

Abiding = Submission = Disciple

A well-known passage among men is found in John 8:31. I have personally seen part of the passage as it appears etched upon the facade of two buildings, one in Houston the other in Washington D.C. (Of course, no credit is given to the Author). We often use the passage correctly when referring to the freedom (from sin) which can only occur by submission to the truth. Equally important are the words preceding the statement "the truth shall make you free." Jesus states, "If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed..." (John 8:32). Consider the importance of the combination of both verses (vs. 31 and 32). The "truth" only makes one free by one's "abiding" in Jesus' words.

The words of Jesus here help the reader understand that being a "true disciple" involves much more than simply believing. Believing is paramount however, simply believing is useless unless one is willing to abide (accept or act in accordance with - Dictionary, data from Oxford Languages) in the directives/commands/words of Christ. Therefore, one can conclude that believing along with following and/or submitting to the fundamentals involved with wearing His name makes one a "true disciple."

When we submit ourselves to what He teaches us to do, following the very truth He espoused allows us by the grace of God to be freed from the condemnation of sin (Romans 3:24, Romans 6:14, Ephesians 2:8-9). Following the instructions spoken by Jesus thereby allows us to be set free from sin, allowing us to walk sanctified being set apart from the world (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Following the instructions spoken by Jesus allows us to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:1-6). Following the instructions spoken by Jesus allows us to become a slave of righteousness (Romans 6:16-18), leaving behind the slave of sin that we were.

Paul, writing to the church at Colosse, provides encouraging instruction on how they (we) walk/live as a true disciple of Jesus Christ. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom..." (Colossians 3:16). Bill Bass often used the idiom, "Whatever you drop in the well is going to come up in the bucket." Stated more modernly,

whatever we put in ourselves (our minds) is going to come out through our actions. Paul continues, "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus..." (Colossians 3:17). When the word of Christ dwells in us richly, we are allowing God, through the words spoken directly by His Son (Hebrews 1:1-4) and our submission to them, to abide in and direct our lives (2 John 4-6).

We can with full assurance look to the teachings of Jesus to successfully guide us through this earthly life. God proved His love for us by allowing His Son to die for us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:6-8). Let us each purpose to walk in appreciation of God's love through our abiding to His word.