

Abounding In Faith

I want to start out this article by asking a question - if you were given a choice on whether you wanted to abound or survive, what would you choose? I believe that most would agree that abounding is or would be the desired option. There is nothing wrong with survival, and it is certainly better than not surviving. I believe that when no one else is surviving that survival in those circumstances *is* abounding. Survival seems to carry the idea that we are existing but that all we have is the bare essentials; and while that is better than not surviving, I believe our existence should be more than just having “just enough”. When the Israelites were in Egypt they did not have enough. When they wandered in the wilderness, they had just enough. However, God’s desire was that they dwell in the land that He promised them which was a “land of more than enough”.

I want to show you a principle that will be a real help in our lives and ministry to experience more than enough or how to abound in, by, and through faith.

Look with me at Colossians 2:7 where we see a very important principle that will help us to abound in our faith. We are told that we will abound in faith by being thankful or with thanksgiving. I believe that this is a very important part of our faith and will be a tremendous asset to us - if we can learn to be thankful and to stay humble. I believe that it is very critical in the day we live in because the Bible tells us that in this day the tendency will be to be unthankful!! When we are unthankful, it can and will be highly detrimental to our faith!! I like to say it this way, “being thankful is the grease that keeps the wheels of faith turning”. When we are not thankful, we tend to slow down just as a wheel on a wagon or vehicle will turn harder and harder without the proper lubrication and will eventually quit working or turning. It may even fall off!!

Let’s look at a few other passages that emphasize the importance of being thankful. 1 Corinthians 15:57 says that thanks is a critical part of bringing faith’s victory. We can look at John 6:8-11 and see that giving thanks will multiply what we have and will enable us to have enough to feed others *and* have some leftover!! Here is another passage that is important to our lives. Look at Romans 1:20-32. Here we see that when we are not thankful, it can lead to error and cause us to be critical and dissatisfied which are highly detrimental to our faith. Not being thankful will cause us to covet what others have and even believe that they owe what they have to us!! That is a lot of what is wrong with society today.

I believe what Jesus said in John 10:10 when He said that He came to give us life and that we may have it more abundantly – and that means in every area of our lives. We do need to understand what the Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Timothy 6:3-6 that Godliness is a means of great gain if it is accompanied with contentment. If we are not content we will not be able to “fight the good fight of faith”. The unthankful will find themselves fighting with wrong motives, for wrong things, and many times with one another. Hebrews 13:5 tells us to avoid coveting and to be content because God will help us!! We give thanks to God always (Hebrews 13:15) and by faith for the things we need because He will help us and we do not need to fear!!

Let me give you some verses that tell us that we are not to covet but be thankful.

Exodus 20:17 says that we are not to covet anything. When we are thankful for what we have, it will help us to avoid this destructive attitude of coveting and will help to multiply what we have!! Not being thankful is always the start of negative attitudes and behavior in our lives.

We should never be thankful by comparison. Luke 18:9-14 tells us that being thankful in this manner will breed an attitude of superiority and pride which again is detrimental to our lives. Be thankful for what you have and what God has done in your life and rejoice with others when they abound and are honored (1 Corinthians 12:26). This will help you to experience abundance in your life.

Always be thankful for your ministry – whatever it is. Psalm 84:10 says that it is better to be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord than to dwell in the tents of the wicked!! Paul was always thankful that God let him be a part of the ministry (1 Timothy 1:12). It is a privilege to be a part of the Body of Christ, a member of the family of God, and a servant of His house. Don't ever forget that and always be "thankful".

Ephesians 5:20 says that we are to give thanks for things even before we have them!! I believe that when we live a life of being thankful that we will then be someone that others are thankful for (Philippians 1:3 and Philemon 4).

I know that when I am thankful, it keeps me from being dissatisfied which leads to being critical, can cause depression, and leads to defeat and wanting to quit!! Being thankful will cause you to endure and will energize your faith.

Faith, love, and thanksgiving are all critical to abounding and surviving. Love and thanksgiving will enable me to endure in faith, abound in faith, and be effective in my faith.