

01-08-21

Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

Abide In Him

A secret to abiding hope is to abide in Him. John 15 teaches us to abide in Christ. It promises fruit and strength. Surely part of that is our hope. Hope comes from within; it is the force that often drives to keep at it. It can serve as an artesian well, to well-water our lives. It pushes out from us rather than something we take in. The direction is *out* not *in*. The idea of John 15, though, is connection. In other words we are to stay connected to Christ. Just as a plant needs to stay connected to the root to produce fruit, so a believer needs to stay connected to Jesus to produce a fruitful life. He was saying, live there, or dwell there, in His presence. Sometimes it's not a matter of what you have but where you live.

If we're connected then... we live in hope. We don't just have it every now and then. It becomes something always available because we are connected to the source of all life (including hope). Here are a few other examples. Jesus took His disciples with Him. They were always close to the source of their strength. All the devil needs to do to cool us off in our faith is separate us from the fellowship of saints. Everyone knows a wandering sheep is easy prey for a roaring lion. A plant will die if cut off from a light source. An electric lamp is useless if unplugged. All the pieces are there. All the equipment in the world, though, will not work without the energy. God has promised and provided the Holy Spirit to help us victoriously live the believer-life. But, all too commonly, we allow the devil, or circumstances, or our own bad attitudes to separate us from God. While Thomas was separated from the other believers, he missed the presence of God. We have no idea where Thomas was. Perhaps he was taking care of personal business - but he missed Jesus. Perhaps he was at a football game when Jesus passed through; there's nothing wrong with that. At the end of the day, though, he missed Jesus. Maybe he was on the computer. There's nothing wrong with that; God has provided computers. Still, he missed Jesus. Do you get the idea? Anything that keeps us from abiding in Jesus could be used by the evil one to separate us from Christ. We get connected to Jesus when we are saved. The trick now is to live in His light. How important do you think it is to be connected to light in the dark times of our lives?

So... run to the light, my friend; run to the light!

Jerry Rea