

Title: "ABIDE WITH US"
Text: Luke 24:29
Date: Sunday Evening — March 25, 2007
Tape # Z-22a

Introduction:

Can the Son of God be forced to do anything? Can man compel the Christ of God by any means, to anything? The answer to those questions may surprise you.

Turn with me to Luke 24. We will begin reading at verse 28. — "*And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.*" As the Lord Jesus walked along the Emmaus road with these two disciples, when they got close to the village and started to turn in, "*he made as though he would have gone further.*" His feet were turned to go on down the road, but not his heart. His heart was still with them. He acted like he was going to leave them, because he wanted to constrain them to constrain him to abide with them. He wanted to make them want him.

EXAMPLES

There are other examples of this kind in the Gospel narratives. You will remember that one dark night, when the disciples were on the sea, a terrible storm arose. They were terrified. Suddenly, they saw a figure walking across the raging waves of the sea. Like here, the disciples did not know that it was their Savior. As he approached their storm tossed boat, it appeared that he was going to walk right by them. Then, "*they cried out for fear.*" As soon as he heard their cry, he stopped; and "*straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.*"

As the Lord Jesus made his way to Calvary, having set his face like a flint to go to Jerusalem, that he might suffer and die in our room and stead, nothing could stop him. Nothing could even cause him to take a backward glance over his shoulder, or break his stride. But, just as he was going out of Jericho, he heard a poor, blind beggar cry out, "*Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me.*" And, immediately, "*Jesus stood still.*"

On another occasion, a poor, desperate Canaanite woman came to him crying, "*Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word*" (Matthew

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15:22-23). He made as though he did not hear her. Why was that ear which was always open to the call of misery closed to this woman? Why did he answer her not a word? It was because he wanted to open her heart wider, wide enough to receive the blessing he was about to bestow.

That is often the way he works with us. Our blessed Savior often makes it appear that he will leave us, or that he has left us, that he may graciously cause us to cry after him. Oh, how he loves for us to cry after him! Oh, how the Son of God loves for us to entreat him not to leave us. He does so, because he ever delights to abide with us!

Our dear Lord often proves our love by withholding his mercies until we know our need of them. He has promised to do us good. He has promised to bless us. He has promised that he will never leave us, nor forsake us. But he says, “*I will yet for this be enquired of to do it*” (Ezekiel 36:37). He loves to draw out our desires after him, because it is good for us and because he delights to hear us express our need of him.

That is how he dealt with Jacob at Peniel. Remember, it was not Jacob who wrestled with the Lord. It was the Lord who wrestled with Jacob. He had come for the purpose of blessing his chosen one; but he would not do so until Jacob had to have him. He said to Jacob, “*Let me go, for the day breaketh.*” But Jacob was in desperate need. He cried, “*I will not let thee go, except thou bless me*” (Genesis 32:26). And the Lord blessed him.

Illustration: *Song of Solomon 5:2-16*

(Song of Songs 5:2-8) “I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night. (3) I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them? (4) My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved for him. (5) I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped *with* myrrh, and my fingers *with* sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. (6) I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, *and* was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer. (7) The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the

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walls took away my veil from me. (8) I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I *am* sick of love.”

(Song of Songs 5:9-16) “What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us? (10) My beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. (11) His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven. (12) His eyes *are as the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set. (13) His cheeks *are as* a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. (14) His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires. (15) His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is as* Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. (16) His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

So it was here in Luke 24. As they drew near to Emmaus, our Lord “*made as though he would have gone further,*” because he wanted to constrain them to constrain him to abide with them. And so, we read in our text (Luke 24:29), “*they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.*”

O Christ, our Hope, our Strength, our God,
 You have redeemed us by Your blood;
 Through You alone we're saved from sin;
 You've proved Yourself the sinner's Friend!

Often when gathered in this place,
 You've come with tokens of Your grace,
 And blessed the preaching of Your Word,
 O come again, beloved Lord!

Enter our hearts and show Your face;
 Abide with us, dear Prince of Peace;
 Come now and make each heart Your own,
 Your house, Your temple and Your throne!

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Keep us from grieving You with sin,
 Subdue our lusts and reign within;
 Abide with us for evermore;
 Make us abide in You, our Lord!

“*Abide with us.*” — That is my unceasing prayer. Oh, how I pray that he will abide with me, abide with my family, abide with you, and abide with us, for without him we can do nothing. Without him, we are nothing!

“THEY CONSTRAINED HIM”

What a remarkable word that is: — “*They constrained him.*” The specific word here translated “*constrained*” a very strong word. It means “to compel by use of force.” It is only used in one other place in the Scriptures, in Acts 16:15, where Lydia constrained Paul and Silas to abide in her house.

(Acts 16:14-15) “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. (15) And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained *us*.”

“*But they constrained him.*” The words might be translated, “They held him by force.” How? By what force was the Lord of Glory constrained? How was he compelled? What force could force the Son of God to do anything? There is only one such force put before us in all the Book of God. Our Lord Jesus was constrained by the cry of these poor, needy souls, — “*Abide with us.*” That cry constrained him to go in and “*tarry with them.*”

- He was not constrained by their faith. At the time, they did not know who he was.
- He was not constrained by any promise from his poor disciples.
- He was constrained by their need of him, by their felt need of that which only he could provide.
- So it is with us.

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His conversation had been so engaging, so heavenly and instructive, so

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sweet and delightful, so powerful and moving, so beneficial to their souls that they could not bear to have him part from them. So *“they constrained him, saying, Abide with us.”*

This is not the Master speaking to the disciple, but the disciple to the Master. It is not the Lord Jesus that is standing at the door and saying, *“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.”* It is a pair of disciples that is saying, *“Come in with us, blessed of the Lord. Abide with us.”* And as he blest Jacob before parting from him, so here went in and sat down with them. When he did, he brought his blessing with him. He filled the house with the fragrance of his presence and the odor of the ointment of his grace!

- *“He sat at meat with them”* (v. 30).
- He gave them bread to eat, bread he had blessed especially in their presence for them (v. 30).
- He opened their eyes and caused them to know him (v. 31).
- He caused their hearts to burn within them (v. 32). — *“And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”*

“They constrained him, saying, Abide with us,” because they were not willing to part with him. O Spirit of God, give us grace that we may follow the example of these disciples.

Abide with us, our Savior,
Let not Your mercy cease;
From every foe defend us,
And keep our souls in peace.

Abide with us, our Savior,
To us open Your Word,
That we may, now and ever,
Here find our blessed Lord.

Abide with us, our Savior,
And guide us in Your light;
Increase to us Your favor,
And save us by Your might.

“ABIDE WITH US”**OUR NEED**

Our blessed Savior heals as many as have need of healing (Luke 9:11). He visits those who need him, and abides with them along as he is needed. But he always departs from those who have no need for him (Matthew 19:1). If we would constrain the Lord Jesus to abide with us, we must, like these disciples, pour out our hearts’ need to him (Job 23:4; Isaiah 43:26).

(Job 23:4) “I would order *my* cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments.”

(Isaiah 43:26) “Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.”

1. “*Abide with us,*” — **because these are days of great trouble, heaviness and sorrow.**
2. “*Abide with us,*” — **because this world is empty without you.**

Life is death, if you are not with us. This house would be an empty place, a house left desolate without you, without the sound your voice, or your footsteps. All is emptiness and cold without you. It is Christ who fills our lives, rejoices our hearts, and lights up our homes He, and he alone gives us gladness in this wilderness. O blessed Savior, “*abide with us!*”

3. “*Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent,*” — **because all is darkness without you.**

We do not know lies before us, what our future is to be. We know the past, we know the present, but the future is hidden from us. For that future and all its uncertainties, we need you to be our Guide and our Protector.

- We need you to will light up our path.
- We need you to defend us and keep us.
- We need you to comfort and cheer us.
- We need you to hold us by the right hand of your righteousness.
- We need you to carry us across the swelling Jordan.
- We need you to present us to the Father.

Who will fight for us, who will deliver us and keep us to the last, in all

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changes, trials, sorrows, joys. Abide with us. Leave us not, neither forsake us. O God of our salvation, O Rest of the weary, O Light of the dark, O Saviour of the lost, O Joy of the sorrowful, O Helper of the helpless, — unchanging Companion, Friend and Brother, O blessed Kinsman, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning, — the same yesterday, today, and forever, “*abide with us!*” Lead us out, lead us in, lead us along the way, lead us beside the still waters, lead us into your banqueting house, and let your banner over us be love!

4. “*Abide with us,*” — **because earth’s night is at hand.**

The sun of time is going down behind the hills. The end of all things is at hand. The day of the Lord hastens on.

- Satan is doing his worst.
- Antichrist rages.
- Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse.
- Perilous times have come.
- Wars and rumors of wars will cover the earth.
- Earthquakes and tsunamis, tornadoes and hurricanes cause men’s hearts everywhere to fail them for fear

“*If the foundations be destroyed, What shall the righteous do?*” We can do nothing except constrain the Lord Jesus crying, “*abide with us!*” — “*Abide with us*” in all your mercy, love and grace, in all your strength and help, in all your joy and peace. — “*Abide with us*” forever.

“Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day,
Earth’s joys grow dim; its glories pass away!
Change and decay in all around I see. —
O Thou Who changest not, abide with me!”

“HE WENT IN”

I cannot fail to call your attention to the last sentence of our text. — “*And he went in to tarry with them.*” Like these disciples, in the Song of Solomon we see the church in great importunity, seeking her Beloved. And when she found him, she constrained him to abide with her (Song of Solomon 3:4-5).

(Song of Songs 3:4-5) “*It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let*

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him go, until I had brought him into my mother’s house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me. (5) I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake *my* love, till he please.”

Let us do the same. Let us, by crying constantly to our Savior, constrain him to “*abide with us.*”

We have gathered again around his Table to eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of him. As we do, may he “*abide with us,*” bless the bread and the cup, break the bread and fill the cup, and give it to us.

Be known to us in breaking bread,
But do not then depart;
Savior, abide with us, and spread
Thy table in our heart.

Oh, sup with us in love divine;
Thy body and thy blood,
That living bread, that heavenly wine,
Be our immortal food.

Amen.