

April 26, 2015 Easter 4

John 10: 10 Abundant Life

Verse 10 is one of a couple of scripture verses that continue to shape my life. **“I came that you might have life in all its fullness, life abundant.”** This verse struck a chord in me when I read it as a teen. It continues to resonate in my soul even now. You see, my experience of the Christian life has always been positive, always been **Good News**. Church has been a place where I have experienced community and acceptance.

Now, my experience of Presbytery and Conference is a different matter which I won't get into today.

I understand that earlier generations may have encountered a more controlling, restrictive, denying kind of Christianity. But for me the experience of the faith has been freeing and has built me up. It has balanced my life. It has taken me from emotional feast or famine to abundant living.

As the context of this verse suggests, the gift of abundance comes to us out of a deep love and costly commitment. When we accept the full extent of **God's** love and commitment towards us, things change inside us. We begin to see and evaluate life differently.

**Jesus** came out, into the fray, into the public eye to bring this abundance:

To bring us into a new relationship with **God**.

Once we accept that **God** has a serious stake in our life,

Once we allow **God** to have a place in our outlook,

Then we find a balance that somehow also fills us.

We learn bit by bit to let go of the scarcity model of ***“there won't be enough to go around.”*** Or ***“there won't be enough attention on me.”***

We discover that enough quite often is more than enough.

We learn that we don't need the best, and that more than adequate does quite fine.

We realize that life is fuller in the present moment than in the pre-planned future, or argued over past. When I hear the word ***“I came that you might have life in all its fullness, life abundant”***. I feel I have come home to **God**. I discover again and again that **God's** grace, forgiveness, acceptance and love, are always more than enough: Always abundantly available.

***The Application for Today***

What brings you home to God, where abundance is always the order of the day?

Think about it! Now live it! Amen.

1 John 3: 16, 18, 19

Often our scripture passages can be complicated and difficult to understand. Sometimes, it's because of the writer like the author of John's gospel or the translation like the King James Version. Sometimes it is because the ancient world is removed from us by 2,000 years. But I believe this passage is simple and clear. We don't just talk about love, we actually live love. In other words, we walk the talk. What's more, when we practice love, we enter into abundant living. Abundant living is how we know we are living in **God's** reality.

Why? Because as we practice love we don't get caught up in the world of competing or of being right all the time, or of comparing ourselves to others. We just love and we feel the strain go and the ease of abundance enters in. As we practice love, 'enough IS good enough'. And the pressure for more begins to evaporate.

When we just love we find a new found creative freedom without all the judgments and criticisms of ourselves or others. We discover we don't need attention or pats on the back for our actions.

A grounding contentment settles into our being and we find we can live more fully in the present moment with whomever or whatever the encounter offers. We experience how love easily expands to meet the need. That is when we begin to see and hear and feel ***God in all things and all things in God.***

And that, my friends is abundant living, the Easter experience, when we can't tell where heaven ends and earth begins. Abundant living is knowing we live in **God's** reality.

***Application for Today***

**Abundant living begins and ends in loving.**

Amen.