



10 Remain in Him, Children of God - 1 **John 2:28-29**

John having really emphasised and reassured the readers about their strong walk with their Father who loves them (**1 John 1:3**) and has anointed them by His Holy Spirit (**1 John 2:20**) now he wants to just reinforce the Truth that the only way forward is to 'remain' in Him and to keep on keeping on. John does not want to control them as he has reminded them that they have the Holy Spirit so are quite able to stand on their own and receive teaching from Him alone. Today we are too quick to look to

others for our teaching, we read books rather than the Bible we don't take time to allow God to open His Book up to us by His Spirit. A good check is how much time do we spend reading secular magazines, newspapers and books compared to The Holy Book? Is our Father happy with that balance in our lives?

In John's gospel (**John 15:1-16**) Jesus talked about how important remaining in Him really is. How vital it is for our daily lives. We cannot walk the Christian life by ourselves in our own strength we should have picked that up by now, after looking at the study on the anointing. "Dwell in Me and I will dwell in you, - Live in Me and I will live in you. Just as no branch can bear fruit of itself without abiding in (vitality united to) the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in Me." **John 15:4**. Do we really want to live the length of our Christian lives just focused on ourselves or do we want it to be very fruitful for eternity. **Jesus must be as essential to us as the air we breathe**. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." **Galatians 2:20**.

Our main responsibility in the Christian life is to **abide** in Jesus. For us to live in Christ, and allow Him to live in us, we have to be vitally united to Him, just like a vine branch is grafted into the main trunk. God had a great purpose when He incorporated us into the Vine at our new birth. Remember when you became a Christian, it seemed as if **you** had decided to follow Jesus, but in fact the Holy Spirit set you up, and God called you. So it is with fruit-bearing. It sometimes seems like we have to work hard at being Christians, but the Truth of the matter is that the **gardener, Father God** is responsible to make us fruit-bearers **Matthew 4:19**. Only with the sap running through us giving us the **Life** of God, can we bear any fruit, **Ephesians 2:8-9**.

When we realise this and get the Truth of it in our hearts, we can rest in God's love and allow the Holy Spirit the freedom to work in and through us as we learn to stay vitally united to Jesus, **Galatians 5:16-18**. John points out that the way to abide and stay vitally united to Jesus is to focus on 'what we heard from the beginning' (**1 John 2:24**). We need to be learning more deeply the great truths we have been aware of from the start. We can be aware of spending comparatively little time allowing the majestic truths of the character of God; who is Jesus Christ; His death and resurrection; atonement and sanctification; the hope of Glory and the character of the Holy Spirit to burn into our hearts. We can become quite blasé to these amazing truths which we focused on in the beginning.

Perseverance

It is so important to keep going as Christians. We saw in the last lesson how we are open to 'antichrists' and deceivers if we become bored, dissatisfied, disappointed or lazy in our relationship with God. It is not modern to stick in a love relationship where we are not 'feeling' very loving but that is just the time when we need to refocus our time and energy onto Jesus Himself. How we do this is different for everybody but some suggestions are; get with an 'on-fire' Christian; go on a retreat (really an advance!); do a day of soaking prayer; fast and pray for Christians in a persecuted country; or read a testimony. Just realise that God wants us to be 'on fire' for Him all the time just as He is about us, **Revelation 3:15**. Even Paul warned Timothy 'For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands'. **2 Timothy 1:6**

We do need to be reminded that perseverance is vital and Jesus reminds us that we can receive a prize if we persevere which always motivates us. Jesus kept going through the trial and crucifixion for the Joy of being with His Father 'Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the Cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God, **Hebrews 12:2**. He knew the prize He would receive and that was the joy of seeing all the Father's beloved children, His sisters and brothers, living with them for eternity, so He managed to keep going. Jesus warned us in **Matthew 24** when talking about the 'end of the age' that times will be tough but we have hope of our salvation if we stick in there. These tough times will sort out real Christians from false, fair weather Christians. Don't turn your back on Him as there is so much to benefit us in eternity and remember He didn't turn His back on us and walk away from the Cross. Aren't we thankful? Keep telling Him how grateful you are.

'When He appears' 1 John 2:28

Will we be ashamed if we have not continued or remained in Him? This is such an important message as we can look at the parable of the sower and ask which soil are we and what fruit are we showing? That is the best way to check out where we are with Jesus. The greatest horror is for Jesus to say 'I never knew you' **Matthew 7:23**. This will be especially true for people who have been merely good regular Church goers. God wants us to be confident of our place in eternity with Him as we have confidence in His Word and we walk by faith in all that Jesus has done. Make sure you are really confident and do not let the devil lie to you that you are not saved or Jesus' sacrifice was not enough for your sin. If we continue with Him we shall be unashamed when He comes again. We shall know with certainty that we are saved. We shall stand before His judgement seat, and He will say to us 'well done, good and faithful servant' (**Matthew 25:21**). Not because of anything good we had done but because of all Jesus has done through us. If Christ came today what would He say to us? Would we be able to stand before Him confident and unashamed?

Righteous 1 John 2:29

This verse can seem confusing, as if it is saying that anyone who does the right thing is a Christian. We are born as sinners so our natural reaction is to please ourselves. In reality righteousness is all about our right standing with God. This is not through us doing good deeds without the power of the Holy Spirit or without faith which is sin 'everything that does not come from faith is sin'. **Romans 14:23**. There is a whole spiritual perspective to righteousness which includes worship and belief and a foundation in our commitment to Jesus Christ.

We cannot go to God and demand acceptance on the ground of our good works. God clearly states that all our 'good' works are as filthy rags. 'For we have all become like one who is unclean [ceremonially, like a leper], and all our righteousness (our best deeds of rightness and justice) is like filthy rags or a polluted garment; we all fade like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away [far from God's favour, hurrying us toward destruction]'. **Isaiah 64:6**

Amp:

So our faith in Christ is worked out in our good deeds that He has planned for us to walk in; 'Dear friends, do you think you'll get anywhere in this if you learn all the right words but never do anything? Does merely talking about faith indicate that a person really has it? For instance, you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say, "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the Holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense? **James 2:14-17 Msg:**

This describes what our loving Father expects from us as we walk in righteousness. 'For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.' **Matthew 5:20**. To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told the parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector as a warning that good works are not enough, **Luke 18:9-14**

How?

We become righteous by exchanging our sin for Christ's right standing with God and trusting Jesus Christ that His offering was big enough to wash away all my sin even though they were

so bad by God's standard, 'God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God' **2 Corinthians 5:21**. God wants us to be so in love with Him that we are desperate to be righteous, then He promises to fill us with Himself. 'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled **Matthew 5:6** 'Abram believed the Lord, and He credited it to him as righteousness'. **Genesis 15:6**. So the faith that we place in God and His Word and all Jesus has done for us makes us righteous. Honouring Jesus in all we do shows that righteousness is so much more than just being a good person.

10 Remain in Him, Children of God - 1 John 2:28-29 **Challenge Questions**

Read the beginning of the notes on 1 John 2:28-29 – Remain in Him Children of God

1. Approximately how much time do you spend reading magazines or papers or surfing the internet per day?
2. Do you find this builds up your faith in God or does it do the opposite? How?
3. How do you think we 'remain' in Jesus in a practical way? Does this agree with the Bible?

Read the notes headed 'Perseverance'

4. What really spoke to you about how important it is to persevere?
5. What 'joy' can you see in eternity?

Read the notes headed 'When He appears'

6. Are we confident of our relationship with Jesus when He appears? Why?

Read the notes headed 'Righteous'

7. From the verses quoted here which spoke to you and why?

Read the verses 1 John 3:1-3

8. What does God call us in these verses?

9. Say what this means to you?

10. What kind of 'love' does God show in this first verse? See **Lesson No:1**

11. Describe this love God has for you as you understand it in all the different facets of love.

12. What changes have you seen in your life as you have recognised God's love for yourself?

13. Do you think the world recognises Christians? What do you base your opinion on?

14. How can we get the world to recognise us as Christians? What is the greatest weapon we have to use against the devil in this battle?

15. When Christ returns who shall we be like? How can we see Jesus now? How will we see Him when He returns?

16. What hope does John mean in verse 3? How does it purify us?

17. Write one sentence about the highlight of these verses.

Pray the prayer at the end of Lesson 1

Memory verse: 'How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called children of God' **1 John 3:1**