



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – November 17, 2022

The Lord be With You.

Are you experiencing a Christian life as rest? I know, for some people, rest is the last thing they think of when they think of being a Christian is for them, being a Christian is a lot of hard work, a lot of pressure, or a lot of trying hard, a lot of guilt. But you know, Jesus did promise anyone who would follow Him that He would give rest, and so I often like to ask myself if I am experiencing the rest that Jesus promises, because I haven't always experienced a Christian life, or ministry as a rest. But there's a Bible verse I come back to that helps me to experience more and more of the rest that Jesus promises. It's John 15:4, where Jesus says, "Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you, unless you abide in me."

I think this verse is key for experiencing the rest, Jesus promises, and it is found in the life that Jesus shares with us as Jesus invites us into his life, Jesus so much wants to be close to us, that He invites us to share a life with him. Now, this verse comes in that section of Scripture, which Jesus says that his relationship with his followers is like branches to a Vine, so that we are to Jesus what branches are to the grape vine. Now, the next time you see a grape vine, see if you can determine where the grape vine ends and the branches begin, you can't because the vine and the branches, they're one, just as we and Jesus are one, there is this inter-dependence between the vine and the branches as the life of the vine flows into the branches, and so is our oneness, our shared life with Jesus that we actually get to draw spiritual life and energy from Jesus as his life flows into us changing our nature, giving us new life. Abide in me as I abide in you, Jesus says. The keyword here is abide.

The Greek word translated abide is the word meno, M-E-N-O, and meno is variously translated in the New Testament as to stay to continue, to remain, to tarry, to dwell. And yes, to abide. meno has the idea of remaining where you are, staying where you are, don't wander off. In John chapter 1:38- 39, two disciples of John the Baptist ask Jesus, where are you staying? The Greek word meno, where are you abiding? Where are you making your home? And so that's the word Jesus uses here, make your home in me, abide in me as I make my home in you and abide in you. So the Greek word meno, it has the idea of permanence, of staying fixed... Of remaining in place. Continuing there. So Jesus is saying that He has come so desiring oneness with us, he's come to make His home in us, His dwelling place, his permanent residence is in us. Jesus has promised



water from rock

that He'll stick with you, he'll live his life in you. And now he invites you to live your life in him, for Jesus to be your burden bearer, to give you rest. So to abide in Jesus means well, it means that you are already there with Jesus, so stay there, lean on him, rest on him. Find your strength in him. Draw from Jesus like a branch. Draws from the vine.

It's what the Apostle Paul is talking about in Galatians chapter 2, verse 20, "I no longer live but Christ lives in me, and the life I live, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me." That is abiding, that is living one's life in Jesus as He lives in us. Abide in me as I abide in you, Jesus ask us. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in a vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. Over the years, I've heard a lot of sermons on bearing fruit and how we are to bear fruit for Jesus. But you know that on board, Jesus put the emphasis, whether Jesus talks about bearing fruit as just being a natural consequence of our abiding in Him, that's where Jesus puts the emphasis, there is no special formula here, there's no technique for being fruitful, but as we abide in Christ, the branch manifests the very life of the vine in it, as we abide in Jesus, his fruit grows in us. So Jesus is not laying down the law here about bearing fruit, rather Jesus is making us a promise, Abide in Me and you will... You will bear fruit. And in the very next verse, verse 5, Jesus says, "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who Abide in Me and I in them bear, much fruit, much fruit. Because apart from me, you can do nothing." The front here is of course, the very life of Jesus manifested in us which is the fruit of the Spirit, described in Galatians Chapter 5:22, and following, which is love and joy and peace and patience. And so forth, that's Jesus in us. And so Jesus here, he's actually asking us to live life like he lived it when he walked the earth, as Jesus lived his life and the father totally relying on the father who abided. Who lived in him.

Well, that's what Jesus was talking about in John chapter 14, verse 10, where Jesus says the words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own. That is, I don't do this myself, but the Father who abides, meno, the father who abides in me, does his works. So as Jesus abided in his father, who abided in him, the father worked through Jesus. Though Jesus was fully God He lived His humanity as He intended you and me to live living our lives and total reliance on him. And as we do that we experience the rest Jesus promises. Make your home in me as I have made my home in you. I'm sticking with you, Jesus says.

I am Tim Smith a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.