

**1st John 2: 24-29; “Let that Abide in you”, Sermon # 11 in a series entitled –
“Behold What Manner of Love”, A Communion Sermon delivered by
Pastor Paul Rendall on November 12th, 2017,
in the Afternoon Worship Service.**

The Apostle John says that the way for the Christian to be able to avoid being deceived by false teachers, and false doctrine is to let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. There is a decided difference between the Christian and the false professor, one who says that He is a Christian but he is not. That difference is given to us in an overview in the verses that we just read. Let's see if we can glean what it is that abides in the true Christian that does not abide in the false professor. There are 4 things that remain with, and in, the true Christian that let them know that they are abiding in the Son and in the Father.

1st – The things which the Christian has heard from the beginning abide with him; and specifically the promise of God.

Salvation in Christ and knowing God has a definite beginning in the mind of any person receiving Him. That beginning takes place when we hear the words of eternal life. Someone had to come and preach to us the gospel, or how should we know that we needed to be converted and saved from our sins in order to have eternal life? Turn with me over to Romans 10. In verses 12-15 we see the predicament. “For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.” “For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” “How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?” “And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” “And how shall they hear without a preacher?” “And how shall they preach unless they are sent?” And then verse 11 says, “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”

Well, what is it that you hear that abides with you when you call upon the Name of the Lord for salvation? You find this in the earlier part of this chapter. You come to understand, as it says in verse 3, that you were ignorant of God's righteousness, and God came to your heart and mind and caused you to see your need of a better righteousness than your own. You had not understood that you were a sinner, and you thought that your own righteousness was pretty good. You sought to establish that righteousness in the sight of God and men, and you did not see your need of Christ until the Holy Spirit came and opened your eyes to the truth. You were zealous for proving to everyone around you that you were fine, just as you were, without ever needing to be saved. You thought that you could be a person who would be accepted in your sinful state because you were convinced that righteousness consisted of your own evaluation of yourself as righteous, rather than God's evaluation of you.

You had never been convicted and convinced of how far short you had fallen of God's glory and how great was your sin in many of your thoughts, and words, and deeds. You did not see the difference between the righteousness of the law and the righteousness of Christ who is the only One who could have every fulfilled the law. The truth of the matter is, that you could have saved yourself if you could only do all those things which the law requires, perfectly. Then you would have been able to attain to eternal life. But sadly you found, you could not. Therefore when the gospel was preached to you, and you heard with faith, you finally saw your need of Christ. You saw what you could not do to merit righteousness. That is why Paul says what he does in verses 6-8. “But the righteousness of faith speaks in this way, ‘Do not say your heart, Who will ascend into heaven?’ (that is to bring Christ down from above) or, ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ (that is to bring Christ up from the dead).” “But what does it say?” “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart (that is, the word of faith which we preach): That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the

dead, you will be saved.” “For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

That which we have heard from the beginning is the word concerning Christ. It is based upon the historic facts that are found in 1 Corinthians 15: 3. “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.” These are the facts that we believe. And salvation is given to the person who, believing the facts concerning Christ, comes to understand that the promise of eternal life will bring to them the free gift of righteousness and salvation, and Christ’s righteousness will be continually imputed to them in their justification, and imparted to them in terms of grace leading to their sanctification. It is this spiritual understanding of the free gift of righteousness which abides in the true Christian, and O how thankful they are for it. Christ is their righteousness, and they count all things as loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus their Lord. They would, like the apostle Paul, be willing to suffer the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that they might gain Christ and be found in Him, not having their own righteousness which is from the law, but that which through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith....” Dear Christian does this blessed truth abide in you? This is one of the major truths that you will remember as you come to partake of the Lord’s Supper.

2nd – The Anointing which is received from the Father and the Son abides in you.

“But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.” This is speaking of the gift of the Holy Spirit that is given to us in accordance with the promise of eternal life. Turn with me to Galatians 3: 11. Here we find the connection between God’s promise and the faith which leads to justifying righteousness and the gift of the Spirit which is the promised anointing. “But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for the just shall live by faith.” “Yet the law is not of faith but the man who does them shall live by them.” “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’) that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” And verse 18, “For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise but God gave it to Abraham by promise.”

This anointing of the Holy Spirit is that which “teaches us concerning all things, and is true and is not a lie.” The Holy Spirit comes to live in the life of the believer forever. If a work of regeneration has taken place, He will abide in you, He will never be displaced. He will give discernment to the humble, prayerful, expectant believer who is trying to understand the truth of the written and spoken Word. Look at John 14: 21-26. “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.” “And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” “Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.’” “He who does not love Me does not keep My words, and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.” The Father and the Son love each and every believer, and the Triune God manifests Himself to the believer through this anointing; the Holy Spirit dwelling with him, teaching him, and helping him to look at everything from the standpoint of truth of the word, so that He sees things as time goes by, most clearly.

Now look at John 15: 20-27. “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master’”. “If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.” “If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.” “but all these things they will do to you for My names’ sake,

because they do not know Him who sent Me.” “If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sins, but now they have no excuse for their sin.” “He who hates Me hates My Father also.” “If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin, but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.” “But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’” “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.” “And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”

We find here that the Spirit of truth proceeds from the Father and He testifies of Christ. And we come to understand from His ministry in our heart and life what the real issue is. It is understanding what it will mean for us to become more like our Lord Jesus. It is not only learning to keep His commandments and becoming a holy person in your behavior. It sometimes will also mean being hated without a cause when you are doing your good works for the glory of God, and not trying to please men in the first place. In learning Christ, you come to understand that the world does not necessarily appreciate your good works enough to inquire further into the way of salvation. Instead they might even hate you for doing them. But you are content to have the Spirit abiding in you and with you, for you have come to know and appreciate His good work in your heart, and your greatest desire then becomes to bear fruit in righteousness; fruit that will remain. The Holy Spirit who abides in you will give you these kind of holy desires.

This leads us in the 3rd place, then, to think about the abiding confidence that each faithful Christian has: that they will so live, as not to be ashamed at His coming.

Verse 28 of our text – “And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” Our Lord Jesus is going to return; it is only a matter of time. But the timing of Christ’s Second Coming ought not to preoccupy us so much as whether or not we will be ready to meet Him when He does come, and whether our meeting will be with confidence or whether we will be ashamed at His coming. Let me first of all address the matter of our Lord’s immanent return. It has been taught and heavily promoted by the Premillennial Dispensationalists that the next event on the prophetic time calendar is the Rapture of the Church and that this is what we ought to constantly be looking for and hastening unto in our thoughts and by our labors for Christ. But as we study the history of the Church, the real Biblical focus of every true Christian ever since Christ ascended to heaven has been to look forward to the Second Coming. And have all those Christians no part in Christ’s appearing and His Second Coming?

No, as we read 1st Thessalonians 4: 13 and following we find Paul saying: “I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.” “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.” “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.” “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God.” “And the dead in Christ will rise first.” So all of those Christian people, believers from all generations and time periods before, will all be raised at the coming of Christ. They will rise first. No believer will miss the Rapture. No believer will be left behind. All believers will be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye as it says in 1st Corinthians 15: 52. Then those who are alive and remain of the last generation of Christians shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” “And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” The focus here is not upon the when, in any generation, but whether you as a Christian are looking forward to Christ’s coming whenever it takes place. Let us see it in this holy way and stop thinking that He could come at any time, when there is so much left in

prophetic history that will need to be fulfilled. There will be no need for a Millennium after Christ's Second Coming, for when He comes, as I just read to you, the resurrection of all the righteous dead will take place. And if this is the case there will be no returning to deal with Israel after a supposed seven year tribulation, after the Rapture of the Church. That cannot take place if there is the resurrection of all the righteous dead, and that is what we have here.

The real issue in relation to Christ's Second Coming, for all Christians in every generation is this: Are you a holy man or woman or young person of God? Are you pursuing righteousness, and repenting of all of your sins, and learning to do God's will with a cheerful heart? Are you pursuing peace with all men? Are you laboring for your Master, or is gaining something from the world your object? Are you making provision for your flesh or are you learning to walk in the Spirit? All of your abiding in the truth will lead you to holiness and a certain confidence that when Christ appears, that you will not be ashamed of the way that you have lived and conducted yourself in this life. Listen to 1st Thessalonians chapter 3, verses 11-13. "Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you." "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." That is the issue – Are you increasing and abounding in love to one another and to all, so that your hearts are established in Christ's grace? Let us consider these words as we come down front now to partake of the Supper.

4th – If that which you have heard abides in you there will also be the practice of righteousness which comes from being born again.

John says in verse 29, "If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him." The practice of righteousness comes flowing forth from the New Birth in the regeneration of our hearts. Our Lord Jesus Christ is called the Righteous One. He is the Sun of righteousness who arises with healing in His wings. His is a kingdom over which He rules in righteousness. His kingdom is not eating and drinking but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Listen to these wonderful words found in Romans 8: 10. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you." "Therefore, brethren we are debtors – not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh." "For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." This is the life of righteousness, putting sin to death and engaging in the practice of doing what is right in accordance with what the Bible teaches.