

Life and Have it More Abundantly

(Part one)

We are told in Scripture that we can have life and have it more abundantly.

John 10:10, The thief cometh not, for but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly.

As far as the evidence and history of mans experience on the earth, people can't help but be confused. Men have created laws and more laws to find a reasonable formula by which we may live with one another. We will continue to be confused until we realize that we need to make a choice, not a choice for our neighbor or some individual on another continent, but a choice for ourselves.

Deuteronomy 30:19, I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that you and your seed may live: 20, That mayest love the Lord thy God, and that mayest obey His voice, and that thou mayest cling to Him: for He is thy life and the length of thy days:

The blessing and cursing that God is telling us about is found in Leviticus chapter 26 and in Deuteronomy 28, blessings for hearing and obedience and cursing for rejecting the advice giving.

Some might say that those chapters in the old testament are outdated and done away. There were times that God did change some of His instructions but He never changed any of His laws. It is important to understand the difference between laws, statues and commands. Only statues and commands have been changed at times so as to lead His people by steps from ones faith to a higher degree of faith, much like our present school system. We start at some level of education and continue until we have reached our

goal. His physical as well as His spiritual laws have never been tampered with. God doesn't change the way He leads His children, otherwise we would be in confusion.

Malachi 3: 6, "For I am the Lord thy God, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

We need to consider that God is building the pinnacle of His creation, starting with the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7) and eventually bringing us into sonship as citizens of His kingdom.

II. Corinthians 6: 18, "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

That seems like quite a challenge but what was God's response when Sarah laughed when she would bear a child in her old age.

Genesis 18: 14, "Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

In considering the above verse, how is it possible to bring the many factors into play to bring about the desired results concerning Sarah. The birth of Isaac was given according to a promise made by God to Abraham. At that time the promise of God brought about a more abundant life for Sarah as well as Abraham. Sarah was childless up until the birth of Isaac.

If Jesus Christ says that we can have life and have it more abundantly would we laugh as Sarah did? Or would we want to hear more? All of Gods promises are based on the condition that we need to do our part. Let me explain.

There was a time in my life that I enjoyed smoking cigarettes. I always felt good, no coughing, wheezing or any other discomfort. My real concern was that cigarette cost were starting to soar. It was getting expensive to smoke. But I was still able to

handle it. It wasn't until while studying God's word the Bible that I read a scripture requiring me that if I were ever to receive God's blessings, I would need to do my part. The scripture I read was:

II Corinthians 6:16, “ and what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols? For ye are the Temple of the living God as God hath said, “ I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people.

Scripture is saying that our physical bodies are the temple in which God would dwell. I had tried to quit smoking many different times but always started again. I just didn't have the strength and will power to quit on my own. However if I was to be obedient to God, I knew that I would need to stop smoking. The first thing I did was to stop buying cigarettes. And I knew I would need the help and strength thru prayer to do whatever was required. Needless to say I was sincere in my desire to stop smoking. It wasn't long before the desires of the flesh to smoke diminished and eventually stopped. I have never had the urge to smoke since. God makes good His promises and gives us the desires of our heart. Someone might say, well the desire of my heart is to have a new car or some other pleasurable item. But what does God say?

Matthew 6:32, “ (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. 33, but seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you

Remember what was said above, He is creating sons and daughters and cares about our spiritual character ***first***.

Psalm 37: 4, Delight thyself in the Lord and He shall give you the desires of thy heart.

We as His children would want to be pleasing to God. The cigarettes and smoking were of the pulls of the flesh. Every one of

us has these pulls. Jesus addresses these pulls of the flesh.

Matthew 26:41, “ Watch and pray that you do not enter into temptation : the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

We need to overcome these deed of the flesh that drag us down and cause us to be less than what we could be. These deed of the flesh are mentioned by the Apostle Paul.

Galatians 5:19, “ now the works(deeds) of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,20- Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, 21- Envyings, murders drunkenness, reveling, and such like: of the which I have told you in time past, that they which do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

These are flaws in our character that weigh us down. These are deeds of the flesh and with the help of God can be overcome and eliminated from our character, much the way smoking was eliminated as described earlier. In a way, it seems as though the flesh has a mind of it's own. Some think that the human body is flawed from birth and in many ways it is. Scripture says we are imperfect human beings.

Romans 3:10, “ As it is written, “ there is none righteous, no not one.

But God can change our character if it is our *hearts desire*.

Psalms 37: 4, Delight also in the Lord, and He shall give thee the desires of thy heart. 5, Commit thy ways unto the Lord; Trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass. 6, And He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.7, Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him:

What will God bring to pass and why the waiting? God does not force any of His children to love Him or to even believe what He says. But if we do love Him and do what is pleasing, He is there to help. Studying God's word the Bible helps us to examine the character of others written in scripture and recognize our own flaws when we read of them. When we realize our own shortcomings, or errors, we can work to eliminate these flaws or the deeds of the flesh. In the beginning of this subject it was mentioned of the blessing and the cursing. God called heaven and earth as a witness for us or against us. God is the one that at this time resides in Heaven and we are the ones that resides on the earth. If we do our part, eliminating the deeds of the flesh, God will do His part in destroying the pulls of the flesh. As we eliminate these character flaws we overcome our carnal nature and put on Gods divine nature. He is the only one from whom we can get our righteousness. We don't get it by our own strength. Verse 5 says to commit thy ways unto the Lord: we need to tell God of our weaknesses and seek His help in eliminating them. Then will come to pass God's promise of healing and free us from the flaws in our character.

John 8:36," If the son of man shall make you free you shall be free indeed.

Free from the nature within us that holds us back from having life and having it more abundantly. To be free from the hostilities within us shapes a true character that is pleasing to God and extends out to others. The deeds of the flesh have been the problem with mankind from the very beginning. God wants us to overcome the works of the flesh.

1 John 2:12, " I write unto you little children, because your sins (shortcomings in the flesh) are forgiven you for His names sake." Verse 14, " I have written to you fathers, because you have

known Him, that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men because you are strong and the word of God abided in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.

The Apostle Paul addresses the Corinthian church because the brethren didn't know how to judge among themselves the smallest matter.

I Corinthians 6: 3, “ Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much the things that pertain to this life?

This church liked to point the finger at others and didn't examine themselves to see where they fell short in overcoming their own human nature.

Verse 9, Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves of mankind. 10, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. 11, “And such were some of you:”

Some would like to laugh as Sarah did and think that Gods word is impossible and Gods promises were unrealistic.

Matthew 19:26, But Jesus told them and said unto them, “with men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

Don't laugh. (To be continued)