

THE KEYS TO A LIFE OF ABUNDANCE AND BLESSING Deuteronomy 28:1-2, John 10:10

When you look at your life, and examine your life in a personal and deliberate way, how would you say that your life is going? Each of us are concerned about our lives, but there is one that is more concerned about your life than you could ever be, it is the Lord God. It is in the heart of the Lord God that you not miss out on the abundance that He wants for your life in this life. The very notion and idea of abundant life didn't stem from psychology but rather from the very heart of Holy God Himself. When Jesus spoke to His very first disciples, He declared to them that "abundant life" is God's idea not mans. But the question on our end is this...how can we enter into the abundant and blessed life that God so yearns for us?

1. REALIZE THAT ABUNDANT LIFE IS GOD'S

IDEA. It wasn't man's "thinking" that initiated the concept of abundant life and abundant living. The very thought, desire and intent originates with the very heart of God. It is God's desire that our lives be packed with those "superadded things" that make for a life blessed, happy and wonderful. Sadly however many believer miss God's truth of "abundant life" and the result is that the merely walk through life existing and getting by.

Some may ask the question, "Why does God want our lives to be marked with abundance and blessing. Simply put, it is the very nature of God to be the God of love. That is the outflow of His personhood. Love from God's frame of reference means that He yearns, desires, craves for our lives a life that is beyond our fondest dreams and imaginations, all because He is the God of grace and the God of love. The closest thing to compare on this side of eternity is a mother's love for her child or children. No mother wants bad things, terrible things for their child. Such an idea is absurd. A mother will give her very life that her child could live...why? All because she loves her child or children!

The Bible says in *Ephesians 2:4* *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us.* Also the Bible affirms again in *1 John 4:16* *And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.*

God's love is never just "lip service", God always demonstrates His love for us in ways that are real, personal, actual. Chances are if you

are failing to enjoy the abundant life that God intended for you, it may well be because of this very first truth principle. Sadly, many people live "feeling guilty" because they feel that is the way they are supposed to live in this world, however, you will never find that in one verse of Scripture. God yearns that we realize He has a life of abundance and blessing not only in the next life, but in this life that we are living now.

2. REAFFIRM THE FACT THAT GOD WANTS HIS ABUNDANT LIFE FOR YOU PERSONALLY. Sadly, here is where many people miss out on this divine principle and truth. Some talk about "abundant life" but personally and practically miss out. The very phrase "that they might have", literally means that God wants you to hold, to possess, enjoy, the abundant life of which He talks about.

Since God wants you to hold and posses His abundant life, then here is the sobering and wonderful truth...His abundant life is designed to be personal and to be extremely real. When you review the very first couple in the Garden of Eden, God made "abundant life" very personal and very real for them! When God told the children of Israel to march into the Promised Land, a land flowing with "milk and honey" (a sign of God's abundance) He revealed that He had a world that they couldn't comprehend until they saw it. Why? Simply because God is love, and God loves to reveal His abundance to our lives.

3. REMEMBER THAT ABUNDANT LIFE COMES ONLY THROUGH JESUS. Listen to the very words of Jesus, "I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." In other words, abundant life is completely based on, grounded in a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. There is absolutely no way that we can have "a life of abundance" apart from Jesus. Because, the truth of God is that we all stand "guilty" before the Creator of the universe, Holy God.

Within each of us, there is a "sin nature" that locks us out of God's abundant life, because He is holy and we are sinful. There is nothing from God's vantage point that brings abundant life...not money, things, or any earthly relationship because we stand before Holy God, the God of all creation, as sinners, under condemnation and wrath. While a person can have money, things, the reality is, deep in his soul there is an awareness that "things" can never and do never satisfy, because without Christ, we remain guilty before God. There is only One that brings "a life of abundance"...Jesus. It was Jesus that took our sins upon himself, and

took our sins, in through faith gives us His life when we place our faith in Him. Failure to recognize that Jesus is the only means of bringing abundance will lock us out of God's good things all through this life.

4. RECOGNIZE THAT THERE IS A PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY TO RECEIVING GOD'S ABUNDANCE AND BLESSINGS. "Why am I not experiencing God's best?" is the question on the lips of many individuals in our day and our culture. Yet, the single greatest reason why so many miss a life of abundance and blessing is found in the very fact that "personal responsibility" is involved.

However, here is the way many individuals think, "If God loves me as you say He does, then He will pour out His blessings and abundance on my life if He wants to." There are many problems to that line of thinking. First, God is love and since He is love, He cannot violate our will. Second, God has created us as free moral beings, and He gives us a will to determine what will become of our lives. Third, God cannot violate His holy nature. If we choose to walk away from Him, and obedience to His will and word, then He must allow us to reap precisely and exactly what we sow!

Listen carefully to God's eternal law of Scripture, *Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.* Whatever we receive back in life, is based on what we have "sowed". When we neglect and reject our personal responsibility before Holy God, and choose to live carelessly, unwisely, frivolously, then we must receive back upon our lives, the outflow of that type of living. Why? Because it is an eternal law that flows from God! Therefore, if you are missing a life of abundance and blessing, then the fault never lies on God's end, the fault always lies on our end.

When you review the very life story of Adam and Eve...there was one thing that led them into a life apart from God's best...**it was their will.** Their will chose to violate the very commands and directives of God. Their will chose to listen to the cunning crafty lies of the evil one, over and above the truth of God's very nature. Their will decided to go against God, and when they gave in, then sin entered into the world.

God **never** bypasses your personal responsibility, because His holy nature cannot. God cannot force one single person to walk in obedience to Him, because God is love, and since God is love, the outflow of His love is to give all mankind "free choice". The revealing truth of our lives is this, we are often where we are due to unwise choices that lead to a life foreign to God's best.

A life that is barren of God's abundance and His blessings, may well be so, due to ignorance of God's Word, ignorance of God's Holy principles and truths, and refusal to apply His Word to everyday life and living.

One thing is certain all through the pages of Scripture, no person accidentally walked into God's abundance and blessing apart from their will being involved, and the same goes for our lives today. You willfully, deliberately, intentionally "choose" what decisions you make in life, and the end result...are consequences that last for a lifetime, and even beyond our lifetime.

While the word "choice" is a seemingly small word, it carries with it tremendous significance when it comes to the "choices" we make in life. Because the reality is, we will either "choose" to follow God or we will "choose" to follow self. We will "choose" to listen to God's word or we will "choose" to ignore God's Word. We will "choose" to obey God or we will "choose" to disobey God. And all these choices are made in the fabric of our mind, and our thinking, each and every day. The pages of Scripture reveal the lives of those who rebelled as well as those who obeyed...but one thing each had...was "choice".

The sobering truth is this...if you miss God's abundance and blessings...it is not God's fault...the fault lies with "us". And the sobering truth is this...you can't even blame Satan. Why? Because God gives you a choice who you will serve!

In the very first two verses of Deuteronomy 28, God gives the nation of Israel some sobering truths. He reminds them that they can "choose" to listen to God or not. They can choose to obey His commands or they can ignore them. But their lives would bear out whether they obeyed or disobeyed...that was not their choice. And the same works for us today.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2 And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.

The first command God gives us is this... "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and all thy soul and all thy might". If we fail to respond to this first command in obedience...then we are forever locked out of God's blessings. After all, why should God give us His blessings, if we desire not to know Him and fellowship with Him?