

## OUR EXAMPLE OF ABUNDANT LIVING

(1 Peter 2:21)

### I. A positive outlook.

- a. Jesus knew what it was like to suffer.
- b. Jesus knew what it was like to be mistreated.
- c. Jesus knew what it was like to be alone.
- d. Jesus knew what it was like to cry.
  - i. John 11:35.
  - ii. Luke 19:41.
  - iii. Hebrews 5:7.
- e. Jesus knew what it was like to be rejected.
- f. Think of how Jesus approached His death.
  - i. Whenever you read of Him mentioning His death, He almost always mentioned His resurrection or His return.
  - ii. Luke 9:22.
  - iii. John 10:17.
  - iv. John 14:2-3.
- g. There was plenty that went on in the life of Jesus to make Him the saddest person in the world.
- h. Jesus did not let the bad things in His life or the bad things He saw or the sadness of sin keep Him from maintaining a positive outlook.
- i. By being positive in the face of sin around us, we can make sure that we don't give in to the temptations of apathy or indifference.
- j. Be honest with yourself: who would you rather be around?
  - i. Someone who is positive or negative?
  - ii. If we don't like to be around negative people, we have to realize people don't want to be around us if we are negative.
- k. Having a positive outlook doesn't mean we aren't aware of or that we ignore sin.
  - i. Jesus did neither of those things.
  - ii. Jesus pointed out sin and He rebuked sin but He kept a positive outlook.
- l. Remaining positive should not be difficult when we remember that Christians win in the end, no matter what happens here on earth.

### II. Proper relationships.

- a. From the very beginning of the earthly ministry of Jesus, He sought the companionship of good people.
- b. Think of those we would call His friends.
  - i. The apostles (Judas started out well).
  - ii. Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.
  - iii. Mary Magdalene and probably many others of whom we aren't aware.
- c. 1 Corinthians 15:33.

- d. Psalm 1:1 – the progression of sin is influenced by being with the wrong people.
- e. Every one of us is aware of the power of influence.
  - i. We often talk of how we are to be an influence to others.
  - ii. We must remember that those around us influence us as well.
- f. Our best friends should be Christians.
- g. The one you choose to be your spouse should be a Christian.
- h. Seek out people who will help us get to heaven and not hinder us.

### III. Be people oriented.

- a. Jesus had more to do in this life and less time to do it than any of us.
  - i. He only lived to be 33.
  - ii. His ministry was only 3 ½ years.
- b. John 9:4.
- c. Despite having much to do, Jesus was concerned for people and showed it.
  - i. On His way to restore life to a little girl, He stopped to encourage a woman who had been racked with suffering (Matthew 9:20).
  - ii. He had time for blind Bartimaeus.
  - iii. He had time for Zaccheus.
- d. The life of Jesus was one of stress and business in the labor of God, but He always made time for people.
- e. If we want to be able to influence people, we must make time for them.
- f. People went away from meetings with Jesus feeling important and cared for.
- g. How do they leave meetings with us?
- h. Stress often comes when we focus solely on ourselves and being people oriented can help keep some of that stress away.

### IV. Personal care.

- a. Our Lord, though abused by others, never abused His own body.
  - i. He cared for Himself physically.
  - ii. Jesus never developed any habits that were harmful to His body.
- b. Have you ever stopped to think how much Jesus walked while on earth?
  - i. At least four times in His 3 ½ year ministry Jesus walked from Capernaum to Jerusalem.
  - ii. That walk alone is nearly 100 miles.
  - iii. Jesus walked nearly everywhere He went.
  - iv. If I'm not mistaken, the only time we read of Jesus riding an animal is when He entered into Jerusalem.
- c. Paul wrote that bodily exercise profits a little (1 Timothy 4:8).
  - i. We need to take care of our bodies.
  - ii. We do this so we can use our bodies for as long as possible in service to God.
- d. Jesus also believed in rest (Mark 6:31).
  - i. Lack of rest is a cause of stress.

ii. Lack of rest also leaves us more vulnerable to temptation.

**V. Private devotions.**

- a. Mark 1:35; Luke 6:12.
- b. Our Lord spent time with the Father in prayer.
- c. One writer said, "He had already been in heaven, and He was going back in a few days, but He felt the need every day on earth to be with God."
- d. If Jesus needed to spend His time with the Father, what about us?
- e. God needs to speak to us every day through His word.
- f. We need to speak to God every day through prayer.
  - i. Jesus taught us to pray and not to give up (Luke 18:1).
  - ii. Paul told the Thessalonians to pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- g. These can be family devotions or personal devotions, but time must be spent with God.
  - i. This allows us to better understand His presence in our lives and His love for us.
  - ii. It causes us to rely on Him more and truly cast our cares on Him instead of bearing them ourselves (1 Peter 5:7).

**VI. A persistent life.**

- a. Jesus was tempted in every area we are, but He did no sin (Hebrews 4:15).
  - i. In other words, Jesus had no regrets.
  - ii. When He said, "It is finished", He could say that with no remorse about what He had done while on earth.
- b. Little will keep us from the abundant life like a defiled conscience.
  - i. Think of those times when you knew there was sin in your life.
  - ii. Was your life over-flowing and joyful with God?
  - iii. How about when you knew there was sin in your life and you kept on sinning?
  - iv. How about when you knew you were lost and kept on being lost?
  - v. We know the answer to that: life was miserable and not abundantly overflowing the way God wants us to live.
- c. Isaiah 57:20.
- d. Our lives need to be in a persistent state of seeking and doing God's will.
- e. If we are busy doing the will of God, the temptations of life have a lot less chance of pulling us away.
- f. You and I are to walk in newness of life, being new creatures: let's live like it.