



SERMON BASED STUDY GUIDE

Pastor Charlie Riley

1ST JOHN PART 4

OPENING & PRAYER:

Today, we dove deep into one of the most challenging and rewarding sections of John's writings, exploring what it truly means to "abide in Him." John's use of language is unique—he uses words like "abide," "believe," and "see" in ways that differ from Paul and other New Testament writers. Understanding these differences is crucial for grasping the heart of his message.

"Lord, thank You for bringing us together in this moment right now. We ask that You would stir our hearts and minds to be curious about You and kind to one another. Please reveal more of Yourself to us as we grow closer to You and one another. We thank You for this small group time we're about to have. In Jesus' name, amen."

SCRIPTURE:

And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming. If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him. **1 John 2:28-29**

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:31-32

Behold (Greek "ideate" – Look At This!) what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know (THIS IS NOT ABOUT INFORMATION: But Rather Intimacy, Fellowship And Connection) us, because it did not know Him. (Intimacy, Fellowship And Connection) **1 John 3:1**

Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. **1 John 3:2-3**

Whoever commits sin (Noun - The Old Nature) also commits lawlessness, and sin (Noun - The Old Nature) is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins (Noun - The Old Nature), and in Him there is no sin (Noun – Old Nature). **1 John 3:4-5**

Whoever abides in Him does not sin (Verb). Whoever sins (Verb) has neither seen Him nor known Him. **1 John 3:4-5**

Whoever sins (Verb - Perfect Tense) has neither seen Him nor known Him (Perfect Tense). **1 John 3:6**

No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him. **John 1:18 (John 14:9)**

Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. **1 John 3:7**

He who sins (Noun – Old Nature) is of the devil, for the devil has sinned (Verb) from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin (Noun – Old Nature Is Defeated), for His seed (The Word 1 - Peter 1:23 And The Presence Of The Holy Spirit - Ephesians 1:13) remains in him; and he cannot sin (Verb), because he has been born of God. **1 John 3:8-9**

But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. **Romans 7:17-20**

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. **1 John 3:10-12**

Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life (Noun - Zoen -Root Zoe) abiding in him. **1 John 3:13-15**

By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? **1 John 3:16-17**

My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. **1 John 3:18-20**

Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight. And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment. **1 John 3:21-23**

Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. **1 John 3:24**

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, **1 John 4:1-2**

and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. **1 John 4:3-4**

They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. **1 John 4:5-6**

GO DEEPER:

To “abide in Him” is not simply to be saved or to have a one-time belief in Christ. Rather, it’s a call to focus our lives on Jesus, to remain steadfast in our devotion, and to let our daily actions be shaped by His presence. John distinguishes between believing (which is being convinced and saved) and abiding (which is remaining, continuing, and living out that faith). This is a discipleship term—a call to ongoing, intentional relationship and focus.

We are privileged to be called children of God, not because of anything we’ve done, but because of what Jesus accomplished on the cross. This identity is a gift, and it’s one the world cannot understand or share unless they know Him. Our hope in Christ purifies us, shaping our choices and keeping our hearts set on eternity, even when life is hard or circumstances are discouraging.

John also addresses the tension between our old and new natures. The old nature, marked by sin and lawlessness, is contrasted with the new nature we receive in Christ—a nature that cannot sin because it is born of God and sealed by the Holy Spirit. Yet, we still wrestle with our flesh and mind, which can lead us into sin when we lose focus on Christ. Paul’s clarity helps here: our spirit is made new and cannot sin, but our flesh is still in process.

John’s teaching on “seeing” and “knowing” God is about spiritual perception and understanding, not just physical sight or intellectual knowledge. When we sin, it’s because we’ve lost sight of Christ in that moment; when we abide, we see and know Him more deeply.

Finally, love is the evidence of our new life. We are called not just to love in words, but in actions and truth. Our confidence before God grows as we keep His commandments—believing in Jesus and loving one another. When our hearts condemn us, God is greater, inviting us to bring our struggles to Him and walk in the assurance of His love.

KEY TAKEAWAYS:

1. Abiding Means Focused, Ongoing Devotion. Abiding in Christ is not a one-time event but a continual, intentional focus on Jesus. It's about letting every part of our lives be shaped by His presence and truth. This kind of abiding leads to transformation, not just information, and is the foundation of true discipleship. **[04:31]**

2. The New Nature Cannot Sin. Our spirit, made alive in Christ, is sealed and cannot sin. Sin arises from our flesh and mind when we lose focus on Christ. This distinction frees us from condemnation and helps us understand the ongoing battle between our old and new selves, encouraging us to walk in the Spirit. **[22:01]**

3. Spiritual Sight Leads to Victory Over Sin. To "see" God is to perceive and understand Him spiritually. When we keep our focus on Christ, we are empowered to resist sin. Losing sight of Him leads to stumbling, but returning our gaze restores our strength and clarity. This is a call to cultivate spiritual awareness daily. **[27:02]**

4. Love in Action Reveals Our True Identity. Loving others is the evidence of our new life in Christ. It's not enough to speak love; we must demonstrate it through our actions. This kind of love is sacrificial, practical, and rooted in truth, showing the world—and ourselves—that we truly belong to God. **[42:03]**

5. Confidence Before God Comes from a Clear Heart. When our hearts condemn us, God invites us to bring our struggles to Him. Confession and honesty before God restore our confidence and keep us walking in the light. This is not about earning God's favor, but about living in the freedom and assurance He provides. **[42:29]**

LEARNING AND GROWING:

1. According to John, what does it mean to “abide in Him”? How is this different from simply believing in Jesus? (**[04:31]**)
2. What does John say is the mark of true love for others? (**[42:03]**)
3. John says that love should be shown “in deed and in truth.” Why is it important that our love is active and not just words? (**[42:03]**)
4. The message said that when we lose sight of Christ, we are more likely to stumble into sin. Can you think of a recent time when you lost focus on Jesus and made a choice you regret? What could you do differently next time to keep your spiritual “sight” clear? (**[27:02]**)
5. The world may not understand or accept our identity as children of God. Have you ever felt misunderstood or rejected because of your faith? How did you respond, and what encouragement can you draw from John’s words? (**[09:20]**)

CLOSING PRAYER:

“Father, thank you for the opportunities to grow in our faith. We will continue to lean on Your Word as we grow to bring people to know you. In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.”