



ABIDING IN LOVE

“AS THE FATHER LOVED ME,
I ALSO HAVE LOVED YOU; ABIDE IN MY LOVE”

John 15:9 NKJV

Every little girl has dreamed at some time about living in a castle. There's something appealing about those sprawling fortresses, with their moats and turrets and drawbridges and ball-rooms. For some reason, they sound like perfection. There would be tapestries and chandeliers and beautiful paintings on every wall. There would be maids and a housekeeper and a butler and grooms and a cook. There would be extensive lawns with peacocks strutting across them. There would be formal gardens, reflecting ponds, and bowers of roses. It all sounds so beautiful. But the idea of living in a castle is probably a whole lot more enjoyable than actually living in one. Stone floors would



CLEARING + THE + COBWEBS

What is the largest
house you've ever
visited?



To love as Jesus loves is a tall order for us fallible human beings.

Marilyn Meberg

be cold underfoot. Wide halls would be drafty. High-ceilinged rooms would be hard to heat. Chinks in the mortar might let in all sorts of critters—ants, spiders, crickets, roaches, snakes, salamanders, mice, rats, bats. Cobwebs in every corner. Musty smells wafting up from the cellars. On rainy days, the whole place becomes as dank as the dungeons, and the hunting hounds lolling by the fireplace give off the distinct odor of wet dog.

Even the most romantic, idealistic homes on this earth have their little imperfections. They can only disappoint us. But believers needn't worry over such things. Our real life is hidden away in Jesus Christ, and we abide in His love.

1. We are loved lavishly. How does Paul describe God's love for us in Romans 5:5?

2. How does Jesus say we are loved in John 15:9? What does He invite us to do?



3. Abiding. It's moving in. It's making yourself comfortable. It's making yourself at home. Scripture tells us that if we belong to God, we have a home with Him.

___ Psalm 91:1

a. Whoever believes in Jesus won't abide in darkness.

___ John 8:31

b. If you keep My commandments, you'll abide in My love.

___ John 8:35

c. Abide in Him while you await His coming.

___ John 12:46

d. We shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

___ John 15:9

e. A son abides in his Father's house forever.

___ John 15:10

f. We are invited to abide in Jesus' love.

___ 1 John 2:28

g. If you abide in My word, you are My disciples.

4. Abiding in love gives us the idea of being surrounded by love, of living in love. Paul gives us another picture of this abiding—while we are abiding in Christ, Christ is abiding in us. How does Ephesians 3:17 describe our relationship to love?



Receiving God's Love

5. Rooted, growing, bearing fruit—this picture is used consistently in Scripture for those who abide in Christ and His love.

- According to John 15:4, what must we do in order to bear fruit?
- How do we know that we are abiding in Jesus, according to 1 John 4:13?
- Who abides with us forever, according to John 14:16?

6. We abide in Christ's love. His Spirit abides in us. And by abiding, we bear fruit. What is that fruit, according to Galatians 5:22, 23?



7. We put our trust in God. We abide in Him. How does David describe the attitude of his heart because of this in Psalm 5:11?

*Faith carries us through
life's unknowns and God's
mysteries.*

Patsy Clairmont

8. What is another description of the one who loves the Lord, found in Judges 5:31?

9. This invitation of the Lord's for us to come and abide in His love has interesting complexities. Take a careful look at 1 John 4:16—just who is in what?



DIGGING DEEPER

Nothing on this earth can satisfy our longing for heaven. But we can lay up for ourselves treasures in heaven. They'll be waiting for us somewhere where thieves cannot break in and steal, and where moth and rust cannot decay. Take a look at these verses that talk about just those things:

- Matthew 6:19, 20
- Luke 12:32
- John 14:2

PONDER & PRAY

Over the next few days, consider what it means to abide in Christ. We must depend upon Him, draw our strength from Him, feel at home with Him. Pray that your roots will continue to go down deep into His love. Pray that you will be able to flourish, grow, and bear fruit.



TRINKET TO TREASURE

There are times that we need to be reminded that we can never be completely happy in this world. Even living in a castle would have its downside. That's why this week's trinket is a little spider—to remind you that even the most elegant mansion on this earth will have cobwebs in the corners. Our true home is with God, and until we join Him, we can abide in His love.