

LIVE THE ABUNDANT LIFE!

FROM THE MESSAGES OF ADRIAN ROGERS



Live the Abundant Life! (Bible Study)

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INTRODUCTION

GOD'S INSTRUCTION FOR ABUNDANT LIFE IN CHRIST

People are always looking for ways to get more out of life. We turn to material things, education, philosophy, or worldly success for satisfaction. We fill our lives with family and work hoping to find meaning. We use entertainment, shopping, drugs, or alcohol to help us escape the lives we have. We pack our schedules with so many activities that we never have time to realize how meaningless our lives feel. But this is not God's plan for our lives.

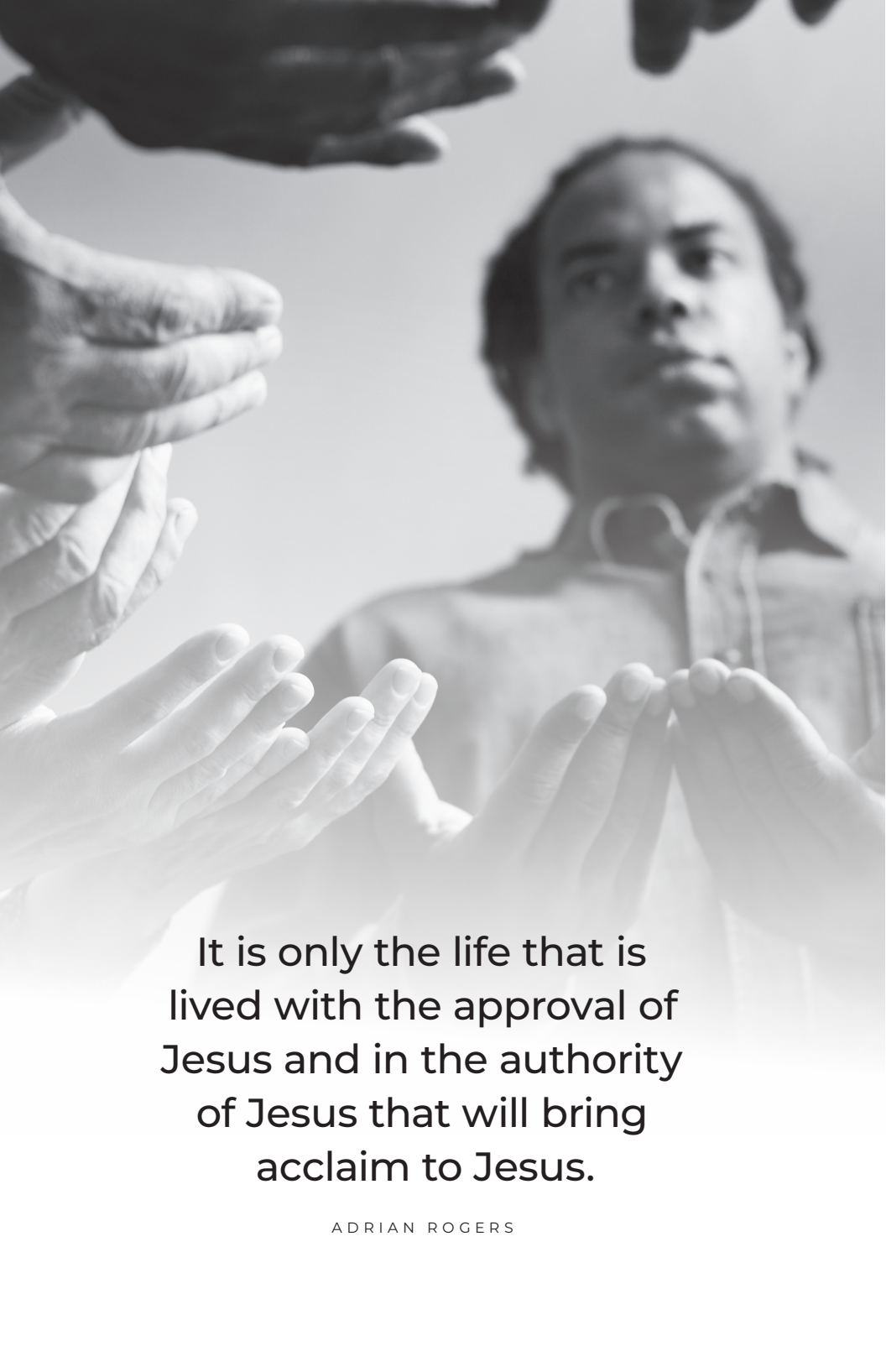
God's desire is that we would find abundant life through His Son Jesus Christ. By studying God's Word, we can understand how He meant for us to live.

This study looks at specific stories and passages from the Old and New Testaments to uncover the biblical truths that tell us how to live. When we let the Bible inform our actions and decisions, we are transformed. Through these stories and the examples of people in the Bible, we can understand who Jesus is and how He helps us live fully in every moment of our lives.

Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come (1 Corinthians 10:11).

WANT MORE?

The audio messages by Pastor Adrian Rogers from which this study is derived are linked using the QR code on page 86 at the end of this study.



It is only the life that is
lived with the approval of
Jesus and in the authority
of Jesus that will bring
acclaim to Jesus.

ADRIAN ROGERS

WEEK 1

THE ABUNDANT LIFE

■ INTRODUCTION

Many people exist, but they don't live. They are drawing their breath and drawing their salaries, fighting to live while they live to fight. However, they don't have the life they want. In Macbeth, Shakespeare wrote, "[Life] is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

But if you know Jesus, you can have abundant life. Jesus said:

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

This victorious abundance is available to us now but we must exercise faith in Jesus, experience freedom through Jesus, enjoy fellowship with Jesus, and express faithfulness to Jesus.

This week, we will consider the story of Lazarus and how his resurrection from the dead can show us how to live.

■ PRAY OVER IT

Dear God, I don't want to just exist. I want to follow You and experience the abundant life You promised. Open my eyes this week to the things that keep me from living victoriously, and help me know how to live differently. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DAY 1

EXERCISE FAITH IN JESUS

■ PONDER IT

In Jesus' time, a family lived in Bethany near the Mount of Olives. Jesus would often fellowship and feast with siblings Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They loved Jesus, and He loved them. In John 11, Jesus was away when Lazarus became critically ill. Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus and asked Him to come. But Jesus delayed, and Lazarus died. When Jesus arrived, Martha noted that if He had been there, Lazarus would not have died.

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26, emphasis added).

We also should be asking ourselves if we truly believe this. If we want to experience the abundant life, **we must exercise faith in Jesus Christ.**

When Lazarus came out of the grave, he came forth at the word of Jesus. Jesus prayed out loud for a particular reason.

Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.” Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” (John 11:41-43).

Jesus didn't need to pray out loud for God the Father to hear Him. He did it so that those around Him might believe. Though the entire story of Lazarus' death literally happened, it is also a parable that illustrates how we are saved. The Gospel of John was written for one

reason: that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, and when you do, you have life in His name. (See John 20:30-31.)

Even if you are physically alive, you may not be spiritually alive. When we live for ourselves and our own pleasures, we are spiritually dead.

But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives (1 Timothy 5:6).

You can't experience the abundant life if you are spiritually dead. The resurrection of Lazarus is an illustration of how we can have the abundant life that comes through Jesus Christ and His Word.

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life” (John 6:63).

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- Have you believed in Jesus' name and received life in Him as Lord and Savior? How did the Holy Spirit lead you to believe in Jesus?
- What sins are you hanging onto that are keeping you from experiencing the abundant life He came to give you?

This is not about comparing yourself to anyone else. Maybe you think “I'm not as spiritually dead as that person.” Friend, dead is dead.

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DAY 2

RAISED TO LIFE

■ PONDER IT

Jesus raised three people from the dead: Jairus' daughter just after she died, a young man during his funeral, and Lazarus who had been in the grave for four days. Of those three, which one was the most dead?

When Jesus came to the little girl, the Bible says He went into the back bedroom where she was and shut the other people out. He took the child by the hand and spoke to her. (See Mark 5:40-42.) In the city of Nain, a great crowd gathered for the funeral of the only son of a widow. Jesus touched the coffin and spoke. (See Luke 7:13-15.) Lazarus had been in the grave for four days. So which one was the most dead? It doesn't matter how long they were dead. The simple fact remains that they were dead.

Many of us want to compare ourselves to others. We might think that we are not as spiritually dead as some other people. But just like these three before they met Jesus, they were dead. If you haven't met Jesus, you are just as lost and dead as the worst person in the world. Dead is dead.

Mankind is trying to find a way to create change, even spiritual change, without God. But if we look at the four things our society tries to use to transform a person, we will understand how absurd it is.

Example: Can a dead man come to life by following another person's example? You can't just follow the good example of Jesus' life. You must know Jesus, the life-giver, personally.

Encouragement: Can you strongly encourage a dead man to come back to life?

Environment: If you put a dead man in an uplifting environment, could you bring him back to life? Adam sinned in the best environment the world has ever known in the Garden of Eden. And that sin brought death.

Education: Can you educate a dead man back to life? Even studying Scripture and knowing biblical history—apart from knowing Jesus Christ—does not impart spiritual life.

These things will not save people because it takes a miracle to raise a dead man. The formula is very simple: we must be raised to new life by the Word of God, Jesus Christ.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- Have you ever used example, encouragement, environment, or education to try to bring someone to faith in Christ? How did it go?
- Which verse from this week's lesson would you like to memorize? Write it down.

Salvation does not come by learning lessons from the life of Christ, but by receiving life from the death of Christ.

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DAY 3

EXPERIENCE FREEDOM THROUGH JESUS

■ PONDER IT

Not only do you exercise faith in Jesus, **but you also experience freedom through Jesus.**

And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go” (John 11:44).

We weren't there that day, but we can imagine what might have happened. When Jesus told them to roll the stone away, they reminded him that the stench of death was on Lazarus. When he told Lazarus to come forth, every eye was fastened on the black hole of the cave where Lazarus was entombed. Jesus didn't plead with Lazarus; He simply commanded him to come. Lazarus appeared like a mummy with the graveclothes hanging off of him. He had already had life, but he was bound in the graveclothes of his former life. He needed freedom.

When Lazarus came forth, he wasn't fit for walking, working, or witnessing. You would not want to have him in your house for a meal reeking of death and still wrapped in death's clothing. He needed to experience freedom through the Lord Jesus Christ. Are you free, or does sin have you bound?

Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls (James 1:21).

When you got saved, you were wrapped up in sin. Old habits, old language, old lusts still hung around. But it doesn't mean that you were not saved. It means that you had an overflow of wickedness. You had leftover relics from your old life, and you needed to be set free. You needed to be unwrapped.

One of the chief duties of a church is to unwrap the saints. We need to stop being judgmental about new Christians, suggesting they might not really be saved because they don't live as they should. Our duty, our joy, our privilege, and our responsibility is to unwrap them and help them leave those old things behind. Some of you remember the people who helped unwrap you so you could mature in the faith. As sons and daughters of God, we are to exhibit and encourage freedom in Christ, who breaks the power of canceled sin and sets the prisoner free.

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, 'You will be made free?'" Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:31-36).

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- Are you living in liberty? Or are you still living with the graveclothes wrapped around you?
- Who are some people who helped you find freedom from old patterns of sin?

You may have been saved, but somehow you're bogged down between Calvary and Pentecost. At Calvary, Jesus died for us. In Pentecost, Jesus is in us.

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DAY 4

ENJOY FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS

■ PONDER IT

In order to live the abundant life, you also need to enjoy fellowship with Jesus.

Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him (John 12:1-2).

Lazarus went from the tomb to the table and was fellowshiping with Jesus Christ. He was enjoying the presence of Jesus Christ.

Some people are afraid to come to Jesus because of what they'll have to give up. However, the only things He will ask you to give up are the things that will hurt you or somebody else. God is good, and He wants us to fellowship with Him and enjoy Him.

For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly (Psalm 84:11).

Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were with Jesus fellowshiping together. Jesus also wants to fellowship with you.

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3:20).

Salvation is dining with Jesus. He's the chef and the master of the feast. He's the fellowship of this meal.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- Do you enjoy spending time with God? Do you think He enjoys spending time with you?
- Into what areas of your life do you need to invite Jesus? What doors of your heart is He knocking on and trying to enter?

Salvation is not a funeral; it's a feast!

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DAY 5

EXPRESS FAITHFULNESS TO JESUS

■ PONDER IT

If you want to experience the abundant life in Christ, **you need to express faithfulness to Jesus.**

Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus (John 12:9-11).

People wanted to see Lazarus, and he was a great witness for Jesus Christ. But he was not only a witness; he was part of the evidence. Many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus because Lazarus had experienced a supernatural miracle that they could not explain away.

Lazarus gave hell headaches. The chief priests wanted to put Lazarus to death again, and they probably tried to intimidate Lazarus with death threats. But how can you threaten a man who has already died? He knew that death was not the end.

The part of your life transformation that cannot be explained is the part people believe. Living a supernatural life is not something you do; it's something Jesus Christ does through you.

Pastor Rogers told the following story:

In a church I used to pastor, the town drunk named Al came to see me and said, "I've been to AA and all of these other things. I went in a dumb drunk and came out as an educated alcoholic. Nothing has changed. I need God."

I prayed with Al, and he got saved. He immediately and dramatically changed. The graveclothes fell off in a hurry. He

became one of the best testimonies and witnesses I've ever known in any church.

We had a little prayer meeting every morning. One man said, "I read that the way to have revival is to get the meanest man in the city saved." We had a little election, and the man that won hands down was a bootlegger, a knife-fighter, a thief, and a gambler. Everybody was kind of terrified of him, so they began to soak him in prayer.

Then they said, "Pastor, you've got to go see him." So, even though I had a big lump in my throat, I knocked on his door. I went in and said, "I've come to tell you about Jesus. I want to tell you how to be saved and have eternal life."

He said, "If Jesus can do for me what He did for Al, I want to be saved."

■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- What is there about you that cannot be explained? What is the evidence that you are living a supernatural, miraculous life?
- How has God used your story to bring others to faith in Christ?

The life of a Christian is the best
argument for Jesus and the best
argument against Jesus.

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DAY 6

SAVED & FREED

■ PRACTICE IT

In order to live the abundant life, we need to express faith in Jesus, experience freedom in Jesus, enjoy fellowship with Jesus, and express faithfulness to Jesus.

You might be one of those who today is part of the living dead. You have existence, but you don't really have life, and you want to be saved. You don't want to keep living like this and then die and go to Hell. You want to be saved. You need to trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord.

Here's how you can be saved:

1. Recognize you're a sinner.
2. Confess that you're dead in trespasses and sins.
3. Understand there's nothing you can do to save yourself.
4. Know and believe that Jesus died on the cross to save you. He paid your sin debt with His shed blood on the cross.
5. Know that He has said that if you will believe Him, He will save you and He will keep you eternally. It doesn't mean you're going to sprout wings and get a halo. There'll be some grave clothes that need to come off. But the same Jesus that saved me and freed me will save you and free you.

■ PROCLAIM IT

If you prayed to receive Christ, please share your decision with another Christian you know or with your pastor. We would also like to hear about it so that we can provide you with free resources to help you grow in your new faith. Please let us know by going to lwf.org/discover-jesus, scrolling down the page, and clicking on *I BELIEVE*.

Spend some time praying and thinking about where you are on your journey to an abundant life. Identify an area that you need to focus on and ask God to help you. Share what you are working on with a trusted mentor or friend.

The only thing you have any right to ask people to believe about your faith is that which they cannot explain.

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