

“Abundant Life” John 10:10

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. John 10:10 (NKJV)

Between 1984-1987 I attended Trinity Evangelical Divinity School where I attained my Master of Divinity Degree. While I was there, I also attended Winnetka Bible Church, in Winnetka Illinois, near Chicago. Also, while I was there the Chicago Bears won a Super Bowl and one of their star players was Gary Fencik. After that Super Bowl Gary Fencik was in a commercial for Cadillac. Fencik was young, handsome, intelligent, he graduated from Yale, and he had just won the Super Bowl, the commercial said that Mr. Fencik was living an abundant life, and he drove a Cadillac. At the time, I was studying the Book of Daniel, and Nebuchadnezzar, who said –

³⁰ The king spoke, saying, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?” Daniel 4:30 (NKJV)

I thought, like Fencik, Nebuchadnezzar was living what men would call, “an abundant life” too!

He is credited with the hanging gardens, one of the SEVEN WONDERS of the ancient world. Babylon’s high walls, were thought impenetrable! Babylon was one of the greatest of our world’s empires and Nebuchadnezzar brought it to its height!

Yet, in Daniel 4, we read more about Nebuchadnezzar’s humbling, than of his greatness –

³¹ While the word was still in the king’s mouth, a voice fell from heaven: “King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! ³² And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses.” ³³ That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles’ feathers and his nails like birds’ claws. Daniel 4:31–33 (NKJV)

In his humiliation, Nebuchadnezzar found an abundant life, in relation to God and the worship of God, that far surpassed his worldly greatness, this is why he says –

³⁴ And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. ³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, “What have You done?” ³⁶ At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. ³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. Daniel 4:34–37 (NKJV)

In John 10:10 Jesus speaks about abundant life, let us consider Jesus’ teaching on this subject –

I. If you want Abundant Life, Know and resist the thief, Satan –

¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.... John 10:10 A (NKJV)

1. Earlier in John 10 Jesus spoke about **thieves and robbers**, here I believe he spoke at least partially about the Pharisees, themselves ...
2. Here though I believe Jesus speaks even to the Pharisees; for Satan had stolen even **FROM THEM** –

Question: You might ask what did or would Satan steal from the Pharisees?

Answer: He stole Christ's Word from them --- (you could say they were blessed with an abundance of God's Word, but....)

⁵ "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Luke 8:5 (NKJV)

¹¹ "Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. ¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. Luke 8:11–12 (NKJV)

3. They were students of God's Word (sort of) –

³⁹ You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰ But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. John 5:39–40 (NKJV)

Question: How would Satan steal God's Word from Pharisees? Answer: "Pride, hypocrisy, he made them Men-pleasers" –

- A. First century Jerusalem was a religious place, God's feasts were Judah's Super Bowl, its Christmas, its Halloween, its grandest events -

⁵ But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. ⁶ They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, ⁷ greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' Matthew 23:5–7 (NKJV)

Religious leaders were like movie stars, admired ... their pride would not allow them to admit they were SINNERS! The word hypocrite meant play actor. They put on a show / But they also deceived THEMSELVES ...

- B. If people only say good things about you, all the time, it can get to you. A couple times I have met famous preachers and both times SAW their WEAKNESS ... yet they were BLIND to it ...

Because they thought themselves "righteous" they did not think they NEEDED a Savior from sin – **²⁹ Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them. ³⁰ And their scribes and the Pharisees complained against His disciples, saying, "Why do You eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"**

³¹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Luke 5:29-32 (NKJV)

- C. They were against Jesus because He pointed out their sin, He made them look bad, He called them out -

²⁴ Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." John 8:24 (NKJV)

³⁴ Jesus answered them, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. John 8:34 (NKJV)**

⁴¹ Jesus said to them, **“If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains. John 9:41 (NKJV)**

²⁷ **“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.**

²⁸ **Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. Matthew 23:27–28 (NKJV)**

4. *The thief (Satan) had convinced them they would LOSE EVERYTHING, their Jewish social status, their wealth, their place in the Synagogue if committed to Jesus Christ –*

⁴² Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *Him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ⁴³ for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. John 12:42–43 (NKJV)

II. *The Abundant Life Jesus offered is worth losing everything else –*
... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10 (NKJV)

1. *The Apostle Paul an example, He had it ALL, but He gained so much MORE –*

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴ though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

⁷ But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹ if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Philippians 3:3-11 (NKJV)

A. *He counted his old life rubbish compared to the knowledge of Christ Jesus – Philippians 3:7-8*

B. *He counted on Christ’s Righteousness, by which he would attain Heaven – Philippians 3:9*

C. *He would know Jesus and the power of His resurrection – Philippians 3:10*

D. *He desired even the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings – Philippians 3:10 B*

2. *The abundant life is not in the things of this world, but in God’s eternal Kingdom –*

A. *If we are not “born again” we cannot see God’s Kingdom –*

³ Jesus answered and said to him, **“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3 (NKJV)**

B. *But Jesus calls us to seek His Kingdom first –*

³³ **But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33 (NKJV)**

C. *These things, God’s Kingdom things, cannot be stolen from us, they do not wear out or rust –* ¹⁹ **“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. Matthew 6:19–20 (NKJV)**

D. Not meat and drink –

¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17 (NKJV)

III. The thief, Satan; and God Who is sovereign, often bring the same things, yet with different intentions –

³ Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that *there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause.*” ⁴ So Satan answered the LORD and said, “Skin for skin! Yes, all that a man has he will give for his life. ⁵ But stretch out Your hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will surely curse You to Your face!” ⁶ And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, he *is* in your hand, but spare his life.” Job 2:3–6 (NKJV)

1. Satan’s intention / desire was for Job to curse God –

⁹ Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God and die!” Job 2:9 (NKJV)

2. Yet, Job in his trials saw his life in God’s hands, God’s intention was good –

¹⁰ But He knows the way that I take; *When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.* Job 23:10 (NKJV)

3. Good or evil it’s the same, is God good? Or is He to blame? Satan would tempt us away from God with good things or have us curse God, when we go through trials, but God is to be praised on both our good and bad days --- Abundant Life means all things work together for good, to make us more like Jesus –

¹¹ “Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, ¹² lest—*when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them;* ¹³ and *when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied;* ¹⁴ when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; Deuteronomy 8:11–14 (NKJV)

A. W. Pink in his conclusion of his book on the Sovereignty of God points to Madam Guyon -

Some two hundred years ago the saintly Madam Guyon, after ten years spent in a dungeon lying far below the surface of the ground, lit only by a candle at meal-times, wrote these words: “A little bird I am, Shut from the fields of air; Yet in my cage I sit and sing To Him who placed me there; Well pleased a prisoner to be, *Because, my God, it pleases Thee.* Nought have I else to do I sing the whole day long; And He whom most I love to please, Doth listen to my song; He caught and bound my wandering wing But still He bends to hear me sing. My cage confines me round; Abroad I cannot fly; But though my wing is closely bound, My heart’s at liberty, My prison walls cannot control The flight, the freedom of the soul. Ah! it is good to soar These bolts and bar above, To Him *whose purpose I adore*, Whose Providence I love; And in Thy mighty will to find The joy, the freedom of the mind.” Madam Guyon

She had found “abundant life” in what might seem a strange place to find it!

Arnold A. Brevick