

1 John 2:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.

Analysis

And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. John transitions to eschatological exhortation. "And now, little children" (kai nyn, teknia)—nyn (now) creates urgency; teknia (little children) conveys tender affection and pastoral care. "Abide in him" (menete en autō)—the present imperative commands ongoing, continuous abiding in Christ. This is the epistle's central exhortation: remain in vital union with Christ through faith, obedience, and love.

"That, when he shall appear" (hina ean phanerōthē)—phanerōthē (appear, be manifested) refers to Christ's second coming. "We may have confidence" (schōmen parrēsian)—parrēsia means boldness, free speech, confident access. Those abiding in Christ will greet His return with confidence, not terror. "And not be ashamed before him at his coming" (kai mē aischynthōmen ap' autou en tē parousia autou)—aischynthōmen (be ashamed) means to be put to shame, disgraced, humiliated. Parousia (coming, presence, arrival) is technical term for Christ's return.

The contrast is clear: those abiding in Christ will meet Him with confidence; those not abiding will experience shame. This isn't about losing salvation but about the believer's state when Christ returns. Those walking in obedience, love, and truth will welcome His appearing. Those walking in disobedience and worldliness will

experience shame at exposure before Him. Abiding now ensures confidence then. The prospect of Christ's return motivates present faithfulness.

Historical Context

Early Christian expectation of Christ's imminent return shaped ethics and endurance. Paul wrote: "The Lord is at hand" (Philippians 4:5). James exhorted: "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh...the judge standeth before the door" (James 5:8-9). Peter urged holiness "seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved" (2 Peter 3:11). Expectation of Christ's return created urgency for faithfulness.

The concept of appearing before Christ at His return runs throughout New Testament. Paul described the judgment seat of Christ where believers' works will be evaluated (Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10). Faithful servants will hear "Well done" and enter into joy; unfaithful servants will experience shame (Matthew 25:21-23). This isn't about salvation (secured by grace) but about reward and commendation versus loss and shame (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

The early church's eschatological fervor sometimes waned as decades passed without Christ's return. Yet apostolic teaching maintained: be always ready (Matthew 24:44), work until He comes (Luke 19:13), live as those who will give account (Hebrews 4:13). Whether Christ returns in our lifetime or we die first, all will meet Him. The exhortation remains: abide in Him, ensuring confidence rather than shame when we stand before Him.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does anticipating Christ's return and standing before Him motivate present obedience and faithfulness?

2. What areas of your life might cause shame before Christ at His appearing— how should this drive you to repentance and change?
3. How can you cultivate joyful expectation of Christ's return rather than fear or indifference?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	νῦν	τεκνία	μένετε	ἐν	αὐτοῦ	ἴνα	ὅταν
And	now	little children	abide	at	him	that	when
G2532	G3568	G5040	G3306	G1722	G846	G2443	G3752

φανερωθῆ	ἔχωμεν	παρόργησίαν,	καὶ	μὴ	αἰσχυνθῶμεν
he shall appear	we may have	confidence	And	not	be ashamed
G5319	G2192	G3954	G2532	G3361	G153

ἀπ'	αὐτοῦ	ἐν	τῇ	παρουσίᾳ	αὐτοῦ
before	him	at	G3588	coming	him
G575	G846	G1722		G3952	G846

Additional Cross-References

1 John 4:17 (Parallel theme): Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.

Mark 8:38 (Parallel theme): Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

1 John 3:2 (Parallel theme): Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Colossians 3:4 (Parallel theme): When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.

1 John 3:21 (Parallel theme): Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.

1 John 2:1 (Parallel theme): My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (Parallel theme): To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.

Malachi 3:2 (Parallel theme): But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' sope:

1 John 5:14 (Parallel theme): And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

1 Peter 5:4 (Parallel theme): And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.