

## **BACK TO THE BASICS OF FAITH**

### *The Glorious, Amazingly Remarkable Nine: Part 2*

In the past, you've heard me talk quite a bit about building a platform. Some of you had some questions about that, and the subject of this teaching presents the perfect opportunity to expound upon it a bit more. 1 Corinthians 3:11 (NIV) says, *"For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ."* Don't you just love this verse!!! We don't come into this Christian thang' and start building from scratch. No, quite the contrary. Our blessed Savior has provided a sturdy and strong foundation that will not only support our lives, but the lives of many others.

Jesus Christ is our foundation. He holds us up when all else around us is crumbling. Through his life, ministry, death, and resurrection, he has given us everything, and I do mean everything, we need to live an abundant life. Now, a tremendous amount of folks are still trying to figure that one out. They hear all this talk about abundance through Christ, and they do everything under the sun to attain it, but alas, abundance eludes them.

There are possibly two things wrong with their quest for abundance, either they have incorrectly defined what *"abundance"* means, or they are not endeavoring to attain it in the way that Jesus Christ intended. These folks don't have a genuine interest in earnestly walking by his example, they simply want the goodies. In essence, they want the good stuff without a willingness or desire to do what it takes to possess it. I don't have to tell you that this approach will never produce desired results.

Jesus Christ said in John 10:10 (NKJV), *"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."* You can't get any plainer than this. An abundant life can only come by way of Jesus Christ. If you're seeking it or think you're getting it any other way, think again. Abundance, in the truest sense of the word, will always elude a person if he or she doesn't #1) know what it is and #2) know how to live it.

#### **What is an Abundance?**

The dictionary defines the word *"abundance"* as an extremely plentiful or over-sufficient quantity or supply. I like that definition, but if you know me, I'm not going to leave it there. So let's delve deeper shall we. Among Christians, there was a time in history when an abundant life was associated with the upper echelon of spiritual attainment and the care and protection of God's covering. It is primarily in this century that most of us have associated the words of Jesus in

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John 10:10 with wealth and prosperity. And I would do them a gross injustice to suggest that abundance, as it is written in this verse, does not encapsulate plurality as well, but there's much more to be gleaned here.

As with all of God's Word, John 10:10 must be kept in context. The context or situation of chapter 10 is that of a loving, compassionate shepherd who is incredibly concerned for his flock. In verse 11, Jesus declares, *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."* Jesus Christ put himself in direct opposition with the devil's mission which is to steal, kill, and destroy. He said *"I am a good overseer, the best. I take care of my sheep and keep them safe. Abiding under my care means they'll have access to the fullness of life; they'll have access to abundance."*

Does everybody have an abundant life? No! But it is certainly available to everyone because of Jesus Christ. So if Jesus Christ made an abundant life available, then you and I must deduce that an abundant life is a spiritual one. Therefore, abundance is the increase in every way of a spiritual person.

So does that mean that when a person becomes born again, they immediately receive the fullness of an abundant life? Absolutely, but remember that anything that comes from Heavenly Father is a spiritual reality. It must be transferred from the supernatural realm into the earthly realm. This simply means that there is much mental and soul work to do as one physically attains that of which he or she has supernaturally received.

We have access to the power that transforms something intangible into something tangible, but it usually doesn't happen on the spot. If we could think of something with our minds eye and have it instantly appear, we wouldn't live very long; for if it works for the positive it would also have to work for the negative. Our thought life is filled with all kinds of imaginations, some good and some very bad. So as a way of protecting us from ourselves, God allows us the element of time to refocus our vision, reshape our thoughts, and redirect our intention to line up with His Word. He does this so that we can become masters of faith through Jesus Christ.

### **How do we live abundantly?**

How do we live abundantly? The answer is quite simply *"through Christ"*. If there were any other way to live an abundant life then God would have told us so. It makes perfect sense that we should live an abundant life through Christ, because after all, he made it available. It was God's plan that Christ should do so.

Christ provided the foundation upon which we should build. He provided the exact, precise example of how to refocus, reshape, and redirect our souls so that we could begin to build our lives upon his foundation. The Apostle Paul warned us, though, that we cannot build upon it any ol' way we please. He said in 1 Corinthians 3:10 KJV, *"But let every man take heed how he*

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*buildeth thereupon.*" You can't lay a brick of jealousy, use mortar of hatred and the clay of discontent and think that you'll build upon the legacy of Christ. No, absolutely not.

And to be sure that we don't fool ourselves into thinking that we got it going on when we really haven't a clue, Jesus gave us abundance as a barometer. It's our way of measuring the quality of our structure. If you're building a platform using the good stuff from heaven, you'll create a life filled with so much love that you become a magnet for anyone or anything good. Your intent to build your life on the foundation of Jesus Christ will draw abundance in your direction. In short, an abundant life is tied to our commitment and intent to increase in Christ. This is the single greatest thing to know about it.

We are instructed and destined to build a life on the foundation of Christ using the glorious, amazingly remarkable nine of love, joy, peace, patience(longsuffering), gentleness, faith, kindness, humility, and self control. With every single thought, action, deed, or behavior cultivated from these nine, you are laying up for yourself a treasure that will not corrupt and decay (Matthew 6:19 KJV). Anything made from these nine cannot corrode or crumble because they do not emanate from the world, they come from the bosom of our Big Daddy. That is why when using them, you are guaranteed to make a platform that will be the springboard for all of your hopes and dreams. You are laying up treasures that will come to you when you need them the most, treasures that will be "*pressed down, and shaken together, and running over...*" (Luke 6:38 KJV).

Christ laid the foundation but we are charged with building a platform that is anchored upon it. Every single person who is living and who has ever lived has built one, and an abundant life is the evidence of its firmness and steadiness.

### **Revelations 3:2 NLT**

*2 Now wake up! Strengthen what little remains, for even what is left is at the point of death. Your deeds are far from right in the sight of God.*

Most of us are not awake. Some of us are walking around under the world's hypnosis. We're waiting for something to happen to shake us into consciousness, but God has told us to force ourselves out of that slumber and strengthen what little remains. We need to strengthen what and how we build upon the foundation of Christ by using the glorious, amazingly remarkable nine. These are the building material of His goodness, and we can't live abundantly any other way than by laying them up, one loving deed after the other.

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