

WEEK 6 (March 15-21) ABUNDANT LIFE-listening and responding in obedience to God.

OPTIONAL READING: John Chapters 11-15


The abundance of our lives is not determined by how long we live, but how well we live. Christ makes abundant life possible if we choose to live it now. Barbara Brown Taylor

Day 1 Read the following scripture:

John 10:26-27 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

²⁶But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. ²⁷My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me;

John 5:19-20 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹⁹Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless *it is* something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and *the Father* will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.

Sheep back in the New Testament times spent the night in a common pen. In the morning each shepherd would call his sheep who knew his voice and followed him. We are the sheep and we can hear Jesus speaking to us, daily. Jesus was always listening to His Father, doing what He says and does, and so should we.

John 15:9-10 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁹Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

The abundant life is abiding in Jesus' love by obeying His commands. Obedience literally means to "listen & hear" followed by responding. We become filled with the Holy Spirit and become powerful witnesses to the goodness of God.

Things to consider: are you obeying Jesus and recognizing His voice?

Prayer: ask God to reveal where you are disobedient and repent of it.

Day 2 Read the following scripture:

1 John 4:7-11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

⁷Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is ^[a]born of God and knows God. ⁸The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ⁹By this the love of God was manifested ^[b]in us, that God has sent His ^[c]only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

We are identified as people who love one another. We live from this identity as God's children. The Holy Spirit constantly teaches us how to be in a right relationship with God and others. His goal for us is to become a person that lives in lovingkindness.

John 15:11 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

¹¹These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

We need to obey Jesus' invitation into life and wholeness. Obeying Him brings complete joy. It also allows us to freely love those around us and prompts us of where He is working so we can reach out to them and meet their specific need. Life in Jesus always expresses itself in concrete, practical action.

Things to consider: are you loving Jesus and others, reaching out to those around you?

Prayer: ask God to help you love Him and others and be used to meet others' needs.

Day 3 Read the following scripture:

Exodus 16:1-21 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

16 Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt. ²The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of ^[a]meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." ⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My ^[b]instruction. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily." ⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening ^[c]you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt; ⁷and in the morning ^[d]you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?" ⁸Moses said, "*This will happen* when the LORD gives you ^[e]meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD." ⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumblings.'" ¹⁰It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they ^[f]looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹²"I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, '^[g]At twilight you shall eat ^[h]meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'" ¹³So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the layer of dew ^[i]evaporated, behold, on the ^[j]surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the sons of Israel

saw *it*, they said to one another, “[k]What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat. ¹⁶This is [u]what the LORD has commanded, ‘Gather of it every man [m]as much as he should eat; you shall take [a]n omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.’” ¹⁷The sons of Israel did so, and *some* gathered much and *some* little. ¹⁸When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered [e]as much as he should eat. ¹⁹Moses said to them, “Let no man leave any of it until morning.” ²⁰But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them. ²¹They gathered it morning by morning, every man [e]as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt.

Notice the Israelites were supplied with their needs one day at a time and just enough each day. God didn’t reveal everything at once because He could not reveal everything at once for our sakes. We are not truly transformed or living the abundant life if we trust only when we have all the answers.

Things to consider: do you insist on having all the information before obeying Christ?

Prayer: ask God to help you trust Him with what He has revealed.

Day 4 Read the following scripture:

Psalm 19 New American Standard Bible (NASB)

19 The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. ²Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. ³There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. ⁴Their ^[a]line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun, ⁵Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course. ⁶Its rising is from ^[b]one end of the heavens, And its circuit to the ^[c]other end of them; And there is nothing hidden from its heat. ⁷The law of the LORD is ^[d]perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. ⁹The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. ¹⁰They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover, by them Your servant is warned; In keeping them there is great reward. ¹²Who can discern *his* errors? Acquit me of hidden *faults*. ¹³Also keep back Your servant from presumptuous *sins*; Let them not rule over me; Then I will be ^[e]blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression. ¹⁴Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

This Psalm describes our world as His creation revealing to everyone His existence. All human beings are in touch with the God of Love through the desires of our heart. We long for intimacy, connection and meaning. We can find a place enjoying something in His creation to make us aware of the goodness and nearness of God. This is tasting the abundant life.

Things to consider: do you have a place to go and a thing to do that you become aware of the goodness and nearness of God?

Prayer: find a place and activity that you can experience God's goodness and nearness.