

"Abundant Life" Doctrine: Scripturally Exposed! : Part 1

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Prosperity Preachers And Abundant Life Doctrine, The False Interpretation Of John 10:10, Lifestyle Of Jesus And The Apostles: Where They Slept, What They Ate, The Mosaic Law Regarding Gleaning, Ruth And Boaz, Women Ministered Unto Jesus And His Followers, Communal Living And Sharing Of The First Century Church, Selfishness Of Ananias And Sapphira, Apostle Paul And Companions Suffered Hunger, Thirst, Cold And Nakedness, Jesus Became Poor So That We Might Become Spiritually Enriched, Hypocrisy Of Scribes And Pharisees, Teachings Of Christ And The Apostles Regarding Materialism And Acquiring Personal Wealth, Materialism And Abundant Life Is A Trick Of The Devil, Resist Satan Tests And Temptations

As many of my readers will already know, one of the great tragedies which has plagued our modern Christian faith has been the proliferation of so-called "prosperity preachers" who preach the misguided "Abundant Life" doctrine. From the pulpits of churches, to huge stadiums, to television and radio shows, to books, magazines and videos, these hucksters spew forth their wayward ideas regarding how God supposedly desires us to live rich, wealthy, materialistic lives here on the Earth. Sadly, many gullible Christians have fallen for this deception, only to realize later that the only ones who are actually getting rich from this scam, are the prosperity preachers themselves. These wolves cry "Give, give, give!", and under the delusion that they will be blessed, and will get, get, get in return, these poor people just throw their hard-earned money at these deceivers. It's really sad.

Exactly how do these wolves in sheep's clothing try to Scripturally justify their misguided ideas? The following verse that is found in the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John has been widely used by many of these deceivers to seemingly support the so-called "Abundant Life" doctrine:

". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."
John 10:10, KJV

However, as I will now clearly explain to you through a preponderance of Scriptural evidence, the "Abundant Life" doctrine is based upon a seriously misguided interpretation of the previous verse. The verse has simply been distorted and misused by modern, unscrupulous prosperity preachers in order to enrich themselves at the expense of their often Scripturally-ignorant flocks.

The truth of the matter is that if Jesus was truly preaching and promoting a rich, materialistic existence in John 10:10, then it totally contradicts everything else that He and the Apostles said, did and taught in the remainder of the New

Testament. Consider the following sample verses which reveal exactly how Jesus and His followers lived during the First Century as they traveled the dusty roads of Israel:

"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."
Matthew 8:20, KJV

"And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."
Luke 9:58, KJV

"At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat."
Matthew 12:1, KJV

"And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn."
Mark 2:23, KJV

"And it came to pass on the second sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands."
Luke 6:1, KJV

"And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance."
Luke 8:1-3, KJV

"And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."
Acts 2:44-45, KJV

"And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common . . . Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them down at the apostles' feet: and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."
Acts 4:32, 34-35, KJV

"And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar. Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the

elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul."
Acts 11:28-30, KJV

"We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised. Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: Being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."

1 Corinthians 4:10-13, KJV

"Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness."

2 Corinthians 11:22-27, KJV

We can garner so much useful information, and form an exact picture of what life was like for Jesus, the Apostles, and for other Disciples and followers, from the previous set of verses. Let's take the verses in order. The first thing we discover is that Jesus did not have a regular dwelling. In other words, He did not have a nice, comfortable home with a soft bed to sleep in every night. He was constantly on the move. Well, does that sound like a person who is living a rich, materialistic existence? Obviously not. If you are wondering exactly where Jesus and His followers slept, in addition to sometimes sleeping in the fields, consider the following instructions which offer us a very clear clue:

"And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace be to this house. And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house. And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you: And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say, Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you. But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom, than for that city."
Luke 10:5-12, KJV

I discuss this very same topic in articles such as "Endtime Witnessing: Winning the Sheep and Waging the Warfare!" The

next thing we discover is that Jesus and the Disciples made it a habit of going to the cornfields and plucking the ears of corn. Excuse me, but that doesn't exactly sound like the meal of the rich and the affluent, does it? It certainly doesn't fit into my picture of what I would consider the "Abundant Life". The fact of the matter is that Jesus and the Apostles were poor; and because they were poor, they were entitled to certain rights which were mandated by the Mosaic Law. Consider the following verses that are found in the Book of Deuteronomy:

"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."
Deuteronomy 24:19-21, KJV

In fact, if you are familiar with the story of Ruth, then you will know that it was precisely in this same manner that Ruth met her future husband -- and ancestor of Jesus Christ -- Boaz. Consider the following verses which describe how Ruth gleaned in the fields of Boaz prior to their marriage:

"And Ruth the Moabite said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter . . . And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house . . . Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Heardest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens . . . And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not . . . And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not . . . So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law."
Ruth 2:2, 7-8, 15-16, 23, KJV

The next thing we discover in the previous verses from the Gospels is that certain women who followed Jesus "ministered unto him of their substance." In other words, as we learned earlier, during the course of their travels throughout the land of Israel, Jesus and the Apostles were helped by the local people who received them into their homes, fed them, and provided whatever other needs they may have had. Maybe some of the women who followed Jesus and His small band of Disciples also cooked, and helped to mend and wash their clothes.

We have now acquired a picture of what life was like for the Apostles and Disciples while Jesus was still on the Earth. It is not difficult to see that they in large part depended upon the kindheartedness and charity of others. This was

obviously a very far cry from the "Abundant Life" doctrine that is promoted by these modern false shepherds who fleece the Lord's sheep to their own advantage.

But what happened following Jesus' Ascension to Heaven; and in particular, after the Apostles began to win thousands of new converts to the Christian faith? The previous set of verses provides us with an answer to this question as well. Contrary to the erroneous "Abundant Life" doctrine, we are told that the First Century Church "had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need", and that "neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common". Furthermore, that "distribution was made unto every man according as he had need."

Now wait a minute! If no one claimed anything as his own, and if everyone freely shared what they had with those in need, doesn't this also mean that there was no possible way for anyone to accumulate personal wealth, and thus live the "Abundant Life"? That is exactly right. You just cannot do it. It is either one or the other. You either selfishly hold on to your possessions, or else you forsake all and give it up for the cause of Christ and the Church. This issue of sharing was taken very seriously by the Apostles and the First Century Church. In fact, if you are familiar with the Book of Acts, then you will know that in Acts chapter five, the Lord set a very serious example, in order to help the new converts to realize that following Christ was not just a game. Consider the following verses:

"But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things."
Acts 5:1-11, KJV

In his various Epistles, in addition to informing us of the persecution which he and his traveling companions suffered for the Cause of Christ, the Apostle Paul tells us that they were also often forced to endure hunger, thirst, cold and

nakedness. Furthermore, just like Jesus, Paul writes that they had "no certain dwellingplace." Once again we see that there is absolutely no way that this can be the "Abundant Life" that is erroneously promoted and propagated by these modern prosperity preachers. It is the exact opposite. So where do these false shepherds get their ideas from? It is obviously not from the Holy Scriptures. In fact, concerning Jesus, Paul also wrote that "though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich". As I will be showing you momentarily, by using the word "rich", Paul is not referring to material wealth. He is talking about spiritual wealth, Eternal Life, and riches in Heaven.

Through the previous verses, we have now seen what life was like for the First Century Christians both before and after Jesus returned to His Father in Heaven. The following verses clearly reveal exactly what Jesus and the Apostles taught us regarding forsaking ownership of all our worldly possessions, and sharing with our fellow brethren out of genuine Christian love, as opposed to the rich, selfish, materialistic mode of living that is promoted by these modern, false prosperity preachers. With these verses, what you will see is that the Lord and His followers practiced exactly what they preached. Unlike the hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees of old who said one thing, and then turned around and did the exact opposite, Jesus and the Apostles led by clear example:

"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear . . . He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."
Matthew 13:3-9, 22, KJV

"Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not."
Matthew 23:1-3, KJV

"Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also . . . No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [treasure, personal wealth]."
Matthew 6:19-21, 24, KJV

". . . Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God . . . And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."
Matthew 19:23-24, 29, KJV

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"
Mark 8:36-37, KJV

". . . Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"
Mark 10:24b, KJV

"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."
Luke 6:38, KJV

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God. And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Luke 12:16-34, KJV

"So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."

Luke 14:33, KJV

"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

John 6:27, KJV

"It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things."

Romans 15:27, KJV

"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."

1 Corinthians 7:31, KJV

"If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"

1 Corinthians 9:11, KJV

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich. And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not. For I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened: But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be equality: As it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack."

2 Corinthians 8:9-15, KJV

"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."

2 Corinthians 9:7, KJV

"Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

Philippians 4:11-12, KJV

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced

themselves through with many sorrows."
1 Timothy 6:6-10, KJV

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
Hebrews 13:5, KJV

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain."
James 5:1-7, KJV

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."
1 John 2:15-17, KJV

I don't see how the futility and vanity of a soulless, empty, materialistic, earthly existence can be made any more plain than what we see stated in the previous verses. There should be little doubt regarding exactly how Jesus and the Apostles viewed such a pitiful and meaningless existence. As we see by the following verses, this rich, materialistic lifestyle is in fact a trick of the Devil, which is purposely meant to steer us away from the true, eternal, spiritual riches of God's Kingdom. Why is Satan able to do this? Because he is the false god of this present world, and because the power has been delivered to him by God, to be able to do these things, in order to test our human fiber:

"And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: FOR THAT IS DELIVERED UNTO ME; and to whomsoever I will I give it."
Luke 4:5-6, KJV

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."
2 Corinthians 4:4, KJV

"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not

ignorant of his devices."
2 Corinthians 2:11, KJV

However, just because the Devil tempts us with materialism and wealth does not mean that we have to yield to his evil temptations. In fact, God's Word instructs us to resist him and the snares in which he may endeavor to entrap us, as we see by these verses:

"But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men."
Matthew 16:23, KJV

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."
Luke 4:8, KJV

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."
John 8:44, KJV

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."
1 Corinthians 10:13, KJV

"Neither give place to the devil."
Ephesians 4:27, KJV

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
James 4:7, KJV

"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."
Jude 1:9, KJV

Please go to part two for the conclusion of this article.

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Additional Old Testament Verses Regarding Vanity Of Earthly Materialism And Wealth, Abundant Life Doctrine Contradicts Beliefs Teachings And Lifestyle Of Jesus And The Apostles, Warning Of The Parable Of The Sower, We Must Keep Heavenly Vision, We Are All Strangers And Pilgrims On This Earth, False Shepherds Thieves Liars And Hirelings, Filthy Lucre, Doctrines Of Devils, Closing Remarks, Reading Resources List

Following are some additional verses which are found in the Old Testament which likewise expose the vanity of earthly materialism and wealth:

"And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."
Job 1:21, KJV

"When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: And put a knife to thy throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his dainties: for they are deceitful meat. Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom. Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven. Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words."
Proverbs 23:1-8, KJV

"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and there is nothing in his hand. As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand."
Ecclesiastes 5:13-15, KJV

From this preponderance of Scriptural evidence, it is plain to see that the "Abundant Life" doctrine is a lie. It has no true basis in the Scriptures, and in fact contradicts the very manner in which Jesus and the Apostles of the First Century lived, taught and believed. They were not bound to the things of this Earth, and neither should we be; because doing so can easily become a snare for our souls, cause us to become ineffective witnesses for the Lord, and in fact cause us to backslide from our faith if we are not careful. As we learned in part one, Jesus taught in the Parable of the Sower that we must watch out for the thorns of this world, which represent the cares and riches of this present life. Let me share that one verse with you again:

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."
Matthew 13:22, KJV

In short, we must endeavor to keep the Heavenly Vision, and realize that we are strangers and pilgrims on this Earth, who are merely passing through on our way to a much better country. While we were at one time strangers to God before coming to Christ, we are now His children, members of His Royal Household, and citizens of His Heavenly Kingdom. I hope the following verses inspire your heart:

"That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world . . . Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;" Ephesians 2:12, 19, KJV

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city." Hebrews 11:13-16, KJV

"And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." John 10:5, KJV

"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;" 1 Peter 2:11, KJV

Regarding these modern thieves and liars who knowingly and willingly fleece the Lord's flocks through their deceptive "Abundant Life" doctrine, consider what the following verses have to say regarding such false shepherds and hirelings, and be warned:

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them. Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds

search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock; Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them."

Ezekiel 34:2-10, KJV

"But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice . . . Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them . . . I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."

John 10:2-4, 7-8, 11-16, KJV

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:13-15, KJV

Just like their selfish spiritual counterparts of centuries past, the sin of these modern Bible hucksters is their greed for "filthy lucre". As I explain in other articles, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon explains that this phrase refers to being eager to acquire base gain, or being greedy for money. There should be no doubt that this practice is strictly prohibited within the Lord's Church, as we see by these verses:

"Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous . . . Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"

1 Timothy 3:3, 8, KJV

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre . . . Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake."

Titus 1:7, 11, KJV

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;"
1 Peter 5:2, KJV

By now, I hope that you have come to understand that the "Abundant Life" doctrine is simply not compatible with our faith, and the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. It is a modern "doctrine of devils", just like so many other wicked beliefs which have infiltrated the Lord's Church. But this is nothing new. God's Church has been warring against such erroneous and wayward teachings since the First Century. Consider the following verses:

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"
Ephesians 4:14-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."
Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do."
1 Timothy 1:3-4, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;"
1 Timothy 4:1, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"
2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

With these powerful verses, I will bring this article to a close. It is my hope that you have found it to be both informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter or Google+, I would really appreciate if you would take the time to click on the corresponding link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this article, or which are related to this article, and which are likewise located on the Endtime Prophecy Net web server.

Endtime Witnessing: Winning the Sheep and Waging the Warfare!
Going Down the Highway of Life
Have You Sold Your Soul for a Pound of Flesh?
Money-Making Bible Hucksters and Mammon

MP3's, Commercialized Christianity and Christian Hypocrisy
Oh Be Careful Little Eyes!
One From Beyond: Hebrew of Hebrews
Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service
Selfishness: A Prophesied Sign of the Endtime
The Cheerful Giver: Supporting God's Work
The Heavenly Vision: Have You Got It?
Who is Building Your House?

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