

We Can Continue in His Word

As we look at John 8:31, we see Jesus talking to a group of Jews who believed on Him. It's interesting to note that Jesus did not say that believing was all they needed to do. Many today will say they believe in Jesus but their lives don't show it. That is usually because they are not truly a disciple of Christ.

As we look at the word believed in our text, it is the Greek word *pisteuo*. This word means more than just believing but rather is an entrusting of our lives, yes and our very souls, to Christ. We turn over our lives to Him rather than to ourselves. You see many believe but do not commit. One who truly believes must be willing to commit everything to Christ. Not just partially but completely. These Jews needed to commit completely to the Lord. That reminds me of the story told of a chicken and a pig. The farmer wanted eggs and bacon. The chicken was willing to be involved and give her eggs because she could always have more. The pig however had to commit to the farmer completely in order to fulfill his part.

Jesus knew these people and so He stated, "If." What a large word! One that really sets in motion what our true desire is. This word "if" is very conditional. I can offer you \$100.00 if you'll just come and get it. You may want it but you lack the desire to actually get out of your chair or sofa, or pew to come and get it. Therefore you can't have it. The same is true with being a follower of Jesus. We can say we want what He has to give but unless

we get up and do what He tells us to do, we cannot have the reward. Jesus informed them that each of them needed to do the committing. No one else could do it for them

Jesus told them that they needed to stay, they needed to abide, they needed to dwell, they needed to remain steadfast, they needed to continue in His word. But what does man say? Man says do whatever feels good. You can be a "Christian" on Sunday and then do whatever you want the rest of the time and still be a Christian. You see man doesn't truly think it necessary to stay, abide or dwell or remain steadfast in the word of Christ. Of course, I'm concerned that too many that call themselves "Christian" believe that all they need to do is just give one or two hours a week to the Lord.

Indeed we are free to follow whatever way we want to but God tells us in Proverbs 14:12, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." There are those today who started off right.

- They heard...Romans 10:17.
- They believed...Mark 16:16.
- They repented...Luke 13:3.
- They confessed...Romans 10:10.
- They were baptized...Acts 22:16.

But then they went right back to doing what they had done before. They don't stay, abide or dwell or continue in His word. Brethren I'm afraid there are more and more going their own way instead of following the way. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6). Jesus said we must

continue. He didn't say we could serve Him every now and then and still be his disciple.

What is it we are to continue in? The text says His (Christ's) word. Today many will follow man. Now that's nothing new. Even in Paul's time many did the same. "Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:12). We understand that we should not follow after some man's word but only the Word of God. It is the Word of God and obedience to that Word that sets men free. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32-33).

Many today will quote men. They will tell you what Alexander Campbell believed. Others will tell you what Joseph Smith believed. Still others will tell you Mohammed believed. And the list goes on and on in quoting of man but man cannot save you. Man may teach a little truth but not necessarily all the truth. You can study the book of Mormon. You can study the Koran. The only way to know the truth is to study the Bible. Many will teach for doctrine the commandments of men: "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). If we follow man, then we are a man's disciple, follower. But if we want to be a disciple of Christ, we must indeed follow Him. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

Again many will say I just can't continue in His word. It's just too hard. Jesus would not have told us to do something we cannot do. Now don't get me wrong. I don't believe I can do all things by myself, I can't. But I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13). Those things I truly need to do, I can because of Christ.

Adam Clark said it this way: "It is not enough to receive God's truth - we must retain and walk in it. And it is only when we receive the truth, love it, keep it, and walk in it, that we are the genuine disciples of Christ."

It is not enough just to say we are a disciple. We must prove we are by our lives. We must show the world we are a servant of Christ not only by word but by deed. "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).

1 John 5:2 is really necessary for us to observe. There it states that we know that we love God when we love His children. His disciples. His followers. Do you truly love the children of God? You do if – there's that word again – if you keep the commandments of God.

You say I do keep some of them. Isn't that enough. What if your husband or wife told you he/she was faithful to you most of the time? Is that enough? I hear statements made by brethren all the time. So and so is pretty faithful. Again is that enough in your marriage? Just pretty faithful? Are you faithful to your marriage partner all the time or not? Are you faithful to God all the time or not?

You cannot serve God and mammon. "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13).

"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4).

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).

Are you just involved in the Word or are you truly committed?

This tract is condensed from a lesson presented at the 27th Annual Mid-West Lectures, "God's Precious Promises." To hear or view the complete lesson go to www.kc-cofc.org/2009Lectures.htm or contact the 39th Street Church of Christ 15331 East 39th Street Independence, MO 64055-4240 USA

God's Precious Promises...
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by
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