



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

1 JOHN 3:24 – A NEW TRUTH: CHRIST ABIDES IN US!

COLORADO

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1 John 3:21-23 gives us the two birthmarks of a Christian which are; faith in Jesus Christ, God's Son and a love for His people, our brothers and sisters in Christ. And as we have already seen in 1 John, the absence of love for one another means an absence of faith.

I. 1 JOHN 3:24- A NEW TRUTH...CHRIST ABIDES IN US!

“And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this, that He abides in us, by the Spirit Whom He has given us.” 1John 3:24

John highlights the blessings of an uncondemned heart in 1 John 3:21-24. Jesus Christ, the One Who knows everything, assures us we are His and that He is ours. And we can live and approach Him with a settled assurance...with confidence. And in this next verse, John gives us the blessing promised the one who “keeps His commands” is that he “abides in Christ” and “He in him”. Wow, what an amazing truth. So John is saying, the ones who keep Jesus’ commandments, are the ones who abide in Christ, and Christ in him, through the Spirit He has given us. What a concept!

A. “ABIDES IN HIM”- 1 JOHN 3:24A

*“And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him...”
1John 3:24a*

So what is the condition for this verse? John says, “*the one who keeps His commandments*”. John says that “*the one who keeps*”, present tense referring to the conduct of those who “*abide in Him*”, in Christ. They keep, they obey the commandments of God. The one who is obedient to God’s Word offers the clearest test of true faith in Jesus Christ.

“keeps” Greek “tereo” stresses the idea of observant, watchful obedience continually.

We must remember our conduct never earns God’s favorable response. Rather it is our obedience that gives evidence of our greater desire to do what is pleasing to God. Our obedience to God’s Word, His commandments, (Psalm 19, Psalm 119) reveal that our will and God’s will are in harmony.¹

John states that by obedience to God we can know that we are true believers, that we are “*in Him*”. We abide “*in Him*”. This phrase occurs frequently in the New Testament. Believers are described as being “*in Christ*”. What does that mean? As Christians, we are placed by the Father, in Christ Jesus. So profound! This simple phrase reveals our position before God

when we become a believer. God sees us as “*in Christ*”. When He looks at us, He sees Christ and declares us righteous, not because we are righteous, but because Christ was righteous and atoned for our sins as the only perfect sinless One and freely gave His life for us, by His death on the cross. Are you in Christ? Has God done this redeeming work in the depth of your soul? Is this true in your life?

This is our position as a believer that John refers to; knowing Him, loving Him, and abiding in Him. And to abide in Christ is to remain in Him, not a temporary attachment or relationship, but a permanent, deep connection. Such abiding in Christ our Savior will characterize the life of a true believer who is in true relationship with God.² So John writes, “*And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him...*” (1John 3:24a)

“abide” Greek “menelo” to stay, to remain, let it be at home, operative in your life, let that message have its course in your life.

The result of abiding in Christ is a continuing reality of fellowship, a shared life with God and the supreme blessing of eternal life promised by Christ Himself, a promise made to us personally...life forever with Him. It is a life with no end. John refers to the believer taking personal and active participation in letting Christ be at home in you and at work in your life. Take personal responsibility to cooperate with His work in you. As we abide in Christ, John assures every believer the result of His Divine message abiding in us is the continuing reality of communion, fellowship, and a shared life with God. This is the blessing of the one who “*keeps His commandments*”.

Let Christ be at home and operative in your life. Let His message have its course in your life. Abide in Him. Keep close and near to Christ, every day, every hour and every moment. May we be watchful and abide in Him.

This speaks of the believer’s free and uninhibited communion with God in our daily life bringing us into intimate relationship with our Father...face to face!³ What an amazing blessing John points out for us!

B. CHRIST ABIDES IN US! - 1 JOHN 3:24B

“And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him.” 1John 3:24b

This is a remarkable statement because it is a claim that Christ abides in us! There is a mutual abiding of believers in Christ

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, [SSB 1525 SHERMAN, RM #603- ACROSS COLFAX FROM CAPITOL](#)

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and then “*He in him*”. What? As believers we have God Himself living in us? How can that be possible? How does John know this is true? And what could that mean?

C. “AND WE KNOW BY THIS” - 1 JOHN 3:24C

“And the one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And we know by this, that He abides in us, by the Spirit Whom He has given us.” 1John 3:24d

How do we “*know*” that Christ abides in us? How does John say that we can be absolutely certain of this truth? John says in this verse, “*And we know by this, that He abides in us, by the Spirit Whom He has given us.*” How do we know? By the Person and work of the Holy Spirit at work in us! This shared life is possible by “*the Spirit Whom He has given us.*”

The power of the good news of the gospel isn’t just that we are declared righteous before God and justified on the basis of Christ’s sinless and perfect sacrifice for us on the cross. No it’s not just that my position before God the Father has changed, but also the power of sin in my life has changed. Not only is my position before Christ righteous based on Him, but He is in me through the Holy Spirit to make me righteous!

Through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the power of God’s Word, God begins to peel away at our desires for sin and renews our mind and changes our lives. And so this ongoing work of the Spirit in our lives is called “sanctification.”

It is the process of becoming more like Christ which we can’t do on our own. It is a process that begins the moment you become a Christian for as John says, that’s when we receive the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit. God has promised the Holy Spirit to us for He knows we are helpless in our own strength not only to know Him, but to grow in Him and obey His commands. Therefore, we are “in Christ” declared righteous, and “Christ is in us” through the Holy Spirit to make us righteous.

So sanctification is the process of becoming more like Christ, of growing in holiness and it begins the instant you are converted and won’t end until you meet Jesus Christ face to face!⁴ (Philippians 1:6, 1 John 3:1-3)

As CJ Mahoney writes, “*Sanctification is about our own choices and behaviors. It involves work. Empowered by God’s Spirit, we strive. We fight sin. We study Scripture and pray, even when we don’t feel like it. We flee temptation. We press on; we run hard in the pursuit of holiness. And we become more sanctified, as the power of the gospel conforms us more closely, with increasing clarity to image of Jesus Christ.*”⁵

So to be clear, justification is being declared righteous before God through Christ’s work on the cross. And sanctification is being made righteous in my life as I am conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Justification is our position, our standing before God as a believer. Sanctification is our practice, our life, how we live. Justification is immediate when we become a Christian. It is a completed action. We can never lose our salvation because it is a completed work and action by God Himself. But sanctification is a process where we continue to grow by God’s grace in obedience.

And the presence of the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity, in a believers life cannot be hidden. He is the “Holy Spirit” and His great mission is to glorify Christ (John 16:14) and to conform us to His likeness. (Galatians 5:22-23) So every Christian is indwelt by the Holy Spirit as John affirms. (Romans 8:9-10) It is His ministry in us to conform us to the image of Christ, God’s Son. (Romans 8:28)

We know Christ abides in us through the presence and work of the Holy Spirit in us. And I can approach the throne of God the Father with confidence, and a settled assurance not because of what I have done, but because I have been declared righteous by God through Christ’s finished work on the cross. I am clothed with His righteousness and my confidence isn’t based on me, or any “self righteousness”. No, my confidence with God is in my Substitute, and Savior Jesus Christ!

What a blessing this truth is that John brings before us, that we are in Christ declared righteous and Christ is in us to make us righteous! This life of “abiding”, this shared life is only possible by “*the Spirit Whom He has given us.*” I would invite you to spend time this week pondering on the blessings our heavenly Father has given us and giving thanks to Him for His unspeakable gifts!

¹ Hamilton, Ian, *Let’s Study the Letters of John*. The Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, UK, 2008. Pg. 51.

² MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary Series on 1-3 John*. Moody Press: Chicago, IL, 2007. Pg. 60.

³ Hiebert, D. Edmond, *The Epistles of John: An Expositional Commentary*. Bob Jones University Press: Greenville, SC, 1991. Pg. 169.

⁴ Mahoney, C.J., *The Cross Centered Life*. Multnomah: Penguin Random House LLC: NY, 2002. Pg. 31.

⁵ Mahoney, C.J., *The Cross Centered Life*. Multnomah: Penguin Random House LLC: NY, 2002. Pg. 31.