be put under three headings: 1. **Denying** the Father and the Son (1Jn 2:22), 2. **Confessing** the Son and the Father (1Jn 2:23), 3. **Abiding** in the Son and in the Father (1Jn 2:24).

**Plummer** paraphrases this passage "Let the truths which were first taught you have a home in your hearts: if these have a home in you, ye also shall have a home in the Son and in the Father."

**Karl Barth** once said "Tell me how it stands with your Christology and I will tell you who you are."

Literally the Greek reads "You, that which you heard from the beginning, in you let it be abiding."

**As for you** (cp 1Jn 2:27) - **You** is first word in the Greek sentence and makes "**you**" a point of emphasis which brings to the forefront a clear contrast with the heretical, apostate antichrists (1Jn 2:22). John is making a direct, strong appeal to his readers! The situation is dangerous, and they must not discount his admonition. **You** is also in the plural so John is addressed the Body of believers. John now addresses the question of how a believer should respond to the false teachings of the antichrists. **How?** By continuing to believe the Word of Truth you have been taught. John's exhortative words of warning remind me of Paul's instruction to Titus on what qualifies a man to be an elder (overseer = Titus 1:7-8-note). He should be a man who is "holding fast (**present tense** = continually, as his lifestyle!) the faithful (trustworthy) Word which is in accordance with the teaching (what they had been taught by Spirit-filled, Word-centered teachers), so that (**term of explanation** = Here Explains Purpose - always stop and ponder - "**What is the purpose?**") he will be able (inherent ability is the idea - How? by being "Word saturated!") both to exhort in sound doctrine (like John is doing to the saints in this first letter) and to refute those who contradict (which is what John is doing in this epistle)." (Titus 1:9-note) So even as overseers would be enabled to recognize and refute unsound doctrine because they held fast to the Word of Truth (best antidote for error!), so too the believers to whom John is writing must continue to "hold fast" to the Truth they had been taught.

**THOUGHT-** Dear reader, are you holding fast to the trustworthy Word of Truth that you might be enabled by

the Spirit to deftly wield the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God? What is the evidence that you are holding fast? Are you diligently reading and studying it (daily)? Are you memorizing it so that you might have it ready on the spur of the moment when tempted or confronted with error?

**Alexander Ross** - As for you, whatever others may say and whatever others may teach," let the truths which were taught you in the early days of your Christian experience have a home in your hearts; if these truths have a home in your hearts, you also shall have a home in the Son and in the Father". ([The Epistles of James and John- New International Commentary](#))

## TRUTH AT HOME IN OUR HEART

**Let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning** - Almost all conservative commentators agree that without using the specific word, John is clearly making reference to the **Gospel of Jesus Christ** (Mk 1:1). And so John is exhorting the believers to remember the truth of the Gospel that they previously heard and by which they were born again. However, one of the great problems in the Christian life is to **forget** what we should remember about God and His Word, especially when a trial or temptation suddenly confronts us or we have had a prolonged "drought" of being in His Word (cp Jesus' advice in Mt 4:4).

**A T Robertson** - Do not be carried away by the new-fangled Gnostic teaching.

**Guzik** - In light of the danger of the spirit of antichrist, we protect ourselves against the spirit of antichrist by abiding in the original, core Christian message (that which you heard from the beginning). As we walk in the simplicity and power of that message, we will not be led astray. Humans, by nature, are almost always attracted to something just because it is new. We almost always think of new as better. But when it comes to truth, new is not better. That which you heard from the beginning is better. The apostle Paul communicated the same idea in Galatians 1:6-9, where he warns against going after a new gospel, and emphasizes the importance of continuing on in the original gospel that Paul taught. This is difficult because we are tempted to be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting (Eph 4:14-**note**). We often itch for something "new" and "exciting" even if it departs from that which you heard from the beginning. Simply put, we abide in what is from the beginning when we stay close to our Bibles. If that was your environment when you were a young Christian, wonderful. But if it was not, then put yourself in that environment now. Let that abide in you: This doesn't mean just **knowing** it, but **living** in it. When we are living in the simplicity of the truth of Jesus Christ, then we will abide in the Son and in the Father. Our world is filled with people searching for God, some sincerely and some insincerely. But if someone wants to really live in God, John tells us how: let the message of the apostles (which you heard from the beginning) live in you.. John did not say, "If you know God's word, you know God," because someone can have a bare, intellectual knowledge of God's word. But he did say, "If God's word lives in you, God lives in you." We can come to a living, growing, relationship with God through His word. ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**That... which you heard** - While John does not state specifically the content or subject of what they had heard, in the context of the lying antichrists who continually deny Jesus is the Christ, the truth that he wants them to remember and to live in so that it lives in them (so to speak), is the truth about Jesus. **John Stott** feels that this phrase refers to "the Gospel, the apostolic teaching, the original message which had been preached. It had not changed and would not change." (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

**Hiebert** - The divinely revealed message is an active agent in the lives of those who receive it and permit it to be operative with them. Its truths "exist as living realities, independent of us, but they need to be permanently living in our minds and our wills." (Quoting David Jackman). Strength and stability (**Ed**: spiritually speaking) are assured by letting this message be at home in them. It is the central characteristic of the mature believer.

**THOUGHT** - Do you daily put out the welcome mat for the Word of God? (cp James 1:21-note) Is the Word of God sufficient for your needs or do you find yourself running first to devotionals, Christian self help books, secular psychology, etc? Or are you like a new born infant, who persistently and passionately longs for the PURE MILK of the Word, that by it you might grow in respect to your salvation (progressive sanctification = Present tense Salvation) (1Pe 2:2-note).

**Jamieson** on **That... which you heard** - Truth respecting he Father and the Son, as a seed not merely dropped in, but having taken root (1John 3:9).

**Schaff** - the apostolic teaching (is) the standard to which every form of doctrine, good or evil, must be brought.

**Spurgeon** - As it was the truth that was revealed to them at the first, there was no need of a later revelation to correct the mistakes of the first, as some foolishly and falsely teach nowadays.

**John MacArthur** - Although John knew that the true sheep could never lose their salvation (John 10:27-29; cf. 1Pe 1:5), he exhorted his audience to persevere, to let that [truth] abide in them which they heard from the beginning. Believers are commanded to

actively persevere in the truth because it is the gracious means by which they are sanctified (Jn 8:31; 1Cor. 15:1-2; Phil. 2:12-13; Col 1:22-23; 2Ti 3:14) even as faith is the means by which they are graciously justified (Ro 3:24-26). ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#))

**Let that abide** (3306)(*meno* - see in depth word study below) means to stay, to remain. John uses *meno* 3 times in this one sentence! See a more detailed word study on *meno* below. In the first use of *meno*, John issues a command (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) calling for them to continually let that which they had heard continually **abide** in them. Let that message have its free course in their lives! How would they (we) do that? They (we) would have to **be in** the message (so to speak), **in** the Word, which practically for believers today means we need to continually (daily) be reading the Word (cp the command in Col 3:16-note). Ultimately, the only way to fulfill the command (under grace, not law) is by dependence upon a supernatural Source, the enabling power of the Holy Spirit Who continually gives us both the **desire** and the **power** to do what is pleasing to the Father (Study Php 2:12-13 which describes our responsibility in Php 2:12-note and God's provision of supernatural power in Php 2:13-note), in this case to make the Word of Truth they had heard (and which we now possess) continually be at home in their (our) innermost being. Notice also that *meno* is in the **active voice** which means that John's readers must make a choice of their will (albeit one that is initiated and energized by the Spirit) to see that the truth they had heard remains comfortably at home in their heart.

Compare **Paul's** exhortation to the saints at Colossae, who were also faced with the influx of false "antichrist" teaching: **See to it** (**present imperative** = command to make this your habitual practice - Why? Because false teachings will continually be coming into the church via books, websites, even doctrinally unsound songs, etc. Note again the only way to fulfill this command is by a supernatural source, which is by continual reliance on the supernatural power of the Spirit) that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority." (Col 2:8-10-note) **"Let** the Word of Christ richly **dwell** (**present imperative** = command to make an intentional effort, again not self effort but effort stimulated by the Spirit, to seek Christ in His Word so the powerful, living and active Word might be at home in our heart, because our hearts are so prone to **wander** AND then they begin to **wonder**!) within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." (Col 3:16-note)

**Deffinbaugh** - The Greek word (*meno*) translated **remain** (*abide*) can also be translated **reside**. One (*remain* means) to stay somewhere, and the (*reside*) is to take up residence. The teaching of the apostles must remain (*reside*) in the readers in order for the readers to remain (*reside*) in the Son and in the Father. If that happens, then they will have eternal life (1Jn 2:25). (Layman's Bible Commentary - Volume 12: Hebrews thru Revelation)

A prerequisite for letting the word abide in one, is recognition that God's Word is a precious, priceless treasure! A beautiful and touching story is told of a young French girl who had been born blind. After she learned to read by touch, a friend gave her a Braille copy of Mark's gospel. She read it so much that her fingers became calloused and insensitive. In an effort to regain her feeling, she cut the skin from the ends of her fingers. Tragically, however, her callouses were replaced by permanent and even more insensitive scars. She sobbingly gave the book a goodbye kiss, saying, "Farewell, farewell, sweet word of my heavenly Father." In doing so, she discovered that her lips were even more sensitive than her fingers had been, and she spent the rest of her life reading her great treasure with her lips. Would that every Christian had such an appetite for the Word of God!

Old **John Trapp** says "Persevere and hold fast the faith of the gospel without wavering in it, Eph 4:14, or starting from it, 2Peter 2:20. Be as the centre, or as Mount Zion, stedfast and unmovable. Stand fast; for ye are sure to be shaken: the tree must be shaken, that rotten fruit may fall off."

As **Stott** says "They must see that it remains in them. It would not do so automatically--they must take steps to ensure that it does. Christians should always be 'conservative' in their theology. To have 'itching ears', ever running after new teachers, listening to anybody and never arriving at a knowledge of the truth, is a characteristic of the 'terrible times' which shall come 'in the last days' (2Ti 3:1, 2Ti 3:7; 2Ti 4:3). The continuous obsession for 'the latest ideas' is a mark of the Athenian not the Christian (Acts 17:21). Christian theology is anchored not only to certain historical events, culminating in the saving career of Jesus, but to the authoritative apostolic witness to, and interpretation of, these events. The Christian can never weigh anchor and launch out into the deep of speculative thought. Nor can he forsake the primitive teaching of the apostles for subsequent human traditions. The apostolic testimony is directed essentially to the Son. That is why it will keep them true to him if they remain true to it. Moreover, they will remain in the Son and in the Father, in the sense of experiencing an intimate spiritual communion with both. To remain in God (or 'abide in', rsv; Gk. *menein*) and to 'have' God (1Jn 2:23) are virtually identical in meaning." (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

**Pulpit Commentary** - "Let the good seed abide in your hearts; not be snatched away by the evil one. Then not only will it abide, but ye also will abide in the Son, and therefore with the Father."

**Barnes** - Adhere steadfastly to it; let the truth obtain a permanent lodgement in the soul. In view of its great importance, and its influence on your happiness here and hereafter, let it never depart from you.

**William MacDonald** - Our great safety is to stay close to the word of God. We should test everything by "What do the Scriptures say?" If a teaching does not agree with the Bible, then we should reject it also. As Dr. Ironside used to say, "If it's new, it's not true, and if it's true, it's not new." (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Kruse** - Recalling people who are being faced with false teaching to the message of the Gospel as they first heard it, and by which they were converted, is a strategy that is also employed elsewhere in the NT (cf. 1 Cor 15:1-11) and needs to be practised today. ([The Letters of John \(Pillar New Testament Commentary\)](#))

**Classic Bible Commentary** - He then urges them to persevere in the faith, so that what they had learned might remain fixed in their hearts. (Edited by Owen Collins)

**Ray Stedman** - Now look a little more closely at the word which John employs here. He says, **Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you.** That means more than simply reading your Bible once in a while. That means more than to read it in a rather cursory way, then shut the book and mark off on the list that you've done your Bible reading for today. This word abide, literally, means "to remain in you." Or perhaps the closer word would be, "possess you." It is exactly what we would mean when we say to a guest who comes into our house, **"Make yourself at home."** Of course, they know that we really do not mean that. It is a polite expression and does not mean, "Take over the house and do what you would like," but, rather, "In the rooms that you have already been given access to, feel free to move around a bit, if you like, but don't go in the bedrooms, and stay out of the closets." But if we really meant that statement we would be saying, **"Possess this house as though it were yours. Go anywhere you like, do anything you like, make yourself at home as though you were really home."** And that is what this word (**meno**) means. John is saying, **"Let this message which was from the beginning make itself at home in your heart, in your life, possess you -- spirit, soul and body. Let it grip you, mind, emotion, and will. Let it lay hold of you, your whole being."** This is the first and necessary step to the goal that he has in mind, the fullness of God manifest in you. **See how he links this inescapably with the Word of God. Let the Word abide in you.** Now here is our trouble. When we read the Bible we really do not want it to move into the whole house, we only want it to move into one room or two. We want it to occupy the room of our mental acumen, the library, if you like, the study. Many people read the Bible that way. They study it intellectually for the knowledge of the times in which we live. Perhaps the prophetic passages because they are simply interested in discovering what the program of God is for the future. Or they study certain of the moral standards or ethical teachings of the Bible, like the Sermon on the Mount, since they are only interested in extracting from it certain intellectual, academic, moral teachings, and that is all they want. There are others (I am afraid, perhaps, a majority), who study the Bible only for the stirring of emotions that it gives. You can do that, you know. That is why we love to read certain favorite passages. I know people who open the Bible and invariably read the same passages over and over -- the 23rd Psalm, the 14th chapter of John, or the 6th chapter of Romans. Why? Because these truths, as they read, stir them. It blesses and stirs their hearts. These are beautiful passages, and beautiful thoughts, and they stir the emotions. That is why we turn to these favorite passages. We love the good feeling we get from reading these passages that have spoken to us in the past, and reading them again wakens memories and we are stirred anew. But that is all. After we have read them and our emotions have been stirred, we close the Bible and go out to live just as we have always lived. There is no difference. When this happens, we may be religious, certainly we are "churchy," and no one can deny that we are reading the Bible, but, yet, the Word of God is not abiding in us and that is the necessary thing. Now, **John is urging toward this. He is saying let the Word grip you. Let it confront you intellectually first, that is always the gateway through which God makes his appeal to man. Understand what God is saying. Meditate on these passages until you see the truth, you know what God is saying. Read them again and again and let them burn into you, muse and meditate upon them until they grip you.** (Ed: NOT ONLY read again and again, but LEARN TO READ WITH A PURPOSE - this is where inductive Bible study, especially learning the basic skills of observation is absolutely invaluable!) Then as you find you understand the truth you will discover that it has done something to your emotions. It has moved and gotten hold of you, you are captivated by it, you are held by it, you are compelled by it. When that happens, that moving of your emotions, then respond to it: submit yourself, obey it. This is what the Scripture calls acting or living by faith; obeying the truth made known to the mind, gripping the emotions, and thus moving the will. **That is the Word of God abiding in you, possessing you.** Let that happen, the apostle says, i.e., make provision for it, set a time for this, make room in your life for this. (See full sermon [The Living Word | 1 John 2:24-25](#))

**Guzik** says that to **abide in the Son and in the Father** "is absolutely necessary for the Christian life. John will use the word abide six times in these few verses, and the idea is repeated throughout the New Testament." He quotes **Spurgeon** who says "Abiding in Jesus (living in Jesus) is not a passive thing; it is an active thing. We must give ourselves, mentally and spiritually, to living in Jesus. We abide in Him, not by a physical law, as a mass of iron abides on the earth; but by a mental and spiritual law, by which the greatness of divine love and goodness holds us fast to the Lord Jesus. Yet, not only are we called to abide in Him; but we also know that He abides in us. It is a two-way relationship. You are to take care that you abide in Christ as much as if all depended upon yourself; and yet you can look to the promise of the covenant, and see that the real reason for your abiding in Christ lies in the

operation of His unchanging love and grace." ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**Preacher's Homiletical Commentary** - Persuasions to letting the Truth abide in us.—"Abiding" is one of St. John's key-words. What had to be feared in the early Church has to be feared in every age of the Church. It is restlessness, that tends to shift men from their foundations. Nothing more effectually hinders Christian living than perpetual uncertainty about the grounds of our confidence and hope. Souls are like plants—they cannot thrive if their roots are continually being shaken. They grow in atmospheres of quietness and peace. They must abide as they have begun. **I. Abiding in Christ is holding fast the truth received concerning Him**—"That which ye have heard from the beginning." Apostles, and all true teachers, never attempted to shift the foundations of primary truth concerning Christ which they had laid. They are willing enough to build on those foundations, but absolutely unwilling to alter the foundations. It would be useless and mischievous work for Englishmen now to try and alter Magna Carta, which is the basis of English liberty. "Holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering" is "abiding in Christ." The primary truths about Christ concern His Divine-human person, and Divine-human mission: Son of God; Son of man; and God saving man. **II. Abiding in Christ is the guarantee of continuous spiritual life.**—It brings the "eternal life." (1Jn 2:25) That life can be ours only by vital union with Him. It is the communication of His own Divine life through the channels of our faith. Break the connection, and the life can but flag and fail. Our Lord Himself said, "Without Me ye can do nothing." **III. Abiding in Christ is the work for us done by the Holy Spirit, who is with us** (1Jn 2:27).—This appears to be the idea St. John tries to express under the figure of the "anointing." The believer is sealed by the anointing of the Spirit. That Spirit has, for His supreme mission in the believer, to keep him in vital relations with Christ—abiding in Christ. ([1 John 2 - Preacher's Complete Homiletical Commentary](#))

### **"IF" INDICATES IT IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

**If what you heard from the beginning abides in you** - John introduces a conditional clause, specifically a conditional promise. If the message they heard (as discussed probably the Gospel) remains in them, then they will remain in the Son and the Father.

**If** - **Hiebert** says this introduces a "third class conditional sentence." (In other words the phrase) **If what you heard from the beginning**", leaves open the matter of their fulfillment of the condition; it challenges them to make sure the condition is fulfilled. (In other words ) believers have a personal responsibility to assure that the condition is met. The effective indwelling of God's Word involves their cooperation. The fulfilled condition assures that "you also will abide in the Son and in the Father."

**Henry Alford** - The truth respecting the Father and the Son once heard is regarded as a seed, dropt in and abiding in the man... He in whom abides the message of life **in Christ** which he has heard, not only has received the tidings of that life, but is transformed into the likeness of Him whose seed he has taken into him: is become a new creation: and the element in which and by which he lives and acts is even He in whom and by whom this new life comes, even Christ the Son of God. And thus living in the Son, he lives in the Father also: for Christ the Son of God is the manifestation and effulgence of the Father, himself abiding ever in the Father, as His people abide in Him. ([1 John 2 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Westcott** - The final strength of the Christian lies not in his own effort, but in the Truth by which he is inspired. That is the power of life which he is charged not to hinder. Comp. John 15:7. ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**Cambridge Greek** - **Heard** is an aorist: as in 1Jn 2:7 and 1Jn 3:11, it points to the definite time when they were instructed in the faith. 'Hold fast what ye first heard, and reject these lying innovations'... 'Let the truths which were first taught you **have a home** in your hearts: if these **have a home** in you, ye also shall **have a home** in the Son and in the Father'. ([1 John 2 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

### **SAFETY IS FOUND IN SOUND DOCTRINE**

**What you heard from the beginning** - **To what does this refer?** In general it is sound doctrine, and in context of this letter, the message they **heard from the beginning** would include the truth that Jesus is the Christ (1Jn 2:22), that Jesus is the Son of God (1Jn 2:22) and that Jesus had come in the flesh (1Jn 1:1-3). More specifically what they had heard was the Gospel of Jesus Christ (even though the word Gospel is not found in First John, the truth of the Gospel is clearly present). It was the Gospel by which they were saved and by which they were being sanctified and by which they would be kept safe from unsound doctrine of the antichrists who propounded another Christ and thus another Gospel, because Jesus Christ is the cornerstone of the Gospel (cp Eph 2:20).

**From the beginning** - This phrase is used 4x in the Gospel of John and 10x in 9v in John's letters - John 6:64; 8:25, 44; 15:27; 1Jn 1:1; 2:7, 13-14, 24; 3:8, 11; 2Jn 1:5-6.

**Beginning** ([746](#))(**arche**) refers to the commencement of something as an action, process, or state of being.

**Hiebert** - "What you heard from the beginning" denotes the apostolic message, viewed as a coherent whole, to which they must

adhere in contrast to any teaching the heretics might advance. **"From the beginning"** carries them back to the time they first heard and received that message, but the aorist verb **"you heard"** includes the entire period since then, during which they had been hearing that same message. It is the continuity of the apostolic message to which John appealed: **"let it abide in you,"** continue to be at home and operative in your lives. Letting this original message abide in them is equivalent to their abiding **in Christ** (1Jn 2:28). Therein lay their safety and effectiveness as believers.

**Jamieson on from the beginning**—from the time of your first hearing the Gospel.

**Gary Burge** - The earliest objective teachings, the things grounded in Jesus' historical ministry, serve as anchors when theological storms sweep across the church's deck. This is the assured avenue for knowing the truth about the Father and the Son and the eternal life that comes from them. (NIV Application Commentary - 1, 2, 3 John)

**Westcott** - The first simple message of the Gospel apprehended in its unity (cp. John 14:23). This 'word' taken into the heart becomes a power fashioning the whole man (Jn 8:31; 15:7). ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**Marshall** - The antidote to heresy is a return to the teaching given at the beginning. This thought is common in other Christian documents of the same period (1Ti 6:3; 2Ti 1:13-note; 2Ti 4:3-4-note.; Titus 1:9-note; 2Pe 3:2-note; Jude 1:17, 20-note). Written toward the end of the apostolic period, they all counsel holding fast to the teaching given in the past which constitutes "sound doctrine," the "faith that God has once for all entrusted to the saints" (Jude 1:3-note). (The Epistles of John. NICNT)

**Matthew Henry** - Truth is older than error. The truth concerning Christ, that was at first delivered to the saints, is not to be exchanged for novelties. So sure were the apostles of the truth of what they had delivered concerning Christ, and from him, that after all their toils and sufferings they were not willing to relinquish it.

**Brian Harbour** - What did John want to remain in us? "See that what you have heard from the beginning" is the way he put it in 1Jn 2:24. He was referring to the truth about God which has been revealed to them in Jesus Christ. To keep growing and to keep going as Christians, we need to allow the truth of God which was revealed to us in Jesus Christ and in His written word to "take up permanent residence" in our hearts. The key is not how much we expose our minds to but how deeply we expose our minds to the central truths of the faith. One of the hottest books on preaching today is a book by Paul Scott Wilson called *The Practice of Preaching*. In talking about the method of preaching, Wilson recommends that preachers concentrate on only a few core doctrines. He finds support from a number of other sources. John Broadus, one of the most popular preachers of the 1800s, urged preachers to concentrate on the "great" doctrines and identified them as sin, providence, redemption, repentance, and atonement. James Stewart, the great Scottish preacher of the 1900s, called on preachers to concentrate on preaching Christ. He advocated four dimensions of this: Christ's death and resurrection, the inbreaking of the Realm of God with power; God's intervention in individual human lives; and God's intervention in history." That seems to be what John was saying in our text. Don't always be looking for some new idea to discover or some new tangent to chase. Focus on the basic truths of Scripture so much and so often that they "take up permanent residence in our lives." This is the recommended pattern in other endeavors. Champion tennis players become champions by repeating hundreds of times a day the basic action of hitting the ball with the racket. Champion basketball players become champions by repeating hundreds of times a day the basic action of shooting the ball into the net. And champion Christians... ? It's the same procedure. Remaining **in Christ** is really quite simple. We simply need to remain in His word, to take "that what you have heard from the beginning" and allow it to take up permanent residence in our lives. ([Notable Harbour Verse-by-Verse Studies](#))

**You also will abide in the Son and in the Father** (cp similar expression in 1Jn 2:23) - **Why is the Son mentioned first?** Most writers agree that Jesus is mentioned first because it is by abiding in Him that we abide in the Father for no one comes to the Father but through the Son (Jn 14:6, cf 1Ti 2:5, Ro 5:1-2-note). The condition is that they **abide**. In this context John is not saying that if they don't let what they heard abide in them, then they are going to lose their salvation. He is referring to fellowship with the Father and the Son, the ongoing communion that is the product of a good memory of the truths they had been previously taught. On the other hand, another way of interpreting this section, is that their continuing to abide in the Word is evidence that they are truly saved. Such a person will continue to abide in the Son and the Father. The fact that they continue to abide does not save them but is evidence that they are truly saved. Natural men are unregenerate and have no supernaturally stimulated desire for God's supernatural Word of Truth. In fact, Paul says "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, **for (term of explanation** - this preposition should prompt the question "Why not?") they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1Cor 2:14). Only the "supernaturally" energized man or woman will seek to abide in the supernatural truth he or she first heard.

**Will abide** is future tense - "The forces of the future... is progressive and expresses the continuing reality of fellowship with God (**Ed**: through Christ)." (Hiebert)

**Teacher's Outline and Study Bible** asks a question worth pondering - How do you know if the gospel is really in you? If you really



know God? This sixth test is a revealing proof: Does the Gospel **abide** in you? **How you live shows quicker than anything else whether or not you know God.** If you have grasped the truth of God's Word, of His Gospel, and are living it out in your life, then you definitely know God. But the converse is also tragically true: if the Gospel, God's Word, is not within you, if you are not living out the Gospel, then you do not know God. Regardless of what you may **feel** or **profess**—regardless of what others may think—you do not know God. The Gospel lives within the life of every genuine believer and the believer lives out the Gospel... note the evidence of salvation, of knowing God: if the gospel continues in you, "you also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father." The word "remain" means to abide, dwell, remain. It means not to be carried away by false teaching or worldly pleasures and possessions. How do we know if we know God? Are we continuing to live in the Son and in the Father? Is the gospel being lived out in our lives? Are we confessing Jesus Christ to be the Son of God? Do we really believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Are we letting Jesus Christ live out His life in us? This is the final proof that we know God. **ILLUSTRATION:** Does the Gospel abide in you? Or does it come and go according to your circumstances? What some claim to be the Gospel is nothing more than a watered-down cause. Compromise has replaced conviction. The reality of the Gospel can be confirmed in your life when it propels you to remain consistent. This example makes a good point. "The following is a Russian parable. A hunter raised his rifle and took careful aim at a large bear. When about to pull the trigger, the bear spoke in a soft, soothing voice, 'Isn't it better to talk than to shoot? What do you want? Let us negotiate the matter.' "Lowering his rifle, the hunter replied, 'I want a fur coat.' 'Good,' said the bear, 'that is a negotiable question. I only want a full stomach, so let us negotiate a compromise.' "They sat down to negotiate, and after a time the bear walked away alone. The negotiations had been successful. The bear had a full stomach, and the hunter had his fur coat. [But not the way he expected it!] Compromises rarely satisfy both sides in equal measure." There can be no compromise (See **Keith Green's** life story "**No Compromise**" - video documentary) with the Gospel: either you live **in Christ** and His life (Col 3:4) is seen in you or you are going your own way, the way of the world. "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being..." (Acts 17:28a). Never compromise with the enemy. You will lose every time. Keep abiding in the Word and in Christ. It is the only way to be safe!

As **John MacArthur** says "Those who continue in what they **have heard** show that what they have **heard from the beginning abides** in them, and they **also will abide in the Son and in the Father** (1Jn 3:17; 4:13)." **MacArthur** goes on to quote from the [Westminster Confession of Faith](#) regarding the understanding of truth and perseverance:

All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them. ([Chapter 1: Article 8](#))

They, whom God hath accepted in His Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved. ([Chapter 17: Article 1](#))

**Westcott** - The presence of the divine life carries with it of necessity the possession of divine fellowship.

**Alexander Ross** - As **abiding** in the Son is the secret of fruitfulness (Jn 15:4-5), so it is only by **abiding** in the Son that we can enjoy real fellowship with the Father.. ([The Epistles of James and John- New International Commentary](#))

**Classic Bible Commentary** - (Will) **Abide in you.** Here is the fruit of perseverance: those in whom God's truth remains, remain in God. (Edited by Owen Collins)

**W E Vine** - As Christ the Son of God is the truth, and as the Word of God which is taught is the truth, to abide in the truth is to abide in Him who is the Son of the Father, and therefore in the Father too, for the Son and the Father are one.

**John Calvin** - Here is the fruit of perseverance, that they in whom God's truth remains (abides), remain (abide) in God. We hence learn what we are to seek in every truth pertaining to religion (**Ed:** Specifically the Gospel of Jesus Christ). He therefore makes the greatest proficiency, who makes such progress as to wholly cleave to God. But he in whom the Father does not dwell through his Son, is altogether vain and empty, whatever knowledge he may possess. Moreover, this is the highest commendation of sound doctrine, that it unites us to God, and that in it is found whatever pertains to the real fruition of God. ([1 John 2 - John Calvin's Commentaries on the Bible](#))

**James Morgan** - The three terms, "abide," "remain," "continue," are the same in the original. The repetition is sufficient to show the extreme importance attached to the thought by the apostle. What, then, is it? It is suggested by a phrase which he uses again and again throughout the epistle, "**The truth is not in us**" In order that the truth may have its due effect, it must be in us, not as a speculation in the head, but a mighty practical principle in the heart. It must be in us as food is in the man whom it nourishes. But it is not merely the truth, as a system, that must thus dwell in us. It is as the casket that contains the jewel; and that jewel is Christ. ([Knowledge Favorable to Further Teaching](#))

**Barker** - The use of the special Johannine word "**remain**" (menō, "**abide**") gives weight to the warning. The Word of the Gospel must

not only be **heard** but it must be given a vital place in one's life. The power of the Gospel depends on the freedom permitted it. The Word is not present simply as a matter of course but only where a person is committed to receive it and unite with it... If the Gospel "**abides**" in them, Christians may be assured they will also "**abide**" in the Son and in the Father. While the exhortation is clearly to faithfulness to the Word, it is an exhortation with an assured promise of fulfillment. Where the Word abides there also **the Son and the Father** abide. Fellowship with the Father and the Son, which is of such concern to the author, is assured those in whom the Word of God abides. The Word is not the goal of the fellowship but rather a means through which the fellowship with the Son and the Father occurs. (The Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 12: Hebrews Through Revelation)

**Marshall** - It is significant that "remain" expresses a continuing relationship. It is not enough merely to have heard and assented to the message in time past. The message must continue to be present and active in the lives of those who have heard it. They must continually call it to mind and let it affect their lives. This is why continual study of the Word and participation in Christian instruction is so important for perseverance in the faith.

**Jamieson's** interpretation - Having taken into us the living seed of the truth concerning the Father and the Son, we become transformed into the likeness of Him whose seed we have taken into us. ([1 John 2 - Bible Commentary](#))

**Expositor's Greek** - The Son is the manifestation of the Father; through Him we reach the Unseen Father (cf. John 14:9). ([1 John 2 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**R S Candlish** elaborates on what it means to **abide in the Son** - We **abide in the Son**, as we may be said to abide in anyone when his words abide in us — or when that which we have heard of him, or from him, from the beginning, abides in us; when we understand and know him by what he says and what we hear; when what we thus understand and know of him takes hold of us, carries our conviction, commands our confidence and love, fastens and rivets itself in our mind and heart, and so abides in us. Thus we abide in the Son precisely as we abide in a friend whom we know, and trust, and love. Let us turn all that we learn into the materials of that personal communing of Him with us and us with Him, which is indeed the essence of our abiding in the Son. All the rather let us do so because, secondly, this abiding in the Son is abiding in the Father; for the Father and the Son are one. Into all that the Son is to the Father, in these and other similar views of His mediatorial character and ministry as the Son, we enter when we abide in the Son. **And so we come to be to the Father all that the Son is to the Father. We abide in the Father as the Son abides in the Father.** So we abide in the Son and in the Father. And still all this depends on our letting "that which we have heard from the beginning abide in us." It depends on that faith which cometh by hearing, as hearing cometh by the Word of God. ([The Guileless Spirit Abiding Through the Word in the Son and in the Father](#))

**Wuest** - The exhortation (**Let that abide**) is that the saints should allow the teaching into which they were brought when they were saved to remain in them. They are to continue to hold it fast (**Ed:** Corollary is so that it might continue to "hold them fast" when winds of doctrine blow!). They must not allow themselves to become entangled in the Gnostic heresy regarding the Person of the Lord Jesus. But the word **menō** (abide) has in it more than the idea of "to remain." The exhortation includes more than that the saint should allow the basic teaching concerning the Person of our Lord to remain in him. He should have that attitude towards it that it (**Ed:** toward the teaching about the God-Man Jesus Christ) will also feel at home in him, have ready access to every part of his life (**Ed:** This begs the question - "Do you have any secret closets in your dwelling, your body, God's Temple? If so you need to confess, repent and "clean house!" Don't procrastinate! Don't delay! Just do it!). In other words, it is the responsibility of the believer to nurture the stability and growth of those doctrines by a holy life (**Ed:** Only possible by constant dependence on a holy power source, THE Holy Spirit! Are you beginning each day filled with the Spirit so that you might be enabled to walk by the Spirit? If not memorize and study Eph 5:18-note, Gal 5:16-note) and a determination (**Ed:** While this must be a choice of my will [God will not force me], praise God, it is a desire that the Spirit will stimulate within my innermost being! Memorize and Meditate on Php 2:12-note and Php 2:13-note) to cling to them and remain true to them. All this is included in the content of meaning of the word **menō**. John now proposes a hypothetical case. "**Shall remain**" is aorist subjunctive. The translation reads, "If in you there remains (abides - **menō**) that which from the beginning you heard." That is, if the true doctrine relative to the Person of our Lord is abiding in the believer, that is an indication that he is saved and will as a saved person continue to abide both in the Son and in the Father. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1, Volume 2, Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

**Illustration** - I have seen a perfect stranger heartily welcomed in an English home and treated with a deference, a tenderness, and a generous hospitality that did one good to witness, and I understood it all when informed that that stranger, though never seen before, had at one time shown kindness to a wandering, long-absent son in a certain town in the distant Australia. The parents governed their estimate of the stranger by this kindly treatment of their boy. And does not our Heavenly Father to some extent deal similarly with us? He views and estimates us according to our treatment of His beloved Son. If our estimate of Jesus is vague, or erroneous, or wilfully depreciatory, we suffer to that extent in the Divine estimation. ([Our Estimate of Christ the Measure of God's Estimate of Us](#))

## PRACTICAL APPLICATION

## OF THIS PRECIOUS PROMISE

**Ray Stedman** adds some very practical comments in his exposition in which he explains that the fulfillment of the promise (of abiding in the Son and the Father) "is inescapable. If the Word, if the truth of God has possessed you, then you will be possessed by the Son and by the Father, i.e., by the fullness of God which is in the Son and the Father. Notice, it is the same word he uses, "then you will abide in [be possessed by, gripped by] the Son and the Father." This is, of course, nothing more than what Jesus himself had said to his disciples in the Upper Room, as recorded in the 14th chapter of John.

**If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode** (this is the Greek word "*monē*" = mansion, resting place, habitation - Believers today are the resting place of the Son and the Father [and the Spirit - 1Cor 3:16, 1Cor 6:19-20-note])!!! We are the answer in a sense to Jehovah's question in Isaiah 66:1! Amazing Grace indeed!) **with him.** (John 14:23).

**(The Triune God is promising)** We will **abide** in him, we will **dwel**l in him, we will move in him, we will go about with him wherever he goes. We will be with him at his work, we will be with him at his home, we will be with him in his relationships with others, we will be with him in his problems, we will be with him in his joys, we will be with him when he is confronted with temptations to anger and temper, we will be with him all the time. We will make our home with him. This is what John is saying. "**If what you have heard from the beginning abides in you, then you will abide in the Son and in the Father.**" Now there is a difference, as you know, between being "**in**" something, and "**abiding in**" something. Our Lord made that clear in John 15 in the parable of the vine and the branches. He said, "**I am the vine, and you are the branches,**" (John 15:5a RSV). The branch was in the vine by virtue of union, and the life of the vine (or some of it, at least) was being imparted to the branch so that it could bear leaves. But it could not bear fruit under that relationship. He pointed out that if a branch is to bear fruit, it must **abide** in the vine, i.e., the fullness of the vine must be in the branch. Not just enough life to sustain it, but all that the vine is, is to be imparted to the branch, and the result would be fruit, and more fruit, and much fruit (Jn 15:5,8) to the complete satisfying of the owner of the vineyard. This is what our Lord called **abiding**, i.e., all the life of the vine accepted by the branch. This, you will notice is a **reciprocal relationship**. **To the degree that you act in faith, obeying the Word, to that same degree the Father and the Son will be in you, performing the Word.** This explains why there is sometimes so much difference between Christians. One Christian, even one relatively young in the faith, can seem to be so abundantly full of the character of Jesus Christ, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit in such abundance, while another Christian who, perhaps, has been a Christian for years, is still crabbed and ugly in temper and disposition, and there is little of the fruit of the Spirit. What is the difference? **One has allowed himself to be possessed by the Word, and thus he is possessed by the Father and the Son. If you obey little, you will experience little. If you obey much, you will experience much. To the degree that you give yourself to God in understanding and obeying his Word, to that same degree he gives himself to you.** That is what John is teaching us. That is why the Apostle Paul in that wonderful 3rd chapter in Philippians says, "I am not claiming absolute perfection, but I press on that I may apprehend that for which I have been apprehended, i.e., that I may lay hold of that for which he has laid hold of me, that I may possess him in order that he may fully possess me," See Php 3:12-14-note). Now if this reciprocal relationship is true, this suggests certain conclusions that must inevitably follow. If it is true, as it surely is true, that God gives Himself to us in the same degree that we give ourselves to Him, then I see three things that result from this: **First, you can have all that Christ is, if you are ready to take Him.** There is no limit to the degree to which He will give Himself to you, if there is no limit to the degree to which you are ready to believe and obey Him. You can have all that He is, in any situation, at any given moment, if you are ready to take it by an act of obedient faith. **Second, if that is true, then it is also true that you will only have as much as you are satisfied with.** God will never give more to you beyond what you really want. God never forces blessing upon anyone. This is why Christians can live, sometimes for decades, in weakness, and folly, in barrenness, fruitlessness and despair, **because they do not really want more from God.** Nothing has awakened them to hunger and thirst after righteousness (Mt 5:6-note). They are content to live at that low level, and God will never force more upon them. Oh, He will try to wake them up, by one means or another, but He will never bless them, cannot bless them, beyond that which they are willing to take. **The third conclusion is: You have now, therefore (if you understand this), all that you really want from God.** Your present level of life is indication that is all you want. So do not blame God if your life is not filled with the blessing and fullness that the Scriptures seem to promise. It is not His fault. You now have all that you really want, because you can have from Him all that you are ready to take. If your life is not satisfying to you, as a Christian, it is not God's fault; it is that you are not yet willing, for one reason or another, to take from Him all that He is ready to give, out of the fullness of His being. (See full sermon [The Living Word | 1 John 2:24-25](#))

**Brian Harbour** talks about how to finish well using a baseball illustration - You don't know the name Bobo Holloman, and there is a reason for it. Bob Holloman was a baseball player, a pitcher. He was one of the young players Bill Veeck brought up to play for the St. Louis Browns a few decades back. Hollomon kept bugging Veeck and the manager for a starting assignment, and they finally gave him one against the Athletics. Everything the A's hit was a rocket, but everything was right at somebody, so instead of hits they were outs. In the eighth inning, the second baseman made a miraculous play to rob the batter of a hit. With two outs in the ninth, the first baseman caught a screaming line drive down the line. The game was over. Hollomon had a no-hitter, the first twentieth-century no-hitter achieved by a pitcher in his first major league start. What an incredible start to his career. Great days were ahead for Bobo

Holloman. Not really. Fact is, he never even pitched another complete game and by the end of the year he was back in the minors, never to see the major league again. Bobo Holloman started well; he just didn't finish well. That happens to restaurants. There are about 555,000 restaurants in the United States with new restaurants starting each year. But more than half of all new restaurants fail within the first three years. They start well; they just don't finish well. That happens to churches. There are approximately 375,000 church congregations in the United States. About 80% of all U.S. churches have either leveled out in attendance, are declining, or are dying. They start well; they just don't finish well. That also happens to "Christians." From the time of Paul's reference in his second letter to Timothy about Demas—"Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me" (2Ti 4:10)—the church has been plagued with the problem of people who claim to have faith but whose faith fizzles at the finish. ([Notable Harbour Verse-by-Verse Studies](#))

**Abide** ([3306](#))(**meno**) in simple terms means to remain in the same place or position over a period of time. It means to reside, stay, live, lodge, tarry or dwell. **Menō** describes something that remains where it is, continues in a fixed state, or endures.

**Meno** can mean "to take up permanent residence" or "to make yourself at home." **Meno** is the root of the Greek noun *mone* which means mansion or habitation (Jn 14:2, 23).

More than one half of the uses of **meno** are by John in his Gospel and letters.

**Louw-Nida** - 1. stay, remain, abide (to remain in the same place over a period of time) (Acts 27:31); 2. wait for, remain in a place or state, and expect something in future (Acts 20:5); 3. continue to exist, remain in existence (Mt 11:23); 4. keep on, continue in an activity or state, as an aspect of an action (2Jn 9)

**Analytical Lexicon** - (1) intransitively; (a) of someone or something remaining where it is remain in a place, stay, tarry (Mt 10.11), opposite *exerchomai* (go away, depart); (b) in a more permanent sense dwell, live, lodge (Jn 1.38); (c) figuratively, as remaining unchanged in a sphere or realm continue, abide, remain (2Ti 2.13); (d) figuratively, as remaining in a fixed state or position keep on, remain, abide (1Cor 7.11; Heb 7.3); (e) of persons continuing on through time last, remain, continue to live (Jn 12.34), opposite *apothnesko* (die, perish); (f) of things continuing on through time last, be permanent, endure (Heb 13.14); (2) transitively; (a) as expecting someone or something wait for, await (Acts 20.5); (b) of things, such as danger, that threaten await, face (Acts 20.23) ([Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament- Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Mille Timothy Friberg](#))

**Stephen Renn** - The meaning "remain" in the sense of "be preserved" is indicated hypothetically in the case of the city of Sodom in Matt. 11:23; and also literally in regard to the earthly destiny of the disciple, John (John 21:23). The idea of remaining unmarried is found in 1 Cor. 7:11 (cf. also 1 Cor. 7:20, 24). More commonly, **menō** is translated "remain" in the senses of "stay," "rest on," in several contexts. **Menō** refers to staying in a house as a guest (Luke 10:7; 19:5; John 2:12; 4:40; Acts 9:43); or more generally, to staying in a particular place (cf. John 8:31; 10:40). John 1:32 refers to the Spirit coming to permanently "rest on" the person of Christ. Paul's determination to "stay" with the Philippian congregation for the purposes of nurturing them is indicated in Phil. 1:25. John 19:31 refers to the Mosaic legislation that forbids allowing bodies to remain on a cross of execution during the Sabbath day. Where believers are concerned, their state of "remaining" **in Christ**, referring to their intimate relationship with Him, is indicated in John 6:56; 1John 2:24, 28; 3:6. Conversely, unbelievers are said "to remain" in darkness (John 12:46); and 2Cor. 3:14 affirms that the veil of unbelief remains over their understanding. **Menō** is also predicated of Christ and God. God's word is to remain in the heart and life of the believer (1John 2:24); as is God's love (1Jn 3:17). In a negative context, the unbeliever is denied the presence of God's word in his heart (cf. John 5:38). God himself is said to remain faithful (2Ti 2:13); and Jn 12:35 declares that Christ remains forever. The qualities of faith, hope, and love are said to remain, or endure (1Cor 13:13). Jn 9:41 refers to guilt remaining. ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#))

**TDNT** - 1. **Meno** means a. "to stay in a place," figuratively "to remain in a sphere," b. "to stand against opposition," "to hold out," "to stand fast," c. "to stay still," and d. "to remain," "to endure," "to stay in force." 2. There is also a transitive use "to expect someone."

The meaning of **menō** ("abide") in John 15 has provoked much debate. Reformed commentators equate it to believe. Free Grace advocates uniformly understand **menō** ("abide") to indicate communion or fellowship with Christ.

The Word of God abides forever (1Pe 1:23,25); Jesus abides forever (Jn 12:34); and so does the new covenant (2Corinthians 3:11). Unbelievers abide in darkness and death (John 12:46; 1 John 3:14), but Christians abide **in Christ** (Jn 6:56; 15:4-7).

**IVP New Testament Commentary** - **To remain** (**Ed**: Especially in many of John's uses in a moral or ethical sense) implies the maintenance of a stable and vital—but not static!—fellowship with God. In the words of one author, abiding suggests "utter and dependable permanence" (Houlden 1973:82). ([1 John 2 Commentary](#))

**Meno** is used to describe the Holy Spirit coming on Jesus and remaining (Jn 1:32-33).

**Meno** is used figuratively to describe the wrath of God abiding (continually = present tense) on all who do not believe in Jesus as

their Savior (Jn 3:36).

How does Jesus abide (meno) in us? In Jn 15:7 He said it would be through His Word, with the aid of the Spirit (Jn 16:13, 14:26). The disciples could abide **in Christ** by being obedient to His Word (Jn 15:10).

Most of the uses in Acts and in the Synoptic Gospels (and several times in John - Jn 1:38-39, 2:12, et al) refer to **physically** continuing in a place and/or lodging there. When **meno** is used of one staying or dwelling with another physically, it often still has an ethical sense in that it implies fellowship, intimacy, communion as discussed more fully in the following paragraph.

In many of the uses of **meno** the translation as to stay, to remain, to abide, etc, implies more that just position (i.e., more than them just physically staying, remaining or abiding somewhere), but when used of persons staying, remaining or abiding, **meno** often includes the ideas of fellowship, friendship, communion, companionship and harmony. For example, read Mt. 10:11, Mt. 26:38, Lk 1:56, 19:5, Jn 1:39-40, et al, where the idea is not only physical presence but relational interaction. In short, **meno** used in this sense speaks of an at-homeness with someone. Most of us would not invite someone to **remain** in our home if we were out of fellowship with them! And so you can see that meno can convey the idea of making someone feel at home -- think of this sense in uses in which Jesus abides in us (Jn 15:5). **Do we "make Him feel at home?" Do we say, do or watch things in our home He is in that might make Him uncomfortable or "uneasy?" I am very convicted by my own question!**

**First-Second John** repeatedly (25x in 18v) uses **meno** followed by the preposition "**in**" (**en**). Many of John's uses parallel one of Paul's favorite phrases "**in Christ**" - 1Jn 2:6 (in Him = Christ); 1Jn 2:10 (in the light); 1Jn 2:14 (word of God abides in you); 1Jn 2:24 (in you = the teaching, the truth, in the Son and the Father), 1Jn 2:27 (in you = the anointing abides ~ Spirit; in Him = **in Christ**); 1Jn 2:28 (in Him = Christ); 1Jn 3:6 (in Him = in Christ); 1Jn 3:9 (in him = God's seed in him); 1Jn 3:14 (in death); 1Jn 3:15 (in him = eternal life does not abide in habitual haters); 1Jn 3:17 (in him = love of God does not abide); 1Jn 3:24 (in Him = **in Christ**; in us = Christ in us); 1Jn 4:12 (in us = God abides in us); 1Jn 4:13 (in Him = **in Christ** or in God); 1Jn 4:15 (in him = God in confessors); 1Jn 4:16 (in love... in God and God abides in him); 2Jn 1:2 (in us = truth); 2Jn 1:9 (used twice - in the teaching)

**Wuest - Abide** is one of John's favorite words. The Greek word is **menō**. Its classical usage will throw light upon the way it is used in the NT. It meant "to stay, stand fast, abide, to stay at home, stay where one is, not stir, to remain as one was, to remain as before." In the NT, **meno** means "to sojourn, to tarry, to dwell at one's own house, to tarry as a guest, to lodge, to maintain unbroken fellowship with one, to adhere to his party, to be constantly present to help one, to put forth constant influence upon one." "In the mystic phraseology of John, God is said to **menō in Christ**, i.e., to dwell as it were in Him, to be continually operative in Him by His divine influence and energy (Jn 14:10); Christians are said to **menō** in God, to be rooted as it were in Him, knit to Him by the Spirit they have received from Him (1Jn 2:6, 24, 27, 3:6); hence one is said to **menō** in Christ or in God, and conversely, Christ or God is said to **menō** in one (Jn 6:56, 15:4)." Thayer quotes Ruckert in the use of **menō** in the words "Something has established itself permanently within my soul, and always exerts its power in me. The word **meno** therefore has the ideas of "permanence of position, occupying a place as one's dwelling place, holding and maintaining unbroken communion and fellowship with another." (See John's uses below). The words "abide, dwell, tarry, continue, be present," are the various translations in the AV Study these places where the word occurs, and obtain a comprehensive view of its usage. In John 15, the abiding of the Christian in Christ refers to his maintaining unbroken fellowship with Him. He makes his spiritual home in Christ. There is nothing between himself and his Saviour, no sin unjudged and not put away. He depends upon Him for spiritual life and vigor as the branch is dependent upon the vine. The abiding of Christ (**Ed**: And the Spirit of Christ = Ro 8:9) in the Christian is His permanent residence in Him and His supplying that Christian with the necessary spiritual energy to produce fruit in his life through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Wiersbe - To abide in Christ** means to depend completely on Him for all that we need in order to live for Him and serve Him. It is a living relationship. As He lives out His life through us (cp Col 3:4), we are able to follow His example and walk as He walked. Paul expresses this experience perfectly: "Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). This is a reference to the work of the Holy Spirit. Christ is our Advocate in heaven (1John 2:1), to represent us before God when we sin. The Holy Spirit is God's Advocate for us here on earth... Christ lives out His life through us by the power of the Spirit, who lives within our bodies. **It is not by means of imitation that we abide in Christ and walk as He walked. No, it is through incarnation: through His Spirit, "Christ liveth in me."** To walk in the light is to walk in the Spirit and not fulfill the lusts of the flesh (cf. Gal. 5:16).

**Hiebert - Abides** (meno), a characteristic Johannine term, portrays habitual fellowship with Him as an active relationship that endures (1Jn 2:6).

**Bock** adds "John uses **menō** in a theological sense to call people to remain or abide in Jesus."

**NET Bible Note** on **abide** (meno) "The Greek word (menō) translated resides indicates a close, intimate (and permanent) relationship between the believer and God. It is very important to note that for the author of the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles every genuine Christian has this type of relationship with God, and the person who does not have this type of relationship

(cf. 2 John 9) is not a believer at all (in spite of what he or she may claim).

**Steven Cole** writes "Dr. James Rosscup devotes an entire book to the theme of **abiding in Christ** as found in John 15. He sums up the concept of abiding in three ways (Abiding in Christ [Zondervan], p. 116, italics his): "**Abiding** involves a person's relating himself to Christ the Vine, to His Person and His purpose; rejecting attitudes, words, actions, or interests which Christ's Word reveals He cannot share; and receiving the quality-essence of Christ's imparted life for authentic fulfillment."

**Mounce** - In the NT, **meno** can function as a transitive verb (i.e., requires a direct object) or as an intransitive verb (i.e., does not require a direct object) in Greek. (1) Without a direct object, **menō** signifies a person or a thing "remaining" in the same place or state. With respect to **PLACE**, a demon-possessed individual was unable "to **LIVE**" in a house (Lk 8:27). When Jesus was overwhelmed with sorrow at his impending death, he told his disciples to "**STAY** here and keep watch with me" (Mt 26:38). With respect to **STATE**, **menō** describes the continuing condition of a person or thing. In this sense, the writer of Hebrews says that Christ "**REMAINS** a priest forever" (Heb 7:3). Paul encouraged converts to "**REMAIN** in the situation which he was in when God called him" (1Cor. 7:20, 24). John uses **menō** frequently to describe the PERSEVERANCE OF BELIEVERS (See [Perseverance of the Saints - is it biblical?](#)) in their relation to Christ, that is, to "remain" or "abide" in Him (Jn 8:31; 15:4-10, 16; 1Jn. 2:6, 10). (2) With a direct object, **menō** means "to await, wait for." In this sense, men "awaited" or "waited for" Paul and Luke at Troas (Acts 20:5). In the same chapter, Paul tells the Ephesian elders that bonds and afflictions "await" him in Jerusalem (20:23). **Menō** 118x = to stay, Mt 26:38; Acts 27:31; to continue; 1Cor. 7:11; 2Tim. 2:13; to dwell, lodge, sojourn, Jn 1:39; Acts 9:43; to remain, Jn 9:41; to rest, settle, Jn 1:32, 33; 3:36; to last, endure, Mt 11:23; Jn 6:27; 1Cor. 3:14; to survive, 1Cor. 15:6; to be existent, 1Cor. 13:13; to continue unchanged, Ro 9:11; to be permanent, Jn 15:16; 2Cor. 3:11; Heb 10:34; 13:14; 1Pet. 1:23; to persevere, be constant, be steadfast, 1Ti 2:15; 2Ti 3:14; to abide, to be in close and settled union, Jn 6:56; 14:10; 15:4; to indwell, Jn 5:38; 1Jn. 2:14; trans. to wait for, Acts 20:5, 23 ([Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words- William D. Mounce](#))

**Meno** is used to describe the Holy Spirit coming on Jesus and **remaining** on Him (Jn 1:32-33).

**Meno** is used figuratively to describe the wrath of God abiding (continually = present tense) on all who do not believe in Jesus as their Savior (Jn 3:36).

**Palmer** writes that **meno** "is practical and warmly personal; it is definite and understandable; it is too common a word for the religious or ideological elite. It is the word for amateurs who may not know the ways of ritual or of avant-garde privilege but who know how to settle into a genuine relationship and enjoy the fellowship and the view." (The Preacher's Commentary Series, Volume 35 : 1, 2 & 3 John / Revelation)

**MacArthur** - **Meno** is used in a theological sense to refer to the truth that resides in believers (1John 2:14, 24-27; cf. John 5:38 where Jesus upbraids the unbelieving Jews for not having the Word **abiding** in them), to true believers **abiding** in the Word (John 8:31) and thus not being in spiritual darkness (John 12:46), to the Spirit abiding in believers (John 14:17; cf. 1 John 4:12, 15, 16) and, most significant, to believers abiding **in Christ** (John 6:56; 14:10; 15:4-7, 9-10; 1 John 2:6, 10, 28; 3:6, 24; 4:13). The truth of the Word, which abides in believers forever, gives them "the mind of Christ" (1Cor. 2:16). (1, 2, 3 John : MacArthur NT Commentary)

Romans 6:1 uses the cognate **epimeno** - **Wuest** has a note that helps us grasp the meaning of the root verb **meno** - The question reads as follows, "Shall we continue in the sinful nature?" The word "continue" is **menō** (**Ed**: Actually it is **epimeno**), "to remain, abide." It is used in the NT of a person abiding in some one's home as a guest, or of a person abiding in a home. It has in it the ideas of fellowship, of cordial relations, of dependence, of social intercourse. The question now can be further interpreted to mean, "Shall we continue habitually to sustain the same relationship to the sinful nature that we sustained before we were saved, a relationship which was most cordial, a relationship in which we were fully yielded to and dependent upon that sinful nature, and all this as a habit of life?" The idea of habitual action comes from the use of the present subjunctive which speaks of habitual action. The fundamental question therefore is not with regard to acts of sin but with respect to the believer's relationship to the sinful nature. This is after all basic, acts of sin in his life being the result of the degree of his yieldedness to the sinful nature. (**Ed**: If we are "cordial" with our sinful nature, we should not be surprised that we commit sins which we would not commit if we were "cordial" with Christ, the sin nature Destroyer!)

**Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary** - In classical Greek the verb **menō** means "to remain" in a place, "to stay," or "to tarry." It also frequently carries the metaphoric meaning of being in a "sphere" or quality of life. In the Septuagint **menō** has basically the same meaning as in classical Greek. It is often used to translate two Hebrew verbs, **qūm** and **'āmadh**, both having as their primary meaning "to stand." As with classical Greek there is the metaphoric meaning of "sphere" or "quality," e.g., to "remain" in a vow is to validate the vow, to make it meaningful (Numbers 30:5).

**Wayne Detzler** - The word **meno** functions on two levels of meaning in the Bible. First, it relates to rather common concepts of life. Living in a house (John 1:38) is described by the word. It is used of Jesus' visit to Zaccheus (Luke 19:5) and Peter's presence at Simon's tannery (Acts 9:43). It also referred to the place where Paul was held under house arrest (28:16), known in Latin as

custodia libera, literally, "free custody." A second slant takes the word into the realm of the spiritual. Christians are urged to make the Lord their place of abode, to persevere. In fact the Greek word for perseverance is hupomeno, a combination of the prefix hupo (under, as in under the rule or sovereignty of someone) and meno (to remain). So the combination word conveys the concept of continuing under the rule or sovereignty of the Lord. That is biblical steadfastness or perseverance. Now let us explore the biblical connections of this word. By its primary form of meno (to remain) Christians are instructed to remain in "the teaching" (2 John 9), Christ's word (John 8:31), and in the love of the Lord (John 15:9). This continuance is related to Christ (John 15:4-5), the Father (1 John 2:24), and the Holy Spirit (John 14:17) who remain with us. In the Apostle Paul's great "Psalm of Love" (1 Cor. 13), we are told that faith, hope, and love remain (1 Cor 13:13). Steadfast staying power is part and parcel of biblical Christian living. (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

**Abide (Webster's English definition)** - To wait for, await; to endure without yielding (withstand); to bear patiently (cannot abide such bigots); to accept without objection (will abide by your decision); Intransitively abide = to remain stable or fixed in a state; to continue in a place; to dwell; to rest; to tarry or stay for a short time (Ge 24:55); to continue permanently or in the same state; to be firm and immovable (Ps 119:90). **Abide** means to exist over a period of time and implies stable and constant existing especially as opposed to mutability (e.g., a love that abides through 40 years of marriage). **Webster's 1828** adds abide "when intransitive (not having a direct object), is followed by *in* or *at* before the place, and *with* before the person. "**Abide** with me—at Jerusalem or in this land." Sometimes by *on*, the sword shall abide *on* his cities; and in the sense of wait, by *for*, abide *for* me. Hosea 3:3. Sometimes by *by*, abide *by* the crib. Job 39:9 KJV. In general, **abide by** signifies to adhere to, maintain, defend, or stand to, as to **abide by** a promise, or **by** a friend; or to suffer the consequences, as to **abide by** the event, that is, to be fixed or permanent in a particular condition."

**Stay (Webster's English definition)** - To stay means to continue in a place or condition, to stand firm, to take up residence, to stick or remain with (as a race or trial of endurance) to the end — usually used in the phrase stay the course

**Reside (Webster's English definition)** - To dwell permanently or for a length of time; to have a settled abode for a time; have one's home (in).

**Liddell-Scott** - 1. to stay, stand fast, abide, in battle, Hom., Aesch.; of soldiers, Thuc. 2. to stay at home, stay where one is, not stir, Il.; to stay away from, Il. 3. to stay, tarry, Hom., etc. 4. of things, to be lasting, remain, last, stand, 5. of condition, to remain as one was, of a maiden, Il.; if oaths hold good, Eur.; to remain contented with . . . , Dem. 6. to abide by an opinion, conviction, etc., Plat. 7. impers. c. inf., it remains for one to do, Il. trans. to await, expect, wait for, c. acc., Il.; so, like Lat. manere hostem, Hom., wait ye for the Trojans to come nigh? Il.; they waited for evening's coming on, Od.; I wait, i.e. long, to hear, Aesch.

**Meno** - 118x in 102v with 23x in 18v in First John -**NAS Usage:** abide(16), abides(22), abiding(4), await(1), continue(4), continues(1), endures(3), enduring(1), lasting(2), lives(1), living(1), remain(20), remained(6), remaining(1), remains(8), stand(1), stay(11), stayed(11), staying(3), waiting(1).

Matthew 10:11 "And whatever city or village you enter, inquire who is worthy in it, and **stay (aorist imperative)** at his house until you leave that city.

Matthew 11:23 "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have **remained** to this day.

Matthew 26:38 Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death, **remain (aorist imperative)** here and keep watch with Me."

Mark 6:10 And He said to them, "Wherever you enter a house, **stay (present imperative)** there until you leave town.

Mark 14:34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death, **remain (aorist imperative)** here and keep watch."

Luke 1:56 And Mary **stayed** with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

Luke 8:27 And when He came out onto the land, He was met by a man from the city who was possessed with demons; and who had not put on any clothing for a long time, and was not **living** in a house, but in the tombs.

Luke 9:4 "Whatever house you enter, **stay (present imperative)** there until you leave that city.

Luke 10:7 "**Stay (present imperative)** in that house, eating and drinking what they give you; for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not keep moving from house to house.

Luke 19:5 When Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must **stay** at your house."

Luke 24:29 But they urged Him, saying, **Stay** (aorist imperative) with us, for it is getting toward evening, and the day is now nearly over." So He went in to **stay** with them.

John 1:32 John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He **remained upon** Him. **33** "I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and **remaining upon** Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.'

**NET Note:** The general significance of the verb **meno** for John is to **express the permanency of relationship** between Father and Son and Son and believer. Here the use of the word implies that **Jesus permanently possesses the Holy Spirit**, and because He does, He will dispense the Holy Spirit to others in baptism. ([John 1](#))

John 1:38 And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You **staying**?" **39** He said to them, "Come, and you will see." So they came and saw where He was **staying**; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.

**Bible Knowledge Commentary** - Sometimes, as here, it means "to stay or dwell" in a place; a few times it means "to last or continue"; but more often it has a theological connotation: "to remain, continue, abide" (e.g., John 15:4-7).

John 2:12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they **stayed** there a few days.

[Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#) - John uses the verb **meno** only thrice in its literal sense in the Gospel ( John 2:12; John 4:40; John 10:40 ); he seems almost jealously to reserve it for metaphorical, i.e. ethical, application.

John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God **abides on** him."

John 4:40 So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him **to stay** with them; and He stayed there two days.

John 5:38 "You do not have His word **abiding in** you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.

**Henry Morris** - "The written Word of God, according to Christ's affirmation, is that which brings salvation and eternal life (James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23) because it is the only source of information we have about the Savior. **The written Word reveals the living Word.** The Lord was, in fact, speaking here of the Old Testament Scriptures, for there was nothing else at that time. These scriptures are replete with testimonies of the coming Christ."

**Adam Clarke** - Though ye believe the Scriptures to be of God, yet ye do not let them take hold of your hearts - his word is in your mouth, but not in your mind. What a miserable lot! to read the Scriptures as the true sayings of God, and yet to get no salvation from them!

**Albert Barnes** - His law does not abide in you - that is, you do not regard or obey it **(Ed comment:** cp Jn 3:36 = "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." --Here we see "belief" is paired with "obedience" -- to say one believes but to not obey is tantamount to unbelief. Don't twist this around -- John is not saying you are saved if you obey! Faith alone saves. John is saying that the faith that truly saves is a faith that results in a regenerated heart, one which has a desire to obey God.)

**John Calvin** - This is the true way of profiting, when the word of God takes root in us, so that, being impressed on our hearts, it has its fixed abode there. Christ affirms that the heavenly doctrine has no place among the Jews, because they do not receive the Son of God, on whom it everywhere bestows commendation. And justly does he bring this reproach against them; for it was not in vain that God spake by Moses and the Prophets. Moses had no other intention than to invite all men to go straight to Christ; and hence it is evident that they who reject Christ are not the disciples of Moses.

**Bible Knowledge Commentary** - Jesus' opponents are ignorant of God. They have no vision of God and no communication with Him. His Word is His message of salvation. This message had not been received by them (does not **dwell** [menonta, from **menō**, "remain, abide"] in them) because they had rejected Jesus.



**Cambridge Greek Testament** - One who had the Word abiding in his heart could not reject Him to Whom that Word bears witness. 1 John 2:14; 1 John 2:24.

John 6:27 "Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which **endures** to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, **for (term of explanation** - What is Jesus explaining?) on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

**Comment: Food** is a metaphor in this context for the Word of God (1Pe 1:23-25-note, cp "living water" Jn 4:10, 14) and speaks of the difference between the physical and spiritual realities. The Jews saw and understood only the former (literal bread) (cp 2Cor 4:18-note). The Jews were seeking Jesus because of what they could get from Him in a materialistic sense (see Jn 6:26), but sadly not in an eternal sense, especially eternal life. James wrote about the futility of riches (James 1:11-12-note). Compare the passing nature of this world and its lusts (1Jn 2:17-note) and Jesus' admonition in Mt 6:19-21-note. By using the verb "work" Jesus was not saying we earn salvation as he

**NET Note:** Note the wordplay on "work" here. This does not imply "working" for salvation, since the "work" is later explained (in John 6:29) as "to believe in the one whom he (the Father) sent."

**MacDonald:** Man should not live as if his body were all. He should not devote all his strength and talents to the feeding of his body, which in a few short years will be eaten by worms. Rather, he should make sure that his soul is fed day by day with the Word of God. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." (Mt 4:4) We should work tirelessly to acquire a better knowledge of the Word of God. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

John 6:56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood **abides in** Me, and I in him.

**Bible Knowledge Commentary** - One who partakes of Christ enjoys a mutual abiding relationship with Christ. He **remains** (menei) **in Christ**, and Christ **remains** in him. **Menō** is one of the most important theological terms in John's Gospel. The Father "**remains**" in the Son (Jn 14:10), the Spirit "**remains**" on Jesus (Jn 1:32), and believers "**remain**" in Jesus and He in them (Jn 6:56; Jn 15:4). The implications of this "**remaining**" are many. A believer enjoys intimacy with and security in Jesus.

John 7:9 Having said these things (**Always pause to ask "What things?" - this forces you to either remember or if you can't remember, to go back and read the previous context, both of which are of value in facilitating meditation on the passage.** In this case read Jn 7:6-8) to them, He **stayed** in Galilee.

John 8:31 So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you **continue in** My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

**Charles Ryrie** on "Jews who had believed Him" - Likely only a profession because of what they said in Jn 8:33 (**Ed:** Not to mention what they sought to do in Jn 8:59!). (Ryrie study Bible: New American Standard Bible)

**William MacDonald:** Jesus made a distinction between those who are disciples (**Ed:** see the professing "disciples" in John 6:66, cp 1Jn 2:19, 2Jn 1:9) and those who are disciples indeed. A disciple is anyone who professes to be a learner, but a disciple indeed is one who has definitely committed himself to the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who are true believers have this characteristic—they abide in His Word. This means that they continue in the teachings of Christ. They do not turn aside from Him. True faith always has the quality of permanence. They are not saved by abiding in His Word, but they abide in His Word because they are saved. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**J Vernon McGee: Faith alone saves, but the faith that saves is not alone** It will produce something. After a person believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he will want to "continue in His Word." The proof of faith is continuing with the Savior. As the pastor of a church, I learned to watch out for the person who is active in the church but is not interested in the study of the Word of God. Such a one is dangerous to a church. (Thru the Bible commentary)

**Leon Morris:** "This section of discourse is addressed to those who believe, **and yet do not believe**. Clearly they were inclined to think that what Jesus said was true. But they were not prepared to yield Him the far-reaching allegiance that **real trust** in Him implies" (The Gospel According to John, The New International Commentary on the New Testament: Eerdmans, 1979, 454).

**John Piper:** The world is not just divided into two groups: disciples of Jesus and non-disciples. It is divided into three groups: non-disciples, unreal disciples, and real disciples—people who make no pretense of

following Jesus, people that say they follow him and have a surface connection with him, and people who truly follow him. Why did Jesus bring up this distinction? It's disturbing. It makes us squirm and ask ourselves the question which one we are. He brought it up because verse 30 says, "As he was saying these things, many believed in him." There had been a large response to what he was teaching. And whenever there is a large response to anything you may guess that some are being carried along by the crowd. If your friends are going, it's easy for you to go, even if you wouldn't go on your own. You are along for the ride. So Jesus doesn't assume that all this belief is real. What he does is give a test that we can use to see if we are real. And in giving us this test Jesus helps us be real. It is not just a test of reality. It is a pathway to reality. So what becomes clear here again, as we have seen several times before (for example, John 2:23-25; 6:26) is what John meant when he wrote in John 20:31, "These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." He meant that this Gospel was written not just to awaken faith in non-disciples, but also to wake up people who think they are disciples but aren't, and to help those who are real disciples confirm their reality and be stronger in their faith. John's Gospel is written to sustain faith as well as create it. You are in one of those three categories. And therefore all of you are included here. What then is a true disciple? Or what does Jesus mean by saying in verse 31, "you are truly my disciples"? Let's be really clear here: For Jesus "true disciple" is the same as "true Christian" or "true believer." Jesus is not saying that "true disciple" is a second stage in the Christian life. First believer, and then later you attain the level of disciple. There have been ministries who talk that way. First, you're an unbeliever, then you are a believer, then you grow into a disciple, and then you are a disciple maker. That is not the way Jesus thought. And one piece of evidence for saying this is to notice the words he uses here in verse 31: "Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.'" He did not say to these professing believers, "If you abide in my word, you will become truly my disciples." In other words, he did not teach that being a true disciple was a later stage after simple belief. No. He said, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." Now that you have believed, here is how you can know what you now are. You can know if your belief is real: You are now my true disciples if you go on abiding in my word. So there is no thought here about "true discipleship" being a second stage of Christian maturity. True disciple means true believer or true Christian or true follower. It means, for example, truly forgiven for your sins. Look at verse 24: "I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins." So he says, if you do believe in me, you won't die in your sins... What does it mean to abide in his word?

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." The word "abide" is simply the word "remain." It doesn't carry in it any special spiritual connotations in itself. It means remain in his word. Don't leave it. This doesn't mean that you can't lay your Bible down and go to your work. No. Abiding in the word of Jesus means remaining in that force field of the word. It means not leaving it. (1) **Abide means** not ceasing to be persuaded by its truth, and never elevating any other truth above it. (2) **Abide means** not ceasing to be attracted by its beauty and value, and never seeing anything as more beautiful or more valuable or more attractive than the word and the Lord it reveals. (3) **Abide means** not ceasing to rest in its grace and power—never turning away as though greater peace could be found anywhere else. (4) **Abide means** never ceasing to eat and drink from the word as the bread of heaven and living water, as if life could be sustained anywhere else. (5) And **abide means** never ceasing to walk in the light of the word, as though any other light could show the secrets of life. This is what it means to be a true disciple. "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." And the fact that Jesus puts the emphasis on abiding—remaining—gives the answer to our last question: **5. How are abiding in his word and truly being his disciple related to each other?** "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples." Jesus is saying that the mark of the true disciple is lasting, enduring, persevering, keeping on in the force field of the word. Temporary tastes of the truth and beauty and value and power and grace and bread and water and brightness of the word do not make you a Christian. The mark of Christians is that we taste and we stay. ([Read or listen to Dr Piper's full message - If You Abide in My Word, You Are Truly My Disciples](#))

**Comment:** I am amazed at some of the comments on this section (Jn 8:30-58), even by scholars who are generally otherwise excellent expositors, such as Dr Thomas Constable (whose work I consider generally to be of peerless scholarship!) And so Dr Constable makes the statement on Jn 8:30 that "in view of the following verses, **the faith of some of them seems to have been quite shallow.**" How can those have genuine saving faith (albeit "shallow") when they are seeking to kill the Savior? (Jn 8:38) And how can they be said to have "shallow" faith, when the Lord Jesus Christ Himself plainly states "**You do not believe Me?**" To say that John 8:30-59 **does not** describe a faith that does not save a person (a spurious faith), seems to be ignoring the plain reading of the words of John and of Jesus. I could be in error, but even the Greek text says the same thing in my opinion.

John 8:35 "The slave does not **remain in** the house forever; the son does **remain** forever.

**NET Note:** Jesus' point is that while a slave may be part of a family or household, the slave is not guaranteed a permanent place there, while a son, as a descendant or blood relative, will always be guaranteed a place in the family (**remains** forever).

**MacArthur:** The genuine son in the context is Christ Himself, who sets the slaves free from sin. Those whom Jesus Christ liberates from the tyranny of sin and the bondage of legalism are really free (Ro 8:2; Gal 5:1). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

**MacDonald:** Whether the word "Son" applies to the Son of God or whether it applies to those who become children of God by faith in Christ, it is clear that the Lord Jesus was telling these Jews (**Ed:** Contrary to what some teach, these were the same Jews addressed in John 8:30-31.) that they were not sons, but slaves who could be put out at any time. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

John 9:41 Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin **remains**.

**Comment:** The religious leaders were spiritually blind to their sin and thus they continued in the state of guilt because of their sin.

**NET Note:** The blind man received sight physically, and this led him to see spiritually as well. But the Pharisees, who claimed to possess spiritual sight, were spiritually blinded. The reader might recall Jesus' words to Nicodemus in Jn 3:10, "Are you the teacher of Israel and don't understand these things?" In other words, to receive Jesus was to receive the light of the world, to reject him was to reject the light, close one's eyes, and become blind. This is the serious sin of which Jesus had warned before (Jn 8:21-24). The blindness of such people was incurable since they had rejected the only cure that exists (cf. Jn 12:39-41).

John 10:40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was **staying** there.

John 11:6 So when He heard that he was sick, He then **stayed** two days longer in the place where He was.

John 11:54 Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He **stayed** with the disciples.

John 12:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it **remains** alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

**MacDonald:** Seed never produces grain until first it falls into the ground and dies. The Lord Jesus here referred to Himself as a grain (or kernel) of wheat. If He did not die, He would **abide** alone. He would enjoy the glories of heaven by Himself; there would be no saved sinners there to share His glory. But if He died, He would provide a way of salvation by which many might be saved. The same applies to us, as T. G. Ragland says: If we refuse to be corns of wheat—falling into the ground, and dying (Read Jn 12:25); if we will neither sacrifice prospects, nor risk character, and property, and health; nor, when we are called, relinquish home, and break family ties, for Christ's sake; then we shall **abide** alone. But if we wish to be fruitful, we must follow our Blessed Lord Himself, by becoming a corn of wheat, and dying, then we shall bring forth much fruit. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Constable:** Anyone who selfishly lives for himself or herself loses his or her life in the sense that he or she wastes it. Nothing really good comes from it. Conversely anyone who hates his or her life in the sense of disregarding one's own desires to pursue the welfare of another will gain something for that sacrifice. He or she will gain true life for self and blessing for the other person. Jesus contrasted the worthlessness of what one sacrifices now with the value of what one gains by describing the sacrifice as something temporal and the gain as something eternal. ([John 12 - Expository Notes](#))

John 12:34 The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to **remain** forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

John 12:46 "I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not **remain in** darkness.

**Comment:** Clearly **meno** here means to continue in spiritual darkness and is descriptive of all who refuse to believe in Jesus. "Apart from Christ, men are in deepest darkness. They do not have a right understanding of life, death, or eternity. But those who come to Christ in faith no longer grope about for the truth, because they

have found the truth in Him." (MacDonald(BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

John 14:10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father **abiding in** Me does His works.

**Comment:** Jesus is describing His oneness with the Father and speaks of a living relationship. **Meno** in this context describes a close, intimate and permanent relationship between the Father and the Son.

**Marvin Vincent:** Philip doubts whether Christ is in the Father, and the Father in Him. The answer is twofold, corresponding to the two phases of the doubt. His words, spoken not from Himself, are from the Father, and therefore He utters them from within the Father, and is Himself in the Father. His works are the works of the Father abiding in Him; therefore the Father is in Him.

**A T Robertson:** This oneness with the Father Jesus had already stated (Jn 10:38) as shown by his "words" and his "works". Cf. Jn 3:34; 5:19; 6:62.

**MacDonald:** They are separate Persons, yet They are one as to attributes and will. We should not be discouraged if we cannot understand this. No mortal mind will ever understand the Godhead. We must give God credit for knowing things that we can never know. If we fully understood Him, we would be as great as He! Jesus had power to speak the words and to do the miracles, but He came into the world as the Servant of Jehovah and He spoke and acted in perfect obedience to the Father. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

John 14:17 that is the Spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He **abides** (present tense) **with** you and will be **in** you.

**Bengel:** A most exquisite title... The Spirit, Who has the truth, reveals it, by knowledge in the understanding; confers it by practical proof and taste in the will; testifies of it to others also through those to whom He has revealed it; and defends that truth, of which John 1:17 speaks, **grace and truth**...The truth makes all our virtues true. Otherwise there is a kind of false knowledge, false faith, false hope, false love; but there is no such thing as false truth." (Gnomon of the New Testament)

**A T Robertson:** The Holy Spirit is marked by (truth) (genitive case), gives it, defends it (cf. Jn 1:17), in contrast to the spirit of error (1John 4:6).

**MacArthur: Abides with you and will be in you** indicates some distinction between the ministry of the Holy Spirit to believers before and after Pentecost. While clearly the Holy Spirit has been **with** all who have ever believed throughout redemptive history as the source of truth, faith, and life, Jesus is saying something new is coming in His ministry. John 7:37-39 indicates this unique ministry would be like "rivers of living water." Acts 19:1-7 introduces some Old Covenant believers who had not received the Holy Spirit in this unique fullness and intimacy. Cf. Acts 1:8; 2:1-4; 1Co 12:11-13. (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

John 14:25 "These things I have spoken to you while **abiding with** you.

**Comment:** While **meno** in this verse clearly speaks of Jesus' physically continuing in a place with His disciples, it also clearly implies fellowship, intimacy, communion. In short, **meno** here implies more than just position (i.e., more than them just physically remaining with the disciples), but includes the ideas of friendship (cp Jn 15:13-15), companionship and harmony.

John 15:4 "**Abide in** Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it **abides in** the vine, so neither can you unless you **abide in** Me.

**Abide in Me:** Among other things **meno** speaks of fellowship, intimacy, communion, dependence (of the disciple depending on Jesus to bear fruit through him). In the New Covenant, abiding in Jesus speaks of the disciple being continually filled with (Eph 5:18) and walking in the power (Gal 5:16) of the indwelling Spirit of Christ (Ro 8:9), Who gives the yielded, surrendered disciple the desire and the power to bear fruit (Php 2:12-13) and Who brings forth this fruit from those who are in fellowship, communion, and intimate relationship with Jesus (Gal 5:22-23).

**Bible Knowledge Commentary: What does it mean to remain (abide)?** It can mean, first, to accept Jesus as Savior (cf. Jn 6:54, 56). Second, it can mean to continue or persevere in believing (Jn 8:31 ["hold" is remain]; 1John 2:19, 24). Third, it can also mean believing, loving obedience (John 15:9-10). Without faith, no life of God will come to anyone. Without the life of God, no real fruit can be produced.

**John Trapp:** All our sap and safety is from Christ. The bud of a good desire, the blossom of a good resolution, and the fruit of a good action, all come from him. ([John 15 - John Trapp Complete](#))

[Commentary\)](#)

**Cambridge Greek:** The freedom of man's will is such that on his action depends that of Christ. The branches of the spiritual Vine have this mysterious power, that they can cut themselves off, as Judas had done. Nature does something and grace more; but grace may be rejected. ([John 15 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

**Alexander Maclaren:** Let me remind you that this great thought of the unity of life between Jesus Christ and all that believe upon Him is the familiar teaching of Scripture, and is set forth by other emblems besides that of the vine, the queen of the vegetable world; for we have it in the metaphor of the body and its members, where not only are the many members declared to be parts of one body, but the name of the collective body, made up of many members, is Christ. 'So also is'-not as we might expect, 'the Church,' but-'Christ,' the whole bearing the name of Him who is the Source of life to every part. Personality remains, individuality remains: I am I, and He is He, and thou art thou; but across the awful gulf of individual consciousness which parts us from one another, Jesus Christ assumes the Divine prerogative of passing and joining Himself to each of us, if we love Him and trust Him, in a union so close, and with a communication of life so real, that every other union which we know is but a faint and far-off adumbration of it. A oneness of life from root to branch, which is the sole cause of fruitfulness and growth, is taught us here.

And then let me remind you that that living unity between Jesus Christ and all who love Him is a oneness which necessarily results in oneness of relation to God and men, in oneness of character, and in oneness of destiny. In relation to God, He is the Son, and we in Him receive the standing of sons. He has access ever into the Father's presence, and we through Him and in Him have access with confidence and are accepted in the Beloved. In relation to men, since He is Light, we, touched with His light, are also, in our measure and degree, the lights of the world; and in the proportion in which we receive into our souls, by patient abiding in Jesus Christ, the very power of His Spirit, we, too, become God's anointed, subordinately but truly His messiahs, for He Himself says: 'As the Father hath sent Me, even so I send you.'

In regard to character, the living union between Christ and His members results in a similarity if not identity of character, and with His righteousness we are clothed, and by that righteousness we are justified, and by that righteousness we are sanctified. The oneness between Christ and His children is the ground at once of their forgiveness and acceptance, and of all virtue and nobleness of life and conduct that can ever be theirs.

And, in like manner, we can look forward and be sure that we are so closely joined with Him, if we love Him and trust Him, that it is impossible but that where He is there shall also His servants be; and that what He is that shall also His servants be. For the oneness of life, by which we are delivered from the bondage of corruption and the law of sin and death here, will never halt nor cease until it brings us into the unity of His glory, 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' And as He sits on the Father's throne, His children must needs sit with Him, on His throne.

Therefore the name of the collective whole, of which the individual Christian is part, is Christ. And as in the great Old Testament prophecy of the Servant of the Lord, the figure that rises before Isaiah's vision fluctuates between that which is clearly the collective Israel and that which is, as clearly, the personal Messiah; so the 'Christ' is not only the individual Redeemer who bears the body of the flesh literally here upon earth, but the whole of that redeemed Church, of which it is said, 'It is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.' ([John 15 - MacLaren's Expositions of Holy Scripture](#))

**Matthew Poole:** This our abiding in Christ is expounded, by an abiding in his words, John 15:7, by abiding in his love, John 15:10, an abiding in his Spirit, 1 John 2:27, a walking as Christ walked, 1 John 2:6, an abiding in the light, John 15:10, not sinning, 1 John 3:6. The exhortation is, without doubt, to a holiness of life and conversation, by which our union and communion with Christ is upheld and maintained, and which is in itself an abiding in the love of Christ. ([John 15 - English Annotations on the Holy Bible](#))

**Ray Stedman:** It is clearly a twofold process that our Lord asks: "Abide in me" that is the active voice. That is something we are expected to do. We imitate that. "Remain in me." "Abide in me." "Follow me." "And I in you." The implication is, "Let me abide in you." That is passive. It is not something we can initiate but something we can expect to happen and trust God for. It takes both to be a fruitful, Christlike Christian.

One alone is not enough. This is where many Christians make a mistake. They work at one or the other but not at both. When I was 22, I got my first car -- a beautiful Model A Ford with a rumble seat in the back. As I recall I paid \$15 for it from my brother, who had earlier bought it for \$35. (If I still had it today it would be worth thousands of dollars.) Since it was a used car it had used car problems. Occasionally it would refuse to start. The first time I had this difficulty, I called my older brother, who was much more mechanically minded than I, and asked him to help me. He handed me a screwdriver and showed me where to put it on the spark plug, and said, "Hold that." I stood there, innocently holding the screwdriver. Suddenly I felt a terrible jolt run up my arm that almost took the top of my head off. His only comment was, "Well, the spark's OK!" Then he began to work on the carburetor. After a little adjustment here and there, he finally got the car going. But I had forcefully driven home to me a fact I have never forgotten since: It takes both gas and spark to run a car. One alone will never do it. And when our Lord says, "Abide in me and I in you," it takes both to be a fruitful Christian. Many Christians concentrate on one or the other, but not both. But notice here that one without the other always results in the same thing -- fruitlessness. It may make you active as a Christian, and even apparently successful, but you are not rendered Christlike unless both are there. In Verse 4, Jesus takes up the first requirement, "Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." The word "abide" is the simple word, "remain." "Stay with me," he is saying. "Keep close to me." In other places, it is the word, "Follow me," "do what I say," "obey my commands," "search the Scriptures," "allow the Spirit to transform you by the renewing of your mind." Renewal comes by the Word of God. Love one another, forgive one another, reach out to one another, minister to one another. Those are his commands. There must also be prayer: "Pray the Father," he says in this very discourse, "and he will give you..." (John 14:16 RSV). These are the disciplines of the Christian life. We must learn early that there is no chance of being a Christlike Christian unless we discipline our life, initiating habits of searching the Scriptures, praying with others, loving each other, forgiving one another, worshipping together, etc. There is no possibility of growth and bearing fruit without that. "Unless you abide in the vine you cannot bear fruit." (Full sermon - [The Vine and the Fruit | John 15:1-11](#))

**Robert Hawker:** Jesus meant by the expression to say, that by his Holy Spirit, which he was going from them purposely to send, they should be enabled to abide in him. The words, according to my view, are similar to that sweet scripture of Christ, when Jesus breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. John 20:22. This was no precept: commanding them to receive what they had no power to take hold of, without the Lord making them receivers, of what he communicated. In like manner here. Abide in me. Jesus undertakes for them, that they shall abide in him. ([John 15 - Hawker's Poor Man's Commentary](#))

**William Barclay:** The secret of the life of Jesus was his contact with God; again and again he withdrew into a solitary place to meet him. We must keep contact with Jesus. We cannot do that unless we deliberately take steps to do it. To take but one example--to pray in the morning, if it be for only a few moments, is to have an antiseptic for the whole day; for we cannot come out of the presence of Christ to touch the evil things. For some few of us, abiding in Christ will be a mystical experience which is beyond words to express. For most of us, it will mean a constant contact with him. It will mean arranging life, arranging prayer, arranging silence in such a way that there is never a day when we give ourselves a chance to forget him. Finally, we must note that here there are two things laid down about the good disciple. First, he enriches his own life; his contact makes him a fruitful branch. Second, he brings glory to God; the sight of his life turns men's thoughts to the God who made him like that. God is glorified, when we bear much fruit and show ourselves to be disciples of Jesus. The greatest glory of the Christian life is that by our life and conduct we can bring glory to God. ([John 15 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**H A Ironside:** "Abide in me, and I in you" (v. 4a). Abiding speaks of "communion." "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (Jn 15:4 b).

How forgetful we are of that! The preacher goes out to face his audience to whom he has preached so frequently through the years, perhaps often from the very same passage of Scripture. He goes out with self-confidence, forgetting the need of prayer, of being before God for a time of heart-searching lest anything, any root of bitterness, might have come up which might hinder the work of the Spirit of God. He rushes to the platform and delivers his sermon-but nothing happens. Nothing happens because he was not consciously abiding in the living Vine.

You have possibly heard the story of a young minister who had been called to be pastor of his first church. He was just out of seminary and had much confidence in his own ability. He had graduated with

honors, and everybody felt sure that he was going to be a second Henry Ward Beecher. The people were watching him as he entered the pulpit with an air of self-importance. He read his text, and then his whole sermon went from him. The whole thing was gone. He read the text again, and still he could not recall the sermon he intended to preach. He tried the third time and said, "I want to read my text again," hoping the sermon would come back to mind. But all was a blank so far as the sermon was concerned, and looking at his audience he said, "I am sorry, but I can't speak to you this morning." Down the stairs he went with bowed head and broken step. At the close an old church officer came to him and said, "Laddie, if you had gone up the way you came down, you might have come down the way you went up!"

You see, it is so easy to be self-confident and to believe that because we have done it before, of course we can do it again. So we forget the need of constantly abiding, of ever being before Him in communion. And it is the same in every detail of Christian life. We have had a great blessing and a wonderful day of victory, and in the power of that we try to live the next day, forgetting in the rush of things the necessity of being before God, of having a quiet time before Him. Then comes a crash and a failure, and we are heartbroken and wonder what is the matter. Jesus gives the answer, "As the branch cannot bear 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 abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (Jn 15:4-5). ([John 15 - Ironside's Notes on Selected Books](#))

**Matthew Henry:** Abiding in Christ is necessary in order to our doing much good. He that is constant in the exercise of faith in Christ and love to him, that lives upon his promises and is led by his Spirit, bringeth forth much fruit, he is very serviceable to God's glory, and his own account in the great day. Note, Union with Christ is a noble principle, productive of all good. A life of faith in the Son of God is incomparably the most excellent life a man can live in this world it is regular and even, pure and heavenly it is useful and comfortable, and all that answers the end of life. ([John 15 - Matthew Henry's Complete Commentary on the Bible](#))

**Chuck Smith:** You cannot bring forth any worthwhile fruit unto God apart from that indwelling power of Jesus Christ. Anything that you endeavor to do for God apart from Jesus Christ is worthless. It is as wood, hay, and stubble that will burn when the day of judgment comes. The only lasting fruit is that which is produced as the result of the relationship with Jesus Christ. And here again, the idea of fruit indicates to us the method of God. The fruit that comes forth from our lives is a very natural thing; it's not forced. That apple hanging on the tree is not out there struggling and striving and pushing and doing its best to get ripe. All it has to do is just hang in there and it's going to ripen. And it's going to come to maturity. And I just need to hang in there, just to abide in Christ, and the natural result of abiding in Christ is my life is going to bring forth fruit. One of the problems in the church today is this endeavor of forced fruit. "Now, you ought to be doing this for the Lord... " And you're being pushed into all kinds of activities, not really directed by the Spirit. And this can become worthless expenditures of energy, unless God is behind it and God is guiding it and God is directing it. Unless you're abiding in Him, you cannot bear fruit of yourself. You cannot sit down and say, "Now, this is what I'm going to do for God this year. And these are the projects that I'm going to endeavor. And this is my plan by which I intend to fulfill this goal." That bearing fruit that God desires is the most natural thing that can happen to you as you abide in Christ. It's just a natural function. And so, "Abide in me. You can't bear fruit of yourself." ([John 15 - Chuck Smith Bible Commentary](#))

**A T Robertson:** The only way to continue "clean" (pruned) and to bear fruit is to maintain vital spiritual connection with Christ (the vine). Judas is gone and Satan will sift the rest of them like wheat (Luke 22:31-32.). Blind complacency is a peril to the preacher. Of itself. As source (from itself) and apart from the vine (cf. Jn 17:17). Except it abide). Condition of third class with ean, negative mē, and present active (keep on abiding) subjunctive of menō. Same condition and tense in the application, "except ye abide in me."

**NET Note:** As far as the disciples were concerned, they would produce no fruit from themselves if they did not remain in their relationship to Jesus, because the eternal life which a disciple must possess in order to bear fruit originates with Jesus; he is the source of all life and productivity for the disciple... While it would be more natural to say "on the vine" (so NAB), the English preposition "in" has been retained here to emphasize the parallelism with the following clause "unless you remain in Me." To speak of remaining "in" a person is not natural English either, but is nevertheless a Biblical concept (cf. "in Christ" in Eph 1:3, 4, 6, 7, 11)

**Leon Morris:** Jesus means that the disciples should live such lives that he will continue to abide in them.

The two "abidings" cannot be separated, and "abiding" is the necessary prerequisite of fruitfulness. No branch bears fruit in isolation. Every fruitful branch has vital connection with the vine. So to abide in Christ is the necessary prerequisite of fruitfulness for the Christian. Fruitfulness doubtless includes both the production of Christian character and the winning of others to follow Christ; it includes everything that results from vital union with Christ. (BORROW [The Gospel According to John. The New International Commentary on the New Testament](#))

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who **abides in** Me and I **in** him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

**Köstenberger** - Initially, "remaining with Jesus" had simply meant for Jesus' first followers to spend the night with Jesus (Jn 1:38-39). Yet already in Jn 6:56, the term occurs with a spiritual connotation. In 8:31, "remaining in Jesus" involves continual holding to his teaching. The majority of theologically significant instances of *meno* are found in John 14 and 15, with ten references in Jn 15:4-10 alone. The disciples must remain in Jesus, in particular in his love, by obeying his commandments (Jn 15:9-10). The vine metaphor illustrates the close-knit relationship that Jesus desires with his disciples (cf. John 10). (John. Baker exegetical commentary on the New Testament)

John 15:6 "If anyone does not **abide in** Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

**Ray Stedman:** That again is the first work of the Father -- removing the fruitless branches. Those like Judas who gather with the people of God for awhile appear to be believers -- they show a certain degree of life. Leaves are present -- but there is no fruit. Ultimately these people disappear from our midst. They do not stay with it. As the Lord makes clear, it is a process: There is first the "withering" of the life they apparently had for awhile. Then the branches are "gathered," then "thrown into the fire," and ultimately "burned." Here we must refer to those verses where Jesus speaks of the end of the age, when the angels will come and gather out of the Kingdom of God all that offend, and throw them into eternal fire, and they are burned, Matthew 25:41-46). (Full sermon - [The Vine and the Fruit | John 15:1-11](#))

**J C Ryle:** We are meant to learn, secondly, from these verses, that there are false Christians as well as true ones. There are "branches in the vine" which appear to be joined to the parent stem, and yet bear no fruit. There are men and women who appear to be members of Christ, and yet will prove finally to have had no vital union with Him. There are myriads of professing Christians in every Church whose union with Christ is only outward and formal. Some of them are joined to Christ by baptism and Church-membership. Some of them go even further than this, and are regular communicants and loud talkers about religion. But they all lack the one thing needful. Notwithstanding services, and sermons, and sacrament, they have no grace in their hearts, no faith, no inward work of the Holy Spirit. They are not one with Christ, and Christ in them. Their union with Him is only nominal, and not real. They have "a name to live," but in the sight of God they are dead. Christians of this stamp are aptly represented by branches in a vine which bear no fruit. Useless and unsightly, such branches are only fit to be cut off and burned. They draw nothing out of the parent stem, and make no return for the place they occupy. Just so will it be at the last day with false professors and nominal Christians. Their end, except they repent, will be destruction. They will be separated from the company of true believers, and cast out, as withered, useless branches, into everlasting fire. They will find at last, whatever they thought in this world, that there is a worm that never dies, and a fire that is not quenched. ([John 15 - J. C. Ryle's Expository Thoughts on the Gospels](#))

**NET Note on John 15:2:** The Greek verb *airō* can mean "lift up" as well as "take away," and it is sometimes argued that here it is a reference to the gardener "lifting up" (i.e., propping up) a weak branch so that it bears fruit again. In Johannine usage the word occurs in the sense of "lift up" in Jn 8:59 and Jn 5:8-12, but in the sense of "remove" it is found in Jn 11:39, 11:48, 16:22, and Jn 17:15. In context (theological presuppositions aside for the moment) the meaning "remove" does seem more natural and less forced (particularly in light of Jn 15:6, where worthless branches are described as being "thrown out" - an image that seems incompatible with restoration). One option, therefore, would be to understand the branches which are taken away (Jn 15:2) and thrown out (Jn 15:6) as believers who forfeit their salvation because of unfruitfulness. However, many see this interpretation as encountering problems with the Johannine teaching on the security of the believer, especially John 10:28-29. **This leaves two basic ways of understanding Jesus' statements about removal of branches in Jn 15:2 and Jn 15:6: (1)** These statements may refer to an unfaithful (disobedient) Christian, who is judged at the judgment seat of Christ "through fire" (cf. 1 Cor 3:11-15). In this case the "removal" of Jn 15:2 may refer (in an extreme



case) to the physical death of a disobedient Christian. (2) These statements may refer to someone who was never a genuine believer in the first place (e.g., Judas [Jn 13:26-30] and the Jews who withdrew after Jesus' difficult teaching in Jn 6:66), in which case Jn 15:6 refers to eternal judgment. In either instance it is clear that Jn 15:6 refers to the fires of judgment (cf. OT imagery in Ps 80:16 and Ezek 15:1-8). But view (1) requires us to understand this in terms of the judgment of believers at the judgment seat of Christ. This concept does not appear in the Fourth Gospel because from the perspective of the author the believer does not come under judgment; note especially Jn 3:18, 5:24, 5:29. The first reference (Jn 3:18) is especially important because it occurs in the context of Jn 3:16-21, the section which is key to the framework of the entire Fourth Gospel and which is repeatedly alluded to throughout. A similar image to this one is used by John the Baptist in Mt 3:10, "And the ax is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." Since this is addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming to John for baptism, it almost certainly represents a call to initial repentance. More importantly, however, the imagery of being cast into the fire constitutes a reference to eternal judgment, a use of imagery which is much nearer to the Johannine imagery in Jn 15:6 than the Pauline concept of the judgment seat of Christ (a judgment for believers) mentioned above. The use of the Greek verb **menō** in Jn 15:6 also supports view (2). When used of the relationship between Jesus and the disciple and/or Jesus and the Father, it emphasizes the permanence of the relationship (John 6:56, 8:31, 8:35, 14:10). The prototypical branch who has not remained is **Judas**, who departed in Jn 13:30. He did not bear fruit, and is now in the realm of darkness, a mere tool of Satan. His eternal destiny, being cast into the fire of eternal judgment, is still to come. **It seems most likely, therefore, that the branches who do not bear fruit and are taken away and burned are false believers, those who profess to belong to Jesus but who in reality do not belong to him.** In the Gospel of John, the primary example of this category is Judas. In 1 John 2:18-19 the "antichrists" fall into the same category; they too may be thought of as branches that did not bear fruit. They departed from the ranks of the Christians because they never did really belong, and their departure shows that they did not belong. ([John 15](#))

**Ray Stedman:** In Northern California, where we are so abundantly provided with vineyards, at a certain time of the year vinekeepers cut off certain "sucker shoots" from the vines. It is because they will never bear fruit. They will grow leaves abundantly, but they will never produce fruit. If allowed to remain, these shoots will actually sap the life of the vine and greatly reduce the quantity of fruit it will bear. The first work of the vinekeeper is to totally remove fruitless branches. We do not have to guess what this (Jn 15:2) means, although many commentators have struggled with this. It had recently happened to one of the disciples. The Father had removed **Judas**, the fruitless branch from the disciples' band. This was the work of God. Within the congregation of the faithful there appear from time to time men and women who appear to be believers, but they will never become fruitful branches. They may give every evidence of life, as Judas did, for he manifested the power of Christ to heal the sick, raise the dead and to cast out demons, etc. But they have never borne true fruit and never will. It is the work of the Father to remove them. In John's first letter, the apostle says of certain people: "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 it might be plain that they all are not of us," (1 John 2:19 RSV). This is the work of selecting those who are fruit bearing Christians and removing those who are not. This has happened again and again throughout the history of the church. (Full sermon - [The Vine and the Fruit | John 15:1-11](#))

John 15:7 "If you **abide in** Me, and My words **abide in** you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

**MacDonald** - Abiding is the secret of a successful prayer life. The closer we get to the Lord, the more we will learn to think His thoughts after Him. The more we get to know Him through His Word, the more we will understand His will. The more our will agrees with His, the more we can be sure of having our prayers answered. touch with Christ moment by moment. (BORROW [Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

**Wuest** - For instance, the pastor is using the tools of Greek scholarship in preparing a message on the expository unit comprising John 15:1-8. He comes to verse seven, "**If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.**" He studies the word "**abide**," **menō**. Bauer gives him, "remain, stay, live, dwell, lodge." Not satisfied with that, he chases **menō** through the New Testament in Englishman's Greek Concordance and discovers that when it is used with persons it implies fellowship, companionship, intercourse; for instance, to Zaccheus our Lord says, "Today I must abide at thy house" (Luke 19:5), "Mary abode with her about three months" (Luke 1:56). **The word speaks of an at-homeness with someone.** The expositor then translates, "**If you maintain a living**

**communion with Me and my words are at home in you,”** and then the new ideas come—abiding refers to a constant, moment-by-moment fellowship with the Lord, nothing between ourselves and Him; the Word is at home in us when it is allowed to operate at will to the exclusion of sin and the production of holiness in the life. Then the pastor considers the words, “ye shall ask.” They are one word in the Greek text, a verb; the mode, imperative; the tense, aorist; the voice, indirect middle. From these technicalities he derives the following rich truths; the imperative mode—this is a command, not a prediction, a command to be obeyed, an obligation of the believer to pray for his needs, disobedience is sin; aorist tense—a command to be obeyed at once, do not let the grass grow under your feet; indirect middle voice, the subject of the verb acting in his own interest—ask something for yourself; and he translates, “I command you to ask, at once, something for yourself.” Next the pastor studies the phrase “what ye will,” and observes that *thelō* is used here, not *boulomai*, the first word referring to a desire which comes from one’s emotions, the second, to a desire that comes from one’s reason, and he translates, “whatever your heart desires.” He now has the entire verse before him, rich with expository material which is not accessible to the expositor who does not know Greek; “If you maintain a living communion with Me and my words are at home in you, I command you to ask, at once, something for yourself, whatever your heart desires, and it shall become yours.” Now it is just as simple as all that. **Proficiency in Greek is nine tenths hard work, one tenth brains, a working knowledge of New Testament Greek, adequate Greek tools, all governed by the Holy spirit.** ([The Practical Use of the Greek New Testament Part I- The Greek New Testament and Expository Preaching -- By- Kenneth S. Wuest - Bibliotheca Sacra 117: 465, 1960](#))

John 15:9 "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you;**abide in** My love. **John 15:10** "If you keep My commandments, you will **abide in** My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and **abide in** His love.

**Comment:** Abide or make your home in His love -- feeling it, saturating yourself with it, reflecting on it, standing in awe of it.

John 15:16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would **remain** (present tense = continually), so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

**Comment:** Spiritual fruit borne in this present life shall never decay, but shall remain alive throughout eternity! **How this truth should motivate us to abide in Christ and be filled with His Spirit that we might bear much fruit in this short growing season!**

John 19:31 Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not**remain** on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, "If I want him to**remain** until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!"**23** Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, "If I want him to **remain** until I come, what is that to you?"

Acts 5:4 "While it **remained** unsold, did it not **remain** your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

Acts 9:43 And Peter **stayed** many days in Joppa with a tanner named Simon.

**Comment:** Remember that all of the many uses of **meno** in Acts, although usually describing a physical remaining, often convey an abiding in the sphere of fellowship, friendship, communion and intimacy with the ones with whom one abides (so to speak).

Acts 16:15 And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and **stay**." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 18:3 and because he was of the same trade, he **stayed** with them and they were working, for by trade they were tent-makers.

Acts 18:20 When they asked him to**stay** for a longer time, he did not consent,

Acts 20:5 But these had gone on ahead and were**waiting** for us at Troas.

Acts 20:23 except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions **await** me.

Acts 21:7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais, and after greeting the brethren, we **stayed** with them for a day. **8** On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we **stayed** with him.

Acts 27:31 Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Unless these men **remain** in the ship, you yourselves cannot be saved."

Acts 27:41 But striking a reef where two seas met, they ran the vessel aground; and the prow stuck fast and **remained** immovable, but the stern began to be broken up by the force of the waves.

Acts 28:16 When we entered Rome, Paul was allowed to **stay** by himself, with the soldier who was guarding him.

Romans 9:11-note for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls,

1 Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work which he has built on it **remains**, he will receive a reward.

1 Corinthians 7:8 But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they **remain** even as I.

1 Corinthians 7:11 (but if she does leave, she must **remain** unmarried, or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife.

1 Corinthians 7:20 Each man must **remain** in that condition in which he was called.

1 Corinthians 7:24 Brethren, each one is to **remain** with God in that condition in which he was called.

1 Corinthians 7:40 But in my opinion she is happier if she **remains** as she is; and I think that I also have the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 13:13 But now faith, hope, love, **abide** these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1 Corinthians 15:6 After that He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

2 Corinthians 3:11 For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which **remains** is in glory.

**Baker:** Paul contrasts the two ministries by describing the one as "what was fading away" (participle of katargeō) and the other as "that which lasts" (participle of menō). The latter is new to this context but is a common word in the NT translated variously as "remain," "endure," or "live." It describes permanence, something which will not be replaced. (The College Press NIV commentary).

2 Corinthians 3:14 But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil **remains** unlifted, because it is removed in Christ.

2 Corinthians 9:9 as it is written, "HE SCATTERED ABROAD, HE GAVE TO THE POOR, HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS **ENDURES** FOREVER."

Philippians 1:25-note Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith,

1 Timothy 2:15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they **continue** in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.

2 Timothy 2:13-note If we are faithless, He **remains** faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

2 Timothy 3:14-note You, however, **continue** (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

**Comment:** Paul calls for this to be our constant and continual habit of life. The **present imperative** calls for a constant, habitual way of life. Timothy is to be a "man of the Book" and thereby armed against the snares and insinuations of seducers. In light of the deepening degradation of these self-willed deceivers it is imperative that Timothy firmly adhere to the divine truth he had previously heard and accepted. Thus Paul commands Timothy to continually abide in the Truth he had learned. Dwell in it and live in it and do not "proceed" or "advance" away from it like the false teachers. To continue however means more than merely continuing in orthodoxy. It calls for a commitment to live and abide in what Timothy had learned.

2 Timothy 4:20-note Erastus **remained** at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.

Hebrews 7:3-note Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, he **remains** a priest perpetually.

Hebrews 7:24-note but Jesus, on the other hand, because He **continues** forever, holds His priesthood permanently.

Hebrews 10:34-note For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a **lasting** one.

Hebrews 12:27-note This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may **remain**.

Hebrews 13:1-note **Let** love of the brethren **continue**.

Hebrews 13:14-note For here we do not have a **lasting** city, but we are seeking the city which is to come.

1 Peter 1:23-note for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and **enduring** word of God.

1 Peter 1:25-note BUT THE WORD OF THE LORD **ENDURES** FOREVER." And this is the word which was preached to you.

1 John 2:6-note the one who says he **abides** (continually = present tense) **in** Him ought (owes a debt so to speak) himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.

**NET Note:** The Greek verb **meno** is commonly translated into contemporary English as "remain" or "abide," but both of these translations have some problems: (1) "**Abide**" has become in some circles almost a "technical term" for some sort of special intimate fellowship or close relationship between the Christian and God, so that one may speak of Christians who are "abiding" and Christians who are not. It is accurate to say the word indicates a close, intimate (and permanent) relationship between the believer and God. **However, it is very important to note that for the author of the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles every genuine Christian has this type of relationship with God, and the person who does not have this type of relationship (cf. 2 John 1:9) is not a believer at all (in spite of what he or she may claim).** (2) On the other hand, to translate **meno** as "remain" removes some of these problems, but creates others: In certain contexts, such a translation can give the impression that those who currently "remain" in this relationship with God can at some point choose not to "remain", that is, to abandon their faith and return to an unsaved condition. While one may easily think in terms of the author's opponents in 1 John as not "remaining," the author makes it inescapably clear in 1Jn 2:19 that these people, in spite of their claims to know God and be in fellowship with God, never really were genuine believers. (3) In an attempt to avoid both these misconceptions, this translation renders **meno** (**Ed**: In NET Translation) as "reside" except in cases where the context indicates that "remain" is a more accurate nuance, that is, in contexts where a specific change of status or movement from one position to another is in view. ([1 John 2](#))

**MacArthur:** The only person who can pass the test of obedience and realize full assurance is the one who ... abides in Him—because Jesus Christ is the perfect role model for obeying the Father... Believers draw spiritual life from the Lord Jesus Christ, even as branches do from a vine. To abide in Christ is to remain in Him—not a temporary, superficial attachment, but a permanent, deep connection (cf. Luke 9:23; John 6:53-65; Phil. 1:6; 2:11-13). Such authentic abiding in the Savior characterizes those who "continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that [they] have heard" (Col. 1:23; cf. Col 2:7; Eph. 3:17), because they are truly regenerate—new creatures who possess irrevocable eternal life. John made it perfectly clear that those who claim to abide in Christ must walk in the same manner as He walked. Walk is a metaphor for daily conduct by believers. (1, 2, 3 John : MacArthur NT Commentary)

**Boice:** "The point here is that the one who knows God will increasingly lead a righteous life, for God is righteous. It does not mean that he will be sinless; John has already shown that anyone who claims this is lying. It simply means that he will be moving in a direction marked out by the righteousness of God. If he does not do this, if he is not increasingly dissatisfied with and distressed by sin, he is not God's child.

**Kistemaker:** How do we know that we are **in Him**? John answers with a progressive succession of statements: "we are in him," "[we] live in him," and "[we] walk as Jesus did." (Vol. 14: New Testament commentary : Exposition of James and the Epistles of John. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House)

1 John 2:10-note The one who loves his brother **abides in** the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

1 John 2:14-note I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God **abides in** you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**Wuest:** "Abide" is menō, "to dwell in as a home." The word of God, residing in their hearts in an unhindered, welcome state, was that which, together with the power of the Holy Spirit, gave these young men victory over Satan, the Pernicious One, who sought to drag them down with himself into the ruin that some day will be his. ([Wuest Word Studies - Eerdmann Publishing Company Volume 1](#), [Volume 2](#), [Volume 3](#) - used [by permission](#))

1 John 2:17-note The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does (habitually, as their general lifestyle, not perfection, but direction of their lie is the idea) the will of God **lives** forever.

1 John 2:19-note They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have **remained (meno conveys the idea of not just physically remaining but also continuing in spiritual oneness, communion and fellowship)** with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.

**NET Note:** Here **meno** has been translated as "**remained**" (**Ed:** In NET translation) since it is clear that a change of status or position is involved. The opponents departed from the author's congregation(s) and showed by this departure that they never really belonged. Had they really belonged, they would have stayed ("remained").

1 John 2:24 As for you, 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.

**NET Note:** The word translated "**remain**" (NET = "As for you, what you have heard from the beginning must **remain** in you. If what you heard from the beginning **remains** in you, you also will **remain** in the Son and in the Father.") may also be translated "reside" (3 times in 1Jn 2:24). See also the notes on the translation of the Greek verb menō in 1Jn 2:6 and in 1Jn 2:19. Here the word can really have both nuances of "residing" and "remaining" and it is impossible for the English reader to catch both nuances if the translation provides only one. This occurs three times in 1Jn 2:24.

**Deffinbaugh** - The Greek word (meno) translated **remain** (abide) can also be translated **reside**. One (remain means) to stay somewhere, and the (reside) is to take up residence. The teaching of the apostles must remain (reside) in the readers in order for the readers to remain (reside) in the Son and in the Father. If that happens, then they will have eternal life (1Jn 2:25). (Layman's Bible Commentary - Volume 12: Hebrews thru Revelation)

1 John 2:27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him **abides in** you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you **abide in** Him.

**Comment:** The anointing, the Spirit, abides in us forever to guide and guard us doctrinally.

1 John 2:28 Now, little children, **abide** (present imperative see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) **in** Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

1 John 3:6 No one who **abides in** Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him.

**NET Note:** Here the verb menō refers to the permanence of relationship between Jesus and the believer, as in 1Jn 2:27 and 1Jn 2:28. It is clear that Jesus is the referent of the phrase en autō (in Him) because he is the subject of the discussion in 1Jn 3:5.

**Ryrie: Abides... sins.** Both words are in the present tense and indicate the habitual character of the person. The person who is abiding in Christ is not able to sin habitually. Sin may enter his experience, but it is the exception and not the rule. **If sin is the ruling principle of a life, that person is not redeemed** (Ro 6); thus **a saved person cannot sin as a habit of life**. When a Christian does sin, he confesses it (1Jn 1:9) and perseveres in his purification (1Jn 3:3). The continuous sinner has not known God and is therefore an unregenerate person. ([The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

1 John 3:9 No one who is born (perfect tense = past completed action with continuing results) of God practices

(present tense = habitually, continually, as their lifestyle) sin, (Why not? Why can't a genuine believer continually live in sin?) because His seed **abides in** him; and he cannot (continually, habitually) sin, because he is born of God.

**Ryrie:** Habitual actions indicate one's character. seed. I.e., the divine nature given the one born of God (cf. John 1:13; 2Peter 1:4). This nature prevents the Christian from habitually sinning. (Borrow [Ryrie Study Bible](#))

**MacArthur: Abides.** The word (**abides**) conveys the idea of the permanence of the new birth which cannot be reversed, for those who are truly born again are permanently transformed into a new creation (2Co 5:17; Gal 6:15; Eph 2:10). **he cannot sin.** This phrase once again conveys the idea of habitual sinning (see 1Jn 3:4, 6). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love **abides in** death.

**NET Note:** The one who does not love remains in death. Again, the author has the secessionist opponents in view. Their refusal to show love for the brothers demonstrates that they have not made the transition from (spiritual) death to (spiritual) life, but instead have remained in a state of (spiritual) death. ([1 John 3](#))

1 John 3:15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life **abiding in** him.

**MacArthur:** John presents the second of 3 characteristics of the devil's children with respect to their lack of love. Hatred is spiritually the same as murder in the eyes of God, i.e., the attitude is equal to the act. Hate is the seed that leads to murder, as seen in the example of the hatred of Cain for Abel that resulted in murder. (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

**Ryrie:** The person who habitually hates his fellow man would act just as Cain did. **Such a person is unsaved.** ([The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

**NET Note:** The verb **menō** in 1Jn 3:15 refers to a spiritual reality (eternal life) which in this case does not reside in the person in question. To speak in terms of eternal life not "residing" in such an individual is not to imply that at some time in the past this person did possess eternal life and subsequently lost it, however. The previous verse (1Jn 3:14) makes it clear that the individual under discussion here has "remained" in death (the realm of spiritual death) and so has never possessed eternal life to begin with, no matter what he may have claimed. Taken together with the use of in 1Jn 3:14, the use here implies that the opponents have "remained" in death all along, and have not ever been genuine believers. Thus "residing" rather than "remaining" is used as the (NET) translation for **menousan** here. Once again the verb **menō** is used of a spiritual reality (in this case the love of God) which does or does not reside in a person. Although the author uses the indefinite relative whoever ( *hos d' an*), it is clear that he has the opponents in view here. This is the only specific moral fault he ever charges the opponents with in the entire letter. It is also clear that the author sees it as impossible that such a person, who refuses to offer help in his brother's time of need (and thus 'hates' his brother rather than 'loving' him, cf. 1Jn 3:15) can have any of the love which comes from God residing in him. This person, from the author's dualistic 'either/or' perspective, cannot be a believer. The semantic force of the deliberative rhetorical question, "How can the love of God reside in such a person?", is therefore a declarative statement about the spiritual condition of the opponents: "The love of God cannot possibly reside in such a person." ([1 John 3](#))

1 John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God **abide in** him?

**NET Note:** The author is not saying that the person who does not love his brother cannot love God either (although this may be true enough), but rather that the person who does not love his brother shows by this failure to love that he does not have any of the love which comes from God 'residing' in him (the Greek verb used is *menō*). Once again, conduct is the clue to paternity. 62 sn Once again the verb **menō** is used of a spiritual reality (in this case the love of God) which does or does not reside in a person. ([1 John 3](#))

**MacArthur:** Genuine Christian love expresses itself in sacrificial giving to other Christians' needs (i.e., "his brother"). It is a practical love that finds motivation in helping others (1Ti 6:17-19; Heb 13:16; Jas 2:14-17). Where it does not exist, it is questionable that God's love is present. If that is so, it is also

questionable whether the person is the Lord's child (1Jn 3:14). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

1 John 3:24 The one who keeps His commandments **abides (dwelleth - KJV) in** Him, and He in him. We know by this that He **abides (abideth - KJV) in** us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

**NET Note:** The verb resides (menō) here and again in the second clause of 1Jn 3:24 refers to the permanence of relationship between God and the believer, as also in 1Jn 2:6; 4:12, 13, 15, 16 (3x). ([1 John 3](#))

**Ryrie:** Obedience also results in abiding. Dwelleth. This word is translated "abide" in Jn 15. Thus, the sentence is a definition of abiding. To abide is to keep his commandments. And the Holy Spirit bears witness to the fact that Christ abides in us. ([The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God **abides in** us, and His love is perfected in us.

**NET Note:** The phrase "God resides in us" in 1Jn 4:12 is a reference to the permanent relationship which God has with the believer. Here it refers specifically to God's indwelling of the believer in the person of the Holy Spirit, as indicated by 1Jn 4:13b. Since it refers to state and not to change of status it is here translated "resides" (see 1Jn 2:6). ([1 John 4](#))

1 John 4:13 By this we know that we **abide in** Him and He **in** us, because He has given us of His Spirit.

**Wuest: Meno** is used often in the Gospel narratives of one person dwelling in the home of another. The word speaks of fellowship between two or more individuals.

**MacDonald:** We should pause to marvel at His dwelling in us and our dwelling in Him. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

1 John 4:15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God **abides in** him, and he in God.

**NET Note:** Here menei, from meno]) has been translated as "resides" because the confession is constitutive of the relationship, and the resulting state ("God resides in him") is in view. ([1 John 4](#))

**Ryrie:** Confess. Say the same thing; i.e., agree with some authority outside of one's self. Son of God. "This confession of the deity of Jesus Christ implies surrender and obedience also, not mere lip service" (A. T. Robertson, Word Studies in the New Testament). ([The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

1 John 4:16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who **abides in** love **abides in** God, and God **abides in** him.

**NET Note: Meno** in its three occurrences in 1Jn 4:16 looks at the mutual state of believers and God. No change of status or position is in view in the context, so the participle and both finite verbs are translated as "resides."

2 John 1:2 for the sake of the truth which **abides in** us and will be with us forever:

**Comment:** Truth takes up residence (present tense = continually) in a believer's heart and cannot be uprooted!

**Wuest:** The word is menō, which is used often in the Gospels of one living as a guest in the home of another. Thus the truth is a welcome guest in the heart of the Christian. This truth, John says, "shall be with us forever." Smith adds "as our guest and companion."

**MacArthur:** It is used in a theological sense to refer to the truth that resides in believers (1John 2:14, 24-27; cf. John 5:38 where Jesus upbraids the unbelieving Jews for not having the Word abiding in them), to true believers abiding in the Word (John 8:31) and thus not being in spiritual darkness (John 12:46), to the Spirit abiding in believers (John 14:17; cf. 1 John 4:12, 15, 16) and, most significant, to believers abiding in Christ (John 6:56; 14:10; 15:4-7, 9-10; 1 John 2:6, 10, 28; 3:6, 24; 4:13). The truth of the Word, which abides in believers forever, gives them "the mind of Christ" (1Cor. 2:16). (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

2 John 1:9 Anyone who goes too far and does not **abide in** the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

**NET Note:** Here menō has been translated "remain" rather than "reside" since a change in status or position is present in the context: The opponents did not "remain" but "ran on ahead." The verb meno is

used only here (twice in this verse) in the Johannine letters in connection with "teaching" but in the Gospel of John it is used three times with reference to the teaching of Jesus himself (Jn 7:16, 17; 18:19).

**MacArthur:** A failure to be faithful to the fundamental, sound doctrines of the faith (a proper view of the person and work of Christ, love, obedience) marks a person as having never been born again (1Jn 2:23; 3:6-10; 4:20, 21; 5:1-3). The word "abide" has the idea of constant adherence and warns that these fundamentals are not open to change or subject to the latest trends or philosophical fads. (Borrow [The MacArthur Study Bible](#)).

**Ryrie:** Others should be examined on the basis of their abiding in the teaching of Christ. Transgresseth. Better, goeth on, i.e., in the profession of Christianity without the reality of abiding in the doctrine of Christ. Doctrine of Christ. That which he taught at his coming. He hath both the Father and the son. The fuller expression in the positive part of the verse shows that, in the negative statement that precedes it, not to have God is also not to have Christ. ([The Wycliffe Bible Commentary](#))

**ESV Study Bible:** Does not have God, i.e., does not have eternal life in fellowship with God. Threats to church purity come not only from the outside but often from within. (BORROW [ESV Study Bible](#))

**Life Application Bible:** the false teachers and their followers did not have fellowship with God. To turn away from the truth of Christ is to turn away from God. (BORROW [Life application New Testament commentary](#))

Revelation 17:10-[note](#) and they are seven kings; five have fallen, one is, the other has not yet come; and when he comes, he must **remain** a little while.

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**Hastings Dictionary of the New Testament** entry on **Abiding** - As in the Gospels, so in Acts and Ephesians we find both the **local** and the **ethical** connotations of this word, which in almost every case is used to render **meno** or one of its numerous compounds (epi-, kata-, para-, pros= hupo-). With the **purely local** (simply describes abiding in a physical place or locale) usages we have here no concern; but there is a small class of transitional meanings which lead the way to those **ethical connotations** which are the distinctive property of the word. Among these may be mentioned the several places in 1 Corinthians 7, where Paul, dealing with marriage and allied questions (? in view of the Parousia), speaks of **abiding** in this state or calling. In the same Epistle note also 1 Corinthians 3:14 "If any man's work abide" and 1 Corinthians 13:13 "And now abide faith, hope, love." [Note: Popular opinion, based on a well-known hymn (Par. 4913f.), very erroneously makes faith and hope pass away, only love abiding.] Similarly we are told of the persistence (a ) of Melchizedek's priesthood (Hebrews 7:3 ), (b ) of the Divine fidelity even in face of human faithlessness (2Timothy 2:13 ), and (c ) of the word of God (1Peter 1:23 ).

It is, however, in the First Epistle of John, as in the Fourth Gospel, that we get the **ethical use of abiding** most fully developed and most amply presented. But, while in the Gospel the emphasis is laid on the Son's abiding in the Father and Christ's abiding in the Church, in 1 John 2:24; 1 John 2:27 the stress is rather on the mutual abiding of the believer and God (Father and Son). Note the following experimental aspects of the relation in question.

**1. The believer as the place of the abiding.** -A somewhat peculiar expression is found in 1 John 2:27 , where we read: "The anointing abideth in you.' By chrisma is meant the gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. 2Corinthians 1:21 ), whose presence in the heart gives the believer an independent power of testing whatever teaching he receives (cf. "He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you,' Jn 16:15 )." [Note: the words of 1 John 2:27 gave rise to the practice or anointing with oil at baptism.] In 1 John 2:14 it is said that the word of God abideth in 'young men'; but it is also the meaning in 1John 2:24; while in 1 John 3:24 Christ is mentioned as abiding in them 'by the Spirit.' In each passage we have a subtle instance of the perfectly natural way in which the operation of the risen Christ on the heart is identified with that of the Spirit. The believer's soul is thus mystically thought of as the matrix in which the Divine energy of salvation, conceived of in its various aspects, is operative as a cleansing, saving, and conserving power, safeguarding it from error, sin, and unfaithfulness.

**2. The abiding place of the believer.** -In 1 John 2:24 we have the promise that 'if the [word] heard from the beginning' remains in the believer's heart, he shall 'continue in the Son' and in the Father (cf. 1 John 3:6 ). This reciprocal relation between the implanted word and the human environment in which it energizes is peculiarly Johannine. Secondary forms of the same idea are found in 1John 2:10 ('he that loveth his brother abideth in the light'), and in 1 John 3:14 ('he that hateth his brother abideth in death'). In 1John 2:6 we have the fact that the believer abides in Christ made the ground for a practical appeal for consistency of life, and in 1John 2:28 the reward of such living is that the believer 'abideth for ever,' i.e. has eternal life. As a general principle, in the use of this word we find a striking union of the mystical and the ethical aspects of the Christian faith. ([Abiding -](#)



John uses the verb *meno* only thrice in its literal sense in the Gospel ( John 2:12; John 4:40; John 10:40 ); he seems almost jealously to reserve it for metaphorical, i.e. ethical, application.

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### Thompson Chain Reference - Abiding in Christ Results in

- Spiritual Fruitfulness John 15:5
- Answered Prayer John 15:7
- Peace in the Storm John 16:33
- New Life 2 Corinthians 5:17
- Robe of Righteousness Philipians 3:9

## MENO IN THE SEPTUAGINT

**Meno** - 53 verses in the **non-apocryphal Septuagint** - Ge 24:55; 45:9; Ex 9:28; Lev 13:5, 23, 28, 37; Nu 30:4, 8-9, 12; 1Sam 20:11; 2Sam 18:14; 2Ki 7:9; 9:3; Job 15:23, 29; 21:11; 36:2; Ps 9:7; 33:11; 89:36; 102:12; 111:3, 10; 112:3, 9; 117:2; Pr 15:22; 19:21; Eccl 7:15; Isa 5:2, 4, 7, 11; 8:17; 10:32; 14:20, 24; 27:9; 30:18; 32:8; 40:8; 46:7; 59:9; 66:22; Jer 46:15; Da 4:26; 6:12, 26; 8:19; 11:6; Zech 14:10.

**Notice the uses of *meno* below** -- note the things that continue - God Himself, His counsel, His descendants, His righteousness, His praise, His truth, His Word. In short, we who are in Christ have a Solid Rock on which to stand and in which to hide, not just in this life, but in the life to come! Let us sound forth His praises forever (Ps 111:10)!

(Ps 9:7) But the LORD **abides** forever; He has established His throne for judgment,

(Ps 33:11) The counsel of the LORD **stands** forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.

(Ps 89:36) "His descendants shall **endure** forever And his throne as the sun before Me.

(Ps 102:12) But You, O LORD, **abide** forever, And Your name to all generations.

(Ps 111:3) Splendid and majestic is His work, And His righteousness **endures** forever.

(Ps 111:10) The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise **endures** forever.

(Ps 112:3) Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness **endures** forever.

(Ps 112:9) He has given freely to the poor, His righteousness **endures** forever; His horn will be exalted in honor.

(Ps 117:2) For His lovingkindness is great toward us, And the truth of the LORD is **everlasting**. (the truth of the Lord endures for ever) Praise the LORD!

(Isa 40:8) The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God **stands** forever.

**Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary** - In the **Septuagint** *menō* is also significant in reference to God and to people and things relating to God. God is the abiding one. He is distinct from our changing world because of His characteristic of immutability. To say that God is immutable does not mean, as in Greek philosophy, that God cannot be moved (e.g., by prayer) or is static; instead, immutability denotes God's steadfastness to His people. The eternalness of God's Word and His love expresses the never-ending quality of our relationship with Him. He is the God who endures forever (Daniel 6:26); His counsel remains (Isaiah 14:24); His Word stands forever (Isaiah 40:8); and the new heavens and new earth He is going to create will endure before Him (Isaiah 66:22).

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**Roy Zuck - Believing and abiding.** One of the most important terms John used to express the permanency of relationship between the believer and God is the Greek verb *menō*. It is variously translated by the niv as "dwell in" (John 5:38), "remain" (Jn 15:7), "live" (1 John 2:10, 14), and "continue" (2 John 1:9). It is not possible to offer a single translation which does justice to every context in which the word is found, but one of the most versatile translations is "reside," which conveys the nuance of permanence without the implication of possible departure implied by "remain."

**On one level John used this word to describe the indwelling of various attributes and gifts of God in the believer and reciprocally the residing of the believer in various attributes.** God's word or Jesus' word is said to reside in the believer (John 5:38; 15:7; 1 John 2:14, 24). Reciprocally the believer is said to reside in Jesus' word (John 8:31). God's love resides in believers but not in unbelievers (1John 3:17), while reciprocally the believer is said to reside in Jesus' love (John 15:9-10) and God's love (1John 4:16). God's truth resides in believers (2John 1:2) as does God's anointing (1John 2:27) and God's seed (1Jn 3:9). Eternal life does not reside in a murderer, but by implication does reside in believers (1Jn 3:15). On the other hand, believers are said to reside "in the light" (1Jn 2:10; cf. John 12:46 where believers do not remain in darkness). The one who remains in the teaching of Christ "has the Father and the Son" (1Jn 2:24) while the one who does not remain "does not have God" (2John 1:9).

**On another level John used the verb *menō* to describe the mutual indwelling of the Father, the Son, and the believer.** Sometimes this is expressed in terms of the mutual relationship between Jesus and the believer. In the Bread of Life discourse Jesus declared, "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him" (John 6:56). On another occasion Jesus told His disciples, "Remain in me, and I will remain in you" (Jn 15:4). In 1 John 4:15 the mutuality of relationship between God the Father and the believer is emphasized. "If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God." The verb *menō* is also used to describe the mutual relationship between the Father, the Son, and the believer. "See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father" (1John 2:24). In John 14:10 Jesus used *menō* to describe His relationship with the Father, obviously a permanent relationship.

**The relationship between Jesus and the Father is the model for the relationship between Jesus and His disciples.** It is, therefore, not surprising that when Jesus spoke to His disciples about the status of their relationship to Him in His Farewell Discourse (John 15:1-17), He used terminology that implied the mutuality and permanence of their relationship. Thus *menō* is used eleven times in those seventeen verses. Mutuality of relationship is explicitly stated by Jesus (Jn 15:4-5). The presumption is that the disciples present as Jesus spoke would indeed remain and continue. The prime example of one who did not remain is Judas (Jn 15:6), who had already departed from Jesus' presence (Jn 13:30). For John, Judas's failure to remain with Jesus demonstrates that he never genuinely belonged to Jesus in the first place, just as in 1John 2:19 the departure of the opponents with their errant Christology demonstrates that they never genuinely belonged to the group of believers to whom John wrote. Regarding the secessionist opponents mentioned in 1 John, a similar thought is expressed by the apostle in 2 John 1:9: "Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue [*menōn*] in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son." **John's expectation was that genuine believers (disciples) would continue with Jesus** In John 8:31 Jesus declared, "If you hold [*meinēte*] to my teaching, you are really my disciples," and it quickly became clear that those to whom He was speaking **were not genuine disciples** of His (Jn 8:37, 40, 42, 44, 47, 52, 59). As already noted in the discussion of belief in the Johannine epistles, John expected genuine faith to result in a lifestyle obedient to Jesus' commands (especially the commandment to love one another; 1John 2:7-11). (See page 228 - BORROW - [A Biblical Theology of the New Testament- Roy B. Zuck, David Lowery, Darrell Bock, W Hall Harris, Mark Bailey, Buist Fanning III](#))

## ABIDING

### W. L. Kynes

Source: [Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels \(borrow a copy\)](#)

#### ABIDING

As a common translation of the Greek verb *menein*, "to abide" has rich theological associations in the Fourth Gospel where 40 of the 112 NT occurrences of the verb occur (it appears another 26 times in the Epistles of John). It is used to communicate the enduring character of Christ\*, and more importantly, when used with the preposition "in" and a personal object, it points to the relationship of mutual indwelling of the Father, the Son (see Son of God) and the believer.

#### 1. Abiding As a Quality of Character

In the Greek OT *menein*, when used in a theological sense, most commonly speaks of the abiding character of God\*. In contrast to

the transitory nature of all things human, God remains, he endures, he is immutable. In the NT period this was considered to be a trait of the Messiah also, as evidenced by the crowds in John's Gospel who say, "We have heard from the Law\* that the Christ abides forever" (12:34). And John would have us know that Jesus is the Son who abides forever (8:35), who gives food that abides unto eternal life (6:27), and who enables one to produce fruit that abides (15:16).

In addition, in the first use of the verb in the Gospel, the Evangelist relates that John the Baptist (see John the Baptist) saw the Holy Spirit (see Holy Spirit) coming down from heaven\* as a dove and remaining (emeinen) on Jesus (Jn 1:32). This was no momentary experience of the Spirit, perhaps like that of the judges or prophets\*, but an enduring reality in Jesus' life.

## 2. Abiding in Relationship

Of greater interest is the use in John's Gospel of the phrase "to abide in" with a personal object to express the relationship of Jesus to the Father and both to believers. The priority must be given to Jesus' mutual indwelling with the Father: "Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I speak to you are not from myself, but the Father who abides in me does his work" (Jn 14:10). This is a dynamic relationship which energizes the ministry of Jesus. Out of this personal union come his words and his works which manifest the character of God. "Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may learn and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father" (Jn 10:37–38 NIV).

The Son obeys the Father and imitates the Father (Jn 5:19–20; 14:31), but the Father imparts his life to the Son ("I live because of the Father," 6:57; also Jn 5:26), and together they share this common life and are united in love (Jn 3:35; 5:20; 14:31; 15:10; 17:21–23). This relationship between the Father and the Son becomes the model and source of the relationship between Jesus and his disciples\*.

Jesus called men and women into this relationship of mutual indwelling using the most graphic imagery: "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him" (Jn 6:56). Just as the Father has loved Jesus, so Jesus has loved his disciples, and they are to abide in his love (Jn 15:9). Just as Jesus has remained in his Father's love by obeying his commands (see Commandment), so the disciples are to abide in Jesus' love by obeying his commands (Jn 15:10). And as they abide in him, Jesus will convey his life to them, even as a vine\* gives life to its branches (15:4–6). His life will manifest itself in their lives as they bear fruit, even as his works were the work of his Father. Apart from him the disciples can do nothing, just as Jesus could do nothing apart from the Father (Jn 5:19, 30).

Jesus mediates to his disciples the relationship he enjoys with his heavenly Father. "Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me" (Jn 6:57NIV). The one who loves Jesus will be loved by the Father, and together the Father and the Son will make their abode (monē—a cognate of menein) with him (Jn 14:23). "I have given them the glory\* that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me" (Jn 17:22–23). This is the perfect unity that results from the mutual indwelling of the Father, the Son and the believers.

"**Abiding in Christ**" assumes the most intimate union possible. The identification of Jesus with the true vine (Jn 15:1), a symbol of Israel\* (cf. Hos 10:1; Jer 2:21; Ps 80:9–12, 15–16; Is 5:7), in which the disciples are to abide, suggests a corporate dimension to his person that has important christological implications.

This union with Christ, however, must not be confused with ideas of the Hellenistic mystery cults (see Hellenism), some of which taught a loss of individuality or a pantheistic absorption of the believer into the being of the divine. The teaching of the Fourth Gospel maintains throughout a moral dimension that assumes individual responsibility. It is a relationship that always begins with the divine initiative, but which calls for a human response: "Abide in me ... abide in my word ... abide in my love" (Jn 15:4, 7, 9).

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conveys connection or closeness both in faith and in doctrine. John was saying, "Be intimately attached to Jesus." In John's Gospel, this same word appears in the well-known chapter on vines and branches (John 15:1-8). We Christians (the branches) are supposed to "remain" in or "abide" in Christ (the Vine). Abiding in Christ means

- believing that Jesus is God's Son (1 John 4:15)
- receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord (John 1:12)
- doing what God says (1 John 3:24)
- continuing to believe the gospel (1 John 2:24)
- relating in love to the community of believers, Christ's body (John 15:12)

Clearly, Christ provides believers' spiritual life, health, and nourishment. A failure to "remain in" him will quickly result in a loss of vitality and fruitfulness. Those who drift away from Christ may eventually find themselves embarrassed and afraid at his unexpected return. How would you evaluate your current "abiding"? (Barton, B. B., & Osborne, G. R.. 1, 2 & 3 John. Life application Bible commentary).

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**Bob Utley - [SPECIAL TOPIC- Abiding in John's Writings](#)** - John's Gospel describes a special relationship between God the Father and Jesus the Son. It is a mutual intimacy based on Jesus' subjection and equality. Throughout the Gospel Jesus speaks what He hears the Father saying, does what He sees the Father doing. Jesus does not act on His own, but on the will of the Father. This intimate fellowship and servanthood sets the pattern for the relationship between Jesus and His followers. This intimate association was not the absorption of the individual (as in eastern mysticism), but an ethical, moral lifestyle of emulation (cf. John 13:15; 1Pet. 2:21).

Fellowship was

1. cognitive (the worldview of the gospel as the Word of God)
2. relational (Jesus was God's promised Messiah to be trusted in and leaned on)
3. ethical (His character reproduced in godly believers)

Jesus is the ideal man, the true Israelite, the standard of humanity. He reveals what Adam should have, and could have been (humanly speaking). Jesus is the ultimate "image of God." He restores the fallen divine image in mankind (cf. Gen. 1:26-27) by

1. revealing God
2. dying on our behalf (substitutionary atonement)
3. providing humans an example to follow

The term "abiding" (menō) reflects the goal of Christlikeness (cf. Ro 8:28-30; 2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 1:4; 4:13; 1Th. 3:13; 4:3; 5:23; 2Th. 2:13; Titus 2:4; 1 Pet. 1:15), the restoration of the Fall (cf. Genesis 3). This reunion of God and His ultimate creation, mankind, for the purpose of fellowship is the Apostle Paul's "in Christ" and the Apostle John's "abide in Me."

**Notice John's usage:**

### **1. Abiding between the Father and Son**

- a. the Father in the Son (John 10:38; 14:10,11; 17:21,23)
- b. the Son in the Father (John 10:38; 14:10,11; 17:21)

### **2. Abiding between Deity and the believer**

- a. the Father in the believer (John 14:20,23; 1 John 3:24; 4:12-13,15)
- b. the believer in the Father (John 14:20,23; 17:21; 1 John 2:24,27; 4:13,16)
- c. the Son in the believer (John 6:56; 14:20,23; 15:4,5; 17:23)
- d. the believer in the Son (John 6:56; 14:20,23; 15:4,5,7; 1John 2:6,24,27,28)

### **3. Other abiding elements (positive)**

- a. the word of God

- 1) negatively (John 5:38; 8:37; 1 John 1:10; 2 John 9)
- 2) positively (John 8:31; 15:2; 1 John 2:14,24; 2 John 9)
- b. the love of God (John 15:9-10; 17:26; 1 John 3:17; 4:16)
- c. the Spirit of God
  - 1) on the Son (John 1:32)
  - 2) in the believer (John 14:17)
- d. obedience is abiding (John 15:10; 1 John 3:24)
- e. love is abiding in light (1 John 2:10)
- f. doing the will of God is abiding (1 John 2:17)
- g. anointing abides (1 John 2:27)
- h. truth abides (2 John 2)
- i. the Son abides (John 8:35; 12:34)

#### **4. Other abiding elements (negative)**

- a. the wrath of God abides (John 3:36)
- b. abide in darkness (John 12:46)
- c. thrown away... burned (not abiding, John 15:6)
- d. sinning (not abiding, 1 John 3:6)
- e. not loving (not abiding, 1 John 3:14)
- f. not a murderer (not eternal life abiding, 1 John 3:15)
- g. he who does not live abides in death (1 John 3:14)