

1 John 3:24 Commentary

PREVIOUS

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FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN
Click chart to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - [Charles Swindoll](#)

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27		Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21	
Abiding in God's Light		Abiding in God's Love	
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			
From Talk Thru the Bible			

STUDY GUIDE 1 JOHN 3

What is this? On the photograph of the Observation Worksheet for this chapter you will find handwritten 5W/H questions (Who?

What? Where? When? Why? How?) on each verse to help you either personally study or lead a discussion on this chapter. The questions are generally very simple and are stated in such a way as to stimulate you to observe the text to discern the answer. As a reminder, given the truth that your ultimate Teacher is the Holy Spirit, begin your time with God with prayer such as Psalm 119:12+ "Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes." (you can vary it with similar prayers - Ps 119:18, 26, 33, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135, 171, etc) The questions are generally highlighted in yellow and the answers in green. Some questions have no answers and are left to your observations and the illuminating/teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some qualifying thoughts - (1) Use "As is" - these are handwritten and will include mistakes I made, etc. (2) They may not be the best question for a given verse and my guess is that on some verses you will think of a far superior 5W/H question and/or many other questions.

Dr Howard Hendricks once gave an assignment to his seminary students to list as many observations as they could from Acts 1:8. He said "So far they've come up with more than 600 different ones! Imagine what fun you could have with 600 observations on this passage. Would you like to see Scripture with eyes like that?" (P. 63 [Living by the Book](#) - borrow) With practice you can! And needless to say, you will likely make many more observations and related questions than I recorded on the pages below and in fact I pray that the Spirit would indeed lead you to discover a veritable treasure chest of observations and questions! In Jesus' Name. Amen

Why am I doing this? **Mortimer Adler** among others helped me develop a questioning mindset as I read, seeking to read actively rather than passively. Over the years I have discovered that as I have practiced reading with a 5W/H questioning mindset, it has yielded more accurate interpretation and the good fruit of meditation. In other words, consciously interacting with the inspired Holy Word of God and the illuminating Holy Spirit has honed my ability to meditate on the Scripture, and my prayer is that this tool will have the same impact in your spiritual life. The benefits of meditation are literally priceless in regard to their value in this life and in the life to come (cf discipline yourself for godliness in 1Ti 4:8+.) For some of the benefits - see Joshua 1:8+ and Psalm 1:2-3+. It will take diligence and mental effort to develop an "inductive" ([especially an "observational"](#)), interrogative mindset as you read God's Word, but it bears repeating that the benefits in this life and the rewards in the next will make it more than worth the effort you invest! Dear Christian reader let me encourage you to strongly consider learning the skills of [inductive Bible study](#) and spending the rest of your life practicing them on the Scriptures and living them out in your daily walk with Christ.

Although Mortimer Adler's advice is from a secular perspective, his words are worth pondering...

Strictly, all reading is active. What we call passive is simply less active. Reading is better or worse according as it is more or less active. And one reader is better than another in proportion as he is capable of a greater range of activity in reading. (Adler's classic book [How to Read a Book is free online](#))

[John Piper](#) adds that "Insight or understanding is the product of intensive, headache-producing meditation on two or three verses and how they fit together. This kind of reflection and rumination is provoked by asking questions of the text. And you cannot do it if you hurry. Therefore, we must resist the deceptive urge to carve notches in our bibliographic gun. Take two hours to ask ten questions of Galatians 2:20+ and you will gain one hundred times the insight you would have attained by reading thirty pages of the New Testament or any other book. Slow down. Query. Ponder. Chew.... (John Dewey rightly said) "People only truly think when they are confronted with a problem. Without some kind of dilemma to stimulate thought, behavior becomes habitual rather than thoughtful."

"Asking questions is the key to understanding."

--Jonathan Edwards

That said, below are the [5W/H questions](#) for each verse in this chapter (click page to enlarge). This is not neatly typed but is handwritten and was used for leading a class discussion on this chapter, so you are welcome to use it in this "as is" condition...



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

Greek - kai o teron (PAPMSN) tas entolas autou en auto menei (3SPA1) kai autos en auto kai en touto ginoskomen (1PPAI) hoti menei (3SPA1) en hemin ek tou pneumatos ou hemin edoken (3SAA1) .

KJV 1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

BGT 1 John 3:24 κατηρη ν τ ς ν το λ ς α το ν α τ μ νει κα α τ ς ν α τ · κα ν το τ γιν σκομεν τι μ νει ν μ ν, κ το πνε ματος ο μ ν δωκεν.

NET 1 John 3:24 And the person who keeps his commandments resides in God, and God in him. Now by this we know that God resides in us: by the Spirit he has given us.

CSB 1 John 3:24 The one who keeps His commands remains in Him, and He in him. And the way we know that He remains in us is from the Spirit He has given us.

ESV 1 John 3:24 Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

NIV 1 John 3:24 Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

NLT 1 John 3:24 Those who obey God's commandments remain in fellowship with him, and he with them. And we know he lives in us because the Spirit he gave us lives in us.

NRS 1 John 3:24 All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

NJB 1 John 3:24 Whoever keeps his commandments remains in God, and God in him. And this is the proof that he remains in us: the Spirit that he has given us.

NAB 1 John 3:24 Those who keep his commandments remain in him, and he in them, and the way we know that he remains in us is from the Spirit that he gave us.

YLT 1 John 3:24 and he who is keeping His commands, in Him he doth remain, and He in him; and in this we know that He doth remain in us, from the Spirit that He gave us.

MIT 1 John 3:24 One who keeps his commands remains in him, and he in the obedient one. Here is how we know he remains in us—by the spirit he gave us.

GWN 1 John 3:24 Those who obey Christ's commandments live in God, and God lives in them. We know that he lives in us because he has given us the Spirit.

BBE 1 John 3:24 He who keeps his laws is in God and God is in him. And the Spirit which he gave us is our witness that he is in us.

RSV 1 John 3:24 All who keep his commandments abide in him, and he in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit which he has given us.

NKJ 1 John 3:24 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.

ASV 1 John 3:24 And he that keepeth his commandments abideth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he gave us.

Wuest - And the one who as a habit of life exercises a solicitous care in keeping His commandments, in Him is abiding, and He himself is abiding in him. And in this we know experientially that He is abiding in us, from the Spirit as a source whom He gave to us. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used by permission)

- **One who keeps** - 1Jn 3:22 John 14:21-23 15:7-10
- **Abides**: 1Jn 4:7,12,15,16 John 6:54-56 Jn 17:21 1Co 3:16 6:19 2Co 6:16 2Ti 1:14
- **we**: 1Jn 4:13 Ro 8:9-17 Ga 4:5,6)
- [1 John 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE BLESSING THAT FLOWS FROM OBEDIENCE

The NAS, ESV, NIV, and RSV all omit translation of the **kai** (**and**) which serves to connect this verse with 1Jn 3:23.

The one who keeps ([tereo](#) - present tense) **His commandments** ([entole](#)) **abides** ([meno](#) present tense) **in Him, and He in him** - Obedience facilitates abiding **in Him** (in context referring to the Father), but the truth is that we are able to keep (present tense = as our general practice) His commandments because He abides in us. Specifically God permanently indwells our mortal bodies and continually energizes us giving us the supernatural desire and power to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord and be pleasing to our Father in Heaven (cf Php 2:13NLT+, Col 1:10+, 1Jn 3:22+). Love is evidence that we are in God and God is in us (cf. 1Jn 4:12, 15-16; Jn 14:23; 15:10).

It is important to emphasize in exhorting believers to keep **His commandments**, John is not advocating keeping a list of things we are to do and not to do! He is not placing us under the law ([legalism](#)) and that's exactly what a list of do's and don't's will do (whether the list is written on paper or in your mind). To repeat, the only way for saved sinners to keep His **commandments** is by learning to daily lean on the everlasting arms of God's supernatural enablement provided by His indwelling Spirit. We need to learn to daily yield our will to His will (we pray it but don't always do it - cf Mt 6:10+), confess (1Jn 1:9+, Pr 28:13+) any known sins that might quench Him (cf 1 Th 5:19+, Eph 4:30+, Ps 139:23,24) and then rely wholly on the Holy Spirit, Who will continually energize us giving us the desire and the power to keep God's commandments (see Php 2:13NLT+). Even then we will not be able to keep them perfectly. John is calling not for perfection, but direction in our walk. We need to examine ourselves and determine honestly whether our life is characterized by progress toward Christ-likeness (progressive sanctification) or is our life characterized by habitual unconfessed, unrepentant lawlessness (1Jn 3:7,8+). A consistently unholy walk (cf walk in present tense in 1Jn 1:6+) strongly suggests absence of a supernatural power to walk holy and thus absence of the indwelling Holy Spirit! Do not think you are regenerate (born again, saved) simply because you made a profession or prayed a prayer! There needs to be some evidence of progress toward a holiness (cf 2Co 5:17+). If there has been absolutely no change in your life or lifestyle, then you may need to be born again. (See Romans Road of Salvation).

*Obedience is the expression or evidence
of the fact that we are abiding in Him and He in us.*

Sam Storms - Having mentioned the issue of obedience to Christ's commandments in 1Jn 3:22-23, John feels it necessary before closing the paragraph to say something concerning **abiding**. His words are often taken as saying that obedience is the condition of God abiding in us and, in a certain sense, this is true. But here I believe the meaning is that obedience is the expression or evidence of the fact that we are abiding in Him and He in us. ([First John 3:10b-24](#))

*The only reason we're willing and able
to abide in Him is because He abides in us!*
-- Charles Swindoll

As **Harris** says "the person who **keeps his commandments** clearly refers to the genuine believer, the faithful member of the community to whom the author is writing (the previous verse defines what the commandment is)." ([Exegetical Commentary](#))

Alfred Plummer on **keeps His commandments** - John once more insists on what may be regarded as the main theme of this exposition of Christian Ethics; that **conduct** is not only not a matter of indifference, but is all-important. We may possess many kinds of enlightenment, intellectual and spiritual; but there is **no union with God**, and indeed **no true knowledge of Him**, without **obedience**: comp. 1Jn 1:6, 2:4, 6, 29, 3:6, 7, 9. 'He that wills to do His will shall know' (John 7:17).

Abides ([meno](#) present tense) **in Him, and He in him** - **Abides** means to remain or be at home in and in the present tense speaks of permanence of our remaining **in Him** and He is us. Who is **Him**? Observe 1Jn 3:23 where John says "**His** Son Jesus Christ" and then says "**He** commanded us" both of which would be references to God the Father. And thus in the immediate context, when he says "abides in **Him**" this is almost certainly a reference to the Father.

*To abide (live) in Christ requires
keeping His commandments*
--[Ryrie Study Bible](#))

Hiebert on **abides** ([meno](#) present tense) **in Him, and He in him** - The one thus characteristically keeping God's **commandments** experiences a reciprocal spiritual fellowship: "he dwelleth in Him, and He in him". Such a mutual abiding marks the heart of a vital Christianity (John 15:1-5+; Col. 1:27-28+). The present-tense verb "dwelleth" ([meno](#)) marks the closest and most permanent union between the human and the divine.

MacArthur adds "That shared life is possible only by the Spirit Whom He has given (cf. Lk 11:13; 12:12; Jn 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; Acts 1:4-8; Ro 5:5; 8:11, 16; Gal. 4:6; 5:16, 22; Eph. 1:13-14; 1 John 2:20, 27; 4:1-2, 13)." (See [The MacArthur Commentary](#))

*the condition of continuous mutual indwelling is obedience;
although obedience is also the issue and evidence of the indwelling.*

John Stott - The concept of a mutual '**abiding**' (RSV), mentioned here in the letter for the first time, we in Him and He in us, is derived ultimately from our Lord's allegory of the Vine and the branches (John 15:1-11). There it is Christ Who dwells in His own, and they in Him. Here, if we may judge from the use of 'Him', 'His' and 'He' in 1Jn 3:22-23, it is 'God' (**ED**: The Father) Who dwells in us, as in 1Jn 4:12, and we in Him... Both here and in John 15 (Jn 15:10) the condition of continuous mutual indwelling is obedience; although obedience is also the issue and evidence of the indwelling. Cf. 1Jn 2:3-6 for an exposition of the same truth... No-one may dare to claim that he lives in Christ and Christ in him unless he is obedient to the three fundamental commands which

John has been expounding, which are belief in Christ, love for the brothers and moral righteousness. 'Living in Christ' is not a mystical experience which anyone may claim; its indispensable accompaniments are the confession of Jesus as the Son of God come in the flesh, and a consistent life of holiness and love. (Borrow [The Letters of John page 154](#))

David Allen - If anyone does what God commands him to do, that person lives united with God in the sense that he or she maintains close fellowship (abides) with God and God lives (abides) in him. In this situation God's fellowship with us remains uninterrupted. Of course, it is true that all who are genuine believers are constantly united with God and God is constantly united with them. The assurance of this abiding is the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, Whom Jesus has given us. The Holy Spirit is the believer's assurance of salvation. John 14:17 speaks of the Spirit as abiding "with you" and "in you." This promise finds its fulfillment in the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit (1Co 3:16, 17; 1Co 6:19). (Preaching the Word - 1-3 John: Fellowship in God's Family)

Henry Mahan on keeps and abides - This is what John has been saying throughout this entire chapter. Faith and conduct cannot be separated; belief and obedience are always found in the same heart. When His Spirit and His word governs our hearts and lives, it is evident that Christ dwells in us and we dwell in Christ. Whatever good works are done by us proceed from the grace of His Spirit Who dwells in us. ([1 John 3 Commentary](#))

Harris on abides - The verb here refers to the permanence of relationship between God and the believer, as also in 1Jn 2:6, 4:12, 4:13 (2x), 1Jn 4:15 (2x), and 1Jn 4:16 (2x). The present verse implies that this is a mutual and reciprocal relationship. Previously the author has introduced the concept of believers residing in God and/or Jesus in 1John 2:5-6, 24, 27-28, and 1Jn 3:6 (cf. also 1Jn 5:20). The author also mentions God residing in the believer in 1Jn 4:12 (cf. 1Jn 2:14; 3:9). Here, however, the ideas are combined and mutual for the first time in the letter (cf. later references in 1Jn 4:13, 15, 16). ([Exegetical Commentary on 1 John 3:11-24](#))

And He in him - We abide in God and God abides in us through the Holy Spirit.

John 14:10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

John 14:17 [that is] the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, [but] you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you.

John 14:23 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 abode with him.

John 17:21 that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, [art] in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in Us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.

Kistemaker - They who keep God's word in their heart experience that God makes His home with them **Ed**: This is referring to experientially at home, to daily communion with God, to intimate fellowship, but positionally God is forever at home in the genuine believer's heart, because His presence is independent of our behavior. In other words we can't merit His presence by our obedience any more than we can lose His presence by our disobedience.). ([Epistles of John](#))

HOW TO KNOW GOD ABIDES IN US

We know (ginosko present tense) **by this that He abides** ([meno](#) present tense) **in us, by the Spirit Whom He has given** (aorist tense) **us** - speaks of knowledge gained by experience and notice John includes himself in this statement. **Know** in the present tense conveys the sense that we can continually know this truth. What do we know? That God the Spirit lives in us, in our mortal bodies. How do we know? **By this!** By what? This phrase could refer to what has preceded - we know that **He abides in us** by our obedient lifestyle of loving our brethren (1Jn 3:11-18) or it could refer to what follows - we know **He abides in us** because **the Spirit** has revealed that truth to our heart. I favor the latter interpretation, but in a sense both are probably operative.

He abides ([meno](#)) is at home, remains in our heart with the present tense signifying God continually abides in the genuine believer. While fellowship may wax and wane, especially if we have unconfessed sins, His presence in our heart does not cease. The essence of the new covenant is union and oneness which is not based on our behavior but upon His immutable promise. He is the covenant keeping God. He has clearly promised to never, ever, at any time, leave us nor forsake us (Heb 13:5+) The day we entered covenant with Him by grace through faith, was the day our eternal destiny was forever sealed and secured, because He signed the covenant agreement with His blood (Mt 26:28+, Mk 14:24+, Lk 22:20+, 1Cor 11:25+)!

Now you still might be saying "Well that is somewhat subjective to say we know by the Spirit Who is in us." Not really. In fact His indwelling is quite objective as demonstrated by our changed conduct. When we were dead in our trespasses and sins, we were

continually disobedient to God. We were chasing after sin, but now sin chases after us. Now the fact that we desire to obey God and are able to obey God is evidence of a supernatural power abiding in us. There is no way we would be able to keep God's commandments (e.g., to love our brothers and sisters in Christ) unless we had the Spirit "at work in (us), both to will (give us the desire) and to work (give us the power)" to live in a way that pleases God. (Php 2:13NLT+) And thus we can know (ginosko) because we have experienced His power.

John Stott adds that we desire to "set our hearts at rest, when they accuse and condemn us, we must look for evidence of the Spirit's working, and particularly whether he is enabling us to believe in Christ, to obey God's commands and to love our brothers; for the condition of Christ dwelling in us and of our dwelling in him is this comprehensive obedience (24a), and the evidence of the indwelling is the gift of the Spirit (24b)." (Borrow [The Letters of John page 154](#))

This verse is similar to another verse that speaks to **assurance of salvation**...

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with [Him] in order that we may also be glorified with [Him.] (Ro 8:16-17+)

[The King James Study Bible](#) (page 2009) **Abides** in this verse describes the mutual indwelling of Jesus and the Christian. The believer abides in Christ by keeping His commandments. Christ abides in the obedient believer as One who is "at home" with that believer. Jesus spoke of this mutual abiding in John 15:4, 5, 7.

Albert Barnes adds that "this is another certain evidence that we are true Christians. The Saviour had promised John 14:23 that he would come and take up his abode with his people. John says that we have proof that he does this by the Spirit which he has given us. That is, the Holy Spirit is imparted to his people to enlighten their minds; to elevate their affections; to sustain them in times of trial; to quicken them in the performance of duty; and to imbue them with the temper and spirit of the Lord Jesus. When these effects exist, we may be certain that the Spirit of God is with us; for these are the "fruits" of that Spirit, or these are the effects which he produces in the lives of men." ([1 John 3 Commentary](#))

BY THE SPIRIT HE HAS GIVEN

By (ex/ek) the Spirit Whom He has given (aorist tense) **us** - **By (ex/ek) the Spirit** is more accurately rendered "from the Spirit" which identifies Him as the Source of how we know God resides in us continually. As [Plummer](#) says "The assurance is begotten by the Spirit." The verb **given** is in the aorist tense which speaks of a point in time, past tense in this context, for the day we believed and were born from above is the day we received the Gift of salvation and the Gift of the Spirit! Tracking the preceding pronouns in context supports the premise that this pronoun refers to the Father Who has given us the Spirit. For John this Gift would have been realized at Pentecost. For all others it would have been realized at the time of the new birth, when the Spirit took up residence in their bodies, God's temple. John's mention of the Holy Spirit provides a segue to his discussion of the unholy spirits in 1Jn 4:1-6.

When did He give the Spirit? when first we believed.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22+ Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also **sealed us and gave [us] the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge**

Ephesians 1:13-14+ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—**having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,** 14 Who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of [God's own] possession, to the praise of His glory.

Romans 8:15-16+ For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but **you have received a spirit of adoption as sons** by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

John MacArthur - The church's understanding of the Spirit's Person and ministry has been seriously distorted over the past few decades. Charismatics have given an undue emphasis to certain pentecostal gifts so that subjective experience is often elevated over objective scriptural truth. At the same time, many non-charismatics have overreacted to charismatic excesses by almost ignoring the Holy Spirit. For most, an in-depth study of the Spirit does not fit with the pragmatic, psychological approach to solving spiritual problems. But we can't afford to go to either extreme; otherwise we'll miss out on what it really means to know the Spirit and to minister by His power. ([Strength for Today](#))

Hiebert - John insists that the ultimate source of our experience of the divine indwelling in our lives is the Holy Spirit Himself. The

certainty "that he abideth in us," which is the heart of true Christian assurance, is wrought in us "by the Spirit which he hath given us". The Holy Spirit is the source from which the certainty of our relationship with God is drawn. The indwelling Spirit is God's gift to the believer. As Houlden remarks, "Whatever man has by way of relationship with God is never the result of his own effort or initiative, but the gift of God."

Candlish - We are to distinguish here between our dwelling in God and His dwelling in us. Our dwelling in God is to be known by our "keeping His commandments"; God's dwelling in us, by "**the Spirit which He giveth us**" And yet, the two means of knowledge are not far apart. They are not only strictly consistent with one another; they really come together in one point. For the Spirit is here said to be given to us--not in order to our knowing that God abideth in us, in the sense of His opening our spiritual eye and quickening our spiritual apprehension--but rather as the medium of our knowing it, the evidence or proof by which we know it. And how are we to recognize the Spirit as given to us? How otherwise than by recognizing the fruit of the gift? The Spirit given to us is, as to His movement or operation, unseen and unfelt. But the fruit of the Spirit is palpable and patent. "It is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." For "against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). ([Our Abiding in God by Obedience](#))

John Stott concludes 'The Spirit whose presence is the test of Christ's abiding in us, manifests himself objectively in our life and conduct. It is he who inspires us to confess Jesus as the Christ come in the flesh, as John immediately proceeds to show (1Jn 4:1ff.; cf. 1Jn 2:20, 27). It is also he who empowers us to live righteously and to love the brethren (cf. 1Jn 4:13; Gal. 5:16, 22). So if we would assure our hearts when they accuse and condemn us, we must look for evidence of the Spirit's working, and particularly whether he is enabling us to believe in Christ, to obey God's commandments and to love the brethren; for the condition of abiding is this comprehensive obedience (1Jn 3:24a), and the evidence of abiding is the gift of the Spirit.'" (Borrow [The Letters of John page 154](#))

Harris - The Spirit's role in the believer's assurance in 1Jn 3:24. Here in v. 24 is the first explicit reference to the Spirit in 1 John, although the "anointing" mentioned in 1Jn 2:20, 1Jn 2:27 is best understood as a reference to the Spirit also. After this there will be additional references to the Spirit in 1 John, all more or less explicit (1Jn 4:2, 13; 5:6, 8; cf. also 1Jn 4:6). Appeal to the Spirit as proof of God's presence residing in the believer may appear at first subjective, but it is very important to note (especially in light of the debate over Christology with the secessionist opponents, which amounts to a claim to be receiving new revelation) that the ground of assurance is not based on some revelation by the indwelling Spirit, but on the fact of the Spirit's presence in the life of the believer. No content of any "message of reassurance" from the Spirit is mentioned or alluded to here. Second, as Smalley notes, "the Spirit, according to John, manifests himself objectively in the life and conduct of the believer, inspiring a true confession of Jesus (1Jn 4:1-3) and enabling his followers to act righteously (cf. 1Jn 2:29) and lovingly (cf. 1Jn 4:12-13)." ([Exegetical Commentary](#))

Sam Storms on the Holy Spirit - Finally, lest all that has preceded fail to bring full assurance to the doubting heart, John appeals to one final source of confidence, the Holy Spirit. John says that yet another way of knowing that God truly lives in us is by the Holy Spirit who indwells us. But how or in what way does this assurance manifest itself? In other words, what does the Holy Spirit do which brings us assurance? There are two possibilities: * Stott takes one view, what may be called the objective view, and explains: "The Spirit whose presence is the test of Christ abiding in us, manifests himself objectively in our life and conduct. It is he who inspires us to confess Jesus as the Christ come in the flesh... It is also he who empowers us to live righteously and to love the brethren. So if we would assure our hearts, when they accuse and condemn us, we must look for evidence of the Spirit's working, and particularly whether he is enabling us to believe in Christ, to obey God's commandments and to love the brethren" (151). * The other view, which I call the subjective view, is similar to the thought of Romans 5:5 and Ro 8:14-16.

The **Holy Spirit** is the gift from the Father and the Son

"And **I will put My Spirit within you** and cause you to walk in My statutes (God's sovereign enablement), and you will be careful to observe My ordinances (Our personal responsibility)." (Ezekiel 36:27)

Jesus said "And I will ask the Father, and **He will give you another Helper**, that He may be with you forever." (Jn 14:16)

Jesus said "And behold, **I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you**; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Lk 24:49)

And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the **Father had promised**, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me. (Acts 1:4)

Jesus said "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom **the Father will send in My name**, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." (Jn 14:26)

Jesus said "When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness of Me."

"Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and **having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.**" (Acts 2:33)

Related Resources:

- [Of the Manner and Importance of the Spirit's Indwelling](#) - John Flavel
- [What is sanctification? What is the definition of Christian sanctification?](#)
- [What is progressive sanctification?](#)
- [What is positional sanctification?](#)

Keeps (5083)(tereo) means to observe, keep watch over, heed, guard and in the present tense "describes what is to be the characteristic habit of the believer." (W E Vine) He is not saying that keeping saves us (cp James 2:10 where keeps = tereo) but keeping does show we are saved. This is John's fourth use of the verb tereo. Earlier he had written "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we **keep** (tereo in the present tense) His commandments." (1Jn 2:3+) In fact "The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not **keep** (tereo in the present tense) His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." (1Jn 2:4+) On the other hand "whoever **keeps** (tereo in the present tense) His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him." (1Jn 2:5+)

TEREO IN FIRST JOHN - 1 Jn. 2:3; 1 Jn. 2:4; 1 Jn. 2:5; 1 Jn. 3:22; 1 Jn. 3:24; 1 Jn. 5:3; 1 Jn. 5:18

John MacArthur - WHAT ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT? [Strength for Today: Daily Readings for a Deeper Faith - Page 1](#)

"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 which He has given us." 1 JOHN 3:24

◇◇◇

Because the Holy Spirit affects every area of the Christian life, it is vital that we have a balanced and correct view of His role.

The church's understanding of the Spirit's Person and ministry has been seriously distorted over the past few decades. Charismatics have given an undue emphasis to certain pentecostal gifts so that subjective experience is often elevated over objective scriptural truth.

At the same time, many non-charismatics have overreacted to charismatic excesses by almost ignoring the Holy Spirit. For most, an in-depth study of the Spirit does not fit with the pragmatic, psychological approach to solving spiritual problems.

But we can't afford to go to either extreme; otherwise we'll miss out on what it really means to know the Spirit and to minister by His power. He is indispensable in saving us, enabling us to obey Jesus Christ, and ultimately perfecting us in glory. Paul urged the Galatian believers not to abandon the Holy Spirit but to lean completely on Him. "Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3).

Too many Christians are wasting time looking to seminars, gimmicks, counselors, and novel interpretations of old truths to uncover "the secret" to the abundant Christian life. But the key to such living is not a mystery or a secret. The sufficiency of the Holy Spirit's ministry, as revealed through the pages of God's fully reliable Word, is all the information and resources we'll ever need to live fruitful and prosperous spiritual lives.

In today's verse, the apostle John is speaking of Christ's indwelling presence in the believer's life, which the Holy Spirit reveals to us. Therefore the Spirit is working with the Lord Jesus in encouraging you, guiding you, enlightening you, and empowering you for every good work (see John 14:16–20; 16:13). By understanding the Spirit's role and allowing Him to work in you daily, you'll begin to see your life becoming more like Christ each day.

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Suggestions for Prayer: Pray that God would grant you and everyone in your church a proper and balanced understanding of the Spirit's role.

For Further Study: Jesus is portrayed as the Good Shepherd in John 10. Read that chapter, and list the major characteristics He has as our Shepherd.

Daniel Akin - A number of years ago I met a 55-year-old man who asked if he could share his conversion testimony. I said, "Sure! I

would love to hear it.” He told me he had trusted Christ at the age of 50, just 5 years before. He went on to say he was a recovering alcoholic and drug addict who had experienced several failed marriages, all of which were his fault. He said he blamed no one, that he had made bad choices and dumb decisions throughout most of his life. Then, with tears streaming down his face, he began to talk about his childhood and a dad who criticized and condemned him at every turn. He said, “You know, all I can remember about my childhood was my daddy saying things like, ‘Boy you can’t do anything right. Boy, you’re just downright dumb. Boy, you will never grow up to amount to anything.’ ” He then added, “I guess I grew up to be exactly what my daddy said I would be.” But then, with a gentle smile and a twinkle in his eye, he quietly and humbly whispered, “But 5 years ago, when I met Jesus, I got a new daddy. And this daddy loves me. He believes in me. He thinks I can do anything!”

In Christ, we do get a new daddy, a perfect daddy, a perfect heavenly Father. This Father longs for you to have a healthy heart and a clear conscience. And you can! Recall who you are in Him through Christ and by the Spirit. Love others as you have been loved by Him. Obey His commands and please Him out of “gospel gratitude” for who He is and what He has done. These are truths with the power to save. These are truths with the power to heal. (See [Exalting Jesus in 1.2.3 John - Page 89](#))

Comment - I can totally identify with this man's testimony for I had 2 very bad fathers, until the day I met my Heavenly Father, the best Father one could ever have in time and eternity. See [My Testimony of the Grace of God](#)

Adrian Rogers - A Gracious Communion (See full sermon [Legacy of Love page 263](#))

Now, here's the third legacy of love—and that's the reason I told you, folks, if you were just even selfish, you would want to love: it gives a gracious communion. Look, if you will now, in verses 23 and 24: “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. And he that keepeth his commandments and dwelleth in him, and he in him”—that is, you are in Jesus and Jesus is in you—“And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us” (1 John 3:23–24)—the abiding spirit. Now, that's the third legacy of love—a gracious communion. The Holy Spirit—just whispering to us that we belong to God. The Lord is real to us. That's the ministry of the Holy Spirit—to take the things of Jesus and to show them to us. Look, when I learned to love and I lived by love, I'm going to have a good conscience. And, when I have a good conscience, I'm going to have a great confidence. And, when I have a great confidence, I'm going to have a gracious communion. I mean, the Holy Spirit is going to be whispering to my heart that I belong to Jesus Christ and He to me.

A. The Witness of the Spirit

Do you know the reason that some Christians doubt their salvation? They don't have the witness of the Spirit. And, how do you know that you're saved—because some preacher has told you that you're saved? Or, does God's Spirit bear witness with your spirit that you're a child of God (Romans 8:16)? Now, the Holy Spirit can be there and you can be saved, and you can have absolutely no assurance because you've failed to love. And, the Holy Spirit is just grieved. And, you know the ministry of the Holy Spirit is to give you joy, and peace, and understanding, and wisdom, and power, and grace, and to make Jesus Christ real to you—not just what you hear on Sunday morning, some sermon, but God in your heart, abiding in the Spirit of God, that gracious communion; not nearly union, but communion, as *koinonia*—that's that word that goes all the way through the Book of 1 John.

But now, folks, let me tell you this about the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit is very gentle. This time I want you to turn to scripture. Would you turn to Ephesians chapter 4? Just turn to it. Ephesians chapter 4 and look, if you will, in verse 26: “Be ... angry, and sin not”—and, by the way, the only way to be angry and sin not is to be angry at sin—“Be ... angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath”—that is, “Husbands and wives, don't go to bed angry, back to back”—“Neither give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:26–27). Now, when you do that—when you have unresolved anger—what you've done is just open the door to the devil. You've said, “Devil, come on in. Wreck my home. Wreck my marriage. Ruin my life. Take away my ... Defile my conscience. Ruin my confidence, and destroy my communion.” You've given a place to the devil.

B. The Grieving of the Spirit

But now, skip on down to verse 30—says, “And grieve not the holy Spirit”—when you give a place to the devil, what do you do? Well, you grieve the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is resident in your heart and in your life when you're saved—“And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption”—now, if you have anger in your heart—if love is not there—that doesn't mean that the Holy Spirit of God forsakes you. He cannot—he will not. You are sealed by the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption. Do you see that? It's one of the great verses on eternal security. You are sealed by the Holy Spirit. Now, watch this—“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice” (Ephesians 4:30–31).

6. Bitterness

Now, what grieves the Holy Spirit? These things right here, and I want you to look at them. First of all, he says “bitterness.” Do you know what bitterness is? Bitterness is an unresolved hurt. Did you hear it? An unresolved hurt. Somebody’s hurt you; somebody’s done you wrong. It may be real; it may be imaginary, but you perceive that somebody has done you wrong. Anybody here like that—somebody’s hurt you? Maybe a child, father, mother, brother, sister, a boss, a dear sweet pastor? Somebody has done you wrong, and you have bitterness.

7. Wrath

Now, watch this—bitterness turns to wrath. That’s next—wrath. Look at it in verse 31 (Ephesians 4:31). Do you know what the word wrath means? The word wrath has the idea of heat, something burning, sort of a slow burn. The best illustration I can give you of this is to think of some oily rags in an attic or a closet, smoldering—or just the heat building up. All right, now watch—first of all, there’s bitterness; and then, there’s that wrath, that slow burn.

8. Anger

And then, it says “anger” (Ephesians 4:31). What is anger? What’s the difference between wrath and anger? Well, wrath is that slow burn, but anger is when somebody opens the door, and the oxygen hits those rags, and they burst into flame. Anger! You say, “Well, I lost my temper.” You probably found it. You know, when a person says, “I lost my temper,” what they’re saying is, “It’s not really my fault—it’s not really me. I lost it.” No, what is happening, folks, is that you’re showing what’s in your heart.

9. Clamor

Now, watch it—bitterness turns to wrath; wrath turns to anger. And, what does anger turn to? Clamor. What is clamor? That’s speaking loudly. You’re wrong. Don’t shout. I’m not shouting. And, you begin to ... you get your voice loud. You begin to say things, and you get on a roll.

10. Evil Speaking

And then, watch this—clamor turns to evil speaking. Then, you begin to say things you would never have said, but you’re on a roll now. And, you begin to say to your loved one, to your child, “I wish you’d never been born into our family.” You begin to say to your parents, “I don’t love you.” You begin to say to your husband, “I want out of here. I want a divorce.” You begin to say to somebody, “I wish you were dead.” The devil says, “Tell them more—tell them more.” And, you say these awful, terrible, hurtful, horrible things. The Bible calls that evil speaking.

11. Malice

And then, he says “malice.” You know what that is? That’s when evil speaking turns to the desire to hurt somebody. “To do malice” means to actually harm them. You may want to hurt them financially, emotionally, physically. You may want to abuse them, and you may do things in a rage. You look back—you say, “My God, how did I do that?” I’ll tell you how you did it: you weren’t abiding; you weren’t Spirit-filled. You let the sun go down upon your wrath. You gave a place to the devil, and you grieved the Holy Spirit. “Grieve not the holy Spirit” (Ephesians 4:30).

When you grieve the Spirit of God—when you grieve Him—He’s so gentle. Have you ever seen somebody’s spirit just close up? I’ve done some awful dumb things in my life. I’ve said some things to Joyce I ought not to say, and I’ve just watched her spirit close up. I can tell when I’ve done wrong—like that. I know I’ve done wrong. The Holy Spirit’s a dove. He’s not a lion; He’s a dove. You can grieve the Holy Spirit. By the way, the Holy Spirit is a person. The Jehovah’s Witnesses don’t believe He’s a person. You can’t grieve an influence. I can’t grieve that piano. You can only grieve a person. And, by the way, you can only grieve somebody who loves you. Grieve is a love word. Your neighbors’ kids will vex you; your own kids will grieve you. Amen? You can only grieve somebody that loves you. You see, the Holy Spirit of God loves you; but when you don’t love, you grieve the Spirit of God, and He closes up, and He withdraws, and you don’t have that communion with God that you ought.

Oh, but the legacy of love! When you love, you have a good conscience. Then, you have a great confidence. And then, you have a gracious communion. Isn’t that great? Isn’t love wonderful? And, the love of God, the Bible tells us in Romans 5:5—it’s “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.”

Taking Orders - Read: 1 John 3:18-24 | This is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. —1 John 5:3

A sergeant in the Indiana National Guard was demoted and sentenced to 4 days in jail because he refused to take off his cap.

It really wasn't that simple. The incident occurred during winter training exercises when temperatures were well below freezing. The man wore a soft cap with ear flaps under a regulation helmet. The previous spring he had suffered burns to his face and ears, and doctors had advised him to wear a cap to protect his sensitive skin.

At this point you're probably feeling sorry for the guardsman. But there's more to the story. In the official report, there was evidence that the man was intoxicated, and this incident of insubordination had been preceded by two other warnings about proper headgear.

The soldier was not excused, though he thought he should have been. Like so many of us, he made the mistake of thinking he was within his rights to dismiss the orders of someone in authority.

In the family of God, we too are apt to think we know what is best for us. But no one is in a better position to understand our needs than the Lord. His commands are given with an understanding of the outcome. They are for His honor, the good of others, and our eventual joy. By Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Master, make me ready
When Thy voice is truly heard,
With obedience glad and steady,
Still to follow every word. —Havergal

To love God is to obey God.

Drawn to God

There is within us all a magnetic draw to seek God's presence in a more exclusive way, focusing on divine attention rather than our own egocentric list of do's. If we do not follow that prompting, we end up fragmenting ourselves from our potential as disciples. And we fragment God, expecting the Spirit's love only in spite of ourselves.

—Mary C. Miller in the Covenant Companion (April 1994). Christianity Today, Vol. 40, no. 1.
See: Genesis 6:9; John 14:23; 1 John 3:24.

Wayne Grudem - He Gives Us Assurance - [See page 562 Systematic Theology](#)

The Holy Spirit bears witness "with our spirit that we are children of God" (Rom. 8:16) and gives evidence of the work of God within us: "By this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us" (1 John 3:24). "By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit" (1 John 4:13). The Holy Spirit not only witnesses to us that we are God's children, but also witnesses that God abides in us and that we are abiding in him. Once again, more than our intellect is involved: the Spirit works to give us assurance at the subjective level of spiritual and emotional perception as well

A Town Run By Women

Topics: LAW, TRUTH, WOMEN

Bible Verses: John 18:37; 1 John 3:24

In April 2007, China announced that it was planning to build a town dedicated to women in its Shuangqiao district. Longshuihu village in the Shuangqiao district of Chongqing municipality will be the world's first "women's town," where men will be punished for disobedience. The town is expected to be completed by 2010.

"Traditional women dominate and men have to be obedient in the areas of Sichuan province and Chongqing, and now we are using it as an idea to attract tourists and boost tourism," said a Chinese Tourism director Li Jigang.

At the gate leading into the town, visitors will be greeted with a slogan saying: "Women are never wrong; men can never refuse their needs." When tour groups enter the town, female tourists will play the dominant role when shopping or choosing a place to stay. Any man foolish enough to debate this point can be punished by kneeling on a hard board or be forced to do the dishes in a local restaurant.

There is only one person who has all of the truth and should be followed and that is Jesus Christ.

Billy Graham - SPIRIT-FILLED LIVING [The Holy Spirit: Activating God's Power in Your Life - Page 281](#)

Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. 1 JOHN 3:24

The Holy Spirit is already in every Christian heart, and He intends to produce His fruit. However, there must be a displacement. A boat does not sink when it is in the water, but it does sink when the water comes into the boat. We do not fail to enjoy the fruit of the Spirit because we live in a sea of corruption; we fail to do so because the sea of corruption is in us.

The internal combustion engine's worst enemy is the deadly carbon that builds up in the cylinder chamber. It reduces the power and causes the motor to lose efficiency. Oil will improve the engine's performance, but it will not remove the carbon so that the motor can run more efficiently. Mechanical surgery must be performed to remove the carbon so that the oil can do its best work and the motor perform as it was designed to do. Similarly, we must eliminate the works of the flesh from our inner lives so that deadly carbon and grit do not impair the effectiveness of our spiritual performance. This is possible only as we yield our lives to the control of the Holy Spirit. We must let the laser beam of God's Word scan us to detect the abiding sins and fruitless qualities which impair our personal growth and fruitfulness.

The story is told of a man who glanced at the obituary column in this local newspaper. To his surprise he saw his own name, indicating that he had just died. At first he laughed about it, but soon the telephone began to ring. Stunned friends and acquaintances called to inquire and to offer their sympathy. Finally, in irritation, he called the newspaper editor and angrily reported that even though he had been reported dead in the obituary column, he was very much alive. The editor was apologetic and embarrassed. Then in a flash of inspiration, he said, "Do not worry, sir, I will make it all right, for tomorrow I will put your name in the births column."

This may sound like merely a humorous incident, but it is actually a spiritual parable. Not until we have allowed our old selves to be crucified with Christ can our new selves emerge to display the marvelous fruit that is characteristic of the life of Jesus Christ. And only the Holy Spirit can make possible the out-living of the in-living Christ.

Our Father and our God, purge my heart and mind with the truth of Your Word. Find the unfruitful parts and eliminate them from my life. Prune my attitudes and my actions, Lord, until they are healthy and wholly in service to You. Give me the heart of my Savior Jesus Christ, through whom I pray. Amen.

A W Tozer - Spiritual Radiance Comes from an Inner Witness [Evenings with Tozer: Daily Devotional Readings - Page 132](#)

... And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us. 1 John 3:24

One distinguishing mark of the earliest Christians was their radiance, for the sun had come up in their hearts and its warmth and light made unnecessary any secondary sources of assurance.

They had the inner witness!

Great power and great grace marked their lives, enabling them to rejoice to suffer shame for the name of Jesus.

It is obvious in our day that the average evangelical Christian is without this radiance. The efforts of some of our teachers to cheer our drooping spirits are futile because those same teachers reject the very phenomenon that would naturally produce joy, namely, the inner witness. Instead of the inner witness we now substitute logical conclusions drawn from texts. There is no witness, no immediacy of knowledge, no encounter with God, no awareness of inner change.

Where there is a divine act within the soul there will always be a corresponding awareness. This act of God is self-validating. It is its own evidence and addresses itself directly to the religious consciousness.

Charles Wesley in a triumphant hymn wrote:

"His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God!"

To the salvation-by-logical-conclusion devotees such language is plain heresy. If it is heresy, I run to join such a glorious heretic, and may God send us many more!

Tony Evans - Walking in the Spirit [A Moment for Your Soul: Devotions to Lift You Up](#)

We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. 1 JOHN 3:24

We all live in the flesh, so we will struggle with the desires of the flesh until we get to heaven. But we can bring these desires under the Holy Spirit's influence. "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16). Notice that the

apostle Paul doesn't say we won't have the desires of the flesh when we walk in the Spirit, but that we won't carry out those fleshly desires. Walking in the Spirit is similar to being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Walking implies that the Spirit is going somewhere—there's a destination. He always goes to the same place, to that which brings God glory. In contrast, the flesh is always moving to that which will please itself.

Walking is continuous. Like the filling of the Holy Spirit, our walk in the Spirit is ongoing, so we must maintain our dedication. To walk is to continue taking one step after another.

A third aspect of walking includes dependency. The key to walking in the Spirit is to look to Him to give us the ability to do what we know we can't do on our own. The moment we try to do it on our own, we reject the work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our source to true power and victory.

EXPERIENCING GOD

ISAIAH 6:1–8; JOHN 1:1–18; 1 JOHN 1:1–3; 3:24

Experiencing God; Faith; Holy Spirit; Incarnation; Knowing God; Perception and Reality; Spirituality

There is a splendid moment in the movie Jurassic Park, when world-class paleontologist Allen Grant, who has devoted his life to the study of dinosaurs, suddenly comes face-to-face with real, live prehistoric creatures. He falls to the ground, dumbstruck. The reason is obvious. It is one thing to piece together an informed but nonetheless imperfect image of dinosaurs by picking through fossils and bones. But to encounter an actual dinosaur—well, there can be no comparison.

For many people, spirituality amounts to picking through the artifacts of faith that survive from long ago and far away. In that bygone era, humans saw God, heard his voice, and experienced his awesome, at times terrible, power. But that was then. Today, those kinds of gripping encounters with God—with a God who wasn't an illusion, but Someone who was real, Someone you could see, and touch, and feel—well, there could be no comparison.

Citation: William D. Hendricks, *Exit Interviews* (Chicago: Moody, 1993)

Billy Graham - Kept by the Spirit [Hope for Each Day Morning and Evening Devotions - Page 536](#)

We know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. 1 JOHN 3:24

A boat doesn't sink because it is in the water; it sinks because the water gets into it.

In the same way, Christians don't fail to live as they should because they are in the world; they fail because the world gets into them. We don't fail to produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit because we live in a sea of corruption; we fail because the sea of corruption has gotten into us.

It can happen almost without our realizing it. At one time we were dedicated to Christ, surrendered to the will of God. But little by little, the chilling waters of the world crept in. We became preoccupied with the things of this world rather than the things of Christ.

Most oceangoing ships have pumps running constantly, sucking out any water that might have leaked into the hull. Similarly, we need to keep the pumps of repentance running. We need to plug the holes with the truth of God's Word. Don't let the world sink your ship!

Jay Adams - Day by Day Along the Way

Whoever keeps His commandments remains in Him. 1 John 3:24

As we learned from 1 John, one may lose the reward for which he worked hard by helping false teachers to flourish in the community. One may "go beyond" the message that the apostles taught by helping these teachers and by becoming enamored with their teaching. Gnostic teachers were abroad who claimed to have additional "knowledge." That claim can be tempting for those who are dissatisfied with their Christian life. Siren voices can be heard today on every hand. But the key is to "remain" in the truth of Scripture. When there is dissatisfaction, the key to discovering why is not to question the truth, but to reexamine your life. Almost always such dissatisfaction is self-induced by failure to learn and then practice "His commandments." Be sure you never trade them for some other teacher. How faithfully are you walking in the truth? What is missing from your life? How can you be more faithful, walk more earnestly, live more fully for the truth? Yes, you must go beyond your own efforts, but never beyond the truth!

He who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. 1 JOHN 3 : 24

A FRESH BEGINNING

Behold, I will do a new thing,

Now it shall spring forth...

I will even make a road in the wilderness

And rivers in the desert.

ISAIAH 43:19

God uses events in our lives to shape us, to teach us, to grow us—and some of the key events are those sparked by sin (our own or someone sinning against us), by our missteps, by our confusion. Memories of the past, therefore, can too easily feel like shackles holding us to failures, regrets, ignorance, foolishness, and sin.

However, God doesn't want us bound to our past. When God saves us from the death we deserve for our sin, He frees us from the guilt and shame of our former life as well. He gives us a fresh beginning. He frees us to receive every good thing He wants to give us.

If your past feels like a wilderness, know that God wants to make a road through it, perhaps to help you navigate the difficult years and salvage the good. If your past feels like a desertland of death, know that God will make rivers of redemption flow as He brings beauty out of ashes. Embrace the fresh beginning God wants to give you.

The Comforting Dove

Gordon Brownville's Symbols of the Holy Spirit tells about the great Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen, the first to discover the magnetic meridian of the North Pole and to discover the South Pole. On one of his trips, Amundsen took a homing pigeon with him. When he had finally reached the top of the world, he opened the bird's cage and set it free.

Imagine the delight of Amundsen's wife, back in Norway, when she looked up from the doorway of her home and saw the pigeon circling in the sky above. No doubt she exclaimed, "He's alive! My husband is still alive!"

So it was when Jesus ascended. He was gone, but the disciples clung to his promise to send them the Holy Spirit. What joy, then, when the dovelike Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost. The disciples had with them the continual reminder that Jesus was alive and victorious at the right hand of the Father. This continues to be the Spirit's message.

—Thomas Lindberg, Stevens Point, Wisconsin. Leadership, Vol. 7, no. 3.

See: Luke 24:49; Matthew 3:16; 1 John 3:24

Robert Neighbour - We Know the Son of God Abideth in Us

"And hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit, whom He hath given us" (1 John 3:24).

1. We have before us a doctrine emphasized by Christ. Christ's mission is set forth in John's Gospel, chapter 15, under the parable of The True Vine.

"Abiding" is the key of fruitbearing.

The branch must abide in the vine; cannot bear fruit of itself.

The believer must abide in Christ, for apart from Him he can do nothing.

There is a great deal of effort in the service for the Lord, wrought through the energy of the flesh, apart from abiding.

There is a great deal of effort to be loving, gentle, kind, happy, and peaceful, in the energy of the flesh, apart from abiding in Christ.

The keynote of all true Christian fruitfulness, however, whether in service or in life, must be from "abiding" in Christ and He in us.

2. We have before us a doctrine set forth by Paul.

The Apostle tells us that the saints are "an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. 2:22).

The Apostle again tells us that Christ must be formed in us "the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

Once more the Apostle says that we are the temple of the Holy Ghost Who is in us (see 1 Cor. 6:19).

In the above we have a threefold abiding. The abiding of God the Father, the abiding of Christ the Son, and the abiding of the Holy Spirit. Bless God! the Trinity dwells within the children of God.

3. We have before us a doctrine sealed in John's Epistle.

(1) THE FACT OF THE ABIDING.

"And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him. And hereby we know that He abideth in us" (1 John 3:24).

The Lord Jesus does not dwell in temples made with hands; nor does he dwell now between the cherubim: the heart of the believer is God's Holy of Holies — it is there that He dwells.

(2) THE PROOF OF THE ABIDING.

"Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us" (1 John 3:24, l. c.).

We know that Christ is within us because the Holy Spirit is continually taking of Christ, and of the things of Christ, and showing them unto us.

He does not say that Christ is in the desert; He does tell us that He is in the heart.

(3) THE RESULT OF THE ABIDING.

"Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3).

What advantageth it us if Christ dwells within our hearts, if we cannot walk with Him, and talk with Him, and fellowship Him?

John, in his Gospel, after he tells us of the indwelling Christ, says: "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

John, in his Epistle, after setting forth our fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, says: "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full" (I John 1:4).

The supreme joy of the believer's earthly walk is the fellowship resulting from the indwelling, abiding Christ.

(4) THE CALL OF THE ABIDING.

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked" (I John 2:6).

If we have Christ in, we should have Christ out; that is, the outflow of our life should be Christ.

It is not a mere matter of walking as He walked; nor is it a matter of "imitation," nor even of conformity — it is a matter of Jesus Christ, dwelling within us, and becoming manifested through us.

(5) THE CONFIDENCE OF THE ABIDING.

"And now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (I John 2:28).

If Christ has been dwelling in the heart, it will be gladness to go to dwell with Him.

If we have not had fellowship with Him down here, and walked with Him as Enoch walked, our hearts will draw back from Him, when He appears in resplendent glory.

We should remember that we are destined to be "forever with the Lord" (see I Thess. 4:17), therefore we should now be cultivating that fellowship which shall be ours for evermore.

Mysterious Invisibility - Across the United States and around the world, we often experience the dramatic effect of something no one can see. In 2011, for instance, several US cities were devastated by tornadoes that blew apart neighborhoods and business districts. And during each hurricane season, we are shocked as winds of more than 100 miles an hour threaten to destroy what we have built.

All of this is the result of an unseen force. Sure, we see the wind's effects (flags flapping, debris flying), but we cannot see the wind itself. It works in mysterious invisibility.

In a sense, this is also true of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2, when believers experienced the filling of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting" (Acts 2:2). That wind was a tangible demonstration to those early Christians that the unseen Spirit was at work in their lives. And He still works in our lives today! If you are a follower of Christ, be encouraged. The Holy Spirit bears fruit in your life (Gal. 5:22-23), forms believers into one body (1 Cor. 12:13), and **assures you of God's presence** (1 John 3:24). The Holy Spirit is a powerful Person in our lives—even though we can't see Him. By Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Silently now I wait for Thee,
Ready, my God, Thy will to see;
Open my heart—illumine me,
Spirit divine. —Scott

The Holy Spirit works powerfully, though invisibly.