

The Abundant Life

John 10:7-10

I. Introduction: 1, 2

1. **John 10:7-10:** “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.’”

A. 3 Jesus came into a world scarred by sin and devastated by death; where darkness ruled men’s lives.

Rom. 3:9-12: “What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. 10 As it is written: ‘There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. 12 They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.’”

John 3:19: “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.”

B. The bright glory of God is withheld from those who spiritually separate themselves from God. How awful! How tragic! This separation from God by sin is called death.

C. Note how Paul describes the dreadful consequences of sin:

1 Tim. 5:6: “But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives.”

Eph. 2:1-3: “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

2. But Jesus came as a light into a world of darkness, sin, and death; to offer life! **Eph. 2:4-5:** “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),”
3. How does He offer life? **Jn. 5:24:** “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.”
4. Then in baptism, one dies and lives to Christ (Rom. 6:2-8; “walk in newness of life”; the abundant life).
5. Jesus proclaimed His mission in John 10:10: “...I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”
- A. Jesus has provided us not only physical life, but an avenue to spiritual life. But, He has not simply promised “life,” as in a mere existence, a mere presence or being, but much more!
- B. Jesus has promised a life of abundance. A life of fullness, richness, sweetness, an overflowing and enriching life. A life that has an unlimited future; a life with untold capabilities.
6. 4 A life without Christ is sin, darkness and death; a life that is mere breath, a mere shell of existence. It is a life without purpose, without meaning, futile and empty. Men without Christ through the ages have bitterly complained about the emptiness of life. **

“The Life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach and none may tarry long. That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving; that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations (arrangement, cvt) of atoms.” (Bertrand Russell, British philosopher, 1872-1970)

5 “Behold 83 years passed away! What cares! What agitation! What anxieties! What ill-will! What sad complications! And all without other result except great fatigue of body and mind, and disgust with regard to the

past, and profound sentiment of discouragement and despair with regard to the future.” (Talleyrand, French diplomat, 1754-1854)

6 “Strike out a few sages, and the crowd of human beings is nothing but a horrible assemblage of unfortunate criminals, and the globe contains nothing but corpses. I tremble to have to complain once more of the Being of Beings in casting an attentive eye over this terrible picture. I wish I had never been born.” (Voltaire, French philosopher, 1694-1778)

7 “Where is my home? For it do I ask and seek, and have sought, but have not found it. O eternal everywhere, O eternal nowhere, O eternal—in vain!” (Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher, 1844-1900)

8 The famous atheist of the 19th century, Robert Ingersoll (1833-1899), spoke these words at his brother’s grave: “Life is a narrow vale between two cold and barren peaks of eternities. We strive in vain to look beyond the heights. We cry aloud, and the only answer is the echo of a wailing cry.”

7. 9 These men were intelligent, in fact, their IQ’s would have probably put most, if not all of them, into the category of “genius.” Their writings are in every major library. They were widely admired and acclaimed in both life and remain so in death.

A. Yet, without Christ they were the walking dead! Life is only “in Christ.”

B. Only through Him can we rise above our mundane existence; the life He gives is not mere breath; it is a life elevating us above the world; a life of fullness, completeness, an abundant life (Jn. 10:10).

8. Let’s consider the aspects of the abundant life Christ offers everyone. The abundant life is...

II. Discussion:

I. 10 A Life of Beauty: this world can be a pretty ugly place! **Ferguson, MO 11-22

A. 23 Beauty is of and from the Lord (**Psa. 27:4**: “One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple.”; **Psa. 96:5-6**: “For all the gods of the peoples are idols, But the LORD made the heavens. 6 Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.”)

(1) There is a magnificent beauty to the things of God: His Word, His scheme of redemption, the life and death of Jesus, etc. that only the believer can appreciate. It is a beauty we need to meditate upon daily. **Psa. 16:6**: “The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my heritage is beautiful to me.” (NASU)

(2) To see the Lord with the eye of faith is to see the beauty of His great love with which He loved us. The bountiful grace and rich mercy He shed on us is an inexpressibly beautiful wonder! It is like the warm, life-giving rays of the sun on the first warm day after a long, cold winter. But, it is only through the abundant life Jesus gives us that we can appreciate this beauty.

(3) 24 “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” The abundant life of the Christian, gives us the eye, ability, or perspective to appreciate true beauty.

(4) One wise man said “Beauty becomes a messenger of and from God.” (C. Caverno, I.S.B.E.).

(5) **Psa. 19:1-6**; **Psa. 8** “Never lose an opportunity of seeing anything that is beautiful; for beauty is God’s handwriting—a wayside sacrament. Welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower, and thank God for it as a cup of Blessing.” (Emerson)

(6) May we all come to a better appreciation of the beauty of God, the beauty of His creation, the beauty of His scheme of redemption; and reflect His beauty through our lives (Matt. 5:14-16).

2. 25 A Life of Joy: There is precious little joy in this world (mainly heartache and sorrow).

A. But the life Jesus gives is abundant in that it is rich with joy (**Psa. 13:5**: “But I have trusted in Your mercy; My heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. 6 I will sing to the LORD, Because He has dealt bountifully with me.”; **Psa. 104:34**: “May my meditation be sweet to Him; I will be glad in the LORD.”).

B. The joy of the Lord transcends the plane of this world. Joy is our wings to take us above the mundaneness, ordinariness and madness of this world. Joy lifts us above the doubts, disappointments, and despair of this world (**1 Peter 1:8**: “whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory.”).

(1) The joy of the Lord gives meaning and purpose to our everyday existence despite what circumstances we find ourselves in. The joy of the Lord is something no man can take from us (Paul & Silas, **Acts 16:20-25**; **Jas. 1:2-3**: “My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.”; **Acts 5:41**: “So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.”).

(2) How is the Christian able to be joyful in times of trial? Perspective! **1 Pet. 1:6-7**: “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.”; **Rom. 5:1-5**; **2 Cor. 4:16-5:1**

(3) It is only through the eye of faith that we can see the joy of salvation! When we really get it... **Matt. 13:44**: “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”; **Rom. 14:17**: “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” (Foxe’s Book of Martyrs)

3. **26 A Life of Love**: **There is precious little love in this world!

A. **27** But the abundant life Christ gives us a life full of love (**1 Jn. 4:12-19**).

B. The love we have as Christians is greater than the “love” found in the world because it is divine in nature (**Jn. 13:34-35**: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”).

C. It is a love for God, a love for others, a love for self (which is not selfish), and a love that grows and shares (**Rom. 5:5**: “Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”; **Eph. 3:17-19**: “that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — 19 to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”).

(1) So, Christians have a love that surpasses knowledge. A love that is active not passive; that expresses itself in kindness, gentleness, sympathy, concern, devotion and vigorous work.

(2) **John 15:12**: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”; **Rom. 12:9-10**: “Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. 10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;”

(3) This love does not tolerate sin and evil, but it always has the best interests of others as a goal (**Phil. 2:3-4**: “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”).

(4) Without this love we are nothing! **1 Cor. 13:1-8**

4. **28 A Life of Fulfillment**: The vast majority of people live unfulfilled lives.

A. Psychologists tell us that fulfillment is a basic human need (Maslow’s hierarchy of needs). After the basics of survival, food, water and shelter are provided; Man needs fulfillment.

B. We all need to see and to know that our lives have meaning and purpose (Robin Williams?).

(1) All men have a deep longing to be satisfied, fulfilled. Christ came to meet that need:

Prov. 14:14: *“The backslider in heart will be filled with his own ways, But a good man will be satisfied from above.”*

John 7:38: *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”*

(2) The only way in which a man’s deepest longing can be fulfilled is by the “living water” offered by Christ (Eccl. 3:11). It goes far beyond what we could ever need or ask for (**Eph. 3:20:** *“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,”*).

(3) “My faith has never been stronger; my hope has never been brighter; my head has never been clearer; my heart has never been calmer; my life has never been purer. I love all; I hate none. My love for some lifts my soul into the realm of the sublime. I am willing to die today; I am willing to live a 1,000 years, to tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love. My friends are dearer to me; association with them is sweeter to me; my sympathy for suffering souls is stronger; my love for all that is pure, all that is beautiful, all that is good and the sublime—from the bud, the blossom, the babe, up to Him from whom all blessings flow—is truer, tenderer, sweeter, than ever before...I sleep soundly, dream sweetly, and ‘rejoice evermore.’ ‘The Word’ is sweeter and stronger to me than ever before. O it is delightful to love and be loved, to do whatsoever duty demands! My vanity is gone. What people say does not bother me. I’ll never waver, but always be right and true.” T. B. Larimore (His longest meeting was conducted at Sherman, Texas. This meeting began on January 3, 1894, and closed on June 7, five months and four days. During this meeting he preached three hundred and thirty-three sermons, preaching twice every day and three times every Sunday; and there were more than two hundred additions to the church during the meeting.)

(4) A man without a goal is like a ship without a rudder; it goes anywhere, everywhere, but nowhere:

Eccl. 12:13: *“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.”*

Gal 2:20: *“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”*

Psa. 17:15: *“As for me, I will see Your face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Your likeness.”*

5. 29 A Life of Immortality:

A. Benjamin Franklin’s unused epitaph: **

“Revised Edition, The Body of Benjamin Franklin, Printer (Like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and stripped of its lettering and gilding.) Lies here food for worms. Yet the work itself shall not be lost, for it will (as he believes) appear once more, in a new, and beautiful Edition, Corrected and Amended By The Author.”

1 Peter 5:10: *“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”*

B. ** “Glory”—beauty, majesty, brightness, brilliance, splendor.

C. Jesus promised us life in abundance NOW! The beauty, joy, love and fulfillment begins NOW! Yet, the most amazing thing is, is that although it begins now, it never ends. In fact, the abundant life continues forward and gets better and better ultimately leading into the glory of immortality.

- (1) But if we don't appreciate and radiate the abundant life now, then we'll never reach the glory portion in eternity. Eternity is but an extension of the beauty, joy, love and fulfillment Jesus gives us in this life carried to a higher plane! **Rom. 8:16-23**
- (2) The whole creation is eagerly awaiting the revealing of the glory of God's sons. Like a parade out of sight in the distance and the spectators anxiously and eagerly craning their necks to see its glory and brilliance (**1 John 3:2-3**: "*Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*"; **1 Cor. 15:40-44, 50-57**).
- (3) So we must keep our eye on the prize!
Phil. 3:12-14: "*Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. 13 Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*"
Gal. 6:9: "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*"

III. Conclusion: **30**

- I. If you are not in fellowship with Christ, if you are not a faithful disciple and follower of Christ, you do not and cannot have the abundant life.
 - A. You may enjoy the limited beauty, joy, love and fulfillment this world can offer.
 - B. But it is like a thirsting man drinking from a mud puddle when there is a pure flowing stream just around the bend.
2. Jesus invites you to come and partake in the abundant life that begins now and never ends!
John 10:10: "*I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*"
Matt. 11:28-30: "*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*"

Adapted from a sermon by Wayne Greeson in *Sowing the Seed 3*, pp. 11-15