

December Devotional: Are you satisfied with life, or do you want much more? By Jerry Furniss

Are you familiar with the new song out right now call "Happy?" Are you happy? We also just celebrated Thanksgiving. Are you thankful and satisfied with how your life is going? Let me ask it differently. Are you confident in our society and in the economy? Are you truly peaceful? Do you enjoy everything about life? Or, do you worry about things and people? Do you pray for your children, family, and friends? Do your prayers consist mostly of requests, or praise? Yes, we are all there. We all want **much more**. Admit it, you want things and cannot wait for Christmas. But getting more does not really fulfill our need for **much more**. What could do that?

Due to sin, mankind begins his existence separated from the Lord. They are "*dead in trespasses and sins*" (Ephesians 2:1). Additionally, each person's individual experience can be decimated by the effects of sin. Selfishness, greed, unrest, fear, expectation, worry, and the like can leave individuals miserable and defeated. These devastations come from being under the rule of sin. Jesus described the sole intention of our enemy's interest in us. "*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*" (John 10:10). Has something stolen your confident, peace and joy?

*For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, **much more** those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:17) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded **much more**, so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 5:20-21)*

The grace of God is here connected with the phrase "**much more**." What a grand description of His grace — the "**much more**" grace of God! God's grace is "**much more**" than forgiveness. It is "**much more**" than new birth. It is "**much more**" than we understand. It is "**much more**" than we have ever experienced. It is "**much more**" than sufficient to deal with the devastating effects of sin in our lives.

The **much more** that we are looking for, is a remedy from God for escaping the reign of sin in two ways: "*those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*" First, the "*gift of righteousness*" provides an acceptable standing in heaven before a holy, righteous God. "*But now the righteousness of God . . . is revealed . . . even the righteousness of God which is through faith in Jesus Christ to all and on all who believe*" (Romans 3:21-22). Second, "*abundance of grace*" gives to us or provides the ongoing spiritual resources that are necessary for the development of a godly, victorious walk here on earth. Both of these wondrous provisions are ours because of the relationship we establish by faith with Jesus Christ: "*through the One, Jesus Christ.*"

Thanksgiving is about being thankful for the first of these provisions from God, forgiveness ("righteousness" with the Lord). Christmas is the natural extension of being thankful, that is, showing our appreciation by giving from the "abundance of grace". The answer to our need for more is not about getting **much more**, but how **much more** we "**app**"recite everything. And when we **appreciate** thoroughly, we will be:

"Happy, Happy, Happy".