

John 10:10(b)

There's so much we could look at in John 10. At the beginning, we've got the parable (v.6) of Christ as the door of the sheepfold, as opposed to the thief who comes into the sheepfold some other way. We see the importance of how we can only enter the kingdom of heaven through Christ. Every other way that people try is false. It doesn't work. They might get into the visible church for a while, and so seem to be in Christ's sheepfold, but they're not truly in the kingdom of heaven at all. We can only get there through the door.

Then from v.11, we've got another parable. Christ as the good shepherd, as opposed to the hireling who doesn't care for the sheep. Let's not follow hirelings. There are plenty of them around in the church today that'll teach all sorts of nonsense. Let's rather follow the true shepherd, Jesus Christ. His true people will know His voice (v.16).

But I just want to focus today on one statement here, that occurs between those two parables, and which can so easily be overlooked.

John 10:10(b)

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

我来了，是要叫羊（或作人）得生命，并且得的更丰盛。

And I want to simply make three points:

1. *"I am come"* 我来了 Christ came for a purpose.
2. *"that they might have life"* 是要叫羊（或作人）得生命 What does "life" mean?
3. *"and that they might have it more abundantly."* 并且得的更丰盛 What is the abundant life Christ came to give us?

1. Christ came for a purpose. *"I am come."* 我来了

In fact, we've all come for a purpose. Did you know that? Not many people seem to realise that. We're not here at random. We're not here for no reason, but for a purpose.

I've heard so many sermons in the past, where the speaker has said something like this: "I'm sure you've all thought at some time 'Why am I here' or 'What's the meaning of life?' Well I'm going to tell you." And they then go on to talk about the meaning of life being Jesus Christ. Now, the last bit is true, the meaning of life is Jesus Christ. But it's the first bit I've got a problem with.

I don't know anybody who's going around asking themselves, "Why am I here?" Or searching around trying to find the meaning of life. Maybe a few depressed people who

end up studying philosophy, but most people aren't asking themselves why they're here at all. They're just living their lives for what they can get out of it.

From the moment we're born, all we do is please ourselves. We cry when we want feeding, or when we want our nappy changing. We grow up just pleasing ourselves, and we get so annoyed when our parents tell us we can't have something. And most people live their entire lives like that. They're not thinking about the meaning of life or why they're here at all. They just go out and do what they want to do, enjoying themselves as much as they can. They don't even think about the concept of life having a purpose. In fact they're no different from the animals, who are just unthinking creatures of instinct.

Psalms 49:20

"Man that is in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish."

人在尊贵中，而不醒悟，就如死亡的畜类一样。

And that's the fundamental problem with the human race. Left to ourselves, we never think about anything higher than our basic instincts, such as the idea of having a purpose. But God did create us for a purpose. And it certainly wasn't to please ourselves.

Imagine coming before God on judgment day, and He says to us, "And what did you do with the life I gave you?" What are we going to answer? If all we can say is, "Well, I had a good time," I honestly don't think He's going to be very impressed with such a waste of a life, do you? Yet millions are dying every day in exactly that position.

God originally created us for a purpose, whether we acknowledge it or not. And I think underneath everything, we are aware of that to some degree, because God has given us a conscience. Our consciences tell us that there's a need for purpose in our lives, but we don't like that, so we make every effort to ignore it and carry on regardless.

There are many ways by which people try to placate their consciences. One way is by "having a religion." They embrace the man-made traditions of their immediate surroundings. If they're born into a Muslim family, they call themselves muslims. If they're born into a Roman Catholic family, they call themselves Roman Catholic. If they're born Methodist, they call themselves Methodist and so on. They embrace the family religion. Maybe they think they'll disgrace the family if they don't. But they do it in a purely superstitious way. They don't understand it, they just blindly follow their family's traditions, assuming the family is right. I can't understand that.

To automatically assume the religion we are born into must be the true religion, just isn't logical. Even if it was the true religion, surely we still ought to examine it for ourselves, test it, compare it with others, before coming to any conclusion. But nobody ever does that. They just blindly assume their family must be right. And that's the easiest path in the world to follow. It stops us from thinking any more about purpose.

That's not the way it should be. All of us were created for a far, far higher purpose than just living, eating, sleeping and blindly following empty traditions. A real purpose. The Westminster Shorter Catechism tells us exactly what that purpose is:

Q1. "What is the chief end of man?"

"The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever."

1 Corinthians 10:31

"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

所以你们或吃或喝，无论作什么，都要为荣耀神而行。

Our real purpose, the real reason we're all here, is to glorify the One true living God, Lord of heaven and earth who created us in the first place. It doesn't matter if we say we don't believe in Him. We don't believe in His existence. It doesn't matter whether we believe He exists or not. What we believe is irrelevant. It's what actually **is** that matters. Every one of us has been put onto this earth to glorify God, whether we accept it or not.

And if we spend all our time living for ourselves and not even attempting to glorify Him, then what does that mean? We're all sinners. We've all fallen short of His requirements.

Psalm 14:2-3

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

耶和华从天上垂看世人，要看有明白的没有，有寻求神的没有。他们都偏离正路，一同变为污秽。并没有行善的，连一个也没有。

Romans 3:23

"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

因为世人都犯了罪，亏缺了神的荣耀。

We've got to understand this principle. We all came into this world for a purpose, to glorify God. But we've all failed and ended up glorifying ourselves instead.

Now, Christ said, *"I have come..."* Christ also came into this world for a purpose. And that also was to glorify God.

Hebrews 10:9

"I come to do thy will, O God."

后又说我来了为要照你的旨意行。

Unlike us, He did glorify God in His life. So if you want to know how to glorify God, His is a good example to follow. But He's more than an example. There's a huge difference between His coming and ours. He was truly and fully a man, but He was also the Son of God. And His purpose wasn't just to glorify God in His own little life, like ours is. He also had a far greater purpose. He was specifically sent by God to come into this world to save poor wretches like us from our sinful nature. That's what His name means:

Matthew 1:21

"thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."

你要给他起名叫耶稣。因他要将自己的百姓从罪恶里救出来。

He came to wake us up from this sleep we're in, only looking at the things of this world, living only for what we can get out of life. He came to give His people a new life, a higher life, far greater than just living for themselves. And that brings us to the second point:

2. Christ came *"that they might have life."* 是要叫羊（或作人）得生命

(a) Who are the *"they"*?

There's a modern idea going around, which is quite wrong. It goes something like this: Christ died for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, everybody's sins have now been taken away. So that can mean either one of two things:

The first idea says that, if everybody's sins have been dealt with, then everybody on the face of the earth will be saved, and must now be going to heaven. No matter what we do, no matter how badly we behave, we're all going there because our sins have been paid for. So we shouldn't think about sin any more. That's negative. Just have a sense of self-worth, self-acceptance, self-esteem. Think positive thoughts about yourself all the time. This is a very common view in the church today. The problem with that idea is that there's absolutely no justice about it whatsoever. If it were true, then God would simply be an unjust monster. Nobody would be judged and given the just punishment they deserve for their sins. We could be terrible people, and we'd all be let off in the end.

To get around that problem, another idea has been invented which goes something like this: Christ has died for the sins of the whole world, but it's now up to us to respond to Him. We've got to make a simple, positive choice as to whether we follow Him or not. Choose Christ, follow Him, and we'll get to heaven. Don't choose Christ, and we won't. In this scheme, we choose Christ just as we might choose Mohammed or Buddha or any other religious teacher to follow. Our salvation becomes all-dependent on our choice.

But that's not salvation, because we're saving ourselves. It's do-it-yourself religion, based on our choice. And it can't be true, because it's impossible. We can't choose Christ. None of us can see higher than our own natural instincts. And even if we could, who's to say that, after we've had a bad day, we can decide to stop choosing Him. Our supposed salvation is up in the air all the time, depending on how we feel. Nobody can

have any sense of assurance in that way of thinking. And even then, if that was the way to heaven, when we get there, it'd be full of people boasting about how clever they'd been because they'd chosen Christ and their neighbour hadn't. Heaven would be a terrible place, and again it would be totally unjust. Boasting must be excluded.

So the “*they*” in this passage can't refer to everybody. It must refer only to God's people. And of course, that would fit the context of the passage. Those who hear Christ's voice. Those God causes to come to Him. These are the ones the “*they*” refers to. By nature we can't come to Him by ourselves. We first need God to open our eyes to let us to see above our own pathetic, natural lives. So rather than us just simply making a decision to follow Christ, we need to acknowledge our need of God to change us first. That's what salvation is. We need God to do the saving, because we can't save ourselves.

(b) The word “*might*” is usually used today in a completely different way to the way that it's used in the Bible. We use the word “*might*” today simply to mean possibility. We say, for example, “Tomorrow I might go shopping.” By which we mean, maybe I will, maybe I won't. There's still a sense of unsureness about it.

But when the Bible uses the word “*might*,” it doesn't mean that at all. It's got a far more definite meaning. It means “*in order for*.” And we do use this meaning too. For example, we could say, “I remove the tree branch, that the path ‘*might*’ be cleared.” By which we mean, “I remove the branch, ‘*in order for*’ the path to be cleared.” The path is now definitely cleared because I've removed the branch. We don't mean, after removing the branch, maybe it's clear, maybe it isn't. No, I've cleared it completely by moving the branch. That's the way the Bible uses the word. Let's look at a few Biblical examples:

John 15:25

“But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled”

这要应验他们律法上所写的话说

In other words, “This cometh to pass, ‘*in order for*’ the word to be fulfilled.” Now this has come to pass, the word has been fulfilled. There's no uncertainty about it. It doesn't mean “Now this has come to pass, the word might be fulfilled, but then again it might not.” No, it's definitely been fulfilled by this coming to pass. What about this one:

John 3:17

“For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

因为神差他的儿子降世，不是要定世人的罪，（或作审判世人下同）乃是要叫世人因他得救。

This verse is often interpreted to mean that God sent His Son into the world so that maybe people will be saved, maybe they won't, depending on whether they choose Christ. But it doesn't mean that. That's the wrong definition of the word “*might*.” It

means “God sent His Son into the world ‘*in order for*’ the world through Him to be definitely saved.” No doubt about it. This “*world*” he’s talking about will be saved. I said earlier that not everybody is going to be saved. So the phrase “*the world*” here can’t mean everybody. It can only refer to the world of all God’s people, whoever they are. In other words, now Christ has been sent into the world, the sins of God’s people have been removed, and the way is now clear for them to be saved. There’s no doubt about it.

Similarly in this verse: “*I am come that they might have life,*” means “I am come ‘*in order for*’ them to have life.” In other words, Now Christ has come, our sin has been taken away, and this has, undoubtedly, absolutely, given His people “*life*.”

(c) What is “*life*”?

Surely, we’ve all got “*life*.” We all exist. We’re all living, moving, breathing creatures, our heartbeats are functioning. But if that’s all we think life is, then it’s because we’re only looking at the word “*life*” from our own natural viewpoint. What we see here in this world, isn’t the life God has for us. The life God talks about is far higher, far greater.

Actually, the Bible talks about our life, our existence, in this world as a living death:

Ephesians 2:1-3

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

你们死在过犯罪恶之中，他叫你们活过来，那时你们在其中行事为人随从今世的风俗，顺服空中掌权者的首领，就是现今在悖逆之子心中运行的邪灵。我们从前也都在他们中间，放纵肉体的私欲，随着肉体 and 心中所喜好的去行，本为可怒之子，和别人一样。

If we just live for this world, we’re described as “*dead in trespasses and sins,*” walking “*according to the course of this world,*” “*fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind,*” “*by nature the children of wrath.*” That’s the life we’re in now, seeking no higher than our own pleasure. But the passage then goes on to talk about what “*life*” really is:

Ephesians 2:4-7

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.”

然而神既有丰富的怜悯。因他爱我们的大爱，当我们死在过犯中的时候，便叫我们与基督一同活过来。（你们得救是本乎恩）他又叫我们与基督耶稣一同复活，一同坐在天上，要将他极丰富的恩典，就是他在基督耶稣里向我们所施的恩慈，显明给后来的世代看。

We were “*dead in sins,*” but God “*quickens*” us, He “*raises us up,*” to “*sit together in heavenly places,*” He “*shews us the exceeding riches of His grace and kindness.*”

That’s what we need. We don’t need this pathetic existence we’ve got at the moment. We’re created for so much more than this. Aren’t we wearied by it yet? This life is full of troubles and trials. Why? Because God is wanting us to seek a much higher life than this one. Don’t we want to get out of bondage to the things of this world? God is offering us all, life. Real life. Life far greater than the one we’ve got here.

Matthew 11:28

“*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*”

凡劳苦担重担的人，可以到我这里来，我就使你们得安息。

Romans 6:23

“*For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

因为罪的工价乃是死。惟有神的恩赐，在我们的主基督耶稣里乃是永生

Eternal life is the opposite of eternal death. Living our lives wanting no more than what this empty world can offer us, is such a waste. And we must be liable to God’s judgment if we continue in it. But there is a way out. We can get away from this empty existence. But we have to forsake our sin. We must repent of our sins and turn to God through the Saviour He has sent. And then we can receive the eternal life He has for His people.

Acts 14:15

“*turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein*”

我们传福音给你们，是叫你们离弃这些虚妄，归向那创造天，地，海，和其中万物的永生神。

But sadly, that’s the stumbling block most people fall at. They don’t want to leave their sins. They like them too much. They don’t want to break free, even when they hear about free salvation offered to them in Jesus Christ. A new life, which can be theirs freely if only they would forsake sin and come to Christ. Remarkably, they’d rather hang on to their sins than accept a new start, a new life without sin dragging them back all the time. They’d rather join the crowd laughing at Christianity, so they can hang on to their pathetic, empty, sinful lives. Don’t be like that. Break free from the crowd and cry to God for help. Everyone who sincerely cries to Him, He will hear and give them a new life.

3. *“And that they might have it more abundantly.”* 并且得的更丰盛

And then we're told that this “*life*” God gives His people is “more abundant.” What does it mean that we might have life “*more abundantly*”? How is it more abundant?

(1) First of all, we escape the judgment to come. We escape the punishment that we all deserve for our sinful natures. We no longer have the thought of a future punishment for our sins hanging over us. What a relief!

Romans 8:1

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

如今那些在基督耶稣里的，就不定罪了。

(2) Secondly, this new life is eternal. If we're just stuck living for no higher things than this world, we're going to have great difficulty seeing beyond our own death. We naturally think death to be the end of our lives. Everything in this life seems so temporary. We can work hard at whatever we do, but it's only ever going to be for a few years, then it's all gone. Walk through a graveyard. Most of the people there have been long forgotten. If this life is all we've got, what's the point in anything?

1 Corinthians 15:19

“If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.”

我们若靠基督，只在今生有指望，就算比众人更可怜。

I can't understand how an atheist can have any sense of fulfilment. To believe that we're only here for a short time and then gone for ever, makes everything pointless. Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived apart from Christ, saw exactly that:

Ecclesiastes 1:14

“I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit.”

我见日光之下所作的一切事，都是虚空，都是捕风。

But Christ gives us eternal life. Nothing we do for Christ is ever a waste of time. Everything has an eternal purpose. We might not know what that purpose is at times, but we can be assured that everything we do for Christ is of eternal worth.

1 Corinthians 15:58

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

所以我亲爱的弟兄们，你们务要坚固不可摇动，常常竭力多作主工，因为知道你们的劳苦，在主里面不是徒然的。

(3) Thirdly, this new life is of a vastly higher quality to the one we have now.

(a) We're given a new heart.

Ezekiel 36:26,27

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

我也要赐给你们一个新心，将新灵放在你们里面，又从你们的肉体中除掉石心，赐给你们肉心。我必将我的灵放在你们里面，使你们顺从我的律例，谨守遵行我的典章。

Now we have this new heart, we can begin to live the way God wants us to. No longer living for ourselves, slaves to our sins, our natural instincts. We're now free to live godly lives in Christ Jesus.

John 8:36

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

所以天父的儿子若叫你们自由，你们就真自由了。

(b) We now have a real relationship with God. We can communicate with Him, talk to Him, as a man does with his friend. We can pour out our hearts to Him, and know He's listening and answers our prayers. We can cry to Him in times of trouble. We can stop worrying about our situation, our little lives, knowing that God hears us, cares about us and will guide and protect us. This is altogether different from the gods of every other religion on earth. In every other religion, you have to go through the motions, the rituals. There's no real relationship between the worshipper and the god at all. But our God is alive and He cares for every one of us.

1 Peter 5:7

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

你们要将一切的忧虑卸给神，因为他顾念你们。

(c) And we now have God's Holy Spirit living within us.

(i) He comforts us:

John 14:16,17

“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

我要求父，父就另外赐给你们一位保惠师，（或作训慰师下同）叫他永远与你们同在。就是真理的圣灵，乃世人不能接受的。因为不见他，也不认识他。你们却认识他。因他常与你们同在，也要在你们里面。

(ii) He gives us victory over sin:

Romans 8:13,14

“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

你们若顺从肉体活着必要死。若靠着圣灵治死身体的恶行必要活着。因为凡被神的灵引导的，都是神的儿子。

(iii) He helps us to pray:

Romans 8:26

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”

况且我们的软弱有圣灵帮助，我们本不晓得当怎样祷告，只是圣灵亲自用说不出的叹息，替我们祷告。

(iv) And He guides us:

Psalms 139:23,24

“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

神阿，求你鉴察我，知道我的心思，试炼我，知道我的意念。看在我里面有什么恶行没有，引导我走永生的道路。

Why should anybody not want this “*more abundant*” life the Lord gives His people? It's crazy to refuse it, simply because we want to hang on to our sin or fit in with the crowd.

And what do we have to do to get this new life? Ask.

Luke 11:13

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”

你们虽然不好，尚且知道拿好东西给儿女。何况天父，岂不更将圣灵给求他的人吗？

It's this new life that we should want. Aren't we fed up with living life for ourselves? For simple, worldly pleasures, which are of no consequence, and don't satisfy?

John 4:14

“But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

人若喝我所赐的水就永远不渴。我所赐的水，要在他里头成为泉源，直涌到永生。

John 7:37-39

“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive).”

人若渴了，可以到我这里来喝。信我的人，就如经上所说，从他腹中要流出活水的江河来。耶稣这话是指着信他之人，要受圣灵说的

This more abundant life the Christian has given to him by God, is far more than we could ever ask or think. Yet so few people seem to want it. Sin is far more important to them. Let that not be the case for any of us. May each and every one of us cry to God, repent of our sins, and receive the new life He has for all who truly call upon Him.

Ephesians 3:14-21

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

神能照着运行在我们心里的大力，充充足足的成就一切超过我们所求所想的。但愿他在教会中，并在基督耶稣里，得着荣耀，直到世世代代，永永远远。阿们。