***John 15:5***  *"I am the vine, you are the branches; he*

**2 Corinthians 5:14-16**  For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. 16 Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh…

*who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much*

*fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.*

**Learning to Abide in Christ Moment by Moment**

Jesus invites every one of us to be intimately connected to God’s Power and Love. He describes it like the natural flow of life from a vine into its branches. This connection with God is not something we have to work to achieve on our power. It is a gift, pure and simple. God willingly and constantly is offering Himself to each of us in *all* situations. Our choice is to accept this gift and learn to let God’s Presence “soak” into every part of who we are. His Presence is the source of life and purpose and peace each of us yearns for. We learn to do this by “practicing the Presence of God” in every circumstance we can.

Learning to abide in Christ is challenging. There are so many distractions! Recently, God reminded me of a simple three steps for listening toward deep abiding. It is based on the three words we used to say to ourselves when approaching a train track. Here, I’ve modified the meaning as a help to connecting with God.

**Psalm 46:10** Be still, and know that I *am* God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

**STOP**

If we keep doing the same thing, it is insane to expect different results. So if we want to see change in our lives, it is important to think differently and act differently. This is the essence of the word “repent”. We begin by saying “No” to our usual patterns of seeing and doing. This involves stopping and stepping back to examine our daily choices in the light of the Holy Spirit. God’s Spirit will speak to us in a gentle whisper through the Bible, through others, and in personal revelation to our spirit. What happens is that we surrender to letting Jesus be our personal guide, allowing Him to show us what the Father is doing all around us. (Other Bible passages to check out: Psalm 131, Proverbs 3: 5-12, Isaiah 55: 6-13, John 12: 24-26, Romans 12, Ephesians 2)

**LOOK**

When we chose God above all else, we are given a new vision of life. Paul called these “spiritual eyes” that allow us to witness what God is doing. When we choose to see life through God’s/Jesus’ eyes, our perceptions and values change. New trust and peace form inside of us. A new love for others and for ourselves begins to develop. We find a deeper gratitude and joy emerges. We can breathe again! (Other Bible passages to check out: 2 Kings 6: 15-17, Matthew 5: 21-24a, 2 Corinthians 5: 14-17, Ephesians 1: 18-20)

 **LISTEN**

**Mark 4:22-23**  "For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has *anything* been secret, but that it would come to light. 23 "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear."

As we practice listening for God’s words to guide and empower us, we come to know Jesus as the Word of God more personally. The Bible, far from being just a book of rules, is our authoritative guide to real and lasting relationships. Jesus will speak the living words of God into our hearts. To really listen, we take time to be still. We purposely attune ourselves to expecting God to speak and positioning ourselves to respond to His Direction. This is really about being more aware of What-Is-Jesus-Doing at any given time. He’s always up to something! Are you tuning in? (Other Bible passages to check out: Psalm 139: 1-18, Isaiah 6: 3, Mark 4: 23-33, Luke 17: 21, Acts 17: 28)

C:\Users\Scott\Pictures\Microsoft Clip Organizer\j0196236.wmf*Lighthouse Christian Church*

Scott Danforth, Pastor Telephone: (906) 493-5233 P.O. Box 40 E-mail: [lccdi@alphacomm.net](mailto:lccdi@alphacomm.net)

Drummond Island, MI 49726