

# The Secret of the Abiding Life

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**Purpose** – Encourage and present hope.

There are lessons in life that we *will* learn! God is going to teach us one way or the other, we can learn it the easy; or the hard way: “Without Me ye can do nothing” John 15:4, 5

Abide – Maintain a living communion, as a vine is entwined about a tree – to be one with – as a branch is one with the vine – the sap of life flows freely from the vine to the branch and the branch produces fruit naturally – Colossians 1:28-29 JBP

God desires to have an intimate, personal relationship with every one of us – so precious is our fellowship to Him that He was willing to die to obtain it – John 3:16

**Problem** – Why are most Christians not experiencing the results of a fruitful union with Christ? If they were, how would you know? “Wherefore, by their fruits you will know them.” Matthew 7:20

What kind of “fruit”? Galatians 5:22, 23 – Character; Romans 1:13 – soul winning (I Timothy 2:4) and discipleship (Romans 8:29), “I do not want you to be **unaware**; brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some *fruit* among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles”. Are they growing to be more like Him? Are their lives producing for the Kingdom?

Psalms 1:2-3 – “bring forth its *fruit* in its season”

Psalms 92:14-16 LB - bear *fruit* in old age

Fruit = “the effect or consequence of an action or operation”:

- Labor – sowing, reaping, harvest
- Lips that give thanks to His Name
- Loins – children, fruit of the womb
- Actions – Isaiah 3:10
- God will punish the fruit of an arrogant heart – Isaiah 10:12
- Injustice, as the fruit of lies – Hosea 10:13
- In keeping with repentance – Matthew 3:8
- Indicates a good tree from a bad one
- Proof of Discipleship – John 15:8

Type A Personality – Many see competitiveness as the main characteristic. According to research, the following characteristics are the hallmark characteristics of Type A Behavior:

- Time urgency and impatience, as demonstrated by people who, among other things, get frustrated while waiting in line, interrupt others often, walk or talk at a rapid pace, and are always painfully aware of the time and how little of it they have to spare.
- Free-Floating Hostility or Aggressiveness, which shows up as impatience, rudeness, being easily upset over small things, or “having a short fuse”, for example.
- Competitiveness.
- Strong Achievement-Oriented

**The Solution** – Romans 8:1-4

Christ’s life lived through you! Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:13

Old Covenant vs. New Covenant – According to Dr. C.I. Scofield, “The New Covenant...is ‘better’ than the Mosaic Covenant (Exodus 19:5) ... It is established upon ‘better’ (i.e. unconditional) promises. In the Mosaic Covenant God said, ‘*If ye will*’; in the New Covenant He says, ‘*I will...*’ (Hebrews 8:10, 12). The New Covenant rests upon the sacrifice of Christ ..... it is absolutely unconditional and, since no responsibility is by it committed to man, it is final and irreversible.”

“Everything coming from God; nothing coming from me.”

“Everything God requires, He provides!” Russell McKnight

Examples: Faith – Required: Hebrews 11:6 – Provided: Ephesians 2: 8, 9  
Good Works – Required: Matthew 5:16 – Provided: Ephesians 2:10  
Righteousness – Required: - Provided: II Corinthians 5:2 1  
Holiness – Required: Leviticus 19:2 – Provided: Ephesians 1:4  
Good Provider – Required: I Timothy 5:8 – Provided: Psalms 127:2 (TEB)  
Fruitfulness – John 15 – Provided: Mark 4:26-29 JBP  
Others?

“They Found the Secret” by V. Raymond Edman published by Zondervan

J. Hudson Taylor: “The Exchanged Life!”  
Samuel Logan Brengle: “The Cleansed Life!”  
John Bunyan: “The Unchained Life!”  
Oswald Chambers: “The Highest Life!”  
Dwight L. Moody: “The Dynamic Life!”  
Andrew Murray: “The Abiding Life!”  
Charles G. Trumbull: “The Victorious Life!”  
W. Ian Thomas: “The Adventurous Life!”  
Charles Stanley: “The Wonderful Spirit Filled Life!”

The Pattern:

- They believed on the Savior, yet.....
- Life characterized by burden and bewilderment; unfaithful and unfruitful, always yearning for a better way and never achieving by their efforts a better life.
- Crisis! (Brokenness)
- They experienced unconditional surrender to the Savior (in their inner most depths).
- They found the Holy Spirit to be an unfailing fountain of life and refreshment.
- Thereafter, life was never again the same!
- New Life had been exchanged for Old.

Illustration: New Jaguar by Ray Stedman

“Absolute Surrender” by Andrew Murray published by Whitaker House

In his chapter entitled “Impossible with Man, Possible with God”, Murray states:

“Peter spent three years in Christ’s school, and he never learned, *it is impossible*, until he had denied his Lord, went out, and wept bitterly. Then he learned it.

“Just look for a moment at a man who is learning this lesson. At first, he fights against it. Then, he submits to it, but reluctantly and in despair. At last, he accepts it willingly and rejoices in it. At the beginning of the Christian life, the young convert has no conception of this truth. He has been converted; he has the joy of the Lord in his heart; he begins to run the race and fight the battle. He is sure he can conquer, for he is earnest and honest, and God will help him. Yet, somehow, very soon he fails where he did not expect it, and sin gets the better of him. He is disappointed, but he thinks; ‘I was not cautious enough. I did not make my resolutions strong enough.’ And again he vows, and again he prays, and yet he fails.....

“At a later period, he comes to another state of mind. He begins to see such a life as impossible, but he does not accept it..... [finally] he gives way to despair. He will do his best, but never expect to get on very far.

“But God leads His children on to a third stage. A man comes to take, *it is impossible*, in its full truth, and yet at the same time says: ‘I must do it, and I will do it – it is impossible for man and yet I must do it.’ In intense longing and prayer [he] begins to cry to God: ‘Lord, what is the meaning of this? How am I to be freed from the power of sin?’ cp. Romans 7:23-25 LB.

“...Let us receive this as the first great lesson in the spiritual life; ‘It is impossible for me, my God. Let there be an end of the flesh and all its powers, an end of self, and let it be my glory to be helpless.

*“Praise God for the divine teaching that makes us helpless!”*

Illustrations: Exodus 14:14; II Chronicles 20:15; Judges 6, 7 (Gideon), etc.

### **The Prescription:**

- I. Know – that in His Resurrection, you are in Christ and Christ is in you (John 14:20), as united as a branch is to the vine (John 15:5), as united as a body is with its head (Colossians 1:18). You are always with me in actual presence (Matthew 18:20).
- II. Reckon – That whatever God requires of you, He will accomplish it in you weakness by His strength and by His infinite grace.
- III. Present (Yield) – When this point of knowing and reckoning is reached, presenting yourself, your whole life, to God as alive from the dead and your members as being instruments of righteousness to Him follows (Romans 6:13). Give yourself over to abiding in Jesus (John 15:5), living in His presence and resting in loving fellowship with and obedience to Him. If there’s a hindrance to presenting your whole life to God, tell Him you’re willing for Him to make you willing. He wants to do this (Philippians 2:13).