

Living Abundantly in Christ

I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 10:10b NKJV

Abundant life. What does it mean to have life more abundantly? Abundantly is defined as: in the sense of beyond; superabundant (in quantity) or superior (in quality); (as noun) preeminence; exceeding above, advantage, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure.¹

We all know it's not an abundance of things that Jesus is talking about here.

He's talking about qualitative abundance. "We live qualitatively through relationship. Through faith in Christ, you have the right, the position, the promises and the power"² to live in close relationship with God Almighty, your heavenly Father. As He develops you, you grow in your ability to truly love others, with a Godly love.

Please read and meditate on *John 10:1-14*

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." 6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

*7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. **I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.***

*11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. 14 **I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.** NKJV*

¹ Excerpts from BibleSoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary.

² Quote from Makeovers with Leftovers, by Sheila Bailey.

THE close relationship. Christ KNOWS you and you KNOW Him.

Please consider this:³

Christ is acquainted with all that are now of his flock (v. 14-15), as the good Shepherd (v. 3-4): There is a mutual acquaintance between Christ and true believers; they know one another very well, and knowledge notes affection.

Christ knows his sheep. He knows with a distinguishing eye who are his sheep, and who are not; he knows the sheep with their many infirmities. He knows with a favorable eye those that in truth are his own sheep; he takes cognizance of their state, concerns himself for them, has a tender and affectionate regard to them, and is continually mindful of them; he visits them graciously by his Spirit, and has communion with them; he knows them, that is, he approves and accepts of them, as *Ps 1:6; 37:18; Ex 33:17*. He observes them with an eye of favor.

They observe him with an eye of faith. Christ's knowing his sheep is put before their knowing him, for he knew and loved us first (*1 John 4:19*), and it is not so much our knowing him as our being known of him that is our happiness, *Gal 4:9*. Yet it is the character of Christ's sheep that they know him; know him from all pretenders and intruders; **they know his mind, know his voice, know by experience the power of his death.**

Christ speaks here as if he gloried in being known by his sheep, and thought their respect an honor to him. ... The Lord Jesus knows whom he hath chosen, and is sure of them (*John 13:18*), and they also know whom they have trusted, and are sure of him (*2 Tim 1:12*. ... Thus: I know my sheep, and am known of mine, even as the Father knows me, and I know the Father; compare *John 17:21*).

As the Son knew the Father, loved and obeyed him, and always did those things that pleased him, confiding in him as his God even when he seemed to forsake him, so believers know Christ.

THE Life.

Christ came to give life to the sheep. In opposition to the design of the thief, which is to kill and destroy.

He came to put life into the flock. ... **Christ came to vindicate divine truths, to purify divine ordinances, to redress grievances, and to revive dying zeal, to seek those ... that were lost, to bind up that which was broken and this ... is as life from the dead.** He came to give life to particular believers. Life is inclusive of all good, and stands in opposition to the death ... (*Gen 2:17*); that we might have life, **as a criminal has when he is pardoned, as a sick man when he is cured, a dead man when he is raised; that we might be justified, sanctified, and at last glorified.**

Life more abundantly.

³ Compiled with excerpts from Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition

It is comparative, that we might have a life

more abundant than that which was lost and forfeited by sin,

more abundant than that which was promised by the law of Moses, length of days in Canaan,

more abundant than could have been expected or than we are able to ask or think.

... Christ came to give life - **something more, something better, life with advantage**; that in Christ we might not only live, but... live plentifully, live and rejoice.

Life in abundance is eternal life, life without death or fear of death, life and much more.

So, you're invited to an abundant life by someone who KNOWS you well.

Will you accept the invitation or decline? That depends on the relationship you have with the One who invited you. Have you been talking with Him continually or infrequently; do you know Him well or only in passing; do you like being around Him or does He...you; does He care about you, do you care about Him?

If you decided that you want to move forward and accept His invitation to live life more abundantly, now what?

Make an honest assessment of your soul.

- Do you have an undivided heart toward God?
- Do you believe God can handle your issues and give you a truly abundant life?
- What about your pride? Humble? Hard to go unnoticed? Hard to admit your weaknesses-to yourself, to God? Do you let yourself be loved?
- Do you truly depend on Him in ordinary life or just say you do?
- Do you practice self-giving love, out of the limelight?
- Do you "pick up your cross and follow Him" without complaint?
- Does your faith in God express itself in love for your brothers and sister?

Go to your heavenly Father in prayer about these things, earnestly and in the name of Christ.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

*Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy -- **meditate on these things.** Phil 4:6-8 NKJV*

For example, meditate on these statements from God:

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. Eph 3:20-21 NKJV

*No, in all these things we are **more than conquerors** through Him who loved us. Rom 8:37NIV*

*I can do all things through **Christ** who **strengthens me**. Phil 4:13 NKJV*

*Cast all your anxiety on Him because **He cares for you**. 1 Peter 5:7 NIV*

*For God has not **given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind**.*

2 Tim 1:7NKJV

*"**Therefore do not worry**, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. 33 **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness**, and all these things shall be added to you. Matt 6:31-33 NKJV*

Now, consider aiming for these qualitative relationships with God and others:

***Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand**, that He may lift you up in due time. 1 Peter 5:6 NIV*

***His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him** who called us by His own glory and goodness. Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

*For this very reason, make every effort to **add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love**.*

For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Peter 1:3-8 NIV

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. 17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Col 3:12-17 NIV