

# The Abundant Life

## Introduction

1. Two texts will get this topic started: 1 Peter 3:10-12 and John 10:10.
2. Why did they live so long in the Old Testament?
  - a. In truth, not all Old Testament figures lived that long.
    - i. Before the flood:
      - a) Adam lived 930 years (Genesis 5:5).
      - b) Seth lived 912 years (Genesis 5:8).
      - c) Methuselah lived 969 years (Genesis 5:27).<sup>1</sup>
    - ii. After the flood:
      - a) Shem lived 500 years (Genesis 11:11).
      - b) Arphaxad lived 403 years (Genesis 11:12).
      - c) Peleg lived 209 years (Genesis 11:18).
      - d) Terah (Abraham's father) lived 205 years (Genesis 11:32).
      - e) By the time Abraham died, 175 years was an old age (Genesis 25:7).
      - f) Moses frames a man's life in terms of 70 to 80 years (Psalm 90:10).
  - b. The flood is seen to mark a great divide in the chronology of man.<sup>2</sup>
3. What is involved in abundant living?

## I. First, consider what the **Abundant Life** is NOT.

- A. It's not just age. "Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished" (Ecclesiastes 4:13).
- B. It's not in worldly wisdom. See 1 Corinthians 1:20, 21 in principle and also James 3:15.
- C. It's not in wealth. See 1 Timothy 6:10 and 2 Peter 3:9, 10.
- D. It's not only in happiness.
  1. Of course, God wants us to be happy, but we must be happy by HIS standards.
  2. Not everything that may make us happy is appropriate (1 John 2:15-17; Hebrews 11:25).

## II. Now, consider what the **Abundant Life** is.

- A. It has a point of reference.
  1. Judging ourselves by ourselves is faulty and confusing (1 Corinthians 4:4).
  2. God gives that point of reference (Philippians 1:27; John 14:6).
- B. It requires **OPTIMISM**.

Philippians 4:13	Romans 8:31	Psalm 23:4	John 14:1
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- C. It requires appreciation.
  1. This quality is contrary to fault-finding.
  2. Appreciation *tries* to live peaceably (Romans 12:18).

<sup>1</sup> Methuselah is the oldest man in the Bible.

<sup>2</sup> The canopy theory plays prominently into this explanation.

3. Love doesn't keep score (1 Corinthians 13:5).
- D. It requires confession (1 John 1:5-10).
- E. It requires forgiveness (Colossians 3:13).

#### Conclusion

1. The **Abundant Life** comes to those who are saved.
2. God's Plan of Salvation:
  - a. Hear the Word-Romans 10:17
  - b. Believe-Mark 16:16
  - c. Repent-Luke 13:3-5
  - d. Confess Christ-Matthew 10:32, 33
  - e. Be Baptized-Acts 2:38
  - f. Live Faithfully-Revelation 2:10

## **GOD WANTS YOU TO BE HAPPY!**

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Teaching God's word has its moments of excitement. I recall those happy occasions when I have been able to study the Bible with people and see the Gospel bear fruit in their lives by their acts of faith. But studying the Bible with people has had its disappointing moments as well.

I remember studying the Bible with a young lady who had been through a divorce, and in the process of our study the subject of divorce and remarriage came up. It was not long until it became clear to me that she was thinking seriously of entering into a second marriage without coming to terms with the fact that her particular divorce did not meet the approval of God (Matt. 19:9). In the discussion I attempted, in love, to demonstrate in what way the Word of God applied to her case (being committed to the Scriptures, I had no choice-1 Tim. 4:16). Sadly, the young lady left the study unwilling to be subject to God. "God wants me to be happy!" she said. She meant that God wanted her to be happy regardless of how she lived her life--that God was not concerned with whether men and women obeyed His will; His greatest concern was our happiness.

There is some truth in that. God does want you to be happy. He wants us all to be happy. That's why He gave us rules to live by. The only way that we are able to enjoy a ball game on television or at the ball park is if all the participants observe the rules of the game. If everyone played by his own rules, there could be no ballgame and no one could derive any enjoyment from it. That's the way it is in life. Happiness comes by living the way God wants us to live. His laws restrict our actions, but they also liberate us from the pain and unhappiness we would feel if we all selfishly lived by our own standards.

God wants you to be happy--on His terms! That's a happiness that is far greater than the fleeting enjoyments we derive from following our own wants and desires. Solomon said, "Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law" Proverbs 29:18. Let us acknowledge with David: "Happy are the people whose God is the Lord" Psalms 144:15.