

## Abide pt1

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Ryan Abernathy / General

Abide / 1 John 1

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As we start the year, I wanted us to begin where we need to be, and not necessarily where we already are. For so many of us, myself included, there are times when it is a struggle to really live and abide in the presence of Jesus. The busyness of life, the ups and downs, the little sins and idols, and a thousand other distractions pull us away from the peace and joy that we find in the presence of Jesus.

It is seen as a normal part of following Jesus- we go thru mountaintops and valleys. And there is definitely scriptural precedent for the ups and downs we see in our lives, but what we need to develop is a pattern of abiding, despite circumstances- so that when we go into a low or a lull, we do not walk it alone, only to meet Jesus on the other side. We need Him to walk us thru the valleys...and that takes the development of the discipline of abiding.

So with that in mind, we are going to walk thru 1 John for the next few weeks. It is a letter, written to a church that John loved...in some ways like Jesus loved him. And as we make our way thru this book, we can begin to learn how we walk with Jesus in a way where His presence is evident...even when our hearts are not in it.

Turn with me to [1 John 1](#). (Read opening chapter)

So first off, I want us all to see who this letter is coming from. It is an eyewitness to Jesus. The writer- John- had not heard about Jesus second hand. He had walked with Him. Seen His miracles. Heard His voice. Experienced Him in almost every way possible. In short, if anyone who could write a letter about following Jesus from first hand experience- John is the one.

### **1, 2, 3 John 1. The Object of Proclamation Highlighted (1:1)**

In other words, John and other eyewitnesses saw this deity, who has life in himself from eternity, incarnated in time/space/history

### **1, 2, 3 John 2. The Object of Proclamation Clarified (1:2)**

The object of eyewitness proclamation is one and the same: “That which was from the beginning,” who is “the Word of life,” is also “the eternal life, which was with the Father.” The first phrase emphasizes Jesus’ deity, while the second phrase focuses on Jesus’ revelation of eternal life. Thus, **the beginning and the conclusion of 1 John (see 5:20) assert the same fact: the eternal Son of God, who is the true God and eternal life, has been revealed in history**

And what he is wanting to do for the church he is writing to, is proclaim who Jesus is and what He has done to them so that they too can have “fellowship” with “us.” The us in this situation is with other believers, but it is also with Jesus. (v3)

That is a HUGE offer. **John is saying it is possible for us to have the same kind of connection and relationship with Jesus that he had experienced, even though Jesus has ascended to heaven at this point.** We will want to watch for that as we go thru this book...because it is a central part of what John is seeking to say and what many of us long for!

### **1, 2, 3 John 3. The Purpose of Proclamation Announced (1:3a)**

it is through the proclamation of the incarnate Word of life that John envisions the accomplishment of his purpose of bringing his readers to fellowship with him and other eyewitnesses. As Eichler observes, “[To] ‘have fellowship’ with one another and with Christ (1 Jn. 1:6f.) is to ‘know’ him (1 Jn. 2:3) and to ‘abide’ in him (v. 6).” This fellowship’s basis, then, is in the apostolic preaching of the historical Jesus as well as the readers’ response of faith in the subject of that proclamation

### **1, 2, 3 John 3. The Purpose of Proclamation Announced (1:3a)**

In summary, faith in the incarnate Son of God, Jesus the Christ, transfers one from the realm of death to life, from darkness to light, and this life that one now possesses through faith makes its presence known by means of the love that a Christian has for his fellow Christians. Fellowship with the Father and his Son, then, is essentially the same thing as having eternal life

### **1, 2, 3 John 4. The Nature of This Common Fellowship Clarified (1:3b)**

Fellowship” further denotes the “oneness in community” with other believers, with the Father, and with his Son that results from faith in this Son. Such fellowship for John is, in fact, inseparable from having eternal life: to have eternal life is to have fellowship with the apostolic witnesses who have testified concerning the Word of life. **Fellowship with these witnesses is, in turn, nothing less than fellowship “with the Father and with his Son, Jesus the Christ**

Look at verse 4- “our joy may be complete.” John is saying that this fellowship, this relationship, this connection is the path to complete joy. **When we are in fellowship with Jesus, we experience the fullness of joy AND He is also joyful!**

So what keeps us from this relationship and this joy? Well, many things, as I sated earlier, but John is going to discuss one of the barriers from the jump- and it is going to come up several times in different ways in this letter.

(Re-read v 5-10) John identifies a major truth about God in verse 5- He has no darkness. This means that God is sinless. He does not do anything wrong. He is fully holy. He is incapable of sin. He defines right and wrong.

That's a lot and it has some major implications for us. If God says something is wrong, it is wrong- no matter what we think or feel or reason...**He has a perspective unlike ours, because we can be wrong, we can do wrong, and we are not flawless...we have darkness in us.**

That's a troubling thought isn't it. We have darkness in us. I like to think I am a pretty good guy. God knows He is perfect. And He knows I am imperfect- even in ways no one else can see or even more- in ways I cannot see yet.

See God knows each of us better than we know ourselves. One thing I try to remind myself of when I am dealing with another follower of Jesus who does something I don't like or agree with- **God is working on that person in ways I cannot know or fathom, so when pointing out fault or concern or sin...be gentle, they really may be unaware of that struggle, because God has them focused somewhere else.**

But those imperfections, are not an excuse to do whatever we want to do. Far from it. Look at verse 6

"Walk in darkness"- to live there...to call darkness the light, a place of comfort and home for us. We are going to stumble, but **some people who say they are followers of Jesus, make their homes in places where God doesn't have an address.**

### **1, 2, 3 John Excursus: "Light" in 1 John**

If we claim that we have fellowship with God and yet do not live in the eternal life revealed by Jesus (implicitly by faith in this Jesus), we are lying and not doing the truth (i.e., we are not obeying God's word)

The opposite of that is found in verse 7- “walk in the light”- **are we willing to live under examination?** Are we living a life that God is guiding, and willing to be examined and convicted? To walk in repentance?

### **1, 2, 3 John Excursus: “Light” in 1 John**

The evidence of true mutual fellowship with God is one’s living in the fullness of life revealed by Jesus. While those without Christ can only make false claims about having fellowship with God (1:6), Christians actually have fellowship with God and God with them through Jesus, who is the only Mediator between God and human beings

This is the opposite of living in darkness- we make our home in God’s presence and when we do sin we confess it and own it and seek to destroy it. **This is the beginning of Abiding- an owning of our own imperfections and a desire to transfer ownership of our sin to Jesus in exchange for His righteousness**

“he cleanses us from all sin”- we don’t wipe out sin- Jesus does- this is not about atoning- Jesus does that- this is about changing directions!!!

John goes even further in the next 2 verses (8-9)

We can either lie to God and ourselves or we can be honest with ourselves and God- one way leads to destruction and one way leads to new life.

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Resist Sin (1:8–2:2)**

**the heretics argued that the condition for fellowship with the Father is sinlessness.** Therefore they claimed to be sinless. Yet in this very claim they rejected God’s word (1:10; i.e., the truth God has revealed in Jesus, 1:8), deceived themselves, and made God out to be a liar.<sup>131</sup> Sinlessness is theirs by virtue of life in Christ alone. It cannot be located merely within themselves.

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Resist Sin (1:8–2:2)**

John's point is that the true condition for fellowship is the confession of our sins. Yet John does not dispute their premise of the need for sinlessness. "When someone acknowledges and avows his fault ... honestly [neither hiding nor denying his sins], he experiences God's faithfulness and righteousness in the forgiveness of sins." By virtue of the cleansing effect of Jesus' atoning death, believers' sins are forgiven.<sup>134</sup> In effect, they are sinless in God's sight (though not in themselves) and fit for fellowship with him.

(Gospel presentation here)

Verse 10 is John's final statement on the matter: We cannot deny our sinfulness and follow Jesus. It's impossible. The beginning of Abiding is admitting that we need Him.

### **1, 2, 3 John (2) Resist Sin (1:8–2:2)**

Because God has sent his Son as Savior of the world (cf. 4:14), to those who confess their sins by trusting in this Jesus whom God has revealed (taking 1:7 and 1:9 together), God is faithful and righteous to forgive them their sins and cleanse them from all unrighteousness.<sup>137</sup> God is able and righteous in forgiving because these sinners will have confessed their sins and trusted in God's revelation of eternal life in Jesus his Son, whose death is the basis for forgiveness.