



"IF YE ABIDE"

Jesus said: "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." John 15:7

The reason the Vine and its branches are such a true parable of the Christian life is that all nature has one source and breathes one spirit.

The plant world was created to be to man an object lesson teaching him his entire dependence upon God, and his security in that dependence. He that clothes the lilies will much more clothe us. He that gives the trees and the vines their beauty and their fruits, making each what He meant it to be, will much more certainly make us what He would have us to be.

The only difference is what God works in the trees is by a power of which they are not conscious. He wants to work in us with our consent. This is the nobility of man, that he has a will that can cooperate with God in understanding and approving and accepting what He offers to do.

If ye abide. Here is the difference between the branch of the natural and the branch of the spiritual Vine. The former abides by force of nature: the latter abides, not by force of will, but by a divine power given to the consent of the will. Such is the wonderful provision God has made that, what the power of nature does in the one case, the power of grace will do in the other. The branch can abide in the Vine.

If ye abide in Me ... ask whatsoever ye will. If we are to live a true prayer life, with the love and the power and the experience of prayer marking it, there must be no question about the abiding. And if we abide, there need be no question about the liberty of asking what we will, and the certainty of its being done. There is the one condition: "If ye abide in Me." There must be no hesitation about the possibility or the certainty of it. We must gaze on that little branch and its wonderful power of bearing such beautiful fruit

until we truly learn to abide.

And what is its secret? Be wholly occupied with Jesus. Sink the roots of your being in faith and love and obedience deep down into Him. Come away out of every other place to abide here. Give up everything for the inconceivable privilege of being a branch on earth of the glorified Son of God in Heaven. Let Christ be first. Let Christ be all. Do not be occupied with the abiding—be occupied with Christ! He will hold you, He will keep you abiding in Him. He will abide in you.

If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you... This He gives as the equivalent of the other expression: "I *in* you. If My words abide *in* you." That is, not only *in* meditation, *in* memory, *in* love, *in* faith. All these words enter into your will, your being, and constitute your life—if they transform your character into their own likeness, and you become and are what they speak and mean—ask what ye will; it shall be done unto you. Your words to God in prayer will be the fruit of Christ and His words living *in* you.

Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Believe in the truth of this promise. Set yourself to be an intercessor for men—a fruit-bearing intercessor, ever calling down more blessing. Such faith and prayer will help you wonderfully to abide wholly and unceasingly.

If ye abide. Yes, Lord, the power to pray and the power to prevail must depend on this abiding in Thee. As Thou art the Vine, Thou art the divine Intercessor, who breathest Thy Spirit in us. Oh, for grace to abide simply and wholly in Thee, and ask great things!

