

LIFE TO THE FULL

*“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy;
I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”*

John 10:10

Read that verse again. And again, slowly, taking in each word.

In recent years, I've struggled with that verse. What does “life... to the full” mean?

Full bellies, full wallets, full homes, full calendars, full friends lists, full physical, mental and emotional function? That sounds good, right? Like what we've heard preached on tv and in books, music and movies. It's engrained in our “American dream” culture.

But what happens when your wallet is empty? Your cupboard bare? You lose a job? Your home? Things break? Dreams shatter? You get sick? You question what “life to the full” means when you can't afford what you *thought it meant*. When you experience *grief after grief*. When anxiety or depression *deflate you*. When you receive a diagnosis that's *chronic, incurable, debilitating...* Can one be struggling, poor, broken or even homebound and still have “life to the full?”

I want to say yes. After all, Jesus said it. And I've understood for years that Jesus' abundant life doesn't look like health, wealth and activities. (Consider his original followers—mostly poor and without access to what we *tend to think* makes life abundant.) Still, I've had a hard time grasping how it *does look*.

Until lately, as Jesus has been pointing me back to Himself. *He is life*.

Grab a Bible and look at the context of John 10. Jesus was comparing the religious leaders (and their legalism) to thieves who steal, kill and destroy and contrasting *that* with Himself as the gate (the way) and the bringer of abundant life. Four chapters later He says plainly that *He is the way, the life*. When we have Jesus, when we *spend time* in the *presence of Jesus, that is life*. Life *so full* it spills out with grace and joy, regardless of our circumstances, and it *makes a difference*. To us and to any with whom we have contact. Abundant life is knowing Jesus.

Prayer prompt: Jesus, you said you came so that we may have life, life to the full. Give us eyes to see what that means. Help us rest in you, trusting that you are enough, and daily experiencing your presence which brings true life. Jesus, sometimes I struggle with seeing

abundance in my life. Help me see your abundance of life, grace and joy in these areas where I feel grief, lack or limitations:_____.