

What Does It Mean to Continue in Christ?

I John 2:28-3:10

Intro:

1. Is it possible for a Christian to turn his back on God, walk away from His grace & be lost?
 - a. I Tim 4:1 - The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.
 - b. Heb 6:4-6 - It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.
2. I John was written for the express purpose of showing Christians whether they have turned away from God's grace or not! Do you know that you can go to church, be baptized & observe all the formalities of church but still not have fellowship with God?
3. God wants you to come & know Him as Lord & Savior - but you need to **continue in Him** (v28) to grow & develop into His **workmanship**. (Eph 2:10)
4. ILL: My friend, Bill Barker, is a professional artist. He does beautiful canvas oil paintings. When he finishes, he stands back & says, "Yeh, that's what I want. I'm proud of it".
5. That's what God wants to do with you! But you must **continue in Him** for that to happen!

I. 2:28-3:3 - Why is it Necessary to Continue in Christ?

- A. **v28** - Because the Second Coming is going to happen!
 1. **Continue** (μένω) = remain, abide, set up residence, dwell.
 2. When Lord Jesus returns He wants to showcase you to the unbelieving world.
 - a. Look! There's Thelma. She was a dirty, rotten sinner - but look at what I was able to do with her!
 - b. Again - look at Caesar Diaz. I was able to completely transform his life!
 3. When Lord Jesus returns, He wants you to welcome Him with confidence & not be ashamed.
 - a. **Confidence** (παρρησία) = lit. to speak openly, be honest. so be frank & courageous.
 - b. **Unashamed** (μη & αισχύνω) = not having a fear that would keep you from doing something or being disgraced.
- B. **v1** - Because you are **called children of God**.
 1. Wearing the name Christian sets you apart in the eyes of the world.
 2. Be careful how you behave, you are being observed. People, correctly, expect you to live on a higher standard than they do.
 3. But this doesn't mean you have to walk on eggshells!
 - a. When you stumble, confess it to the Lord. He forgives you (I Jn 1:9).
 - b. You're not perfect, just forgiven. Strive to live better to honor Him as Lord!
 4. Your purpose for existence is to grow to the point where you are a positive witness by the way you live.
- C. **v2** - Because you **are children of God**.
 1. When you're God's child it's natural for you to enjoy continuing with the family.
 2. We are growing children, in the process of becoming like the Lord. The Bible calls this process **Sanctification**.
 3. We will know what the finished product is like at the Second Coming.
 - a. **v3 - Purify** (ἀγνίζω) = ceremonial cleansing, purify from being defiled, have moral virtue.
 - b. So expecting & looking forward to the Second Coming is like putting yourself through the ceremonial cleansing process.

II. v4-10 - How Do You Go About Continuing in Christ?

A. v4-6 - Get out of the sin oriented life.

1. **v4 - Sin is lawlessness** - rebellion! It's the deliberate choosing not to do it God's way! This is not occasionally stumbling - this is a sin oriented life.
2. **v5** - The Lord's purpose for dying on the cross was to deliver you from that lifestyle.
3. **v6** - Apostasy - turning your back on the Lord - is a deliberate choice!
4. If you're worried as to whether you've left the Lord - you haven't!

B. v7-10 - Get into the righteous orientated life.

1. **v7-8** - Here there are only two camps - God's & Satan's.
 - a. **v10** - There is no in between arena.
 - b. It's what you continue doing - your lifestyle - that determines whether you are righteous or of the devil.
2. God wants you to leave Satan's camp (the world & it's lifestyle) & live in God's camp (the righteous life).
3. What is the righteous oriented life?
 - a. Obeying the Lord's royal law. - **Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** - Matt 22:37-39.
 - b. Putting your faith into action. Jam 2:14-18 - What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.
4. **v9** - If you are born again into the righteous oriented life you won't be in the sin oriented life.
5. So - don't be in doubt about where you are with the Lord.
 - a. If you left the world & it's lifestyle you are in the Lord's camp.
 - b. If you are still living the world's lifestyle, you are still in the world. Get out of it & commit your life to the Lord!

It's living the life that makes the difference!

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