

GOD'S PURPOSE: ABUNDANT LOVE

Bridges are essential for movement in the physical world.

Living on PEI for 8 years gave me a great appreciation for bridges.

The Confederation Bridge was our link to the world.

It was worth paying \$40.00+ to cross that bridge.

It was the gateway for Dorothy to go to a mall that had more than 15 stores.

It was the link far-away places and the freedom from isolation.

It was always a little unnerving when the Bridge was closed.

High winds would close the bridge.

Severe weather conditions would make it impassable.

Suddenly, with the Bridge gone the world became very small.

We were cut off from fresh supplies.

Store shelves became noticeably bare after a couple of days.

The thing about bridges is they are few and far between.

We know that in Drumheller.

For us there is only one bridge across the river.

That bridge is essential to movement.

If our bridge was closed, I'd be late for church.

Without bridges our lives would be severely hampered.

It would be difficult to get where we wanted or needed to be.

Bridges are essential for movement in the spiritual world as well.

Sin has isolated people from God and from each other.

Sin has created a gulf, a chasm.

A Bridge is essential to unite people with God.

There is only one Bridge - Jesus.

Jesus came that we might have life and that we might have it abundantly.

Jesus is the perfect bridge because He is fully God and fully man.

He is the link between our impoverished lives of sin and God's abundant life of holiness.

The Greek word for "abundantly" is **περισσος** which means to move beyond.

To live abundantly is to live, "exceedingly abundantly beyond".

When we live abundantly we live beyond the limitations of this world.

It comes from **περαν** which means to pierce through or move across.

It carries the thought of a tunnel, to pierce through.

Or, a bridge, to cross over.

Jesus is the link to abundant life.

Abundant life cannot be found in our natural existence.

It is not natural to our lives.

It is found in another world.

It is part of another kingdom.

It is found through Jesus.

People have a burning desire for that abundant life.

That is why Satan's temptations are so effective.

His temptations promise shortcuts to this abundant life.

His words to Eve, "when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5) are nothing more than a shortcut.

When Satan has tempted you, it has ultimately been to promise you abundant life.

That is a promise that he can never fulfill.

But Jesus has provided the way.

Hebrews 10:17-22 (RSV) "I will remember their sins and their misdeeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood

of Jesus, by the new and living way which he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."

Jesus has opened the way, built the bridge, bored the tunnel to abundant life.

He reached to us when we were lost, lonely, and loveless.

That is what our text is telling us in v. 9.

Through Jesus, the tunnel or bridge, we have abundant life.

Through Jesus we become expressions of **ABUNDANT LOVE**.

Anyone who finds and puts their faith in the bridge of Jesus is born of God.

When we find the bridge of Jesus and trust Him we know God.

And when we are born of God and know God, we are called to love.

We are called to be **ABUNDANT LOVERS** who offer the Bridge to others.

These verses tell me we are people with the resources to invest into others.

God has provided us with every resource we need to build bridges.

We have the presence of Jesus (vs. 9, 14).

We have the forgiveness of Jesus (vs. 10).

We have God's perfect love poured into us (vs. 12)

We have fearless confidence for the judgment day (vs. 17).

If we have confidence for that day we have confidence for today (vs. 17).

He has given us His own Spirit (vs. 13).

We have assurance of God's love (vs. 16)

We are given the blueprint for the bridge (vs. 11).

Is your life a bridge of grace to someone who is lost, or lonely, or without love?

When I am typing I sometimes make a mistake.

I don't always get every word typed correctly the first time I try.

I am so thankful for spell check.

One word that I typed incorrectly was movement.

Instead of hitting the "m" I typed an "l".

Instantly that little red line appeared on the screen under the word.

But I didn't correct it right away.

I ended up with a new word to me - "lovement".

I realized there are similarities between movement and lovement.

Lovement is really spiritual movement.

Love is God and people working together harmoniously in action.

Love is a verb.

When we are told that **"God is love"** He is a God of action.

It isn't just who God is.

It is what God does.

God built the Bridge to us so that lovement could take place.

He wanted people to be able to draw close to Him.

People are looking for the bridge.

Too many are settling for Satan's imitations.

Perhaps it is because the true bridge is obscured or barricaded by me.

I need to ask myself, "Am I making it possible for people to find Jesus?"

Am I involved in "lovement"?

Are people able to discover the Abundant Life God has for them when I am involved in their lives?

Or, does my life cause them to stumble and fall?

Jesus came as a sacrifice to clear away our sins.

He came to clear away the sin in my life that makes people stumble and fall.

God wants my life to open onto the Bridge to abundant life.

When people approach you, do they see that bridge?

They won't see it if they do not see verse 11 lived out.

When we love, the abundant life becomes evident to others.

We are a beacon to help others to find the Bridge to abundant life.

Closing Song - I Could Sing of Your Love Forever