

Message Four

Abiding in Christ as the True Vine

Scripture Reading: John 15:1, 4-5, 7; 1 John 2:6, 27-28; 3:24; 4:13, 15; Rom. 8:4

I. The Lord Jesus said, “I am the true vine”—John 15:1a; cf. Rev. 14:18:

- A. This true vine (the Son) with its branches (the believers in the Son) is the organism of the Triune God in God’s economy.
- B. This organism grows with His riches and expresses His divine life.

II. As branches in the vine, we need to abide in the vine—John 15:4-5:

- A. To be in the Lord is a matter of union; to abide in the Lord is a matter of fellowship—1 Cor. 1:9, 30.
- B. Our abiding in Christ as the vine depends on our seeing a clear vision that we are branches in the vine; once we see that we are branches in the vine, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord—John 15:2.
- C. The Christian life is a life of abiding in the Lord—1 John 2:6, 27-28; 3:24; 4:13, 15.
- D. Our abiding in Christ is the condition of His abiding in us—John 15:5a.
- E. Apart from the vine, we are nothing, we have nothing, and we can do nothing—v. 5b.
- F. Only when the branches abide in the vine can the vine be everything to them.

III. We abide in Christ so that He may abide in us by caring for the inward teaching of the all-inclusive anointing—1 John 2:27:

- A. We abide in the divine fellowship with Christ by experiencing the cleansing of the Lord’s blood and the application of the anointing Spirit to our inner being—John 15:4-5; 1 John 1:5, 7; 2:20, 27.
- B. Christ as the Head is the anointed One and the anointing One, and we are His members enjoying Him as the inner anointing for the fulfillment of His purpose—Heb. 1:9; 3:14; 2 Cor. 1:21-22.
- C. The anointing, as the moving and working of the compound Spirit within us, anoints God into us so that we may be saturated with God, possess God, and understand the mind of God; the anointing communicates the mind of Christ as the Head of the Body to His members by the inner sense, the inner consciousness, of life—Psa. 133; 1 Cor. 2:16; Rom. 8:6, 27.

IV. To abide in the Lord is to be one spirit with Him, that is, to live in the mingled spirit—1 Cor. 6:17:

- A. The essence of the New Testament is the two spirits—the divine Spirit and the human spirit—mingled together as one—v. 17; Rom. 8:4.
- B. The union of these two spirits is the deepest mystery in the Bible.
- C. The expression *one spirit* indicates the mingling of the Lord as the Spirit with our spirit—1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. The spirit, which is the mingling of our spirit and the Lord’s Spirit into one spirit, is both the Spirit of the Lord and our spirit—Rom. 8:4; 2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45.
 - 2. All our spiritual experiences, such as our fellowship with the Lord, our prayer to Him, and our living with Him, are in this mingled spirit.
- D. The focus of God’s economy is the mingled spirit, the divine Spirit mingled with the human spirit; whatever God intends to do or accomplish is related to this focus—Eph. 3:5, 9; 1:17; 2:22; 5:18; 6:18:

1. By being one spirit with the Lord, we can experience Him as the all-inclusive One—1 Cor. 1:2, 24, 30; 2:7-8, 10; 3:11; 5:7-8; 10:3-4; 11:3; 12:12; 15:20, 23, 45, 47.
 2. We can experience Christ and take Christ as everything because we have become one spirit with Him.
 3. For anyone who is one spirit with the Lord, the supply is inexhaustible.
- E. The mingled spirit is a spirit that is one spirit with God and that is the same as God in His life and nature but not in His Godhead—1 John 5:11; 2 Pet. 1:4:
1. The divine Spirit and the human spirit are mingled as one within us so that we can live the life of a God-man, a life that is God yet man and man yet God—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a.
 2. The God-man living is the living of the two spirits joined and mingled together as one.
- F. To be one spirit with the Lord implies that we are in Him and He is in us and that we and He are one in life—John 3:16; 1 John 5:12.
- G. To be proper Christians, we must know that the Lord Jesus today as the embodiment of the Triune God is the Spirit indwelling our spirit and mingled with our spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 1 Cor. 15:45; 6:17.
- H. The Bible requires that we walk according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:4:
1. The key to everything is found in the wonderful Spirit who is in our regenerated spirit and who has become one spirit with our spirit.
 2. To live in the spirit is to let Christ fill and saturate us until He permeates our whole being and is thereby expressed through us—Eph. 3:17.
 3. The mutual abiding in John 15:4-5 is the practice of being one spirit with the Lord.

V. Effective prayers are the issue of our abiding in the Lord and of His words abiding in us—v. 7:

- A. Prayer is man cooperating and co-working with God, allowing God to express Himself through man and thus accomplish His purpose; a praying one will cooperate with God, work together with God, and allow God to express Himself and His desire from within him and through him—Rom. 8:26-27; James 5:17:
1. Prayer is the flowing between man and God and the mutual contact between man and God.
 2. The real significance of prayer is to contact God in our spirit and to absorb God Himself—Eph. 6:18.
 3. The way to experience the indwelling Christ and to live Christ is to pray in a genuine way—Col. 1:27; 3:4; Phil. 1:20-21a.
 4. We need the kind of prayer that brings us into contact with the Lord, prayer that causes us to be one with Him in our spirit—2 Tim. 4:22; 1 Cor. 6:17.
- B. When we abide in the Lord, and His words abide in us, there will be a desire in us that comes out of His words—John 15:7; 1 John 5:14-15:
1. We will touch the Lord's feeling and understand His intention; then spontaneously, we will have His desire in us.
 2. His desire will become our desire, what He wants will be what we want, and we will pray according to this desire.
 3. The Lord will answer this kind of prayer because it issues from our abiding in the Lord and from His words abiding in us.

VI. When we abide in Christ and Christ abides in us, we can have the church life—John 15:4-5; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 30; 12:27:

- A. We can have the genuine church life only by living in the mingled spirit; we should remain in this mingled spirit for the church life—1:2; 12:27.
- B. The church life is a life of loving one another—John 15:12, 17.
- C. When we abide in Christ as the vine, we participate in the wonderful fellowship among the co-branches—vv. 4-5; 1 John 1:3-7.