

A Life of Abundance John 10

Introduction

- Church Camp Theme Verse
 - Set to a tune
 - While I don't remember how the tune goes, I've never forgotten the verse
- **John 10:10 (ESV), "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."**
 - As a teenager, I found this verse intriguing. The verse seems to imply that if we put our faith in Jesus, then God will supply abundance in our life.
 - Who wouldn't desire that kind of life?
 - *The difficult thing is understanding what Jesus meant by an abundant life.*
 - At the time I heard this verse for the first time, I was trying to figure out how to find a career that would not only be fulfilling, but provide financial gain.
- Consider the following example from Forbes Magazine:
 - In 1962, John Havlicek was a rookie for the Boston Celtics.¹
 - His rookie salary was \$15,000.
 - \$15,000 wouldn't even be considered minimum wage today!
 - Havlicek went on to have an historic career with the Boston Celtics winning multiple championships, and is considered one of the greatest basketball players of all time.
 - Compare John Havlicek's rookie salary to LeBron James' 2018 contract which earned him 33.5 million dollars.²
 - He earned an additional 52 million dollars through endorsements.
 - So in 2018 LeBron James earned a total of 85.5 million dollars!
 - I can't even wrap my mind around what 1 million dollars looks like let alone 85.5 million!
 - Puts things into perspective doesn't it?! One way to measure abundance through money and achievements.
 - Not a criticism, but just an example of the value placed on sports stars and their achievements
 - One which most of us will never reach, but a piece of abundance that is enticing none the less
- "Abundance"- excessive, more than enough
 - Does abundance have a dollar amount? Is it some achievement that can be earned?
 - OR, Is abundance something that is much deeper than material worth?
 - The real question: Does our understanding of an abundant life match what Jesus promised in **John 10:10**?

¹ Forbes Magazine, *The Highest-Paid Athletes 2018 Ranking*. www.forbes.com. Assessed May 30, 2019.

² Steve Schaefer, *John Havlicek: To Retire Well, Invest From Day One*. www.forbes.com. February 14, 2014. Accessed May 30, 2019.

God chooses to reveal his abundance through our poverty

- The context of **John 10:10** begins in chapter 9
 - The focus of chapter 9 is on a man who has been blind from birth
 - Jesus' disciples raise a question (**John 9:2**) that defines the social understanding of how someone like the blind man was perceived
 - The blind man appears to have nothing of value to offer to society
 - Isn't it interesting that the disciples and, as we will see, the religious leaders assume that the man's blindness is the result of sin?
 - However, Jesus' response to the disciples (**John 9:3**) tells us that God is about to do something special
 - Jesus heals the man (**John 9:6-7**)
 - All of a sudden the man who once was blind seems to have something of value that his neighbors and religious leaders are interested in
 - He has a testimony!
 - The Neighbors and Pharisees
 - The man's neighbor's are astonished, "How has a blind beggar now able to see?"
 - The man tries to explain, as best as he can, that a man named Jesus anointed his eyes with mud, and healed his blindness.
 - However, the story sounded more like a fish tale than a true story.
 - So the neighbors, being good Jews, took the man to the religious leaders.
 - The Pharisees have two concerns
 - First, how could someone be healed on the Sabbath? It is against the religious law for someone to perform a miracle on the Sabbath!
 - Second, the man was claiming Jesus had healed him. The Pharisees didn't like Jesus coming around messing with protocol.
 - Return to the concern of blindness being a result of sin.
 - If the blind man can receive his sight then the power and influence of the Pharisees' can be questioned. They are the ones privileged with abundance
 - The greater point is that Jesus has just caused everyone to reconsider their understanding of abundance.
 - This new understanding of abundance can be perceived as either a blessing or a threat.
 - If we are going to understand God's abundance we are going to have to think differently
 - **John 9:35-41**
 - Why did Jesus heal the blind man?
 - **9:3-4**
 - Jesus healed the blind man to reveal God's abundance

- The man was healed not only of his blindness, but the fulfillment of his faith through Jesus Christ
 - Yet, the true blindness that is occurring in this story is the unwillingness to see God’s abundance through Jesus Christ.
 - Therefore, as Jesus responds to religious leaders, “Your guilt remains (41).”
 - If we are going to understand abundance we are going to have to think differently
 - Abundance is not so much about what we can earn or achieve
 - Instead, God chooses to reveal his abundance through our poverty
 - The poverty of sin
 - Blind beggar-salvation through Jesus
 - Pharisees
 - With just spit and mud Jesus is able to heal the man
 - New creation
 - N.T. Wright, “The chaos and misery of this present world is, it seems, the raw material of which the loving, wise, and just God is making his new creation.”³
- Can you see this morning that without Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are poor?
 - It is out of the poverty of our sin that God desires to reveal his abundance
 - When we begin to measure our value on grace, the promise of abundance has no limit.
 - For some, this will be received as a blessing, but for others it will be received as a threat.

Attitude and Testimony define Abundance

- Marco/Polo Game
 - Those who have their eyes close yells, “Marco”
 - The one person whose eyes are open responds, “Polo”
 - Follow the sound of the “Polo” in order to see.
- The Faith of the blind man
 - When Jesus healed the blind man all of a sudden, the man had something of value; a testimony
 - However, it appears that before the man’s testimony he had faith
 - **John 9:28-32**
 - Worship God
 - Do God’s will
 - Listen to God
 - Compare to **John 10:1-4**
 - Hear the voice

³ N.T. Wright, *John For Everyone: Part 1 Chapters 1-10*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. Pg. 134.

- Know the voice
 - Follow the Shepherd
- Despite his blindness and state of poverty, the man had faith in God.
- It was the man's attitude toward God, that opened the door for Jesus to heal the man and give the man a testimony to share.
- We may feel broken, blind, and poor, but it shouldn't keep us from worshipping God, doing God's will, and listening to God.
 - Through our poverty God reveals his abundance
 - **John 10:10**
 - Attitude and Testimony define abundance
 - Is this your attitude today?
 - Do you have a testimony to share?

God's Abundance is in his promise

- Review so far
 - If we are going to understand God's abundance we are going to have to think differently
 - God chooses to reveal his abundance through our poverty
 - Attitude and Testimony define abundance
- God's abundance is found in his promise
 - **John 10:22-30**
 - Pharisees, Jews, Privileged: not the sheep
 - If they would have had the attitude of worship, obedience, or listening they would have been able to see that Jesus was the fulfillment of God's promise.
 - Instead, their attitude and testimony was centered on their own power, influence, and personal achievement.
 - Here is where abundance is more than just what we can earn
 - Ezekiel 34
 - Sheep and Shepherd that Jesus describes in John 10
 - **Ezekiel 34:23-27**
 - God's abundance is eternal abundance
 - Until we begin to accept that our poverty and blindness is our sin, we will never receive God's abundance
 - God's abundance will
 - Heal us from the deception, weight, and expectation to have more
 - Give us a testimony of true abundance found in the grace and peace of Jesus Christ
 - Provide the necessary provision we need in the present world
 - God's promise of abundance is something you can take to the Bank of the Kingdom of God

Conclusion

- The Bible teaches (the main point of this sermon series) Abundance is not about how much you have, but about how much you give
 - However, you can't give abundantly until you have received God's abundant grace
 - Nation of Israel were chosen to be blessed and be a blessing, however when they focused only on being blessed their purpose got out of balance- I think this is a temptation for us today when we think about abundance.
 - Jesus gave fully of himself on the cross, so that we could have eternal life
 - Taught: The treasures of heaven are more valuable than the treasures of the earth (**Matthew 6:19-21**)
 - Taught: **"It is more blessed to give than to receive."** - Acts 20:35, **ESV**
- God chose to reveal his abundance through a blind man's poverty
 - Jesus gave the man a testimony to share
 - God's abundance changed the blind man's life
- God's abundance can change your life too
 - To understand God's abundance we have to think differently
 - Attitude and Testimony define abundance
 - God's abundance is in his promise
- Does your understanding of abundance match God's?
 - Listen to his voice
 - Follow his voice
 - Worship

PRAY AND COMMUNION