

Our family got a new puppy about six weeks ago. He is a Teddy Bear (a crossbreed between the Shih Tzu and Bichon Frise breeds) and his name is Pickles. He is about 15 weeks old, and he is definitely ALL puppy. For the most part he is potty trained, but with an occasional accident usually because we have not paid attention to his cues. But the thing we are most struggling with is his biting and nipping. Sometimes, when I say “No!” or “No biting!”, Pickles stops, but depending on how feisty he is, he may start in again. I am looking forward to the day when my word(s) actually mean something to him, and he obeys. But as people have told us, “Keep at it and be consistent” and eventually he will come around.

Jesus says in John 15:5, ***“Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.”*** On your own, you cannot produce fruit. You must know God through faith in Jesus, AND you must abide in the Word of God. Knowing God through Jesus is a gift through the Holy Spirit, but abiding in the Word is something to which you must apply yourself. Granted, if you know Jesus you will naturally be drawn to the Word, but you and I are sinners and thus we rebel. We bite and nip (as it were) and get ourselves in trouble. Sometimes we will hear a Word from God that says, “No!” Sometimes God will discipline His children. Sometimes God will reward His children. Whatever the case, if we are not abiding and listening to the Word of God, we will go astray and find ourselves in trouble. A few weeks ago, I was in the backyard with Pickles when all of a sudden, he took off to chase the Schwan’s truck who was just leaving our house. I took off after Pickles calling for him to stop. I began to plead with him, almost begging, fearful of what could happen. Thankfully the driver saw me and stopped. Eventually, I scoped up Pickles and held him tight. I wasn’t mad, just thankful. I then brought him into the house for safe keeping.

When you fail to abide in Jesus, you are left vulnerable to the dangers of the evil one. But thankfully, Jesus never ceases to chase after you and me. Not one of his sheep will be lost. And then, on that last day, Jesus will scope you up, take you out of this evil world, and bring you into his Father’s house for safekeeping. Until then, abide in the Word of God and obey His words of life. Seek to know Him better and better so that you can bear more and more fruit to the glory of God. Amen and Amen!