



Abide



Volume 3, Issue 3

July–November 2003

Abiding in Christ



*Rest For Your Soul
In The Midst Of Life's
Tempestuous Storms*

Our Mission Statement:

The reason for publishing this journal is to encourage youth to mature in the Lord. We desire all to be challenged to seek the reality of God in their own lives. We hope you will see, by the testimony of many youth, a Christian life that radiates the power of God. God’s desire for all of us is much more than to escape Hell. It is for us to live a victorious life by abiding in Christ. All material will be edited with this goal in mind.

The Editors

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The Bush And The Tree

On Two Kinds of Men

By John Patrick Pazdziora

Sometimes words can be more vivid than any other art form. A word well used is worth a thousand pictures. The prophet Jeremiah knew this; his words ring with chords and cadences as if they were music and flash with the colors and images of a picture. From the grief-stricken keens of his lamentations to the soaring anthems of the coming Messiah, Jeremiah is a man, prophet, and poet, weaving the words God gave him into a tapestry of wonder.

In the Bible, he wrote these words:

“Thus says the LORD, ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD. For he will be like a bush in the desert and will not see when prosperity comes, but will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant. Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose trust is the LORD. For he will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green, and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.’” (Jeremiah 17:5-8 NASB)

He has shown us a contrast between two kinds of men. We are shown a curse and a blessing: a curse upon the man who trusts in mankind, a blessing on the man who trusts the Lord.

Jeremiah’s opening is significant. *“Thus says the LORD.”* (v. 5) This is not human observation; it is divine inspiration. These are the words of the Lord. The Lord has spoken, and His words are true and undeniable. If the Lord is speaking, we must give heed.

“Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength, and whose heart turns away from the LORD.” For this man, human na-

ture and human thought are absolute. Humanity will provide his needs, drowning his need for God. He thinks he need look no further than his own kind to find love, to find peace, to find joy. He would deny that anyone’s best efforts outside of the power of Christ are feebler than the wiggling of a beetle’s antennae. He will not admit that man is fallen, lost, and dying, in desperate need of the Savior.

Humanity will also provide his answers. He claims that truth can be found in his own mind, by his own reasoning. He pretends to seek for truth but denies it when it comes. He declares himself to be rich, wealthy, needing nothing, but he is wretched and miserable, poor, blind, and naked—a sewer rat imagining himself a king. (Revelation 3:17ff)

This man has been from the beginning of the world. He is Adam reaching out to take the forbidden fruit. He is the workman of Babel erecting his own pathway to heaven. He is a worshipper at the feet of the Golden Calf. He is the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah living in blatant defiance of the Lord. He is modern man, seeking reason in unreason, trusting the vacuous theories of scientists and experts, like Esau selling his soul for a bowl of soup.



Jeremiah likens this man to *“a bush in the desert.”* Leaves dry and dusty, roots shallow and flimsy, battered by its own struggle to survive, it

lives only a miserable, wretched existence. This is the lot of man when he has turned from his Creator. Only Jesus is the truth and life. Without Him, man is left with only lies and death.

He *“will not see when prosperity comes.”* He

has grown so used to living in a wasteland, so used to having no water that he cannot live anywhere else. *“Men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds are evil.”* (John 3:19) Man cannot see his own Savior. *“And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”* (John 1:5)

So man, as he works and strives by his own strength and will, scrapes out an existence not worth having, in a place not worth inhabiting.

Rather, he *“will live in stony wastes in the wilderness, a land of salt without inhabitant.”* This is the bleakest part of creation. There is nothing green or growing here. So man, as he works and strives by his own strength and will, scrapes out an existence not worth having in a place not worth inhabiting. He has no hope, no growth, no life, but hides behind a shabby façade. His very existence is a nightmare.

Now the tone of the prophecy changes. Jeremiah has given the Lord’s curse; now he gives His blessing—a blessing upon the man who trusts the Lord.

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose trust is the LORD.” (v 7) He does not rely upon his own strength but the strength of the Lord. He does not strive or grope for wisdom or knowledge. He trusts in the Lord, and the Lord is his trust. So he is blessed, for when we have such trust, then we have peace.

He *“trusts in the LORD.”* He does not delude himself with vain hopes in human excellence. Such hope would be vain, for man, without Christ, has no excellence. Those who base their life upon such a hope will be flattened, crushed by despair. But if a man trusts Christ, he need never know that despair. *“For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’* (Romans 10:11) All others may and

will disappoint us. They will not do what we expect; they will give in when the chips are down; they will fail us at every turn. But Jesus never will. He will be faithful far beyond the faith we have in Him.

His *“trust is the LORD.”* Notice that here Jeremiah does not say “strength”, but rather, “trust.” Jeremiah writes of a man who makes flesh his strength, and of a man who makes the Lord his trust. With the flesh, the emphasis is strength—strength to be all you can be, do all you can do, get all you can get. It is strength to make yourself as you want yourself, to be your own commander, to reach out and eat of the forbidden tree.

It’s a sorry sort of strength hardly worth its name. With the Lord, the emphasis is trust. It is not that as we once drew strength from the flesh to do our best, so we now draw strength from the Lord. We merely trust in what Christ has already done. The Lord does not give us strength; the Lord *is* our strength, for we would never be strong enough. So we trust Him, and He is our trust. It is no longer a matter of whether we have strength enough or not, but whether we trust Him.



The man who has such trust *“will be like a tree planted by the water, that extends its roots by a stream.”* (v. 8) It is not a

bush, but a tree. It’s not a sorry, bedraggled heap of wilt, but a high, lofty King of the Forest—strong and firm, well-rooted and long-lived. This tree is not in a wilderness but by running water; its roots spread down to the depths of the stream. It is beside a never-ending source of life.

For man, Jesus is that life. Jesus is the cold, clear water that surges from root bottom to leaf end, spreading out our hearts like trees, taller and broader, richer and greener. Jesus said, *“If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”* (John 7:37f) He gives us the living water of His Spirit, and our lives are changed, cleansed, renewed.

If anyone drinks of that water,

Continued page 17

Jesus, I Am Resting:

Studies From the Hymn

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the joy of what Thou art;
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.

Thou hast bid me gaze upon Thee,
And Thy beauty fills my soul,
For by Thy transforming power,
Thou hast made me whole.

O, how great Thy lovingkindness,
Vaster, broader than the sea!
O, how marvelous Thy goodness,
Lavished all on me!

Yes, I rest in Thee, Beloved,
Know what wealth of grace is Thine,
Know Thy certainty of promise,
And have made it mine.

Simply trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
I behold Thee as Thou art,
And Thy love, so pure, so changeless,
Satisfies my heart;

Satisfies its deepest longings,
Meets, supplies its every need,
Compasseth me round with blessings:
Thine is love indeed!

Ever lift Thy face upon me
As I work and wait for Thee:
Resting 'neath Thy smile, Lord Jesus,
Earth's dark shadows flee.

Brightness of my Father's glory,
Sunshine of my Father's face,
Keep me ever trusting, resting,
Fill me with Thy grace.

Jesus, I am resting, resting
In the joy of what Thou art,
I am finding out the greatness
Of Thy loving heart.

—Jean S. Pigott

—By Eric M. Pazdziora

“Jesus, I Am Resting,” the strikingly beautiful hymn by Jean S. Pigott, is not as widely known as I think it deserves to be. In all my personal collection of hymnals, only one—a recent edition at that—even contains it at all. This is a pity. Not only because the hymn is, in my opinion as a composer and lyricist, about as close to perfection as it is possible for such writing to come, but because it deals with a subject that also is unfortunately neglected. The neglect of the hymn is a loss to church music, but the neglect of its subject is a loss to our spiritual lives.

The subject is stated in the first stanza, and the rest of the hymn skillfully develops the idea.

“Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art.” It is a hymn about resting in Christ.

From the first two words, “Jesus, I,” we know that the hymn is meant to be a prayer, addressed directly to the Lord by a believer in a loving relationship. But, like all songs that follow the Biblical models (see Col. 3:16, Deut 31:19, et. al.), it can also be used for teaching. I propose to take the thoughts in this hymn and use them as a springboard to explain this idea of rest in Christ.

“Jesus, I am resting.” What is this rest?



ing, you will find God.

The second is found in Western religions (Islam, Judaism, and, sadly, some schools of Christianity): if you work very hard and strive your best to meet the standard, you will find God.

These ideas resemble the true, biblical concept only as a caricaturist's drawing resembles a person's face. The recognizable features may be there, but they are exaggerated beyond any kind of realism.



If you want a better picture of rest, this hymn is a good place to start. Look at the verbs it uses to show what the believer does: Rest. Gaze. Know. Wait. Trust.

Now, on the one hand, we have not emptied our minds to do nothing, because these words show definite action. But, on the other hand, the action they show involves no intensive labor or striving. We could almost call them verbs of passive activity.

Only once in the hymn is the verb "work" used of the Christian, and it is immediately qualified with "and wait," with "resting" brought into the very next line for re-emphasis. We are not emptying ourselves of all action, but neither are we striving at what we are doing. We are doing something, but what we are doing is resting. It may seem paradoxical, but if so, what a glorious and liberating paradox of truth!

You see, all this paradox does is take what we experience at the point of salvation and apply it to the remainder of our lives as Christians. When we are saved, we recognize our own inability to meet God's standard of perfection, and, by handing over our lives to Christ, we trust instead in Jesus' work on the Cross to do what we never could have done. Jesus has done it: "It is finished," and we no longer need to work to be saved. We stop working. We rest.

It *does not* end there. "Having begun by the Spirit," Paul asked laconically, "are you now being perfected by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3 NASB) The point of his terse rhetorical question is clear. Regeneration is a miraculous work of God the Spirit apart from your own efforts, and *so is the remainder of your life as a Christian*. It is foolishness to begin your Christian life by trusting completely in Christ and then assume that you can go on to trust partially in yourself. You cannot live as a Christian in your

own strength any more than you can save yourself from your own sin.

"As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord," wrote Paul again, "so walk in Him." (Colossians 2:6 NASB) The key word here is "as." The noted Greek scholar Kenneth Wuest translated it, "*In the same manner as you received Christ.*" That is how we are to "walk in Him." In a word, we are meant to live our lives as Christians the same way we first received Jesus. The same simple faith. The same total submission. The same rest.

It is what the Bible means when it talks of rest and is the idea Jean Pigott has expressed so clearly in our hymn. The concept does not end there. Rest cannot be taken alone and made into an abstract ideal; otherwise, it becomes a negation and we are back to the Eastern religious philosophy. There is a solid factual reason for us to rest, and a solid fact we can rest in. The hymn explains, "I am resting... in *the joy of what Thou art.*" We rest because of what Jesus has done, and we rest in who Jesus is.

You cannot have joy without having Jesus, and you cannot have Jesus without having joy.

The hymn writer so masterfully puts it that Jesus is Himself a form of joy. Jesus spoke of this joy when He told his disciples "that *My joy* may be in you, and that your joy may be made full." (John 15:11 NASB) Joy is not something we get as a *result* of knowing about Jesus. What we learn and experience of Jesus *is itself* joy. You cannot have joy without having Jesus, and you cannot have Jesus without having joy.

It's good for us, then, to see what we can find out about Jesus, and indeed, that is the next thought in the hymn: "I *am finding out* the greatness of Thy loving heart."

**He is beautiful.
He is infinitely loving and
good. He is the provider.
He has a wealth of grace.**

Notice that the sentence is not phrased, “I *have* found out” or “I *will* find out.” Nearly all the verbs in the hymn are either in the present tense, or, like this one, indicate an ongoing process that continues in the present. Significantly, almost the only past tense verb in the entire hymn is “Thou *hast made* me whole.” Our regeneration is the past event, and now we are living with Jesus day by day. We can be continually learning of Christ, for He is always with us.

We learn by experience. The more we walk with Jesus we learn of Him by His Spirit and His Word, and we experience firsthand what He is and what He does.

What do we learn? Turning again to the hymn, we find a glorious list of things Jesus is, has, and does: He is beautiful. He is infinitely loving and good. He is the provider. He has a wealth of grace, an inexhaustible supply. He satisfies our hearts’ deepest longings. He meets our needs, and tops that with all-encompassing blessings. He lavishes His goodness on us. He bathes us in the brilliant light of His smile of approval—and on, and on, each marvelous poetic metaphor towering over the one before.

Even these magnificent truths give only a small picture. To answer the question fully would take—indeed, *will* take—all eternity, and I can only echo the words of John’s gospel:

“If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.” (John 21:25 NIV)



Thankfully, we do have all eternity, and it has already begun. We already have God’s approval; we already have God’s infinite forgiveness; we already have the love of Jesus. There is nothing left for us to strive for. All that is left for us is rest. The more we rest in the joy of what Jesus is, the more we find out of the infinite riches of His divine nature, and these in turn become the truths that give us reason to rest.

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Thoughts From The Past

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt.11:28–30)

Here we have two things standing in contrast to each other, a burden and a rest. The burden is not a local one, peculiar to those first hearers but one which is borne by the whole human race. It consists not of political oppression or poverty or hard work. It is far deeper than that. It is felt by the rich as well as the poor, for it is something from which wealth and idleness can never deliver us.

The burden borne by mankind is a heavy and a crushing thing. The word Jesus means “a load carried or toil borne to the point of exhaustion.” Rest is simply release from that burden. It is not something we do; it is what comes to us when we cease to do. His own meekness, that is rest.—A. W. Tozer *“The Pursuit of God”*

“Only let your trust be in God, not in man, not in circumstances, not in any of your own efforts, but real trust in God; and you will be helped in whatever your need may be. You must give up your trust in circumstances, in natural expectations, in former helpers, but solely rest in God. This alone will bring blessing. If our trust in God is real, help will surely come.”—George Muller



Rest For Your Souls

—Andrew Murray, *Abide In Christ*

"Come unto me, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; and ye shall find rest to your souls"—Matt.11:28-29

Rest for the soul: Such was the first promise with which the Savior sought to win the heavy-laden sinner. Simple though it appears, the promise is indeed as large and comprehensive as can be found. Rest for the soul—does it not imply deliverance from every fear, the supply of every want, the fulfillment of every desire? And now nothing less than this is the prize with which the Savior woos back the wandering one—who is mourning that the rest has not been so abiding or so full as it had hoped-to come back and abide in Him. Nothing but this was the reason that the rest has either not been found, or, if found, has been disturbed or lost again: you did not abide *with*, you did not abide *in* Him.

Have you ever noticed how, in the original invitation of the Savior to come to Him, the promise of rest was repeated twice, with such a variation in the conditions as might have suggested that abiding rest could only be found in abiding in earnest.

First the Savior says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest"; the very moment you come, and believe, I will give you rest—the rest of pardon and acceptance—the rest in my love. But we know that all that God bestows needs time to become fully our own; it must be held fast, and appropriated, and assimilated into our inmost being; without this not even Christ's giving can make it our very own, in full experience and enjoyment. And so the Savior repeats His promise, in words which clearly speak not so much of the initial rest with which He welcomes the weary one who comes, but of the deeper and personally appropriated rest of the soul that abides with Him. He

now not only says, "*Come unto me*," but "*Take my yoke upon you and learn of me*"; become my scholars, yield yourselves to my training, submit in all things to my will, let your whole life be one with mine—in other words, "*Abide in me*."

Then He adds, not only, "*I will give*," but "*ye shall find rest to your souls*." The rest He gave at coming will become something you have really found and made your very own—the deeper, the abiding rest which comes from longer acquaintance and closer fellowship, from entire surrender and deeper sympathy. "*Take my yoke, and learn of me*," "*Abide in me*"—this is the path to abiding rest.

The rest is in Christ, and not something He gives apart from Himself, and so it is only in having Him that the rest can really be kept.

Do not these words of the Savior discover what you have perhaps often sought in vain to know, how it is that the rest you at times enjoy is so often lost. It must have been this: you had not understood how entire surrender to Jesus is the secret of perfect rest. Giving up one's whole life to Him, for Him alone to rule and order it; taking up His yoke, and submitting to be led and taught, to learn of Him; abiding in Him, to be and do only what He wills—these are the conditions of discipleship without which there can be no thought of maintaining the rest that was bestowed on first coming to Christ. The rest is in Christ, and not something He gives apart from Himself, and so it is only in having Him that the

rest can really be kept and enjoyed.

It is because so many a young believer fails to lay hold of this truth that the rest so speedily passes away. With some it is that they really did not know; they were never taught how Jesus claims the undivided allegiance of the whole heart and life; how there is not a spot in the whole of life over which He does not wish to reign; how in the very least things His disciples must only seek to please Him. They did not know how entire the consecration was that Jesus claimed. With others, who had some idea of what a very holy life a Christian ought to lead, the mistake was a different one: they could not believe such a life to be a possible attainment. Taking, and bearing, and never for a moment laying aside the yoke of Jesus, appeared to them to require such a strain of effort, and such an amount of goodness, as to be altogether beyond their reach.

The very idea of always, all day, abiding in Jesus, was too high something they might attain to after a life of holiness and growth, but certainly not what a feeble beginner was to start with.



They did not know how,
when Jesus said,
"My yoke is easy,"
He spoke the
truth; how just the
yoke gives the rest,

because the moment the soul yields itself to obey, the Lord Himself gives the strength and joy to do it. They did not notice how, when He said, "*Learn of me,*" He added, "*I am meek and lowly in heart,*" to assure them that His gentleness would meet their every need, and bear them as a mother bears her feeble child. Oh, they did not know that when He said, "*Abide in me,*" He only asked the surrender to Himself, His almighty love would hold them fast, and keep and bless them. And so, as some had erred from the want of full consecration, so these failed because they did not fully trust. These two, consecration and faith, are the essential elements of the Christian life—the giving up all to Jesus, the receiving all from Jesus. They are implied in each other; they are united in the one word—surrender. A full surrender is to obey as well as to trust, to trust as well as to obey.

With such misunderstanding at the outset, it is no wonder that the disciple's life was not one of such joy or strength as had been hoped. In some things you were led into sin without knowing it, because you had not learned how wholly Jesus wanted to rule you, and how you could not keep right for a moment unless you had Him very near you. In other things you knew what sin was, but had not the power to conquer, because you did not know or believe how entirely Jesus would take charge of you to keep and to help you. Either way, it was not long before the bright joy of your first love was lost, and your path, instead of being like the path of the just, shining more and more unto the perfect day, became like Israel's wandering in the desert ever on the way, never very far, and yet always coming short of the promised rest. Weary soul, since so many years driven to and fro like the panting hart, O come and learn this day the lesson that there is a spot where safety and victory, where peace and rest, are always sure, and that that spot is always open to thee—the heart of Jesus.

**Do not the arms of the
mother sustain and keep
the little one? And so it is
with Jesus.**

But, alas! I hear someone say, it is just this abiding in Jesus, always bearing His yoke, to learn of Him, that is so difficult, and the very effort to attain to this often disturbs the rest even more than sin or the world. What a mistake to speak thus, and yet how often the words are heard! Does it weary the traveler to rest in the house or on the bed where he seeks repose from his fatigue? Or is it a labor to a little child to rest in its mother's arms? Is it not the house that keeps the traveler within its shelter? Do not the arms of the mother sustain and keep the little one? And so it is with Jesus. The soul has but to yield itself to Him, to be still and rest in the confidence that His love has undertaken, and that His faithful-

Come, my brother, and let us this very day commence to accept the word of Jesus in all simplicity.

ness will perform, the work of keeping it safe in the shelter of His bosom. Oh, it is because the blessing is so great that our little hearts cannot rise to apprehend it; it is as if we cannot believe that Christ, the Almighty One, will in very deed teach and keep us all the day. And yet this is just what He has promised, for without this He cannot really give us rest. It is as our heart takes in this truth that, when He says, "*Abide in me,*" "*Learn of me,*" He really means it, and that it is His own work to keep us abiding when we yield ourselves to Him, that we shall venture to cast ourselves into the arms of His love, and abandon ourselves to His blessed keeping. It is not the yoke, but resistance to the yoke, that makes the difficulty; the whole-hearted surrender to Jesus, as at once our Master and our Keeper, finds and secures the rest.

Come, my brother, and let us this very day commence to accept the word of Jesus in all simplicity. It is a distinct command this: "*Take my yoke, and learn of me,*" "*Abide in me.*" A command has to be obeyed. The obedient scholar asks no questions about possibilities or results; he accepts every order in the confidence that his teacher has provided for all that is needed. The power and the perseverance to abide in the rest, and the blessing in abiding-it belongs to the Savior to see to this; 'tis mine to obey, 'tis His to provide. Let us this day in immediate obedience accept the command, and answer boldly, "Savior, I abide in Thee. At Thy bidding I take Thy yoke; I undertake the duty without delay; I abide in Thee." Let each consciousness of failure only give new urgency to the command, and teach us to listen more earnestly than ever till the Spirit again gives us to hear the voice of Jesus saying, with a love and authority that inspire both hope and obedience, "Child, abide in me."

That word, listened to as coming from Himself, will be an end of all doubting—a divine promise of what shall surely be granted. And with ever-increasing simplicity its meaning will be interpreted. Abiding in Jesus is nothing but the giving up of oneself to be ruled and taught and led, and so resting in the arms of Everlasting Love.

Blessed rest! The fruit and the foretaste and the fellowship of God's own rest! Found of them who thus come to Jesus to abide in Him. It is the peace of God, the great calm of the eternal world, that passeth all understanding, and that keeps the heart and mind. With this grace secured, we have strength for every duty, courage for every struggle, a blessing in every cross, and the joy of life eternal in death itself.

O my Savior! If ever my heart should doubt or fear again, as if the blessing were too great to expect, or too high to attain, let me hear Thy voice to quicken my faith and obedience: "*Abide in me*"; "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; ye shall find rest to your souls.*"

Prince of Peace, Control My Will

Prince of Peace, control my will;
Bid this struggling heart be still;
Bid my fears and doubtings cease,
Hush my spirit into peace.

Thou hast bought me with Thy blood,
Opened wide the gate to God:
Peace I ask, but peace must be,
Lord, in being one with Thee.

May Thy will, not mine, be done;
May Thy will and mine be one,
Chase these doubtings from my heart,
Now Thy perfect peace impart.

Saviour, at Thy feet I fall,
Thou my life, my God, my all!
Let Thy happy servant be
One forevermore with Thee.

Mary A. S. Barber

Come Ye Apart And Rest

–Jesse Estes

“And he said unto them, ‘Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while’: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.” (Mark 6:31)



This is a call Jesus gave to his disciples after a time of work. I would like to look at a part of God’s plan of rest for youth.

Christ calls us to dedicate our hearts totally to His control, leading, and guiding. Only this will bring inner peace, and a true fulfilled life. Often, though, we get anxious. We want things to happen that are not being done. This causes strife, unrest, and other forms of impatience to show in our lives.

Sometimes I feel like praying, “Lord, I want to get out of home life. I get tired of my responsibilities. I am weary of the same jobs day after day. Other youth my age are out doing great things for You. This is not fair. Our family struggles just to have right attitudes and be loving and harmonious. Lord, I want to be winning lost souls for you. They are going to hell. I don’t see the end of this.”

God has ordained for us to be in submission to our parents. Yes, we should always want to grow in the Lord, but that will not free us from obedience to our parents. I ask myself several questions whenever I feel restless.

1. Am I truly a born-again Christian? (We all know deep in our hearts.)
2. Have I wholly given everything to God?
3. Where has God placed me? (If we think about this, it is right where we are, unless we are in sin or rebellion.)
4. Do I have to know the “why” to everything

God allows in my life?

5. Am I dying daily and letting Christ use my vessel for anything He chooses?

6. Am I living by faith and trust?

7. Am I walking in humility, or trying in my own strength to do great things for God?

Let the Lord search your heart with these questions.

Can we be satisfied if we are out of God’s will? Jesus so fully loved and obeyed the Father that everything the Father said was “right.” *“For so it seemeth good in Thy sight.”* We understand not everything Jesus did was easy. We have our trials also. But, rest is divinely connected to the extent of our surrender and self-sacrifice. When we try to get our own way, spiritual victories and rest for our troubled souls will seem far away.

Jesus calls us to take His yoke and learn of Him. We cannot bring the gospel or even function properly at home if Jesus does not control us. Isn’t it wonderful to take a yoke from Jesus that is light? To me that is the rest for the people of God. Oh, that God would show us the greatness of His keeping power. We must obey Him willingly to find His peace. We say we love Him; how hard is it to do something for Someone we love?

Jesus wants us to carry His yoke in meekness and humility. This was the key to His life as He lived. Let us sincerely pray, “Yes Lord, I am here. I will carry Your yoke that is easy to bear. I know You have fulfillment and rest planned for me. I dedicate myself to Your purpose as I fulfill my role at home. By Your grace I will follow Your bidding and work until Your coming, for Your glory. Amen.”

Let us yield our bodies as a living sacrifice to Him, for the growth of peace in our families. When the Lord finds us faithful to Him in the

most monotonous places, with our imperfect family, He will reward us with much.

Rest in it, it's a promise.

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal 6:8-9)

Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Mt 11:25-30 AV)

"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." (Heb 4:9 AV)

Important Updates

We have a few **updates** to share with our readers. Josiah and Tyler have been led by the Lord to pursue some ministry training. They will be home during the summer. While we rejoice in God's leading for their lives, the circumstances have necessitated several changes for the *Abide Journal* and its staff. While they are gone, my sister, Rebecca, will be doing the layout, and I the correspondence. Josiah and Tyler will continue to edit, write, and give oversight.

Second: The editors of *Abide* have always funded a considerable part of the journal, but will no longer be able to give the same amount in the future. Therefore, **we will only publish *Abide* when funds become available**. We are still accepting all your submissions, so **please continue** to send material to us. In the past we have received enough donations to publish a 20 page issue two or three times a year. We will publish more or less as funds permit.

We covet your prayers for the journal as well as our families during this time of transition. May Christ be glorified in it all.

Correction: In Volume 3, Issue 1, page 13, the third verse of "The Love of God" reads, "and were the stars of parchment made." It should read, "and were the skies of parchment made."

Gleanings on Rest

Taken from "Streams in the Desert" Updated Edition

Two painters were once asked to paint a picture illustrating his own idea of rest. The first chose for his scene a quiet, lonely lake, nestled among mountains far



away. The second, using swift, broad strokes on his canvas, painted a thundering waterfall. Beneath the falls grew a fragile birch tree, bending over the foam. On its branches, nearly wet with the spray from the falls, sat a robin on its nest.

The first painting was simply a picture of stagnation and inactivity. The second, however, depicted rest.

Outwardly, Christ endured one of the most troubled lives ever lived. Storms and turmoil, turmoil and storms—wave after wave broke over Him until His worn body was laid in the tomb. Yet His inner life was as smooth as a sea of glass, and a great calm was always there.

Anyone could have gone to Him at any time and found rest. Even as the human bloodhounds were dogging Him in the streets of Jerusalem, He turned to His disciples, offering them a final legacy: "*My Peace*".

Rest is not some holy feeling that comes upon us in church. It is a state of calm rising from a heart deeply and firmly established in God."

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God, and not of us; we are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; pursued, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh."
(2 Cor. 4:7-11)

Thoughts From The Editor

Andrew Rocke

Rest? What does it mean? The Thorndike-Barnhart Dictionary gives fifteen definitions of the word. Definition number three says: “freedom from anything that tires, troubles, disturbs, or pains; quiet.” This gives me a good picture of the state of someone who is truly resting in Christ. Not that they have an easy road with no difficulties, but no matter what his state, whether “*to be abased*” or “*to abound*,” “*his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.*” So we see to be free from that which “tires, troubles, disturbs,” etc., we must be “trusting in the Lord.”

We are in the realm of rest when we see the word “trust,” for definition number ten is: “rely (on); trust (in); depend; be based.”

In Psalm 4:7-8, we read one of David’s definitions of rest. “*You have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased. I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.*” David really took one of the most obvious definitions of rest— sleep!



He says in Psalm 3:5-6
“I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people who have

set themselves against me all around.” Psalm 112:7, speaks of the godly man like this: “*He will not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is steadfast, trusting in the Lord.*” David’s confidence was not in himself. We read, “*Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God.*” (Psalm 146:5)

David refused to fear, and thus he could so easily sleep, without thought of his own safety whether pursued by Saul, or running for his life from Absalom. (Which is when he wrote the words to Psalm 3) Even if he was not in these dangerous

circumstances, David could sleep without worry over tomorrow, care about projects or anxiousness over illness, etc. He knew that God was in control of all things and God was with him; nothing would happen outside of God’s will.

If this is our case, what should we fear? David says, “*I will fear no evil; for You are with me.*”

Freedom from that which “tires, troubles, disturbs, or pains,” comes only from relying on and trusting in God. Some of our trouble and pain is self-inflicted from sin, but in Christ where no sin can exist, we are free from these.

Rest and peace are not dictated by circumstances. Jim Bowers’ circumstances certainly would not dictate love and forgiveness, (See *Peace in the Midst of Pain*) but Jim Bowers was not governed by circumstances, but by God. Those like Mr. Bowers, who are resting in Christ, will not be able to retaliate in anger for, “*he who abides in love abides in God.*”

The trouble is that we often don’t rest or abide in Christ. We are disturbed, troubled, afraid of evil tidings, and we know our hearts are not steadfast—our hearts are filled with doubts and fears. We must learn to trust Christ whatever our lot

We cannot trust man for protection and peace. “*Do not put your trust in princes, nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help.*” We must put our trust in God. God does not promise us an easy road; He promises us Himself. Psalm 125:1-2 says, “*Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever. As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds His people.*”

I close with a verse on the blessedness of resting in Christ.

“Though an army may encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.”

Where Peace Rests

Joanna Marini

Sunshine came streaming over the mountain, sending a cheery wake-up call to the creatures of the woods. The leaves hanging about the boughs of the wise, old trees nodded to each other, as the dancing beams of sunlight poured through the spaces. It was morning.



The little house awoke as the windows welcomed the light. It was a quaint little house. A sweet looking place; surrounded with

a great many trees and abundant flowers, violets, peonies, lilacs, and nigh the house, roses, climbing up the open windows and nodding their dewy heads to greet the day. The little house stood expectantly, waiting for the inhabitants to rise.

7:00 In the living room, the voice of the grandfather clock sounded, deep, mellow, and strong. Down the hall with light, quick steps came the lady of the house, and into the kitchen she bustled, squeezing oranges, frying sausages, singing, humming and whistling by turns.

7:30. Prayers had been said, washed faces shone, and breakfast was wafting a tantalizing aroma, bringing in a hurry the man of the house and five merry children who gathered 'round the table, and sang a hymn of thanksgiving.

8:30. The dishes were dripping in the drainer; the floor was nicely swept, and off went the family, some to their play and some to work.

9:00. The lady of the house was polishing, wiping, and arranging until the little house shone with tidy brilliance.

And the walls looked on and talked. They spoke of the

friendly guests who came and lingered, of the jokes they'd heard, (clean ones, mind), of the gymnastics they'd seen with grandpa, the man, and his sons, and they chuckled. Funny sights, indeed. They remembered the earnest prayers they'd heard ascending to heaven and the silent tears they'd seen. The sweet little tableaux they'd seen when the man and the lady had first come there, warm hugs and kisses, and how the man and the lady still did sweet things for one another.

The walls reminisced about dear old grandpa blessing the bride and groom on their wedding day as a crowd of friends came for a house warming party. It had been a touching scene. Dear old grandpa had raised his hands to heaven and asked God to fill the little house with His peace, to keep the house with His love, make life there contentment and joy, and that all who came might sense the presence of God. The walls stood silent and thoughtful as they remembered those scenes.

The walls talked of the furniture; even the blanket thrown over the puffy couch had a hospitable look to it. The tabby cat had a fondness for rubbing guest's feet and legs, and would come purring as guests sat on the comfortable chairs residing in the room.

A sweet looking place; surrounded with a great many trees and abundant flowers, violets, peonies, lilacs, and nigh the house, roses.

The piano! Ah, many were the lively songs, quiet airs, and sincere hymns played there, often with friends gathered around singing. Every evening found the family, in a semi-circle around the piano, singing a hymn with the eldest daughter accompanying.

12:00. The walls stopped talking. In came a merry troop of hungry school children, and out of the very generous refrigerator, food taken and eaten at an astonishing rate, (How it did the walls good to see such hale and hearty appetites.) Oh! for the stamping of boots and the run-

ning about, the smearing of mustard and jelly, the shouts of laughter, friendly teasing and funny chattering that went on. Then the lady of the house assumed a more military semblance as she ordered in a rather loud voice, (as one would find necessary to be heard in such a racket) to commence disaster relief. So off they went to their respective chores, some washing, some sweeping, and some putting away. Gradually the two little rooms, the kitchen and diner were put to rights and the little house breathed a recovered sigh.

The more nocturnal books were pulled from the shelves and had their wise and edifying contents pored over.

1:00. It was time for naps. The little house stood quiet and sleepy, Tabby purred as if one-`o-clock was her favorite hour. The more nocturnal books were pulled from the shelves and had their wise and edifying contents pored over by those bookish; as was nearly everyone in the little house.

2:00. Everyone was up and outdoors for exercise. The two playful puppies, Bertie and Bonnie, joined in the games, while Tabby observed from the big windowsill in a grandmotherly sort of way.

2:30. Back to school.

The walls resumed their conversation. Now they talked of the quarrels they'd seen, for the family was surely not perfect, such little naggings and irritations, disrespectfulness and impertinence as went on, dear me! But then, as the man and the lady had taught their dear ones by example, precept, and pain, the walls recollected the humble apologies they'd seen, and the forgiving hugs that went 'round. The walls said how remarkable it was that after those scenes, it seemed the offender and the offended were best of friends. Astonishing, indeed!

3:30. In the kitchen such an interesting assort-

ment of projects commenced! Here were three youngsters engrossed in a batch of cookie dough, and there the lady and a small boy were stirring and testing the soothing properties of chicken soup, a lone child putting muffins into a basket. These comfortable things were made complete with a great bunch of daffodils, for they have a way with sick folks, you know. This was all for Mrs. Crockenhoffer, who was ill.

Down the street the family went like so many angels of mercy to the door of the big house, home of the rather disagreeable old crank, we are sorry to say. After a rather unwelcoming hello from the ill woman, they gathered around her, sang a song of cheer, and put the eatables on her barren table.



No flowers graced the big, wide house. The air was thick with gloom, as if all the happiness had been squeezed out of existence. The big old couch seemed to say, "Don't sit on me", the drapes hung stiff and stern to frighten away any daring little sunbeams, and the old cat spit and glowered in a dreadfully forbidding way.

The old invalid was all a flutter of "Well, I never!" "Dear me!" and other mixed up phrases of gratitude and fluster. They stayed and amused her with merry chatter and little services.

The walls of Mrs. Crockenhoffer's house watched. It was astonishing to see such generosity and cheerfulness, the laughter of the children seemed to penetrate through their very thickness, and it felt wonderful.

The scenes they had seen from year to year: the wretched quarrels, the prideful silence when wrong was done, (nobody would ever say they were sorry), and the loneliness that came. The walls had never seen the family pray. (For years ago, there had been family there, but the children had all grown up and left, and poor Mr. Crockenhoffer had died.)

Neither had they seen the family help one another with work or play. Music, with its cheerful encouragement never seemed to find a home there, and any sort of affection was foreign. Everything had an air of frightful unhappiness.

The south wall said to the east, west, and north walls, "Dear me! How sad things are here! Why even we stand caved and cracked with weariness for the years of trouble we've seen within us. I wonder why?"

The north wall said, (because he was very observant) "It seems to me the dark secret is engraved upon the plaque on the west wall. See there? "I did it my way." " The south, east, and the west walls sighed sadly and agreed.

4:00. Back home went the lady and sobered children, along with a profound little lecture from the woman, who seized the teachable moment, on how being sweet and kind when we are young produces kind sweetness when we are old, and the opposite is quite true. People ought to take heed to such examples as they see.



Then ensued a scurrying to clean up before "dear papa" came home. The careful setting of the table, adorned

with a few glowing candles. There was stirring, tasting and concern on the part of the young cooks that supper might be "just right."

5:00. The door opened and creaked out a welcome as if happy to see the kind, hard-working man. Funny laughs and tussling yelps from the wee ones and a general smothering of hugs went 'round. Then stories on his knee were told and a good many laughs shared together.

5:30. All hands were holding another's around the table, a prayer was going up in thanks as the food steamed, the ice tinkled in the glasses, and the candles flickered their amens. The walls stood and listened in respectful, reverent quietness.

And then the eating! It was a regular feast. With sundry reminders to each other "Say please" and "Thank you!" they got on with supper in a most pleasant way. After all tummies were satisfied, they leaned back in their chairs and talked, chattered, and laughed.

6:30. Hats off to the industrious! The entire fam-

ily could be seen scraping plates, washing dishes, sweeping, singing, talking, cleaning up together.

7:00. Over came some friends, and with them, chattering and music. Stories and snacks and a prayer all 'round when it was time to go.

9:30. Time for warm baths, more stories, prayers, such as would touch a very hard heart. Hugs, kisses, and goodnights followed. Pillows were fired at this boy and that girl. Even the lady was a very good shot and applied one of those comfortable weapons right to the head of the man! Ta-da! A regular rouser of a fight, a very good natured one to be sure, and then the goodnights had to be said all over again with a few peacemaking kisses, and the lights were put out. Sweet slumber overtook them.

A storm rumbled through. Lightening flashed, thunder rolled in the distant sky. Rain came in torrents.

10:00. A storm rumbled through. Lightening flashed, thunder rolled in the distant sky. Rain came in torrents, dashing the heads of the roses against the house, scattering their soft petals over the ground, and causing the trees to creak and moan. But inside, it was cozy and warm; there was no storm within. All was warm and safe, peace and quiet, but for the sounds outside.

The walls conversed. The north wall said to the east, west, and south walls, "How nice a family lives here! Such things we have to watch and hear! I wondered today how such things could be, that even we, walls, can glow with an atmosphere of love, happiness, and peace. Not only we, but the hospitable couches and chairs, and the merry little stove and the generous table. How did we escape the life of the walls of Mrs. Crockenhoffer's house? Alas! Dear me! How can these things be?"

And the south wall, which didn't talk very much, but had very keen eyes and ears, spoke from his deep store of wisdom and experience. "Aye. There is a secret to these differences. Look upon the east wall. See

the plaque? There is the verse that graces this home. It says, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." The man put it up when he first wed the lady, and they have lived by it ever since."

"I was listening tonight when the jolly party was here, and another verse was read. It spoke of the man who dug deep, and laid the foundation upon a rock and built his house. When the water rose up and beat vehemently upon that house, it stood. For it was founded upon a rock. And another verse, "Peace be to this house. And if the Son of Peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it."

The Son of Peace is here, He is the Rock of this house, and peace rests upon it

"The Son of Peace is here, He is the Rock of this house, and peace rests upon it. It is the peace of Jesus. He gives it, and they accept it. They follow those things which make for peace. That, friends, is the secret."

The north, east, and west walls gladly agreed.

10:30. The storm blew past. The roses and the trees shook the rain off their drenched heads. The walls stood firm, and slept in peace. Sweet peace.

Joanna Marini, Age 17 ~ 12th Grade.

The Bush and the Tree, con't

he will never thirst again, for Christ will never leave us or forsake us. (John 4:14, Hebrews 13:5)

Such a tree "*will not fear when the heat comes.*" The heat cannot scorch or whither it for no matter what the weather may be, the stream is still there, still cold, still flowing, still fresh. Though the air around it may change, though the sun may burn upon it like flame, the stream remains, and so its life is secure. When one trusts in Christ, though his situations may

change and the world about him be thrown into hysteria, he need not fear. He does not hope in the folly of man, but in the truth of Christ. It is his unfailling foundation, and it will not fail.



"Its leaves will be green." (v. 8) Green leaves mean that the tree is healthy and alive. It is well watered. Could it be any other way. For this tree is by the stream, with its roots reaching down into the water. The stream gives it life and vigor that it could not otherwise have. As the stream is the life of the tree, so Jesus is our life.

"And it will not be anxious in a year of drought." The drought that afflicts the world around it cannot harm the tree. Lack of rain cannot harm it, for it does not depend on rain. When a man puts absolute, childlike trust in Jesus, then the moods and circumstances around him will no more affect him than the drought affects the tree. For, like the stream, Jesus will always be beside him, giving him life.

"Nor cease to yield fruit." Not only is the tree alive, it is bearing fruit. The bush in the desert can barely stay alive; the tree by the water produces more life. Not even a drought can stop it. The world may be dry and miserable, unable to survive let alone produce; the tree by the water goes on bearing fruit. So is the man who trusts in the Lord. He reaches down into the depths of Christ's life and love and grace, and receives what he could never achieve on his own.

It is not because of any virtue of the tree that it bears fruit, but it is because of the life it receives from the stream. When one trusts in the Lord, it is not his own well being or marvelous abilities that can save him. A man who trusts in those is like a bush in the desert. When we send our roots down into who Christ is—the Son of God—and what He has done—given His life for ours—then we are borne by His infinite and inexorable life. A man is better and greater by trusting in the Lord, for the Lord is greater than he. By trusting in Jesus Christ, we can be truly and richly alive.

Peace In The Midst of Pain

Based on the Book *If God Should Choose*

April 20, 2001

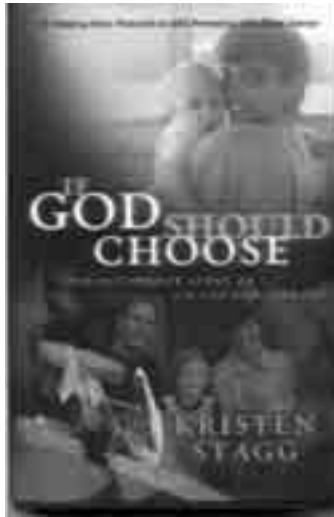
The morning sun glinted off the shiny Cessna. Inside, missionaries Jim and Roni Bowers were returning home from a business trip to Brazil. They were about an hour from their home in the jungles of Peru.

Jim was sitting near the front holding their small daughter, Charity. He turned and glanced at the back seat and smiled at the sight of his wife and son sleeping peacefully. How he loved his dear godly wife! Because of her, they had been able to accomplish much during the past months. The two of them made a beautiful team.

He thought back over the short time they had been on the mission field. The mission assigned them to oversee a group of churches scattered along the Amazon River.

To simplify the task, Jim and Roni had built their own houseboat to travel as a family up and down the river. Jim dreamed of the day when these small churches would multiply and this wild land would be full of born again Peruvians. By God's grace, he and Roni would do everything possible to reach the dear Indian people they loved so much. Noticing that Roni had awakened; Jim turned and handed his little daughter to his wife in the back seat.

Seconds later as he was gazing out the plane window, a Peruvian military plane suddenly came into view



Seconds later as he was gazing out the plane window, a Peruvian military plane suddenly came into view. He asked Roni to wake up their son Cory so he could see it. Jim knew how excited his son would be to see a real army plane. They watched the plane as it flew to the side of them for a brief moment before dropping behind out of sight.

The last view Jim caught of the plane he saw what he thought looked like smoke coming from the front of the fighter plane. Suddenly their quiet ride was shattered by a ray of bullets blasting through the side of the plane.

As the plane plummeted towards the jungle, the pilot quickly shut off the engine and fuel lines. He desperately tried to guide the plane towards the river, so he could land the floatplane on the water. Although the pilot had shut off the fuel, one of the bullets had struck a fuel line and suddenly the cabin engulfed in flames.

Jim grabbed a fire extinguisher and frantically began to try to put it out. As he fought the flames, he glanced to the back where his wife and daughter had been sitting. His dear wife was slumped over, lying far too still. His precious daughter lay on the floor in a pool of blood. His heart broke.

April 27, 2001

The crowd sat in tense anticipation as the man they had been waiting to hear, strode to the front of the room. The room was packed with people from every imaginable source. Politicians, relatives, friends, news reporters, and people from across the globe filled the room. Even a Peruvian official sat in the front row as a symbol of those who caused this seemingly senseless tragedy. What would a man who had been the object of such pain and sorrow have to say?

The world was watching as Jim Bowers mounted the platform. Here was his chance to lash back and demand retaliation on those who had caused this tragedy.

He proceeded to thank person after person for their kindness since the tragedy

As he began to speak, every eye riveted to his face. Every ear strained to hear his words. What he proceeded to share shocked many: "I want to thank . . ." were his first four words.

He proceeded to thank person after person for their kindness since the tragedy. He included those who were responsible for the accident. He was deeply thankful to God for sparing his son who had not yet given his heart to the Lord. He had no tone of bitterness. His voice rang with forgiveness, thankfulness and hope.

Wasn't he heartbroken? Yes, of course. But there was a hope inside of him that was alive! No tragedy could steal it from him. Jim Bowers had peace in the midst of pain. He had triumph in the face of tragedy. Jim had Jesus instead of despair.

"All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purposes." Romans 8:28

People everywhere were asking why God would allow such a tragedy. But Jim's faith in God sus-

tained him, and it did not take long to see some of the good that God brought out of the tragedy.

In the days, weeks, and months following the death of his wife and daughter, Jim Bower had countless opportunities to share his faith. The president invited him to the White House. The governor sent him a personal letter. Politicians, celebrities and the national media clambered to hear from him. Although Jim's dreams of reaching the Peruvian people seemed crushed, Bible Colleges across the U.S. asked Jim to come and share his testimony.

Hundreds of young people dedicated their lives to taking the gospel to the unreached after hearing Jim's story of dedication and sacrifice. Countless lives were affected as they saw Jim's attitude in spite of what he had been through. How could he do it? Jim knew a secret that most people know nothing about.

Many Christians do not even understand it. It is the secret of abiding in Christ. It is a secret that we at Abide Magazine have caught a glimpse of, and have experienced in a small way. God's awesome plan for every believer is that they would find all of the resources they need in Christ.

If Jim had not been trusting and resting in Christ in the midst of all the pain, he would have responded like any other "normal" person. He would have responded in anger, bitterness, and hate.

Although our personalities differ, none of us possess the kind of strength it takes to go through such a tragedy without bitterness. None of us that is, unless we are abiding in Christ. Just as a grape cannot exist without the vine, so a Christian cannot live as a Christian unless he is abiding in Christ.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

REJOICE IN THE LORD!

**“Lord, you will
establish peace for us,
for You have also done
all our works in us.”**

Isaiah 26:12

In This Issue... Abiding in Christ—Rest for Your Soul

Abide

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