

Reach For Abundant Life

John 10:10 [New King James] *“... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”*

These are the words of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ and the Greek word translated “*abundantly*” is “*pērisōs*” meaning beyond normal superabundant in quantity and quality, abounding exuberance for life.

What do we need to live abundantly? –

a) The capacity to love –

John 10:11 [New King James] *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.”*

Jesus Christ expressed this love for others in sacrificing His life for all humanity, [**John 3:16-17**].

We need to develop a genuine caring and concern for other human beings, to reach out a helping hand to all in need.

1 Corinthians 13:2 [New King James] *“And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”*

Without love for others we are nothing.

How is this love expressed? –

It is being silent when words would hurt.

It is being patient when others are curt.

It is being deaf when scandal flows.

It is being thoughtful for others' trials.

It is courage when misfortune falls.

Romans 12:9-21 [New King James] *“Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honour giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”*

This can only happen in our lives when we have applied Romans 12:1 and the Holy Spirit is re-educating our attitude to life, Romans 12:2.

b) The capacity to learn –

We learn to apply what we find in God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

This is a lifelong process of absorbing the wisdom and knowledge that is found in its pages.

Proverbs 9:9-11 [New King James] *“Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser; teach a just man, and he will increase in learning. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you.”*

This is a promise from the Eternal Creator God and is exactly what our attitude towards learning should be.

John 16:13 [New King James] *“However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.”*

Again this is dependent on the active presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, [Luke 12:11-12; John 14:26; Acts 5:32].

c) The capacity to work hard –

There are times in life when idle ease seems very appealing.

Actually it is through hard work we receive real rewards and satisfaction.

Success is sweet but its secret is sweat, and no-one has ever been drowned in sweat.

2 Timothy 2:15 [New King James] *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

The apostle Paul’s inspired advice to Timothy and the congregations of Christians that were in his care.

Proverbs 6:6-8 [New King James] *“Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest.”*

This is one of many instructions given in Proverbs about work ethic.

The only time and place where success comes before work is in the dictionary!!

d) The capacity to laugh –

Laugh at ourselves as well as with others. Life can sometimes be hard and dreary. The capacity to see humour in certain situations, to enjoy the funny side of life, can brighten not only your day but that of other people.

There is a time for proper humour, [Ecclesiastes 3:4].

When a person is gloomy, everything seems to go wrong; when they are cheerful, everything seems right. Seek to have a balance of humour and happiness in your life.

e) The capacity to leave –

We all have people and things that we care about very much. But the day may, and will, come when they are no longer part of our lives. A loved one dies, a good job is lost, a valued situation changes for one reason or another.

When such a time comes, a period of grieving may be in order, but it should soon be set aside. The past is over and we cannot recapture it, it is time to move forward.

On my last birthday I was given a translation of The Bible which was not among my collection by my wife, son and one of my granddaughters. On the card that came with the gift they had written, “*We appreciate how this book is your life. With all our love.*”

The printed message on the card was, “*Lord, in all I do today, remind me that there is just one way to do the things I do best to put my mind and heart at rest. That is to put in Your great hands my life, that You alone have planned.*”

Proverbs 8:32-35 [New King James] “*Now therefore, listen to me, my children, for blessed are those who keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life, and obtains favour from the LORD;*”

On first reading of what has been stated in this article may seem like rather simple qualities, they do, after all, exist to some degree in all of us.

But it is the applying of them to our life, along with the active presence of the Holy Spirit, [**Galatians 5:22-25**] expanding on them, in sustaining them in every aspect of our lives that will bring us the abundant living that the Triune God desires we should experience.