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ABUNDANCE

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and to destroy. I came that you might have life and have it more abundantly.”

Jesus, as quoted in John 10:10

There it is in black and white. Jesus intended that we live a life of abundance. But does that mean we all should have great jobs, large houses and money overflowing from our bank accounts? I hope you’ll forgive me but I always get a bit nervous when I hear Christian people talking about abundance. It makes me think of poofy-haired TV preachers with gold pinky rings selling prosperity to low income congregations. I know that’s unfair. But too many shysters from too many pulpits have robbed too many people with a prosperity gospel that is neither prosperous nor the gospel.

That said, what am I supposed to do with John 10:10? What am I supposed to do with, *“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.”* (Matt. 6:33) How am I to handle Luke 6:38? *“Give and it shall be given unto you, pressed down, shaken together and overflowing.”* Does God really intend for me to have so much that even if I packed it down and shook it around that it would still overflow?

Wasn’t it Jesus who also said, *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God?”* (Matt. 19:24) Doesn’t the apostle Paul elaborate on this when he says, *“The love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang?”* (I Tim. 6:10) It seems then, since the abundance of money would lead too many of us away from the faith that we should “flee immorality” and avoid abundance all together? Sure, that makes sense but the problem is in our attempt to flee from the danger of riches we’ve discarded the abundance mentality Jesus desired us to have for a scarcity mentality that is robbing us of the life God intended us to live. It’s this scarcity mentality that authors Jeff Standridge and Tim Kellerman are trying to destroy in their new book, ***The Abundance Principle.***

Scarcity thinking, the authors say, is the belief that there’s only so much prosperity to go around so you better get yours before someone else does. Have you ever told a cashier or waitress that she undercharged you? Have you ever taken more deductions on your tax form than you’re entitled? Are you happy when a co-worker receives a promotion? If you answered no to any of these questions than you, like too many of us, experience the scarcity mentality from time to time. The Israelites who gathered too much manna were victims of scarcity thinking. The farmer who built a

bigger barn to store his grain then eat, drink and be merry was the victim of scarcity thinking. (Luke 12) Scarcity thinkers focus on themselves and resent the successes of others. Scarcity thinking prevents us from taking chances, forming new friendships and enjoying life.

An abundant thinker, on the other hand, is one who understands that it's not what you have but who you are that makes you happy. An abundant liver believes life is a gift to be savored and uses every opportunity to make the most of his God-given talents and abilities. While abundant thinkers can't control the problems life throws at them they can control how they react to them. And while an abundant life doesn't necessarily mean a financially prosperous life an abundant thinker is more likely to experience overflow as a direct result of his actions and his attitude.

Standridge and Kellerman are great coaches. Not only do they point out the folly of our old way of thinking they have compiled an easy to follow, scripturally-based guidebook to help put us back on the path that God intended us to walk; a pathway that leads not to an ordinary life but an extraordinary one. The kind of life that makes other people to say, *"I've got to have whatever it is they have."*

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