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Mutual abiding with the Lord

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To be “in” is different from “abide.” In John 15 the Lord said, “Abide in Me and I in you” (v. 4). This is a mutual abiding. However, most of us Christians understand this mutual abiding as dwelling together. Husbands and wives dwell together, but we are mutually abiding with the Lord. It is not enough to dwell with the Lord; what God wants is mutual abiding. This is something many Christians have not seen. In our concept it is either walking with the Lord or being with the Lord, while dwelling with the Lord is somewhat better, and living with the Lord is even better. What Christians have seen are walking with, being with, dwelling with, and living with. Our natural concept does not exceed “with.” However, what the Bible tells us is not only walking with, being with, dwelling with, or living with, but even more it is mutually abiding in. If we walk with the Lord, we are with Him; if we are with Him, we dwell with Him; if we dwell with Him, we live with Him; and if we live with Him, we have the mutual abiding with Him. Our living with the Lord depends on our dwelling with Him; our dwelling with Him follows our being with Him, and our being with Him requires our walking with Him. In the Old Testament there is walking with God. In the New Testament we see that there is being with the Lord. First, there is being with the Lord; then there is dwelling with the Lord. This dwelling with the Lord must reach the point of mutual abiding.

Mutual abiding means that we abide in the Lord and the Lord abides in us. The Lord Jesus wants to mutually abide with us. Without the mutual abiding, the Lord is not satisfied. How then can we abide in the Lord, and how can He abide in us? This is the most central and mysterious teaching in the Bible, yet it has been the most neglected by Christians. The Bible contains many words on the surface. We often illustrate this with chicken feathers and garlic husks. Chicken feathers are not good to eat, and garlic husks are undesirable. However, without feathers the chicken cannot survive, and without husks the garlic cannot grow. The garlic must have husks to grow properly, and for the chicken to grow well, it must have full feathers. When you buy a chicken, you must first examine the feathers. If the feathers are scraggly, do not buy the chicken, because it will not be a good one. A chicken can be good only if it has good feathers; good feathers are a guarantee of a good chicken. Eventually, however, no one will eat the chicken feathers. If you invite me to eat chicken, you would not give me a plate of chicken feathers to eat. We northerners love to eat garlic, but you would not give me a pile of garlic husks to eat. That would be an insult to me. Similarly, the vine spoken of in the Bible has a main stalk and supplementary branches and leaves.

Ephesians 5 says that we must be filled in spirit (v. 18) and not just filled but even overflowing with all the fullness of God. When we are filled unto all the fullness of God, what overflows may be a “chicken feather,” such as wives submitting to their husbands, or it may be a layer of “garlic husks,” such as husbands loving their wives. However, in reality it is the fullness of God that has filled us and has saturated our entire being so that we overflow God. As a result, the wives spontaneously submit to their husbands, and the husbands spontaneously love their wives. How can garlic grow without a husk? Christianity has concentrated on details but has forgotten the main objective. Instead of speaking about God’s filling, their talk is about loving the wives and submitting to the husbands. This

is the condition of many Christians today. They do not know the truth, nor do they know the reality of the Spirit; they teach people religion with the husks and feathers of the Bible.

The Lord’s economy, which is entirely different from Christianity, is to dispense the Lord Himself into us not only to be our life but also to be our everything, thereby causing us to be filled with Him. After we are filled, what flows out from within us is God Himself. If you are a wife, then what flows out is submission to your husband. If you submit to your husband, it is not your virtue but the expression of God, the flowing out of God. If you are a husband, what flows out is love for your wife. Your love for your wife is not your characteristic but the overflow of God, the flowing out of God. What the wife overflows is submission; what the husband overflows is love. Whether submission or love, they are the overflow of God Himself.

Mutual abiding with the Lord being altogether a matter in the Spirit

What is it to abide in the Lord? Our Lord was God, who became man to be the last Adam. Since Adam sinned, there was the need of another Adam to accomplish redemption. The first Adam sinned, but the last Adam came to redeem. Only the last Adam could redeem us, because we are all descendants of Adam. The first Adam sinned, causing all of us little Adams to fall into sin. Hence, the last Adam came to redeem us. However, there are those who do not wish to receive Jesus, but whoever is willing to receive Him will be redeemed. We thank and praise the Lord that here today we all are willing and we have received Him; thus, we have been saved. As our last Adam, He has redeemed us.

In this respect Christianity is right. However, Christianity is not willing to go on and see that this last Adam has now become the life-giving Spirit. He is not only the last Adam; even more He has become the life-giving Spirit. The last Adam is for redemption, whereas the life-giving Spirit is for dispensing life. His redemption on the cross is objective to us, but His dispensing of life must be subjective to us. Thus, as the life-giving Spirit, He entered into us. Second Timothy 4:22 says, “The Lord be with your spirit.” Today the Lord is in our spirit. Romans 8:9 says, “If indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.” Then it goes on to say, “Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.” We have Christ; therefore, we belong to Christ and we are joined to Christ. Then verse 10 says, “But if Christ is in you.” These few verses first mention the Spirit of God, then the Spirit of Christ, and then Christ. Never think that these three are three different ones. Rather, these three all refer to the same One. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Christ is Christ. After reading the entire context, you will see that today our God, our Savior Christ, is the consummated Spirit.

The Triune God processed and consummated to be the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit

If the Lord Jesus had not gone through death and resurrection, there would not be the “story” of the life-giving Spirit. If He had not gone through death and resurrection, there would only be the story of the last Adam. If God had not become flesh, there would not be the story of the last Adam; there would only be the story of God. God is in three stages: before His incarnation He was the story of God; after He was incarnated to be a man, He was the story of the last Adam; and after His death and resurrection He became the story of the Spirit.

God is Spirit, and from eternity He is Spirit. The title the Spirit of God appears as early as Genesis 1:2. There it says that the Spirit of God was brooding upon the surface of the waters. According to essence, God is Spirit. However, although God was Spirit before His incarnation, He had no relationship with man and had no story of man. First of all, one day God was born into Mary through the Holy Spirit. After the conception was completed, He with the human nature was born to be a God-man, possessing both divinity and humanity. At that time the Bible began to use the title the Holy Spirit for the Spirit of God. The title the Holy Spirit was not used until the Lord Jesus was conceived to be born. This title was not used in the Old Testament. The first record of the Spirit of God is in Genesis 1; the first record of the Holy Spirit is in Matthew 1. Matthew 1 shows us that this One who was conceived in the womb of Mary and born of her was of the Holy Spirit. He is sinless and holy; He is the Holy One. From this time the Spirit of God began to have a relationship with man.

The Lord lived and worked on earth for thirty-three and a half years, and eventually He died on the cross to accomplish redemption. Then He was resurrected from the dead to become the life-giving Spirit. Before God was incarnated, He was Spirit. Even after He became flesh, He still could not be reckoned as the life-giving Spirit. For God to dispense life into man is not simple. He needed to go through many processes. As the divine Spirit, He could not directly and suddenly come into man to give man life. There were still many problems in man, many problems that had not been solved. God had to first become man, pass through human living, and go to the cross to deal with all of man's problems, such as sin, the world, Satan, the flesh, and the old creation. If these problems were not dealt with and terminated, God could not dispense life into man. Suppose you want to put something into a vessel. If the vessel is dirty, you must first wash and even sterilize it; otherwise, the contents placed in the vessel will be contaminated. If God did not deal with all our problems, He could not dispense Himself as life into us. Even though God is Spirit, without going through incarnation, death, and resurrection He would have no way of dispensing life into us. It was only through His incarnation, death, and resurrection that He could deal with all the problems. Hence, it was at the completion of all these processes that He became the life-giving Spirit. He is not merely the Spirit of God or the Holy Spirit but the life-giving Spirit. He advanced from being the Spirit of God to being the Holy Spirit, and then from being the Holy Spirit to being the life-giving Spirit. These are not three Spirits but one Spirit. By this time He had not only accomplished creation as the Spirit of God, He had not only accomplished redemption through the Holy Spirit, but even more He as the life-giving Spirit had consummated God's new creation, which is the church.

In this consummation God is the life-giving Spirit. Today we are all in God's new creation, which is the church. This does not mean that we are not the created ones, nor does it mean that we have not been redeemed. Rather, it means that we have gone through creation and redemption and are now in the new creation, which is the church. What we need here is the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God. Today this life-giving Spirit is the Triune God. Romans 8:10 says, "Christ is in you," and 2 Timothy 4:22 says, "The Lord be with your spirit." The Lord who is in us is the life-giving Spirit. This life-giving Spirit is the Triune God Himself, but this is not the God who had not gone through incarnation, death, and resurrection. Because He has gone through incarnation, death, and resurrection, He is now in us as the One who has been processed. In Genesis 1 He had not gone through the process, but today in the Epistles in the New Testament, He is a processed God. He is the Triune God who has passed through incarnation, death, and resurrection. Today He is the life-giving Spirit dwelling in our spirit.

Mutual abiding with the Lord — we abiding in the Lord and the Lord also abiding in us

The Triune God was incarnated, passed through human living, died on the cross to accomplish redemption, and entered into resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit. Today He enters into us to abide in our spirit with all that He has, all that He has gone through, all that He has accomplished, and all that He is. We must remember that He abides in us and that He very much desires that we abide in Him. Therefore, every day from morning to evening, in big things or in small things, in our home or outside our home, and in all our living and actions we must abide in Him. When we want to speak to others, unless we have the assurance that we are abiding in Him, we should not speak. We speak only when we have the assurance that we are abiding in Him. We speak from within Him, not outside of Him. Before we argue with others, we must examine to see if we are abiding in the Lord. We must first abide in the Lord and then argue. The Lord is already abiding in us; so before we do anything, we must first abide in the Lord. We act after we are abiding securely. It is easy to speak about abiding in the Lord, but it is not easy to live this out. Therefore, we must learn to practice abiding in the Lord in our daily life.

In summary, first, you must know that today your Savior is this Spirit abiding in you. Second, before you do anything in your daily living and walk, you must abide in Him. The Lord said that He will abide in the one who abides in Him. If you abide in Him, you will enjoy His salvation and all His riches. (Excerpts from **A Living of Mutual Abiding with the Lord in Spirit** Message 3)

Burdens for Church Prayer

- Raising more shepherds for shepherding the new ones.
- Establish a prayer life individually and corporately to seek God's desire for all men to be saved and to come to the full knowledge of the truth.
- Building up a healthy life practices and opening our homes to raise up our next generation.
- Pray for the campus work and the remaining fruit at WV College.
- Pray for our reaching out to Campbell community.
- Pray for the financial needs of FSCC.
- Pray for the financial needs of Sacramento Meeting Hall. Payment of 3.25 M needed to close the escrow on 10/31, Campbell target to give \$100K.

Announcements

- Life-study of Second Corinthians 53 & 54
- HWMR: The Christian Life Week 4
- 9/24 (Tue.) 7:45pm Prayer meeting, Campbell meeting hall.
- 9/27 (Fri.) 7-9pm South Bay Bible Truth Forum (Chinese), FSCC
- Corporate Pursuit Classes at FSCC
2nd term Wednesdays 10/30-11/20. Fridays 11/1-11/22
Registration link:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeip5DhExg2BADdqLKVuneS1Uu2nmb2RqVWzXlJRgcT92e18g/viewform?usp=sharing>
- 2024 Calendar Online Order, Discount price by 10/31.
- 11/28-12/1 International Thanksgiving Conference ,Atlanta, GA
- 12/23-28 Winter Training in Anaheim, registration deadline 11/1, registration fee \$200
- Financial Giving:
PayPal/Zelle: churchincampbell@gmail.com
Venmo @Churchin-Campbell
- Church in Campbell bookroom account (PayPal/Zelle):
churchincampbellbooks@gmail.com