

Abound

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[0:00] My message tonight is how to abound. How to abound. How can I be an overflowing Christian?! How can I be a channel of blessing? One of the big problems I see is Christians who are not living the abundant life.

They are not growing. Their growth is stunted. They have stunted growth if any. And the fact is, friends tonight, that the devil does not want you to grow.

The devil wants to hold you stagnant and stuck. But the Lord Jesus offers us abundant life. So that's my theme. It's talking about this abounding. The theme of abounding. Of abounding life. We see that firstly in John 10, verse 10.

Our Lord is speaking and he says, 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.

So the devil wants to steal your joy, to kill your faith, to destroy your love. But our Lord wants us to be an overflowing Christian. An overflowing believer.

[1:17] And the word abound or abundant, it speaks of an overflow. It speaks of an excess, an increase. And we're going to just unpack that a little bit. What that means. An overflow, an excess, an increase.

The devil, on the other hand, wants to stifle, constrict, to dry us up spiritually, to choke off the flow of God's life and power.

He doesn't want us to have the life source, who is Christ. One time I asked someone, motivated by love, this question. I asked them this question, How are you going spiritually? And it caused this provocation, this eruption of feeling, of reaction.

And I was shocked and taken aback. My motive was love, to ask them, How are you going spiritually? How is your walk with the Lord? It's an important question. And I need to ask them, to ask them, to ask them, to ask them, to ask them, to ask them, And yet there was a reaction of, Oh, that's a bit in my space. You know, that's a bit too personal.

My motive was love. Can I ask you that question tonight? Can you answer it honestly, prayerfully? How are you going spiritually? How is your walk with the Lord?

[2:35] How is your walk with the Lord? Do you settle for the minimal? Or do you see God overflowing? God overflowing in your life?

Is your faith flowing? Is it overflowing? Or is it just spits and spurts? I've got a tap like this at home. When I turn the tap on, there's spits and spurts. It's like there's a blockage.

It's not flowing well. And with psalms, somehow there can be this blockage in our faith. God doesn't want it that way for you. And you can know how to abound. So that's what I'm wanting to tease out some scriptures about. How can we abound?

Is there a blockage in our Christian faith such that we're halting? We're stifled somehow. There's a blockage there. What's holding us back? Are we settling for some minimalist way of being?

But we see God is abounding. God is over the top. Literally. Literally over the top. As we hear David say in Psalm 23. And he praises God. And he says, My cup runneth over. That's the measure that God gives to us. Can we stop and think?

[4:02] Friends here tonight. Safe people here tonight. Think of the goodness of God. Think of it. Think and realise that God supplies abundantly. He gives and gives over and over again.

He abounds towards us. And there's numbers of Bible verses that talk about this abounding, this abundance. For example, talking about abounding in faith, abounding in grace, in love and in service.

Think of how God supplies. He's over and above. Flowing over. How God gives. Let me demonstrate how God gives here tonight. If you imagine that's you. That's you here tonight.

I've got a thimble from Julie's thimble box. Imagine this thimble is you. And then we imagine God as the eyedropper here.

And this is how God gives. Drip. Drip. Drip. Drip.

[5:08] Do we think of God's supply as a small drip? As a mere drop? You know, sometimes we can measure God by human measures. And our own spiritual life is diminished as we think of the smallness of our own vision. We're limited.

We look at life in human measures too much. This is not how God is. We'll come to that.

Now we were talking this morning about setting up the chairs. And I said about the way that I had set up the chairs. That meets my standard. And then Lin Tong was talking to me.

And he said, does it meet my standard? And then we talked about Julie's standard. Now everyone would know Julie's standard. She is the chairwoman of the church.

She likes to set the chairs up just perfectly. According to millimetre standards. And everything's just got to be just so. Standards. My standard's down here.

[6:12] If it looks near enough. Lin Tong's standard is maybe here.

Julie's standard is here. Now God's standard is up here. And we've got to think about standards.

How about spiritually? How are we measuring our faith by the measure of our human thinking? How do we live our Christian life? Sometimes we think, oh, that's good enough.

What about God's standard? You know, I've got to stand on a chair and I can't reach high enough.

How do we exercise our faith? Sometimes it's just thimblefuls of it, isn't it?

Just like an eye dropper. We measure our spiritual life with an eye dropper and a thimble. We give sparingly.

Now when I think of how God gives to us. My cup runneth over. It reminds me of the church family camp. Where people were throwing water balloons and people were getting wet.

[7:11] He was part of that. I know Trent was enjoying that. Got some great shots of a balloon hitting Tim's face and smashing Ennis face. Or just about. But then someone dear to young Peter here, who shall remain nameless, thought, let's grab the bucket.

And it was a bigger bucket than this one. And they poured it out on Peter. They wanted an outpouring. Not a trickle. Not a tread. Mind you, some people look like big wet drips when they get wet.

But no. The outpouring happened. Not the dripping. And I'd like to put to you tonight that God gives like this. With a huge bucket. Full to the brim.

My cup runneth over. Sloshing around and splashing about. He pours in. Into our lives, doesn't he? You know, we could think of it like this. You know, if that glass represents you and me.

And God's pouring in, isn't he? And he pours in and he pours in. But it doesn't stop. It's just overflowing. Overflowing. Overflowing. Overflowing.

[8:21] Overflowing. And you imagine the bowl representing the world, the influence that we might have as God's people. That's how God gives to us. He doesn't stop. There's, my cup runneth over.

My cup runneth over. And that's what we can think about. The giving of God to us. And what's God's standard? It's overflowing, isn't it? God's standard is overflowing.

He says, I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly. It says that God gives to all men liberally. James 1 verse 5. Think of the generosity of God.

The gift of God. He spared not his own son. His very own son he spared not. God wants us to have abundant life. To have overflowing. Life abounding.

But the devil wants to stop you. He just wants you to think of God as giving you little half measures. God's not like that. God is overflowing. But the devil wants you to stop from growing.

[9:17] He wants you to be stagnant. And so some Christians don't mature. There's a blockage somehow. They have something blocking the flow. But let me just try to explain what I'm trying to put to you in simple ways.

And put to you in symbolic form. What the Bible talks about as abounding. God's will is that we abound. For example, we see one scripture here. In 1 Thessalonians 4 verse 1.

grace a bit more grace oh no it's full okay he does it again no more grace for him i'm not going to show him any more grace that's how we treat people isn't it we're going to be gracious with people oh just so much and then no no more no more grace to them them but god doesn't exercise grace like that does he now i've encountered some mean spirits of people in my life nitpickers critical people mean fault finders have you ever have you ever met people like that are you one of those people they measure out grace by the thimble full don't they grace how do we measure it with a thimble or with a bucket how are we going to exercise grace are we going to be abounding the grace abounding that we've received we can be abundantly gracious to others too that's kind of the the picture of it isn't it how do we measure it with a thimble with a bucket or an ocean think of god's grace it's an ocean full isn't it god's grace is described as abounding abounding abundant exceeding abundant you can't measure it and god's grace is described as lavishly richly lavished upon us think of his grace his word talks about the riches of his grace his kindness his forgiveness for example ephesians 2 verse 7 it tells how he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us through christ jesus of course we read it tells how where sin abounds grace does much more abound grace does much more abound thank god for that amen when we feel sinful like this fellow who's feeling like he's got a sinful past join the club god's grace is sufficient

and god's grace is lavished upon the sinner that trusts him god's grace does abound much much more abound and we read how it says that god is able to make all grace abound toward you god's grace is he's able to make all grace abound toward you that ye always having all sufficiency in all things may abound to every good work think of it brother sister the riches of god's grace the richness of it he's given to us all grace abundantly think of the bountiful provision of grace that he has given how can we have grace like god is that possible of course we read how lord says we should forgive as we are forgiven we should love as he has loved how can we have grace like god has given to us is that possible it is possible god's abounding work and blessings touch every facet of our lives here's another reference to grace uh to this abounding paul tells the corinthians 2 corinthians 8 verse 7 therefore as he abound in everything so there's a whole list here in faith utterance knowledge all diligence your love see that you abound in this grace also so god wants us to abound in grace he wants us to abound in faith abound in utterance so we could think of in our words in our speaking that what the words that we speak should be words that are abounding as good words our knowledge it should be abounding our diligence in other words our eagerness to serve in our love that should abound and god's grace abounding activates us we think how can we aspire to this abounding notice it says abounding in everything in everything so it's all encompassing so we're seeing grace another thing the bible talks about as abounding is abounding in service we see 1 corinthians 15 58 therefore my beloved brethren be steadfast unmovable always abounding in the work of the lord for as much as you know that your labor is not in vain in the lord so god's promising and abounding here that the grace will abound there'll be a service that will abound there's also i know peter touched on it this morning the faithful man shall abound with blessings there's an abounding with blessings the abounding of our faith produces fruit we see philippians 4 17 paul talks about the the giving of the philippians and then he says i desire fruit that may abound to your account so the abounding in the work of the lord will be a fruitful work there'll be a fruit that abounds a harvest that is abounding a harvest with eternal quality and friends we're all going to reap we shall reap we shall reap all of us will reap and it's what we sow that we're going to reap i'm not talking about money necessarily not veering into faith prosperity gospel or anything like that but there's that truth where where what we put in we get out isn't it and the way i've kind of wanted to picture it was when you think how as i pictured it kind of here that the grace that we receive the grace that we receive flows out doesn't it can you get that picture that the god's grace that he gives to us he's pouring it out like bucket loads and he wants us to overflow such that we'll extend grace to others that will be like him but that the grace that he gives to us will extend that grace to others and and likewise the the the work of god in us helps us to love others it helps us to show grace to others and there'll be a fruit from that grace from that work of god and another truth is

that not only is the

grace that abounds or service that abounds it talks about love that abounds what thessalonians 3 verse 12 12. paul tells the thessalonians and the lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another and toward all men even as we do toward you i put to you tonight a question how can i be a more loving christian how can we sow love it's about his love being poured out such that it overflows his his love poured about out out upon us we can abound in that love towards others because he says i have loved you you should love one another so this this common theme as god pours into us we should be overflowing to others let's bring it to kind of a an action point here how do we become an abounding christian how do we become an abounding christian luke 6 38 our lord says give and it shall be given unto you good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over that picture again running over shall men give into your bosom for with the same measure that you meet with all it shall be measured to you again so when they they meet out the the cloth that you buy down at um what's that place spotlight they they pull out the cloth and they measure it they put the meter there and they say that's so many meters and they meet it they measure it they cut it and it says with what measure you give with what measure you put out it'll be given to you so are we just going to give grace like this i'll show a bit of grace towards the people in my life but only so much or are we going to give grace like god gives like god has given to us all right forgive one another as i've forgiven you love one another as i have loved you you know show grace to one another as god has shown grace to you are we going to be measuring such that we just give thimble fools of grace to people and we're just going to be mean-spirited and not have that love not have that grace not have that forgiveness or are we going to be trying to be like god have bucket loads of grace bucket loads to be big-hearted like god so i put to you tonight don't stifle your faith the bible tells how god's way is that we have a sufficiency in all things in every good work the question is how do we realize this abounding where is it found where is this pouring out he's not withheld it or given a mere trickle or thimblefuls of grace he's poured it out upon us he's poured out his grace upon us when you think about it in in the sense of when the holy spirit was poured out in the bible for example joel tells how in those days god says will i pour out my spirit he doesn't pour it out like a trickle he pours it out like floods upon dry ground and he pours out his spirit god doesn't use thimblefuls he's got bucket loads of that pouring out of his abounding of god's overflow and i wonder where we ought to be to receive it to receive the outpouring of course it was fulfilled largely there in acts 2 when they gathered at pentecost the recipients were at pentecost in the house in the house when god poured out his spirit in acts it was poured out on the people who had gathered and heard the word of god in acts 10 likewise where it says the holy spirit fell on all them which heard the word and then they said that god has poured out the gift of the holy ghost so i'm just trying to make the point that some people they they miss that overflow they miss that pouring out of god because they're not in the meeting the people that weren't in jerusalem didn't get the pouring out the people around cornelius's household didn't get the pouring out if they weren't where the holy spirit was speaking through the word of god and some people missed the church lunch today and went hungry but the people that were there got fed and it's the same spiritually speaking you can think of it if we want god to pour out if we want god to fill us be where the word is be where the holy spirit where the word of god is we have to be where we can receive from god and so that's why fellowship is important be where the word of god is i was contemplating on the various words that god uses to describe the abounding and we talked about some of them but there's others we could talk about for example grace we see paul tells how where grace abounds grace abounds and there's there's kind of a common theme here that i thought well that's quite interesting when we think about the grace that is poured out or the grace abounding what is the bible called the word of his grace the word of his grace then we see there's another scripture in 2 corinthians 1 verse 5 it talks about our consolation aboundeth by christ that's 2 corinthians 1 verse 5 consolation or comfort what we read we read of the comfort of the scriptures this comfort of the scriptures we see in one of those verses we read how there's an abounding of knowledge where do we get knowledge from the word of god it talks about an abounding of faith the bible's called the word of faith so it's interesting the people who weren't at jerusalem did not get the poured out spirit the the point i'm trying to make is that to get god to pour into us to get god to fill us and overflow us be where the word is it's the word of his grace it's the word of comfort it's the word of knowledge it's the word of faith elsewhere it talks about abounding in hope it's the word of this is the hope that we have isn't it the word of god so it's all about where the word is it's where the word is that will help us to abound and here's where the uplifting is the encouraging the edifying it's where the word of god is it's where we can get

comfort and we can have an abounding of comfort it's where we can get faith and abounding of faith it's where we can get knowledge and abounding of knowledge of grace and so i urge you tonight to think about where we get the grace of god from we go to the cross don't we we go to the cross we we realize our need of saving and you might say tonight preacher i'm i'm so sinful i'm not worthy it says where where sin abounds god's grace does much more abound no one is too far from god that he cannot reach it says that his arm is not shortened that it can't save god's plan is poured out it's an overflowing and when you think of that picture again the analogy here of that we're recipients we're recipients of the grace he's poured out his grace it's overflowing grace it's abounding grace not only are we recipients but we transmitters of it we transmitters of his grace and that's how i think we should be as believers we should be such that we're receiving god's abounding his abundant life that's through christ it's through faith in christ our salvation is abundant life and we're also messengers of that grace we're messengers of that grace so we're recipients but we're also transmitters

so we're to relay to transmit to impart there's a sense where when we meet hopefully we get filled up like the picture of the glass getting filled up when we receive the word of god he's filling us with this word we're refueling our faith's getting recharged and enlivened we're getting topped up refreshed bolstered for the week ahead the fountain is the word of god we receive it talks about the water of the word doesn't it we receive it it's freshness to us it's enlivening it's refreshing the word of god and we receive it we're recipients of it but we transmitters of it too such that we receive it and we can impart it to others we communicate it and so this abundant life it's real it's demonstrated and i urge you tonight think about the grace more abundant think about his love it's abounding his faith the grace that we have to be saved the wonder of salvation we think of the poured out spirit of god that we receive his spirit when we save when we trust him we can go to the cross today and see that the fountain of the word it's the fountain of life is the word of god it's it's an overflow that we can receive and and not just be recipients of it but transmitters also let's pray lord we thank you that your grace abounds where sin abounds lord even for such as we unworthy as paul was yet you saved him and two also you can save such as we that trust in you lord we thank you that you abound towards us your love abounds towards us help our love to abound your grace abounds towards us help our grace to abound lord we've got abundant life help us to impart that such that we'll be communicators of that hope of the gospel help us lord to have as as it talks about the consolation that abounds that there's comfort that we can receive comfort and we can impart it as well help us not to be selfish such that we're just receiving but help us also to be so overflowing that we'll be imparting it to others that will be transmitters of your grace to others lord help us to walk in the truth to walk to abound in that walk to abound in that life of faith lord pray for anyone here present is yet to trust you that i'll see that you are the fountain of life that you are the one who we can come to and know that wonderful abundant life that you promise to those who trust in you and help us to have the heart to grow lord to see the word as the source of all those things that we've talked about as we go to where your word is where it's preached where we can study it where we can tune into it whichever way we can that that word will feed our faith it will feed that overflowing life of god that you want us to have that spiritual life that will overflow lord help us to know that in the monday morning when we down at the workplace and we need to exercise grace help us to realize what you've given unto us lord to help us to impart that to others too lord we pray that you'd be glorified in every life in jesus name amen