

12.1.25 am: Abiding in Christ

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Date: 12 January 2025

Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. A warm welcome. A very warm welcome by the feel of it today. And a happy new year to any I haven't yet seen this year.
- Those who are visiting with us, I see we've got one or two visitors with us, and it's especially good to have visitors, and especially good at this time of year. There's tea, there's coffee at the end of the service.
- If you're able to stay behind, please do so. It's good to get the chance to meet and enjoy fellowship together. And the notices have been on the screen before the service began, and you've had the email to give the details of that.
- I don't think there's any I need to draw particular attention to this morning. So let's begin this time of worship, and let's begin actually with a short word of prayer.
- Our Heavenly Father, we thank you that at the beginning of this, your day, and at the front end of a new year, we can come into your presence knowing that we will be received and not pushed back.
- [1 : 0 6] We thank you that we come in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour, the one who lived and died, and rose on the first day of the week, promising resurrection life to all who believe.
- We thank you that on this, the Lord's Day, we remember with thanksgiving all that Jesus has done for us. We remember the resurrection. We give thanks for life in abundance and life eternal.
- And we give thanks for the great cost that it came to at the expense of Jesus, so that we could freely hear and respond to the offer of the gospel.
- We thank you for the wondrous cross that we survey, that we will sing of in just a moment. And we ask, Lord, that in this day and in this year, our eyes would be fixed upon Jesus, that we would not drift from the cross, that we would be filled with resurrection joy, abundant life, and purpose, that we may determine and resolve day by day to glorify God.
- And as we do so, we thank you that we know the joy of the Lord, which is our strength. So we ask, Lord, that as we gather together in worship, that we would worship in spirit and in truth.
- [2 : 2 4] We pray that you would clear from our minds every distraction. We pray that you would cleanse our hearts from all sin. We ask that you would empty us of all that is of self and fill us with the Holy Spirit, that we may draw near to God, knowing that you have promised that you will draw near to us.
- So hear our prayers and lead us in worship, we pray. And we ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. We'll sing to God's praise and we will sing Mission Praise 755, which takes us to the cross when I survey the wondrous cross.
- When I survey the wondrous cross, On which the rest of glory died.
- My riches give, I count the cross, And more content on all my pride.
- Forbid it, Lord, that I should boast, Stay in the death of Christ my God.

[4 : 04] All loving things that shall be most, I sacrifice them to His heart.
 See, from His head, His hands, His feet, Sorrow and love flowing good down.
 Did e'er such love and sorrow meet, Our thorns compose so rich shall come.
 When the world of nature fly, That where an offering far too small, Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, My life, my all.
 Scott will now read us in a word of prayer, please. We'll pray together. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, We thank you for this day.

[5 : 47] And we ask that we gather in your name, That we would know the blessing of you being amongst us, And the power of your spirit over us, And guiding us as we turn to your word, As we read about what has done for us, The cross at Calvary.
 As we read about Jesus Christ, And we read about his love towards us. Lord, we pray that you would help us to understand Who Christ is and how much he loves us, What he has done for us, And the giving of himself, To save us from being eternally lost.
 Lord, we pray that you would protect us From the schemes of the evil one, The distractions that he may cause in this moment. For he will be trying to distract us, Because we are drawing near to the living God.
 We are intentionally gathered together, To call upon God, To sing praises to him, To worship him. And so we pray, Protect us with your loving arms, At this moment and this hour.
 That we may say how lovely it is, To be in your dwelling place, To gather with your people, To be in praise and worship together.

[7 : 08] Lord, we pray that we would know These loving arms over us, A love that calls us and compels us to come. So may your word compel each of us To come to these loving arms today, That they may be held out With a welcome and care and love of a heavenly father, To his children, As a shepherd to his sheep, To care for them and nurture them, In every situation and every experience, Even through the valley of the shadow of death, That we would know these loving arms, Embracing us and holding us, In every situation.
 So as that call goes out today, To come into and embrace and receive the love of Christ, We pray that we would not harden our hearts, We pray that you would soften our hearts, If it be of stone today, That you would draw us, With your steadfast and patient, And eternal love, That we may joyfully run to you, And joyfully embrace you, And that we would not turn from you, Turn from that call to come, And receive Christ today.
 We pray this would be the same, For wherever the gospel is preached, Morning and evening this day, In no different denominations, Across our nation, Across our world, That it may go with the accompaniment, Of your power and your spirit, That it would, That it would speak into hearts, That they may, Be persuaded, To embrace Jesus Christ, We pray, For those who are anxious at this time, We pray for those who have their own worries, We know that you are a God, That knows the hairs on our heads, And knows every situation that we are in, And we are all here as individuals, From different families, Different places, We just pray that you would, Meet us at our need this morning, That you would be, Our help, That we would call upon you, Lord, We remember,

Those who are in difficulty, At this particular moment, Across our world, We pray for those that are in war, We pray that you would bring peace, To these nations, We pray for those, Who have no homes, We pray, That you would provide warmth, And a shelter for them, Pray for those who have no food, And we pray, That there would be someone, To go, With the bread and water, Or whatever they need, That there would be someone, To give them care, And medicine, That there would be someone, To, Bring the gospel to them, We see the fires, In Los Angeles, And we pray, That you would be there as well, And we see, That many who have the riches, Of this world, Have lost great treasures, But we pray, That they would, Consider things, That they would, Remember that, They may gain the whole world,

But what is it, If they lose their soul, It is not the same, For us this morning, That the devil tempts us, With the things of this world, But what will it be, If we lose our own soul, That we reject, The love of Christ, That is held out yesterday, So we pray, That you would, Compel us to come in, With your word, With David's message, This morning, Reach to us, In the depths of our hearts, Speak to the worries, Of our souls, And be with us, In all things, By the power of your spirit, We ask, In Jesus name, Amen.

[11 : 25] Amen, Thank you, Scott. Boys and girls, Would you like to come forward, Please? How are you all today?

Happy New Year? Merry Christmas? You're very quiet today, Did you have a good holiday?

Yeah, Happy to be back in school? Not so much, That's what makes you a bit quiet, Is it? This week was quite an exciting week, Wasn't it? My goodness, We're working hard today, Aren't we?

What was so exciting about this week? Think back, To a little bit earlier in the week, What was so exciting about this week? Think weather, The snow, So who made a snowman?

Good job, Who was out sledging? Who threw snowballs? All of you did, Yeah, So we had snow this week, And because we had snow this week, We had some trouble on the road, You guys don't have to worry about the snow, Because you're not driving cars, But see when you're driving cars, Through thick snow, It can sometimes be a bit of a stress, And so, I've got a few pictures to show you, Of somebody that we see, A lot on the road, When it's snowing, Who's that?

[13 : 06] Or what's that, First of all? Finley? It's a gritter, And tell me, What does a gritter do? Michael?

It's spread salt, Why? Pardon? To get rid of the snow, It kind of melts the snow, What else does it do? Finley? Did you have your hand up?

No? Spread salt, Pardon? See that again? To melt the ice, To melt the ice, So there's grit, And there's salt, And that kind of melts the ice, And what's the big thing on the front of it, That we can't see very well?

Pardon? The plough at the front, And what does the plough do? It pushes the snow away, And so, I think there's a few more photographs, Of, Possibly the, Most handsome gritter driver, In all of, Of Harris, No offence, Janangus, There he is again, It's a powerful man, It's a powerful gritter, Yeah, Yeah, So when we're out in the snow, Well, I'll tell you a story actually, Last week, I think it was last Monday, I was driving from Inverness, To a place called Glenel, To see my mum and dad, Who live in Glenel, The girls had headed back to Harris, And so, When I left Inverness, It was snowing a little bit, And as I got out of Inverness, It snowed heavier, And heavier, And the temperature in the car, Was going down, And down, And so the road was getting, More and more slippery,

It was getting harder, And harder to drive, And then it started to get foggy, But because it was freezing, The fog just, Not the fog, The fog just sort of, Stayed, Stayed all around, And it was, I couldn't see anything, And then when I was trying, To clear the wipers, When I was trying to clear the windscreen, By doing a squish, The squish stuff just froze, So it was really hard to see, The car was slipping all over the place, And I knew there was a big, Massive hill to Glenelg up ahead, And I thought, If it's so hard to drive in the snow, At the lower level, How on earth am I going to get over that hill?

[15 : 26] So I was a wee bit stressed, To be honest, When I was driving along, But then just a little bit ahead, You know what I could see? I could see, Flashing orange lights, And what did the flashing orange lights tell me?

What was up ahead of me? It was the gritter, It wasn't dull on that gritter, But it was a gritter up ahead, And when I saw that gritter, I was delighted, Because it was spraying the road with salt, With salt and grit, Which meant that the snow and ice was melting, And the big plough at the front, Was pushing the snow away, So it was much easier to drive, And the flashing lights meant, And that I could see, I could see where the road was, And I could see the right way to go, So what do you think I did?

What do you think I did when I saw the gritter? I was going quite slow, The gritter, Do you think I said to the gritter, Get out of my way, Gritter, You're making my journey far too slow, Move out of the way, So I can overtake, Do you think that's what I did?

Do you think that would have been wise? No, Because I knew, How difficult it was, To stay on the road just up ahead, And I didn't know the road all that well, And so, The wise thing to do was to do what?

Even though it was only doing 40, 50 miles an hour, What was the wise thing to do for me? To stay behind, And follow it, That was the wise thing to do, And so that's, That's what I did, It took a little bit longer, But it was clearing the road ahead of me, It was springing the road, So that the ice was melting, And then when it came to the massive big hill, It was great, Because I was just following this gritter, That I cleared the road, So I could get over the hill, What year is it boys and girls?

[17 : 31] What year is it? 2025, 2025, 2025, And boys and girls, Do you know, You know, I couldn't see the road up ahead, When I was in the car, Because of all the fog, And all the bad weather, Do you know what's, What's going to happen in 2025?

Do you know what's going to happen in January, And February, And March, And April? Can we see it in 2025? Do we know what's up ahead?

We don't, Do we? We don't know what's up ahead of us, But who does? Michael, God does, Jesus, Knows the way up ahead, And what does he call us to do?

Does Jesus say to us, You just carry on yourselves, Pass me by, And just carry on yourselves, You'll figure it out, Does he say that? No, What does he say to us? He says, Trust me, And follow me, That's what it means to be, A disciple, Remember, When Jesus first called the disciples, Remember what he said to them, They were fishing, And they were doing all their stuff, And Jesus said, Peter, Peter, Andrew, James, John, Leave your stuff, And follow me, And keep on following me, Day after day, And boys and girls, That's what you and I, Are to do, This year, And every year, That God gives us, We're to trust, In Jesus, We're to follow, Jesus, And he's promised, If we follow him, He'll take us, The right way, The way that he chooses,

For our lives, Which is always the best way, And he'll take us, All the way through this life, As his friends, And then at the end of life, Where does, Where does he take us, If we're trusting in him?

And we thank you, Lord, That we can, Trust you to do that, So help the boys, And girls,
Help those of us, Who are older as well, To trust you, And to follow you, Every day, Of our
lives, And forever, And we ask all this, In Jesus name, And for Jesus sake, Amen, We're
going to sing now, And we're going to sing, A hymn, A new hymn, That we've got to know
The last week, Well, Called the Ancient of Days, And there's a, There's a line in this hymn,
That says something like, Though we cannot see, What the future brings, We can, We
can trust God, As we, As we go forward, So we'll stand to sing, Just a moment, NINGNIN
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None above him, none before him, all of time in his hands, for his throne he shall remain
and ever stand.

[22 : 31] Though the dread of night overwhelms my soul, he is here with me, I am not alone.

None above him, none before him, all of time in his hands, for his throne he shall remain
and ever stand.

Though I may not see what the future brings, I will watch and wait for the Savior come, All the glory, I will trust in his name, for my God is the ancient of days.

For my God is the ancient of days. Amen. John chapter 15, verses 1 to verse 11, and Scott will read the passage for us.

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Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

[25 : 42] Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. Apart from me, you can do nothing.

If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and wither. And the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burn.

If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples.

As the father has loved me, so I have loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my father's commandments, and abide in his love.

[26 : 59] These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. Amen. The reading of God's word be a blessing to us.

Amen. Thank you, Scott. We're going to sing again now to God's praise, and we're going to sing from Psalm 23. Psalm 23, the first two stanzas of the Psalm in Gaelic.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want. He makes me down to lie in pastures green. He leadeth me the quiet waters by. My soul he doth restore again, and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness, even for his own name's sake.

These two verses of Psalm 23, we sing to God's praise in Gaelic, and we remain seated to sing in Gaelic. Thank you.

NING! .

[28 : 54] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[31 : 16] Thank you. If you could turn please to the passage that we read in John 15. And as we go there, as usual, let's ask for God's help.

Our Father, we thank you that our souls are restored as we come to you, as we open the word of God, as we take time to be in your presence.

We thank you that Jesus, the Lord, the Good Shepherd, is the one who came to restore our souls. And as we trust in him, we experience that restoration.

And we ask, Lord, that you would be working in our midst today, work within our hearts, we pray. Work to make us more like Jesus if we are Christians.

And if there are any here today who are not yet Christians, we pray that they would hear the voice of God calling them to follow the Lord Jesus.

[32 : 24] We pray for the young ones. We thank you for them and for their interest and for their faith and their responsiveness. We pray that as they are taught the gospel in a simple way in Sunday school, that they would hear, that they would believe, that they would be saved and that they would walk with you all the days of their lives.

So hear our prayers. And as it's been prayed already, we pray for the congregations around us, different denominations, wherever Christ crucified is preached, we ask that you would be working, Lord, that you would be speaking to your people.

We pray for congregations that we are connected with as well, those visiting with us and the congregations that they may come from. Some of our students and our workers who have headed back to cities across the land and across the world.

We pray that as they meet together with your people in different places, that they would know your blessing. As we pray that we would know your blessing. We pray for those who are at home and who would desire to be with us, but who cannot at this stage in life find the strength to be able to come out.

And we pray that you would bless them and minister to them in the power of the Spirit. We pray for those who are at home and who could easily be here, but maybe have lost that desire to be here.

[33 : 44] And we ask that you would be working in their lives, in each one of our lives, Lord, to draw us close and to keep us close. So hear our prayers. Help us as we study your word.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. There are some places that we go, not once or twice, but we find that we go to these places.

We need to go to these places over and over again. There's a yearning, there's a longing to return to these particular places. There might be a family home.

It might be a holiday destination that has just become precious over the years. There are certain places that we return to often because they help us reset.

They help us maybe to be refreshed, to get perspective. John 15 is one place in the Bible that I find helpful to go to over and over again.

[34 : 54] It's for me, certainly, it's a key passage that I need to revisit regularly. And when people ask me, how can we pray for you?

I'll almost always answer. Pray John 15, please. So that's the place I'd like to go this morning, at the front end of a new year, before we go back to our studies in Matthew and in Genesis.

So I want to take a theme for the day, which is not my usual practice. I want to take a theme for the day, morning and evening. And the theme for today is our relationship with God.

That's what being a Christian is. It's to be in relationship with God. To be a Christian is to know Jesus.

Savingly, it's the one who's taken our sin away. And personally, we know him as friends. We follow him, we speak to him, we listen to him.

[36 : 11] So this morning, with John 15 open, I'd like to think about abiding in Christ. That call to abide in Christ. And this evening, I would encourage you, with the young ones, to come back this evening.

These will be two simple services. This evening, with Zechariah 1 open, I'd like to think about the call of God to return to him.

If we've been strained. Or maybe if we've just determined that we're going to walk at a distance. There is a call of God to return to him.

So John 15 this morning. And we begin four points this morning. And the first point is anxious disciples. That's what we find as we come to this passage.

And as we think about the context. We find anxious disciples. So where are Jesus and his disciples as we come to this passage?

[37 : 16] Well, from John chapter 13 through to John chapter 17 at the end, Jesus and his disciples, they're gathered together in a little upper room.

Jesus has gathered them all together there. And this is the last time that the disciples would be all together with Jesus in this world.

So what does Jesus say to the disciples when they get in the room? And when they close the door?

Well, one of the things that Jesus says to the disciples, and you find this at the beginning of John chapter 14. Just to give us the context, as we think about what's going through the minds of the disciples.

One of the things that Jesus says to the disciples, John chapter 14 verse 1, is let not your hearts be troubled. So why does he say that?

[38 : 19] Well, he says that to the disciples clearly, because their hearts were troubled. Jesus knew their hearts. He knew these disciples intimately. He knew that they were troubled in their hearts.

He could sense he knew that they were anxious disciples. The crowds that used to love and be amazed by Jesus were starting now not to love Jesus.

In fact, they had begun to turn against Jesus. And the religious and the political leaders, the most powerful men in that place, they were very openly against Jesus.

Which meant that they were very much against the disciples of Jesus. So it was no longer safe to be a follower of Jesus.

Jesus and the disciples were beginning to feel, as the second half of John 15 addresses, Jesus and the disciples were beginning to feel the hatred of the world against them.

[39 : 34] So the disciples, understandably, they were anxious. Some of us today, as we sit here, we may sit with a brave face on.

But I'd be surprised if there aren't many people in this room who are listening at a distance who are wrestling with anxiety.

As we step out into a new year, for some people, there's a real sense of excitement, anticipation.

But for others, who may have gone through a few hard years, as they step out into a new year, there can be a feeling of anxiety.

Because we don't know what's up ahead. And that can often cause us to worry. Maybe with the disciples, we sense that it's becoming harder and harder to be a Christian in Scotland.

[40 : 49] We see our children and we see our grandchildren. We worry. We've got anxiety for them. How's it going to be for them as they seek to be faithful and follow Jesus?

Or it may be that our work is not going well just now. We're starting to struggle in the place of work.

It may be that our health or the health of a loved one is failing. It may be that a friendship that has been so cherished over the years or even the relationship with a spouse seems to be breaking down.

It may be that that money is tight. Christmas was expensive. Bills are coming in. How are they going to get paid? These are all things that can cause us to become anxious.

So what do we do when we become anxious? What do we do when we with the disciples are wrestling with hearts that are troubled and anxiety?

[41 : 58] What do we do with the disciples today? we come to Jesus? We get in a wee room. We close the door.

We spend time with Jesus just like the disciples did. we get together with other believers and we encourage each other as we spend time in the presence of Jesus.

Anxious disciples that's the first point that gives us context. the second point is approaching the cross. We've thought about the disciples and what was going through their minds as they huddled together in that wee room but what about Jesus?

what was going through the mind of Jesus? What could Jesus see as he anticipated the future?

Well Jesus could see the cross. We spent the month of December thinking about the birth of Jesus the birth that was foretold by the prophets the birth that was remember it was announced to the shepherds the least likely people the news the good news of the child in the manger but that child came into this world on a mission as we sang over the Christmas period he was the child who inherits all our transgressions all our demerits on him fall and all our demerits all our transgression all our sin was about to fall on Jesus as he sat in that upper room washing the feet of the disciples teaching the disciples comforting the disciples

[44 : 23] Jesus knows that he's only hours away from the cross this is Thursday night he will be crucified on Friday Jesus knows that he is approaching the cross he's not distracted he was never distracted I remember some teachers in school I believe some teachers probably still exist with this with this tendency I had a teacher in school called Mr. Turner lovely teacher we very much enjoyed him but sometimes if the lessons were getting a bit dry and we were getting a bit bored you could distract him just like that because all you needed to say was is that a plane I saw out the window there was always these jets flying around in the sky and you'd say was that a plane off to the window he shot looking out the window and then talks about F-16s and then we were into the wars and then there were stories and half an hour later the bell was going and the lessons being abandoned but we were we were entertained he was easily distracted

Jesus was never distracted from the reason that he came into this world Jesus never drifted off mission he never lost sight of the cross and we must never lose sight of the cross that's how we began this morning with the hymn when I survey the wondrous cross again and again not just at the beginning of our Christian lives but again and again we have to return to the cross and survey all that Jesus did for his disciples and did for us if we're trusting in him sometimes we we lose sight we lose a sense of how much

God loves us and if we want to regain that sense of God's love for us if we want to know the extent of God's love for us when we're maybe not feeling it where do we go we go back to the cross or if our love for God is cooling as it can do if we are finding that that we no longer have that sense of love for God that we once had if we're finding that it's becoming easier and easier to sin if we're finding that it's becoming more and more of a chore to open the Bible and come to church and go to the prayer meeting where do we go we go back to the cross so that we will see what our sin did to Jesus so that we will hate sin and we will repent and we will rejoice in the fact that he has opened up the way for us to come into his presence if pride is creeping into our lives and we're starting to feel a bit righteous and we look at other people and we tend to judge them place ourselves a little bit higher than them where do we go we go back to the cross to be humbled or if on the other extreme we are all too conscious of our crushing sin if Satan is tempting us to despair and we're losing the joy and the assurance of salvation where do we go we go back to the cross to see once more that the cross is the place where

Jesus made an end to sin he made an end to all my sin and he secured our salvation secured it it is finished remember he cried out so there's the context don't worry this is not the introduction this is the first two points we see anxious disciples and we see Jesus the saviour who knows that he is approaching the cross third point already clean already clean and if you scan through the verses we're not going through verse by verse today as we normally do but if you scan through the verses and you come to verse 3 we see or we hear that this is what Jesus says to the disciples he says to them already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you one of the commentators

Hendrickson says by faith in the word of Christ the eleven had become clean heart clean forgiven clenched by faith in the word of Christ the eleven had become clean and we can rewind just a little to John chapter 13 still remember they're in the same room and in John chapter 13 Jesus said that very thing to them remember Jesus he's washing the disciples feet and the water that Jesus uses to wash their feet points forward to the blood that would be shed to wash their hearts and Jesus as he washes the feet of Peter he says to the disciples in John chapter 13 and verse 10 you are clean but not every one of you 11 disciples were clean because they were in

[51 : 05] Christ and in John chapter 15 and verse 2 Jesus speaks about being in me the connection in the vine the branches in the vine and 11 of the disciples were clean because they were in Christ they were connected to by faith they were in Christ but one disciple Judas Iscariot he was not in Christ none of the rest of them realised that Judas Iscariot he looked the same as everybody else he said the same kind of things Judas was in the room when Jesus was saying all these things in John chapter 13 he was at all the services he'd heard all the preaching he'd actually been a preacher Judas was at the feet washing Judas was even served the bread and the wine at the first communion meal but he was not clean because he was not in Christ he didn't believe in Christ he hadn't confessed his sin in the room but not in Christ there's a sermon there

I don't need to take any time to labour it you understand that we can be in the room we can be on the roll we can be sitting at the table we can be preaching at a general assembly hall none of these things matter you have to be in Christ and the eleven disciples these disciples who were with Jesus to the end these disciples who believed in the word of Jesus yes they were failures yes they made a hash of things so often and we take encouragement as we read about their bungs but despite all their failures and their falls eleven of these disciples they were connected to Jesus divine by faith and they were already clean how could they be so sure because of the word that Jesus spoke to them they maybe didn't feel that clean

I'm quite sure Peter when he fell didn't feel very clean but Jesus had said to these disciples you are already clean and they could be sure of that because of the word that Jesus spoke to them and because of the blood that Jesus was just about to shed for them you are already clean and at the beginning of a new year this is such an encouraging truth to meditate upon if we have repented of our sin if we are today still repenting of our sin if we have confessed our sin if we have believed in Jesus says to us take encouragement from this you are already clean it is well with your soul there may be a whole lot of carnage in your life there may be a whole lot of stress from circumstances but if we are trusting in

Christ it is well eternally with our souls and so there is a steady joy and peace that can carry us through all the trials and tribulations of life because of the word that Jesus spoke to us and the blood that Jesus shed for us think about the words of the hymn we could have sung it my sin think about your sin we are so aware of our sin my sin writes the hymn writer oh the bliss of this glorious thought my sin not in part but the whole is nailed to his cross and I bear it no more it is well it is well with my soul if you're a

Christian this morning Jesus says to you as he says to me you are already clean 1 John 1:9 as Jesus speaks to John the apostle if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness every sin all unrighteousness cleansed clean because of Jesus the devil would want to remind you and I of our past sins the devil loves to bring back to our memory and haunt us with past failures and we ourselves are often guilty of digging back up the memory of past sins that have long since been confessed and some of us because of our nature we look to the future and we fear and we dread the sins that we've yet to commit but

[57 : 35] Jesus says to all who are connected to him by faith all who have confessed our sin you are already clean and I'm laboring this purposefully because we need the joy of this past present future sins cleansed by the blood of Jesus so Christian if you're a Christian this morning take this in ask for the help of the Holy Spirit to take this in to lift our moods to swell our hearts that we might sing with great joy let this truth cause our hearts to overflow with joy and peace you says

Jesus are already clean! to people who are in the room but not yet in Christ those who are not yet Christians can I plead with you to repent of your sin do not carry it with you into hell repent of your sin trust in Jesus so that you too may have your sins forgiven and be declared clean in Christ what a blessing to walk out the door this morning knowing that we are clean we don't have to climb a mountain in the Himalayas we don't have to pay a whole series of indulgences we don't have to fulfill a thousand religious rituals to hopefully get some cleansing sometime maybe in the future if we are trusting in

Christ we are clean cleansed secure saved already clean final point abide in Christ and I want to finish on this point because this is clearly the main point running through these verses and if we want to get some emphasis to something that we've written we get out the highlighter pens and the rulers and the bold and the underlying Greek writers didn't have these formatting options so to bring emphasis they used repetition and we've got plenty of repetition in these verses look how many times Jesus uses the word abide in the section in verse 4 he says abide three times in verse 5 one time in verse 6 one time in verse 7 two times in verse 9 one time in verse 10 two times so we've got 10 times in 10 verses

Jesus says abide Jesus says to us if you want to be fruitful in 2025 abide in me if you want to be effective in prayer verse 7 abide in me if you want to glorify the father verse 8 abide in me if you want verse 9 to know the love of God abide in me if you want the scowl taken off your face and fullness of joy to fill your heart verse 11 abide in me says Jesus if you want assurance of salvation abide in me so if you and

I are looking for a new year resolution to go into 2025 with a resolution that is far more significant than eating healthy and exercising well John says to us well here's one resolve to abide in Christ J.C.

[62 : 38] Ryle says abide in me cling to me stick fast to me live the life of close communion intimate communion with me get nearer and nearer to me roll every burden on me cast your whole weight on me never let go your hold of me for a moment be as it were rooted and planted in me do this and I will never fail you says Jesus I will ever abide in you abide in Christ that's our calling that's our privilege abide in Christ God the Son he says to us come to me abide in me but how do we do that how do we abide well it's not complicated we do what the disciples do we take time to be with

Jesus which may well involve less screen time for us and more upper room time we listen to the word of Jesus like the disciples did which means we're in our Bibles we speak to Jesus which means we get into the closet and we pray we get into the room next door for one hour a week we pray and we resolve in God's strength to obey Jesus to live lives that are holy and pleasing to him what does it mean to abide us weers be it means to keep in fellowship with Christ so that his life can work in and through us to produce fruit this certainly involves the word of

God and the confession of sin so that nothing hinders our communion with him it also involves obeying him because we love him that's what it means to abide and there's no more joyful life one commentator says the abiding relationship is natural to the branch and the vine but it must be cultivated in the Christian life it is not automatic abiding in Christ demands worship meditation on God's word prayer sacrifice service but what a joyful experience it is once you have begun to cultivate this deeper communion with Christ you have no desire to return to the shallow life of the careless

Christian abide in Christ that's the calling that's the challenge that's the privilege that's the joy that's where there's life is an alternative to abiding in Jesus well yes there is it's to be apart from Jesus and Jesus warns us about that we can abide or we can be apart from him and if we remain apart from Jesus in time then we will remain apart from Jesus for eternity and that's what Judas Iscariot chose that was his choice that was his will he determined in his will that he would be apart from

Jesus and Jesus says in verse 6 if anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered thrown into the fire and burned it's a picture of hell and that's what Judas chose he chose to be apart from Jesus not to abide in Christ but even as Christians we can drift apart for a time from Jesus we've heard testimonies here of those who've been honest enough to say there were years when I drifted apart from Jesus Peter could tell us that sad story of being apart from

[68 : 08] Jesus David the psalmist could lament as he did the year when he was apart from God and we can find ourselves as genuine Christians saved Christians we can find ourselves sometimes saved but following at a distance and we're going to spend some time tonight thinking about that and thinking about how God calls us not to stay there but to return to him but this morning we finish with that call of Jesus not to drift not to stray not to backslide but to abide in him to trust him to obey him and to know the happiness that comes from having a close walk with the

Lord may we know a close walk with Jesus this year we'll finish by singing to God's praise in hymn or mission praise number 760 760 in mission praise when we walk with the Lord in the light of his word what a glory he sheds on our way when we do his good will he abides with us still and with all who will trust and obey trust and obey there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey when we walk with the Lord in the!

! to be! to Jesus! to! to God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.

[72 : 01] God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. What he says we will do Where he stands we will go Never fear, only trust and obey Trust and obey For there's no other way To be happy in Jesus But to trust and obey Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forevermore. Amen.