

August, 2008

Workshop 3

“Without HIM I Can Do Nothing”

Presented by Pastor John Townsend

Abiding in Christ by prayer and an attitude of trust and obedience in application to leadership and Christian service

1. Purpose of This Session

To contribute toward the Workshop goal of “Building confidence in the sufficiency and power of God’s Word for ministry to those in bondage to addictions, and their families” by giving you some practical keys:

- To help you depend on God more effectively in your ministry
- To remind you of some key passages in Scripture that will prepare you for service
- To give you greater confidence in your service through better yieldedness to Christ – to help you be more God-dependent in your ministry

2. The Theme Hymn

Without Him, I can do nothing; without Him, I’d surely fail;
Without Him, I would be drifting, like a ship without a sail.
Jesus, Oh Jesus, do you know Him today? Do not turn Him away!
O Jesus, O Jesus, without Him how lost I would be.
Without Him, I would be dying; without Him, I’d be enslaved;
Without Him, life would be hopeless, but with Jesus, thank God, I’m saved!
Jesus, Oh Jesus, do you know Him today? Do not turn Him away!
Jesus, O Jesus, without Him how lost I would be.

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3. Theme Verses: John 15:4-5

- *“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for **apart from Me you can do nothing.**”*
- We like to focus on Philippians 4:13: *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”*
 - We often take Philippians 4:13 out of context & apply it in ways that are not justified by the verse’s context – ability to endure adversity.
 - We tend to forget that we must first abide in Christ before Philippians 4:13 has any significance in any context.
- Christ is the source of everything – our strength, our wisdom, our purpose, etc. It makes no sense to do anything separate from Christ,
- BUT WE OFTEN DO NOT APPLY THE PRINCIPLE OF ABIDING IN CHRIST to our calling, our serving, our leadership responsibilities, etc.

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4. Abide?

From Webster's: (1) "to stand fast, remain, *go on being*", (2) "to stay, reside in or at", (3) "to await", (4) "to submit to, to put up with", (5) "to live up to (a promise or agreement)", (6) "to submit to and carry out a rule or decision"

- Many modern English translations use "remain". Others use "stay united" or "joined". Some say "live in" or "dwell in".
- The Greek root is "meno", which means '*to stay in a given place, state, relation or expectancy*'
- From the context of the verse, we see that we are to be in a relationship with Jesus Christ in the same way that a branch is in a relationship with the vine – a relationship of total dependency, of needing the vine to supply everything.
- So what should I do? – like the branch, just "**hang in there**" and **bear fruit**.

5. Bearing Fruit

- "Fruit" refers to what is obvious about a type of plant; the fruit of a plant is also what is most useful.
- To 'bear much fruit' is the other significant concept of John 15:1-11 (abiding in Christ being the foremost)
- The purpose of bearing fruit is to:
 - Glorify the Father (vs 8)
 - Prove to be disciples of Christ (vs 8)
 - Demonstrate the love of Christ for others (vs 9 & 10)
 - Be satisfied in your life & enabled to be joyful (vs 11)
- Anything we do to serve Christ must be in these attitudes
 - To serve the needs of others in love in order to glorify God.
 - The actual service is not the fruit; the manifestation of Christ in us and through us is the fruit (as in Galatians 5)

6. So how do I perfect these attitudes in myself?

Receive Christ's love for you and **understand** Christ's love for all others

- Receive and meditate on the Gospel: that Christ suffered and died for you because of God's great love for you and that He arose triumphant over the grave so that you (and all men who will believe) can be victorious over sin and death.
- **Meditate** on the Bible day and night – you will be successful (Joshua 1:8)
- **Pray!** Prayer is communication with God through Christ Jesus. Prayer is the life-giving sap from the vine to the branches – most of prayer is listening rather than talking. (Refer to John 14:13-14; John 15:7; John 15:16.)
- **EVERYTHING Needs to be Covered in Prayer**

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- Everything Jesus did was initiated in prayer.
- How much more so should we cover everything we do in PRAYER.

7. What Fruit Are You Called to Bear?

- See **Romans 12:5-8** – exercising our gifts in services in the Body of Christ
*“...so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.
⁶Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; ⁷if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; ⁸or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”*
 - Teaching? Exhorting? Prophesying? Counseling? Comforting? Serving? Giving? Showing Mercy? Leading?
- See **Matthew 28:18-20** – making disciples, baptizing them into Christ, and teaching them to do all that our Lord has commanded us.
- See **John 15:12, 17** – showing love to all others.

8. We Must Abide & Bear Fruit in Leading Others

- **How do I “abide” in Christ for leadership?**
 - **By being an excellent follower of Christ**
 - Setting an excellent example in behavior
 - Hoping that those you lead will become leaders in Christ
 - By knowing His will for those you are leading
 - By adopting His attitude of being the **Servant Leader**
 - **Through dependence upon the Spirit of Christ in your leading**
 - For wisdom – after all, He is the one who is omniscient, not us
 - Recognizing that it is for His glory, and not our own
 - Recognizing that we seek to build the Body of Christ; that enduring growth will take place when we ‘get out of the way’ and let Christ lead
 - **By preparing ourselves prior to leading (in prayer) so that we become an instrument of Christ**
 - He has given us our talents and gifts to use in service for His purposes and His glory
 - So that we are able to act with the Mind of Christ

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9. We Must Abide and Bear Fruit in Serving Others

- **How do I “abide” in Christ for serving others?**
 - **By ‘putting on the Mind of Christ’ – how does He see the people?**
 - As people in need of a relationship with Him
 - As people who need His power to change
 - **As people whom He loves**
 - By being compassionate toward their needs
 - By being willing to be used by Christ in whatever way He desires – even to the point of death

- **Some Examples**
 - **JESUS**
 - separated Himself from the people in order to pray before and after He ministered to them.
 - He was obviously a man of prayer; by His example of prayer the disciples asked Him to teach them to pray.
 - Stayed focused on His purpose – to take away our sins through His death and resurrection
 - **Moses** – humbly sought God’s guidance, “What shall I do?” (see Exodus 3:11-4:17; 15:25; 17:4; 32:31-35; etc.)
 - **Joshua** – went out to pray prior to the battles (the one exception was prior to the first battle of Ai) (see Joshua 5:13-15)
 - **David** – prior to each engagement, David prayed to the LORD and asked, “shall I go up?” (see 1 Samuel 30:8; 2 Samuel 2:1, etc.)
 - **Daniel** – prayed regularly (3 times each day – see Daniel 6:10)

10. Don’t Get Distracted From the MAIN Thing – Our Relationship with Christ Jesus

- The Apostles needed to dedicate themselves to prayer and the study of Scripture (Acts 6:2-4), and not to be distracted by the serving of tables
- We are often distracted by mundane aspects of service and lose track of our main focus – serving Christ
 - The mundane details do need to be taken care of
 - The details can, and should, be delegated to those who are able
 - Ensure that the time we gain is used for the purpose most needed – prayer and study of the Word!

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11. Suggested Prayer Points for Leaders

- **Pray** – to know how you can follow Christ better.
- **Pray** – for love, discernment, wisdom, & patience in dealing with the people you are called to lead.
- **Pray** – to know the will of God in how you should lead (by example, by illustration, by teaching).
- **Pray** – to know God’s will in where to lead.
- **Pray** – to know God’s calling on your group (what are you to accomplish collectively in serving Him).
- **Pray** – to see how you need to stir up and develop the individual and collective gifts of the people.
- **Pray** – for the revelation of Scripture for each step.
- **Pray** – to see how each person needs Christ’s grace in order to receive His love.
- **Pray** – to see each person’s needs to be disciplined.
- **Pray** – to glorify Christ in all of your service.

12. Suggested Prayer Points for Teaching

- **Pray** – that you can glorify the Lord in your service.
- **Pray** – for the people you are ministering to.
- **Pray** – that you may be used by God to be a blessing to the people you are called to minister to.
- **Pray** to know the needs of the people in detail.
- **Pray** for God’s wisdom as you outline your service and select Scriptures to address the needs.
- **Meditate on God’s Word as you pray for the people – especially to see how the Gospel is to be revealed in the application of Grace to life circumstances.** Every work of service should declare the Gospel of Christ and demonstrate the application of His grace – in word and/or in work.
- **Pray for the Lord to show you the application of the Scripture to the people’s situations – consider how the love and grace that is in Christ Jesus is depicted in the selected texts.**
- **Pray** that you may be an instrument in the hands of the Lord.
- **Pray** that the Lord take all control.

So what is the operative word for abiding in Christ?

PRAY!

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**We are each uniquely different,
but we all share in bearing fruit.**

- **We need to abide in Christ.**
- **He will never leave us or fail us.**
- **We do this first and foremost in prayer.**
 - **A practical prayer is:**



LORD, I CAN'T, BUT YOU CAN.

YOU TAKE CONTROL.

THANK YOU,

JESUS!