

**T**M A THRIVEMOMS  
BIBLE STUDY

# Abundance

DISCOVERING A  
FULL LIFE IN CHRIST

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Kara-Kae James  
& Ali Pedersen

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DAVID  COOK™

*transforming lives together*

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# THE WAY IT WAS MEANT TO BE

*It's not supposed to be like this.* That sentence runs through my head more often than I'd like to admit as I survey my chaotic home, fighting children and my own short temper. Motherhood seemed so much more beautiful and easy from the outside looking in, but now, in the thick of it, many days I feel like I'm standing in quicksand.

*Was it really supposed to be this way? Is it supposed to be this hard?*

The short answer? No. It wasn't, and it's not.

Sin wrecked God's glorious plan for life with Him and flipped the script on what should be a full and abundant life, leaving us feeling shorthanded and grasping for a bit of hope. And if anything has taught me about falling short, hitting rock bottom, and finding grace again and again—it's parenting.

This week we are going to take a look back at God's original plan and where things all went wrong. I want us to think of this story as one of hope, not devastation. Where God could have given up when His creation turned against Him—He showed He was a God of second (and third and fourth and fifth) chances. Wouldn't you do the same for your child?

Although this may not be the way it was meant to be—God had a plan all along to lead us back to abundance with Him. So, hang with us, because there is good news, and there is hope.

## *Abundance*

### *Day One*

## **BROKEN ABUNDANCE**

Genesis 3:1-7

*Crunch.*

You know the feeling when you bite into a crisp, ripe fruit. It's a satisfying sound to your ears and an explosion on your taste buds. I imagine the sound when Eve took the bite of that forbidden fruit; it must have echoed through the garden of Eden. I'm sure the fruit in the garden was the juiciest and most delicious it's ever been in all of creation. The animals probably paused as the whole earth stood still in that world-shattering moment.


Before that infamous *crunch*, there was perfection. God had created this beautiful world. Everything was in order, working together perfectly. He put man and woman in the garden to live and create life together and to walk with Him. Man and woman and God lived together more intimately than we could ever imagine.

But before we go any further into this story—let's take a quick look at *abundance*. What is it?

**Get out a dictionary (or, let's be honest—ask Siri or Alexa) and write down the meaning of *abundance*:**

**What does *abundance* mean to you?**

Now, let's take a deeper look at where things all went wrong—the moment of broken abundance.

 **Go to the Word:** *Read Genesis 3:1-5 for the dialogue between the serpent and the woman.*

As we read in Genesis 3, the serpent (later in the Bible, in Revelation 12:9, referred to as the deceiver Satan) comes to the woman and tempts her: “Did God *really* say you can't eat from any tree?” (I imagine heavy sarcasm in his voice.) Eve responds, telling the serpent that they are allowed to eat from any tree but the tree in the middle of the garden, and if they do, they will die.


“You won't die!” the serpent responds to her.

You see—sin does this. It lies and manipulates. It tells us that it's okay. It promises something greater than we anticipated. It says whatever the cost of our disobedience is, it will all be worth it—but it never is.

### **What does sin do?**

In an instant, the perfect, beautiful bond between God and humankind was broken. The intimacy between God and human beings was made to be something really special. When we look back to the way it was intended to be, we know that God had this beautiful plan of perfect abundance in mind for them.

But when Eve believed the lies, she fell into the sin.


 **Go to the Word:** Read Genesis 3:6–7: “The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

When Adam and Eve first sinned, they felt shame. They realized their brokenness and wrongdoing, and their eyes were opened. They saw that they were naked and covered themselves. Sin brings shame, guilt, and brokenness. Sin is never worth the delicious *crunch*.

As hard as it may be to look back at our beginnings, there's good news—our story doesn't end here. Hope wasn't shattered that day. Abundance may have been broken, but God never leaves it that way. This is just the start of a truly beautiful story. It's important to revisit the story of the Fall to get a full picture of the way our relationship with God was meant to be and to grasp the significance of God's sacrifice, made for us so that we may have abundance with Him now.

**What in your life promises to be worth it, but never is in the end? What lies is sin telling you today? These are the things that keep us from true abundance, and it's best to call them out now!**

**Do you have stories of brokenness that are difficult to recall but have helped you on your path to following Jesus? Maybe you're in one of those stories right now. Sometimes it takes being broken and living in shame to lead us to a place of surrender. Write about one part of your story of brokenness.**

 **Go to the Word:** *The Bible is an entire work made up of many parts, all inspired by God and reflecting His plan. Read the following verses and write down what they tell you about God and His plan for His people.*

**1 Peter 2:9-10**

**Romans 1:20**

## **PRAYER FOR ABUNDANCE**

Ask God to help you see what sins are holding you back from a life of abundance with Him. In the spaces provided after these prompts, write down any requests you make in prayer, and you can come back to review them later in the study.



*Day Two*

## SEPARATION FROM GOD

Genesis 3:8-24

Consequences are something we learn about at a young age. You touch a hot stove; it burns you. You push your sister; she'll likely push back. You talk back to your mom; you might lose that movie-marathon weekend you've been planning. There were consequences for Adam and Eve when they chose to disobey God's instructions. And if anyone understands how much this must have broken God's heart, it's us moms. We beg our children to not do that *one* thing—but they almost always have to test their limits. Every time they cross that line, it breaks our hearts, because we want our children to trust us, and we want to save them from the consequences of disobedience. (Yeah, God, we hear You. We get the irony!)

**What consequences have you had to deal with in your life because of disobedience?**

 **Go to the Word:** Read Genesis 3:8-13.

We find Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, hunkered in the corner, knitting first-generation parachute pants and peasant tops (or whatever fashion trend they created), when God joins them in the garden. I find this to be one of the most fascinating parts

of this story—chapter 3, verse 8—they “heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze.” This paints a picture of the intimacy and relationship between this man and woman and God. The fact that God was moving around in the garden with them illustrates the way our relationship with God was meant to be. When I hear our back door click open and footsteps across our kitchen floor, I know my husband is home. We have a deep, intimate relationship, and I know exactly what he sounds like when he walks through the house. Adam and Eve knew the sound of God moving through the garden; they were that close!

God calls out to them, “Where are you?”

And Adam says, “I heard you coming, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.”

Okay, also a relatable scenario: 99.9 percent of the time, I’m excited when I hear my husband enter the house, but sometimes, when I haven’t been the best wife, I feel the need to sneak away and hide from him. You know the feeling, right? (Sorry, honey, I haven’t showered in three days, so I’m hiding in bed so you don’t have to look at me!) Sometimes our first instinct when our behavior hasn’t been ideal is to hide—even from those who love us the most.

God continues in verse 11 (with a question He already knows the answer to, because He’s God, but He’s driving the point home): “Who told you that you were naked? Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”

As we keep reading, we see Adam and Eve play the blame game, and then eventually God hands down the consequences.

 **Go to the Word:** Read Genesis 3:14–19. Pay attention to the consequences described for the serpent, woman, and man.

**Write down some of the consequences God gave to the man and woman.**

The consequences given to Eve (in verse 16) are ones that many mothers understand well: the pains of bearing children and the struggles with marriage. While the childbirth part is pretty clear in this verse, the part about husbands can be a little more confusing. The statement of “he will rule over you” wasn’t a biblical command for husbands to dominate wives, but can be understood better as a description of what was going to happen to the relationship between the two parties—that it would become problematic and complicated as opposed to the perfect partnership it had been. The battle of the sexes began!

**How have you struggled with the same consequences given to Eve?**

 **Go to the Word:** Read Romans 1:18–25, and then answer the questions that follow. Look closely at verses 21–25:

*For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead,*

*their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, four-footed animals, and reptiles.*

*Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen.*

**In Romans 1:18-25, how does Paul say that people have sinned against God? How does that sin separate us from God—what are the consequences we face?**

 **Go to the Word:** Read Genesis 3:20-24.

While this story of Adam and Eve's disobedience has a solemn ending, it is sprinkled with a covering of hope. Before God sends them away and separates Himself from them, He pauses to make clothes for them (verse 21). It's a beautiful picture of grace—that God is constantly showing His love for His children even in the midst of utter heartbreak. He shows us this same grace each and every day, if we are willing to accept His offerings to us.

## **PRAYER FOR ABUNDANCE**

Think about the consequences of your own sins and in what ways you have felt separated from God recently. Ask God to help you fully accept the grace that draws us close to Him.

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