**Sermon/Abiding in Christ**

Takoma Park, Maryland

May 15, 1909

Sermon by Mrs. E. G. White, given Sabbath, May 15, 1909, in the Pavilion, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

“I am the true Vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.” [John 15:1, 2.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 1**

When the purging comes, we frequently feel that the Lord is against us. Instead of this we should look to ourselves and see if there is not something we have left undone or something we need to take away from our lives before we can **stand in right relation to God**. We should let nothing interpose between us and the beams of light that will come to every one of us if we will comply with the conditions specified. We do not want to be the branch that shall be taken away, but the branch that shall produce fruit.**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 2**

“Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in Me.” [Verses 3, 4.] **It is for our present and eternal interest that we understand these words.** **Do we let our petitions come up before God daily?** **Do we realize that we must have an abiding Christ if we would represent Christ to the world in our speech, in our characters, and in all our dealings with our fellow men?** **When this is our experience, we shall not be found fruitless.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 3**

“I am the Vine,” the Saviour continues, “ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.” [Verses 5, 6.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 4**

**How important it is that we so relate ourselves to our Creator and to our Redeemer that the influence we exert shall represent Christ and represent the Father.** God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that those who abide in Christ might become the sons of God. Everything is at stake here. What will you do about it, my brethren and sisters? Are you going to let worldly ideas, worldly customs and practices, come into your lives and characters? Are you going to study what this one or that one will say? Or are you looking to the One who so loved the world that He did not withhold from us His only begotten Son. **God gave Christ to the world to reveal to men that humanity united with divinity could overcome the temptations that are in the world through lust.** **This union we must experience.** We must be living branches of the True Vine, daily laying hold of our Redeemer, that we may bear the fruits of a Christian character. Christ is our only hope. “I am the Vine,” He declares, “ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without Me ye can do nothing.” [Verse 5.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 5**

“I in him.” It is of the greatest importance that you abide in Christ, and that in your humanity you lay hold upon divinity. **Unless you take hold by living faith of His divine power, you will miss that life that measures with the life of God. We cannot afford to miss that life. We cannot afford to live careless, indifferent, selfish lives; for such God cannot accept.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 6**

God has given Christ as a pattern of what our lives should be. Do you see Him walking in the streets and looking upon and pitying the sick? His heart is drawn out in compassion for them. He weeps for the afflicted and the suffering. He draws them close to His heart of love and heals them. Consider the great company that on one occasion followed Him, growing in numbers until there were five thousand men besides women and children. There was such attraction in his words that they could not leave Him. Finally turning to His disciples, He says to them, These are weary; they must rest, and bids that the company sit down on the greensward all prepared for them. He says to the disciples, Have you something for them to eat? One replied, “There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?” The Saviour bade the disciples bring the food to Him, and breaking it into pieces, He gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the hungry multitude. They ate and were satisfied. Then “He said unto His disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.” [Mark 6:38; John 6:9, 12, 13.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 7**

**This was the work of our Lord upon the earth.** **He could do these miracles because His humanity was united to divinity. What we need in all our sanitariums is a faith that abides in Christ, that lays hold upon His power, that is obedient to Him, and that leads us to take up the cross of self-denial and self-sacrifice. This unites the soul to Christ and makes us one with Him.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 8**

**To every one of us the Lord holds out this privilege if we will cut away our wrong habits and practices. There are many who think that they can retain their wrong habits, their perverted appetites and passions, and at the last get into a condition of self-denial.** **But the longer selfishness is practiced, the harder it is to break away from it. *What the Lord wants now is men and women who have the missionary spirit***, **who understand why Christ gave His life, why He laid off His royal robe and kingly crown, and came to the world as a little child, to be brought up in poverty.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 9**

The Lord has the power to forgive the sins of every soul in this congregation, if you will repent of your backslidings, if you will turn to the Lord and will cut away from your lives wrong habits and dispositions and your hardness of heart. What you need is the humanity that was in Christ Jesus that laid hold upon divinity. Take hold upon that divinity and bring it into your life, and you will be a savor of life unto life. Every one of us should stand in that position where we can receive a commission from God. Will you not come into that place? Will you not humble your souls before God, that you may comprehend and respond to the immense sacrifice that has been made in your behalf?**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 10**

“If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you,” the Saviour said, “ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples. As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.” [John 15:7-9.] There is peace to be found in continuing in Christ’s love, and in daily carrying out the conditions upon which our salvation depends.**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 11**

**What can you do in the work of saving the lost unless Christ imbues you with His divine power?** A little is being done in our world; but O that the good work might spread abroad and reach every needy soul. O that the present truth might be proclaimed in every city. This great need is kept before me night and day. Some nights I cannot sleep. I seem to be proclaiming to companies as large as this the great salvation, the great power of God, the great glory to be obtained by the exercise of a living faith. **We need to lay hold of Jesus Christ, that we may have the power to become the sons and daughters of God.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 12**

**There is something for each one of us to do. It is no use to talk of being Christians if we leave unhelped those who are perishing all around us.** To me has been presented something of the great needs of the people. **On this journey to Washington I did not expect to speak in many places, but when I got within reach of the people, I could not help doing all I could.** My soul was so drawn out with earnest hope, with confidence that they would receive the message, that I spoke the Word to the white people and to the colored people whenever opportunity was given me. I thank God that I did not **neglect the colored people.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 13**

**“Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit: so shall ye be My disciples.”** [Verse 8.] **It is fruit that Christ wants.** ***When we are willing to practice self-denial and self-sacrifice, as Christ practiced it in His life, we shall bear fruit to God’s glory.*** **Often after a day of toil, although tired and worm with labor, while His disciples were sleeping, His voice could be heard all through the night, pleading with the Father that He would clear the highway, that the words of the living God might reach the multitudes, and that they might lay hold of the truth. Such labor as this costs something. It does not mean the making of a little sacrifice. It costs much to be men and women of God.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 14**

**Men and women are going forth more and more to carry the gospel message.** We thank God for this, but we need a greater awakening. We slide back into self-indulgence; we do not exercise to the utmost power the virtues that Christ has promised if we ask for them in faith. That which we receive from Christ we must give to others. Just as surely as we receive, so surely we must give. None who receive the grace of Christ can keep it to themselves. As soon as Christ becomes an abiding presence in the heart, we shall not be able to see souls perishing in ignorance of the truth, and be at rest. We will make any sacrifice that we may reach them; and there are none of us so poverty-stricken but that we can make sacrifices for Christ daily.**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 15**

**It is our privilege to see the work of God advancing in our cities. Christ is waiting, waiting for places to be entered; and who are preparing for this work? We will not say that we are destitute of laborers. We are glad that there are some; but there is a greater, a far greater work to be done in our cities. Far greater self-denial is to be practiced in order that the Word of life may be carried from place to place.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 16**

On my journey to Washington I had some experience in going, not only to the highways, but also to the hedges. I saw something of the work that is being done in the mission schools near Nashville. **Little companies of workers are going out into the mountains and laboring for those who have not heard the message, and here and there little companies of believers are being raised up.** **Who would dare to put their hand on such workers and say, You must not labor thus; it costs too much. Can it cost anything that will begin to compare with the sacrifice that Christ made in order to save perishing souls?** *My brethren and sisters, I ask you in the name of Jesus of Nazareth to take your light from under the bushel, and let it shine forth, that others may be profited.* **We must let our light shine forth in our actions. If we will seek to do this, the light of heaven will surely abide with us, and we shall stand on vantage ground.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 17**

***It is worth everything to be where you can reach out the hand of faith, and say, “Lord, lead me; guide me; direct me in every place where I shall go.” It is the duty of every soul to look to God for guidance, to be taught of God, to be led by God, and to do the work of God intelligently.*24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 18**

**The Saviour declares, “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments, and abide in His love.” [Verse 10.] He compares Himself and His work and experience of abiding with the Father with the experience and work to which He has ordained us, because He represents humanity and divinity combined. It is our privilege to lay hold of the divine nature and say, “Lord, you promised it. We ask Thee to give us a spirit of self-denial and self-sacrifice. Help us to understand what it means to abide in Thee.”24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 19**

**To abide in Christ means that you shall be a partaker of the divine nature.** Humanity lays hold upon divinity, and you have divine power. ***But if you cling to old habits and practices of self-indulgence, and refuse to carry the burden of souls, you will lose your own soul.*** You will not value your own soul highly, and you will not carry on a straightforward work. **It is the privilege of every believer to purify his soul, that he may have that life that measures with the life of God in the kingdom of glory.** **This is what we all desire—to live through the ages of eternity in the kingdom of glory. But we can never do it if we continue to follow our own habits and inclinations. O that this burden might be rolled upon souls, and that they might realize that if they will be overcomers, they can help others to overcome.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 20**

“These things have I spoken unto you,” the Saviour said, “that My joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.” [Verse 11.] **The work of overcoming is not a joyless work; no, indeed. It means communication with heaven.** You can go to God in prayer; you can ask, and receive; you can believe, hanging your helpless soul on Christ. It means that humanity can work the will and ways of God. Humanity and divinity are combined for this very purpose. O what a different world we should have if every professed Christian would come to Christ just as he is, practice self-denial, permit the fruitless branches to be cut away, and the good branches to be improved. Such an experience of constantly abiding in Christ would result in souls being brought to a knowledge of the truth. Let the petition come up before God, “Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do today? Let Thy light shine upon me.” **Terrible trials are to come upon our world, and the world is preparing itself for this. We too must be prepared, that we may have the protection of our heavenly Father. And if we lose our life in the conflict, let us have faith to believe that it will be restored to us again.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 21**

“This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. ... **Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, he may give it you. These things I command you, that ye love one another.”** [Verses 12, 13, 16, 17.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 22**

This was the purpose for which Christ came into the world. Read of His sufferings, of what He bore in order that we might have eternal life. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him might have eternal life. [John 3:16.] That “whosoever” is firm and sure and broad. He that will follow on to know the Lord, should know that His goings forth are prepared as the morning. **My brethren and sisters, let the world see the love of Christ manifested in your lives. This will have a tremendous influence, and souls will take knowledge of you that you have been with Jesus and learned of Him.** Do not feel that you must follow the world’s fashions and copy its indifference. Lay hold upon the Mighty One. Consider the work to be done for the souls that are perishing all around us. Heaven will unite with you in working for them.**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 23**

**“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated Me before it hated you.** If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.” [John 15:18, 19.] ***Why this hatred? Because by your consistent life you condemn the worldling’s course of action.*** **He wants to act like the world, to serve the world; and you are serving God. Your life is a reproach to him, and therefore your influence is hated.24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 24**

“Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for My name’s sake, because they know not Him that sent Me. If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.” [Verses 20-22.]**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 25**

**The unity existing between Christ and His followers is to be as much greater than now exists, as you can possibly comprehend.** **When you have that unity, you will have power.** **Angels will minister through your words and through your works in every place where you are.** There will be revealed a living connection with the living God who rules in heaven and in earth. He wants you to come into right relation to Him. Here is the Word, my brethren, (holding up the Bible). Open this Word to your children; present it in your schools; present it, I beseech you, wherever you are; and live by the Word of God. Here is life; here is salvation. Take your light from under the bushel, and give life and light to the world. God help us that we may arouse from our state of stupor.**24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par. 26**

O, that at this meeting we might seek the Lord most earnestly, and that the great blessing of God might come upon each one of us! Make a covenant with God by sacrifice. You may feel that you make sacrifices; but if you go where I have been, in the highways and hedges, your compassion will be stirred by what you see. May God help us, that we may work to the point. We need to pray, and to pray in faith. We need to carry forward the work that God has given us to do. Our children are to be saved; our neighbors are to be labored for; and we are to act as though eternal life meant something to us. Let us labor unitedly, that the joy of the Lord may be in our souls. Amen and amen. **24LtMs, Ms 19, 1909, par.27**