The Abundant Life





Let My Cup Overflow

Cameron Nolan

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INTRODUCTION

The message of salvation is good news, Christ wants us to prosper in all ramifications, he says in John 10:10 I have come that you may have a life to the full. Christ meant every single word he declared; it is his desire that we enjoy life to the fullest.

Now, a lot of people misunderstand the true meaning of the abundant life. Most people attention is easily drifted to worldly prosperity when they hear the word abundant life. To fully understand the message of the abundant life, we must drive back our attention to the story of creation, however, I am not going to dwell much on the abundant life at creation now because that will be treated fully in chapter four of this book.

The truth is, material wealth and fame is definitely part of the abundant life, but consist of less than 10% of the entire package of abundance Christ is offering us, and so if you desire wealth from the abundant life just bear in mind that you are settling for 10% of the entire package.

To explain vividly what Christ meant by the abundant life, I would like us to reflect on (Mark12:18-27) the Pharisees approached Jesus and put forth a question of marriage before Christ. But Christ seeing their level of ignorance of scriptures and God's purpose, made them un-

derstand that God's will for man is beyond the earthly understanding or achievements.

Ask yourself:

Do I really want to live the abundant life?

Am I ready to fellowship with the Holy Spirit, so I can have a fair taste of this abundant life Christ has secured for us?

Reflecting on the abundant life, a passage of scriptures grabs my attention Mathew 6:10 'Thy kingdom come' This is it! This is the abundant life am talking about, that is God establishing his kingdom and purpose in our lives. You cannot talk about the abundant life without including God's purpose for us.

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I SHALL OVERCOME

CHAPTER ONE

Understanding the true meaning and Essence of the Abundant Life

God's love abounds in us; it is the expression of the love of God that initiates the abundant life that we experience. The love of God is powerful; in fact, salvation is a gift of God's love. God dwelt among men and established his kingdom among us. We become partakers of his glory and power.

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name (John1:12).

When we celebrate God's love, we celebrate the abundant life. The abundant life is Christ Jesus working among and within us. Christ is the center of the abundant life. In Luke 4:18-19 Christ makes it clear in his mission statement that he has come to set man free from captivity and establish his abundant life.

To experience this abundant life we must learn to cooperate with Christ and work according to the principles he has set before us.

It means growing in grace

Grace is a gift of God freely given to uplift us from human weakness and limitation, grace can elevate us to a completely new level in the spirit, and grace shows us the mind of God and enables us to live out the purpose for which we are made. Grace sets us apart for we live no longer by the law but by grace. Grace ushers us into the abundant life Christ has secured for us.

The coming of Christ exposes us to a new era, the era of grace; also the resurrection of Christ proves the establishment of grace.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you (Romans 8:11).

Grace increases our expectation in Christ Jesus, it makes us be fruitful and experience the abun dant life.

Finally, we need to understand that there are levels of grace since grace is a spiritual gift, the apostles for exampled enjoyed a special privilege called the Apostolic grace.

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. (Acts2:1-4)

We must ensure that we grow in grace.

A fellowship in the Spirit

To experience the abundant life, we must be ready to move off from ourselves and let the Holy Spirit take charge for it is the Holy Spirit that leads us and bestows the abundant life; the Holy Spirit makes us be fruitful in good works and ensures that we experience the abundant life.

Simply put, the abundant life is glory in the Holy Ghost, therefore the Holy Spirit makes us think differently from our former ways, He also enables us to act differently from former ways and we begin to see life from a whole new perspective.

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. (1 Corinthians 13:11).

Working by Faith

Faith is that which put us right with God, without faith we cannot please God, faith connects us to God and allows the power of God to flow into and through us. Faith is a mystery that escapes the human intelligence; it is our spiritual lens by which we have a vision of the promises of abundance that God released for us.

We can pull mountains and obstacles and have access to the abundant life only through faith, faith promotes us in the spiritual realm, look at Abraham for example, Faith brings about a harvest in the spirit.

CHAPTER TWO

Abundant Life in the Spirit

It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life (John6:63)

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you (Romans8:11)

It's a spiritual gift

It is important that we understand the essence of the abundant life; the abundant life is a gift from God. But we must be ready to cooperate with God for us to achieve this abundant life.

Another secret that we must understand is that the gifts of the spirit of abundance are limitless, it's up for you to decide what level you want to find yourself and for you to achieve a high level of abundance, you should be ready to dig and dig really deep.

The fruit of the Resurrection

The abundant life was secured at the cross when Christ paid the prize, carried our burden and opened for us the gateway to the abundant life. Scriptures state that the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Although the abundant life was

secured at the death of our Lord, the fruits and the manifestation of this abundance began to emerge at the resurrection.

The resurrection of Christ sets another phase in the dispensation of grace, the establishment of the kingdom Christ promised came into reality at the resurrection, Christ assured the Samaritan woman that in the fullness of time, Christians will be able to have unrestricted access to God and also will be given the opportunity to freely express their deepest emotions and worries.

The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."(John 4:19-24)

The apostles became the first witness to the fruits of this abundant life of the resurrection as this was displayed in their works.

But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, "Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your

young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on my menservants and on my maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days, and they shall prophesy. I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath Blood and fire and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD. (ACT2:14-20)

The climax of the abundant life

There is an interesting event in the bible that talked about how Christ reinstated the glory and the abundant life once lost by man. His sacrifice on the cross! The power of Christ sacrifice made a remarkable turn in the history of the universe; in fact, earth alone was not shaken but the cosmos including heaven.

In fact, there is a theological ideology which quotes that when Christ cried out on the cross: 'father why have you forsaken me' the father could not turn his face towards Christ because when he looked at Christ, he saw the weight of man's sins that Christ has carried on himself.

The death of Jesus on the cross broke the walls that imprisoned man from accessing heaven and thus there was a great earthquake that destroyed the powers of darkness and set man to lose!

Now the windows of heaven became open, the blessing that has been locked down was now open; showers upon showers of blessings were released. In fact, the first man to tap into these blessings wasn't even a saint, it was a thief! And this young man not only stole properties here on earth, he went further and stole paradise!

The apostles became the first witness to this abundant life Christ has promised, and they

worked wonders and miracles in the name of the risen Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

Who Can Receive Abundant Life

The abundant life is open freely for everyone, *That you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust (Mathew t 5:45).*

To experience this abundant life, we must take the necessary steps to achieve it. Here is what Christ said:

Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28)

It follows therefore that those who truly want to experience rest and the abundance of Christ presence must take the bold step of approaching Jesus. It is in 'coming to Jesus' that we experience the abundance of his blessings, so we must be eager to take the bold step.

Look at Peter, for example, Christ said come to me and Peter did the impossible by walking on water in approaching Jesus. We too can do the impossible and achieve the abundant life but we must first 'come to Jesus'.

To access Jesus we must arm ourselves with humility, and faith. Peter lost faith in which he

initially had and the result was the loss of abundance, he began to sink!

Similarly, you cannot be filled with the abundance when you are already full of loads, you must empty yourself and allow Christ to fill you. So self-emptiness, faith, and humility are key to achieving the abundant life.

Both Jews and Gentiles

St Paul makes it clear that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the new dispensation of grace, we are all born into one and the same spirit whether Jews or Gentiles.

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free and have all been made to drink into one Spirit (1Corinthians 12:13).

The Jews signify a particular class who see themselves as chosen or self-righteous, for them those outside this class are unworthy of God's blessings. Unfortunately, most Christians still exhibit this Jewish attitude.

The truth is Christ died for all whether Jews or Gentiles, black or white, tall or short, educated or illiterate, beautiful or ugly, rich or poor, Christ died for us all.

We all are called to share in this abundant life. The Jewish people have to distinguish themselves as righteous that even the Samaritans dread to interact with them.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, 'How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans (John 4:7-9).

But Christ has come to bridge whatever gap we have created among ourselves and make us one.

Today we still see countries exhibiting the same attitude the Jewish people displayed long ago, racism is still very much alive in some parts of our world, and countries strive for ego and classify lesser countries as irrelevant or unimportant.

Can this be the message of hope and abundance Christ came to establish for us?

The Baptized

At baptism, we are reborn into Christ, a re-birth into the era of grace, for we put off Adam and put on Christ. Baptism sets us apart as a chosen race and priestly people who participate in God's banquet, at baptism we receive the Holy Spirit who enables us to participate in mission Christ has entrusted to us.

At baptism, we receive the power of the resurrection and we are enlightened by God's word and we also partake in the apostolic mission.

Baptism signifies abundance, a new life in the spirit for we become united with Christ and glory in the Holy Ghost.

The apostle often recommends baptism for every new convert because they are aware that baptism ushers the gateway to the participation in the abundant life and the rain of God's blessings.

Those who have faith in Christ

We are put right with God through faith, faith gives us the opportunity to participate in divine mysteries and become co-heirs with Christ, and faith opens for us the abundant life. The man

who has faith always succeeds and triumphs over his adversaries.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Full Expression of the Abundant Life

The truth is that our flesh cannot capture the fullness of the expression of the abundant life; this fullness is achieved in heaven. However, Christ has come to share his glory and give us a foretaste of that abundance. This was exactly what he wanted his apostle to understand at the transfiguration.

How it all started

The story of creation is a perfect example of the abundant life, God is full of abundance and he spoke his abundance into existence at creation, first he said: let there be light and from his abundance came forte light, he made the heavens and the earth and caused the earth to flourish in abundance and after he made all things he said they were very good.

Finally, God created man to explore and enjoy the abundance he has instituted, he gave man authority over the birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, and he blessed man and asked him to take dominion over the earth.

The Garden of Eden

To show the wonderful desire God has for man, he took a man and planted him in a garden so he could flourish and enjoy the abundance of his blessings, at the garden man had all he needed for food and rest for there was abundance.

However, man's insatiable desire and crave for power and fame made him do the unimaginable. He went out rightly and disobeyed God. This ushered a new beginning for the loss of the abundant life God initially provided for him.

Now the man was driven from the garden, he had to labor and till the soil; there was no longer abundance for he had to sweat to earn a living.

But something else happened, the love of God for man, made God uncomfortable that he sought means to restore man back to his glory, to achieve this he started establishing covenants with the patriarchs, he also did chose Israel and sent prophets to warn them when they sinned but man still messed up.

And so God wanted an end to this lost glory, he had to send his only son who would be the perfect sacrifice for the redemption of man and restore back the glory man once lost.

Figures of the Old Covenant that experienced the Abundant life

The old covenant was a symbol of the lost glory of man and that is why Christ came to establish a new covenant and bring back the glory.

However, there were some personalities of the old covenant who by the grace of God broke into the abundance of the blessings of God even though it wasn't yet time for the establishment of the new covenant, for the records we would focus on just a few of them.

David

David is often described as the man after God's own heart, this was a man who won every battle, in fact David declared that he saw the Lord near him at all times and that he would never be troubled, David was chosen and set apart by God to reign and rule over his people Israel, he became the greatest king ever in the history of the people of Israel, in fact his reign became so powerful that he promised to build a temple for the Lord, but because of his sins God gave the responsibility to his son, a blessing that was still retained in his lineage.

David started to flourish even as a little boy when he was set apart from his brother to take the mantle of leadership of the people of Israel.

To crown his glory, God promised that the Messiah would come from his lineage, a promise God fulfilled several generations later. David, therefore, experienced the abundant life.

Daniel

If you want to talk about men who expressed great faith, obedience and dedication to God in the bible then you must include Daniel, he was a man full of God's spirit, a man gifted in dreams and visions, who interpreted the dreams of kings, a man who had access to God's angels, of whom he always enjoyed their protection. A great intercessor, because of him God shut the mouth of hungry lions, because of this young man and his team, a burning furnace became habitable, and this young man was so dedicated that he prayed three times daily, Daniel was outstanding in whatever he did. He experienced the abundant life.

Elijah

As earlier explained abundant life is not tied to material prosperity, when we talk about abundant life, we must include spiritual prosperity or glory in the Holy Ghost. There are several holy people and saints who lived the abundant life but were not materially rich, some had the opportunity to claim material wealth but they chose to despise wealth and focus on God; we see a very good example in our time, St Francis of Assisi, he left his wealth and possessions for the work of God. For him the abundant life is entirely spiritual; in scriptures, you find great men like John the Baptist who ate only locust and honey, he was never interested in wealth but he also experienced the abundant life.

For me, I call Elijah the most radical of the prophets, he slew 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah, this was a man who could call down fire from heaven, his spirit was so great that he could command the sky to shut its mouth and withhold rain for years. Indeed Elijah exercised authority over nature just as Christ did.

Finally, when he was about to depart this world, he had to transfer his mantle of leadership to Elisha; God honored him by sending a chariot of fire to take him off from the surface of the earth.

Now, taking a closer look at Elijah, you would agree with me that he was not wealthy, for he survived on basic needs just like John the Baptist.

However, he too experienced the abundant life of God's presence. This follows therefore that the abundant life is not tied to material wealth as some would prescribe but instead the abundant life entails having the privilege of encountering God in a unique or remarkable way.

Joseph

Joseph was a young kid chosen by God just like David; he has the gift also in dreams and visions just like Daniel. The spirit of the Lord was upon Joseph such that God's blessing overflowed in Joseph where ever he went, in fact every opportunity his enemies wanted to use against him to punish or inflict pain on him became for Joseph a stepping stone to higher heights.

First it was his brothers and later it was Potiphar's wife, from there he went to the prison; but the grace of God was still on this young man, the abundant life was radiating all over him and so from prison he entered the palace. The grace of abundance took this young man from prison to palace.

Now Joseph who was thrown into a well to waste away became the saving grace and instrument used by God to set his family and the people of Israel free from hunger and starvation. The abundant life indeed rested on Joseph.

The Expression of the Abundant life among the Apostles

The resurrection of Christ brought grace and power to the apostles and through the resurrection power, they worked signs and wonders in the name of Jesus. The apostles were also a living witness to the testimony of the resurrected Lord. The fruit of their work was the conversion of pagan communities. Healing of the sick, casting out devils, and the raising of the dead. The apostles experienced the abundant life.

The full expression of the abundant life is in heaven

Finally, we must understand that the abundant life experienced on earth cannot be perfect unless it is crowned in heaven, God's glory that we experience here on earth is only partial but the time will come when we shall see him face to face.

For now, we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known (1Cor13:12).

In the fullness of the expression of the abundant life, we shall be like the angels.

For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,(Matt22:30-31).

Similarly, concerning the abundant life, St Paul talked about the resurrection when we shall be transformed into glory.

Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." (1Cor15:51-54).

Similarly, we shall put off the bodily tent for we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed; we have a building from God,

a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2Cor5:1).

Conclusion

It is my desire that the blessings you have received from this book will remain permanent in your life in Jesus name Amen. Ensure to check my other titles for interesting articles.

God bless you.

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