

Jesus, The Life You Have Been Searching For!

John 10:9-11

King James Version (KJV)

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

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

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

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10 The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it [a]overflows).

Life has a myriad of definitions. Depending on who you talk to and where you are – you will get varied understandings of what a good life is.

If you talk to someone here in America they would say, “Oh, if I could just live in the Caribbean that would be the life.” Then you ask a native of the Caribbean and they would say, “Oh, to live in America!”

The poor cry “Oh, to be rich!” While the rich often say, “Oh, to have a simple and healthy life!”

The childless woman would say, “Oh just to have children, that would be the life!” While the mother with children says, “Where did all these kids come from and why do they keep calling me mom?”

Life: The condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic matter, including the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change preceding death.

- To a clinician, life is simply something that is breathing.
- To a human, life is simply day by day then death.
- To Jesus, life is His breath breathed into humanity not only at your physical birth but also for your spirit being!

Jesus is not interested in you simply living or existing but living in abundance!

How do you live with abundant life? It's when you have the weights of this life, the sin you were born with, but not designed for, removed from your life.

Life more abundantly is when you live in the purpose you were created for. That purpose of God that is tailor made to fit your life!

- Life is more than work, sleep, eat, and procreation!
- Life is more than punching a clock and time ticking till the ticker stops ticking.

Life is about purpose!

A quote from Robert J. Shores that goes like this:

“Our hope for eternal life in the hereafter does not spring from a longing for a spiritual existence, but grows out of our love for life upon this earth, which we have tried and found good.”

This hit me in a powerful way! If you hate this life then why would you pursue eternal life?

The root word abundant is repeated over 70 times in the scripture.

God wanted His people in the OT to live in a land flowing with milk and honey.

In the NT He wanted us not only to have life, but that more abundantly!

Matthew 8:1-3

1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Leprosy is a strange disease and even with all today's medical science, there is still no cure. How many know that there are still leper colonies in existence? We have one in LA and one in HI. Leprosy in the Bible is much like cancer today. How many here have ever been affected by cancer yourself or someone you know or someone you're related too? My grandfather died of cancer.

Leprosy in the Bible was said to have been caused by sin in the individual's life or the life of a relative. Leprosy was the most dreaded disease of the Old and New Testament. Without boring you with a lot of medical information I want to show you why leprosy was so dreaded and why it's symptoms were used to compare sin in a person's life.

Leprosy is a bacterium that affects the skin and nerves. Leprosy causes blindness, dead limbs, crippling, & amputation.

The greatest symptoms are loneliness and shamefulness.

For a surgeon, the most common symptom patients present to them with is pain. Pain causes a great deal of discomfort, suffering and despair. Most people will do anything for a pain free life and thus help fund a multibillion-dollar drug industry devoted exclusively to suppress this pain.

Pain however is a necessary part of life and the problem associated with loss of the sensation of pain needs to be experienced or witnessed in order to understand its importance.

Pain in the physical and spiritual is very important and something we cannot live without, hence the importance and relevance of pain. Pain of course is perceived as a problem and not as the protective symptom that it is. Pain causes a protective response. Other parts of the body rush to favor and take on the burdens of the hurting part. The heel takes on the burden of the forefoot; the forefoot takes on the burden of the heel. The hand rushes to comfort the hurting part by holding and massaging.

If this does not occur and pain is ignored, or if the pain is absent, destruction results and a part of the body may be lost.

In the spiritual sense of leprosy when a saint of God is affected by sin we as the body of Christ must rush to the hurting part of the body or individual and begin to hold their hand in prayer and fasting for restoration.

Sin like leprosy, starts out small and we may try and wrap the wound or run to the altar and repent. For some the leprosy is healed but for others they don't pray enough to heal. Some time may go by and everything seems to be ok but all the time the leprosy continues to spreads. We are standing on our own now without God and don't even notice it. Our legs have lost all feeling and we don't even realize that we are damaging ourselves.

Then our eyesight becomes dim and we can't see our way anymore and we begin to bump in to harmful things that cut us and bruise us and we can't even feel it. God comes by and try's to touch us but our feeling is gone and we can no longer feel His hand of love and mercy.

Sin begins to separate the infected and they become ostracized both by the community of believers and very often by their close family members. Not because the church or the family wants to, but generally because the diseased feels ashamed and hopeless. You cut yourself off from the clean and join the unclean.

In our text today we find that this leper is the first man to call Jesus, Lord. He was not a prophet, not a Pharisee, not even a disciple, but a leper.

The song says, "He touched me, and made me whole. And Oh, the joy that floods my soul."

The Book of Matthew was written for the Jews to show them that Jesus was there King. Matthew is the only Gospel of the four that starts out with the leper. I believe that God wanted Matthew to convey to God's people that He was not some God who was millions of miles away. Or who would be a ruler and who would only talk to His subjects when they were bad.

But God wanted Matthew to show His people that He loves them so much that He would step out of the vastness of Heaven, not as a royal king with vast armies and generals to set up an earthly palace and kingdom but that He would robe Himself in flesh and walk among them and touch them.

This is an interesting story Matthew gives. Vs. 1 talks about the multitude but out of the multitude comes one man. Sometimes a crowd hinders us. The woman with the issue of blood. Everyone else was standing and looking around but when she touched Him a miracle came forth.

Here is my message today. The lepers could never dwell with the clean again. They ate, slept, worked, and married their own kind and like some lost tribe they lived together.

The Bible says the leper worshipped Him. Not asked for forgiveness, not asked for a healing, not for financial gain but he came forward and said Jesus I know who you are, and worshipped Him.

To touch a leper was a violation of the law, 12ft or 300ft. Matthew again shows Jesus as the King by saying the leper worshipped Him.

Mark shows this leper as a servant kneeling down.

Luke shows him falling down before Him.

The leper worshipped, kneeled, and fell before Jesus.

Some ask why we raise our hands and why we worship the way we do. We have come to worship, kneel, and fall on our face and declare that He is God.

The next miracle in our text today tells us the story of the Centurion's servant. It is the first story in the other Gospels. Jesus healed the centurion's servant without ever touching him. Later on 10 lepers come to Jesus, but only one runs back and

thanks Him. It was this man that fell and worshipped Him. The same God who said don't touch a leper or you will die, the same God that said leprosy is a type of sin and to stay away, is the same God that stepped out of Heaven in the form of Jesus Christ and said I am going to bring you something new called love and mercy and I am going to personally touch you.

He could have stopped some 12 ft. or 300 ft. away and said be healed like the priest. But He wanted Matthew to write that I am not a God who sits somewhere a million miles away and is just waiting to kill you with a sword when you make a mistake but I want to show you love and mercy and salvation and forgiveness.

I am preaching on Jesus, the life you have been searching for.

Allow me just a few more moments this morning.

I want to draw your attention to one final story in John 4.

John 4:9-19

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewst the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

Jesus leaves Judaea and heads towards Galilee but the Bible says He had to go to Samaria.

Many times when a person makes up in their mind: "I need a change, I can't live like this anymore". God has a way of finding you. Maybe your well experience was a knock on your door with an invite to this church, or maybe a co worker, or you drove by the church or stumbled onto the website...

It was another horrible typical day for this woman who no doubt as a child dreamed of becoming a princess to a prince. A queen to a tall dark strong handsome king in a palace set on a hill somewhere.

Maybe her dream was simpler. A nice house with a porch and white picket fence with children playing in the yard and a husband who would love her, provide for her and protect her.

But somewhere along the way the childhood dreams begin to fade and slip away. Maybe it started with a neighbor or family member who molested her. Maybe her father abandoned his family and she had no father image in her life.

Whatever event happened in her life, it caused her to abandon her dreams and sell her body not to the highest bidder but rather to any bidder she could find.

I assume there were several reasons why this woman would go to the well at noon. I don't believe the other village women went this late in the day due to the heat and the fact that most of the house work would start early because of the heat.

She was a shameful woman and an outcast in her town. Nobody wanted to be seen talking to her.

I see her darting around corners and in alleys on her way to the well. She is shamed and at a loss of how to get out of the web she is in. Her life is miserable and maybe she wonders if it would be better to just end her life.

The pills, drugs, and the alcohol only numb her for a short time.

She sees a man at the well, oh great I can't stand the sight of men and now I have to draw water with him here. I wonder if he knows who I am. I wonder if he is going to proposition me like all the rest.

But before she can tell him what she thinks he asked her for a drink of water.

I can see her thinking wow that is an original pick up line!

You know what I like about God?

He is a God who says if you will just worship me I will touch you. And when I touch you I will put back all the broken pieces of your marriage, home, your loneliness, hopelessness, and un-happiness.

I will give you life and that more abundantly!

There's no telling how many times that woman went to that well alone.

All she had was... Her shame. Her fear. Her loneliness.

But Jesus knew what she needed.

He knew He had what she had been looking for.

And he offered her the same thing He is offering you today.

- A life with Him.
- A relationship with Him.
- His love instead of all the problems your life has burdened you with.

He is just waiting to touch someone today.