

THE WHY'S OF GOD'S BLESSING

JULY 21, 2024

WORSHIP

HOSANNA,
AMAZING GOD, PRAISE
FROM EVERY NATION,
LORD OF THE NATIONS,
HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD

WELCOME

What was the greatest blessing you've received thus far, and what have you done with it?

WORD

PSALM 67

God be gracious to us and bless us, And cause His face to shine upon us— Selah.

² That Your way may be known on the earth,
Your salvation among all nations.

³ Let the peoples praise You, O God;

Let all the peoples praise You.

⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy;

For You will judge the peoples with uprightness

And guide the nations on the earth. Selah.

⁵ Let the peoples praise You, O God;

Let all the peoples praise You.

⁶ The earth has yielded its produce;

God, our God, blesses us.

⁷ God blesses us,

That all the ends of the earth may fear Him.

Not everybody agrees on what it means to be “blessed”. What do you think of when you think of God’s blessings? Perhaps we believe that it’s winning the lottery, getting that much-coveted visa to live and work abroad, etc. Receiving these material things may not turn out to be good for you at all. The Bible has much to say about the “what’s” and the “why’s” of God’s blessings.

I. THE “WHAT’S” OF GOD’S BLESSING

In the Old Testament, “berakah” is used to refer to material blessing, victory, the presence of God. Other terms used for blessing includes “shalom” (peace, wholeness...living in the presence of God) when you are blessed with God’s Presence, you are experiencing the “shalom” of God. We miss out on the bigger picture of God’s blessing because we focus so much on the material part of it. Another idea related to blessing is “tzedez” (righteousness, justice, fairness in accordance with God’s character and will). Even in the New Testament, God wants us to pursue His righteousness first, then the things we need will be added to us. This gives us the right mindset of seeking not just the material blessing, but God’s Presence. God’s Presence relates to His blessing (**Psalm 67:1**). His blessing has a bigger purpose, it’s not just for us (**Psalm 67:6-7**). The most commonly known blessing known in the Old Testament was when the Israelites were about to enter into the Promised Land after 40 years (**Deuteronomy 28:1-10**). Moses gave them the condition of God’s promise, because the blessing of God also follows our obedience. If the Israelites obey God, He will bless them in the Promised Land — not just materially, but in their families, so that all the other nations will know that they are God’s people. Sometimes we think that the blessing is just for us to enjoy, but God blesses us so that other people will know what it means to have a great God like we have. When God took Israel out of Egypt, His plan was to bless them. His blessing would be upon every aspect of life, both material and spiritual. But we also learn that God’s blessings were conditional—they needed to obey. God’s blessing has a purpose, it’s not just for us to enjoy. In the same passage that we learn about God’s blessings for Israel, we also learn about the curses that will be on them if they fail to follow God fully (**vv. 15-68**). God is serious and warned them about what will happen if they did not obey.

How about blessing as taught in the New Testament? “Eulogeo” is the word used that carries the idea to bless, speak well of, beseech God’s favor, grant favor. “Makarios” is the most commonly used word for blessed, having a deep sense of happiness, joy and fulfillment, living in God’s favor and “charis” is the Greek word for grace, unmerited favor or kindness, a gift freely given not earned. When we are blessed by God, it is grace that He gives to us not because we deserve it. The Beatitudes uses this same word (**Matthew 5:3-12**); you are blessed when you are poor in spirit, mourn (because this causes us to turn to God), if you’re gentle, hungry for righteousness, etc. These are the values that Jesus we should have if we want to be blessed!

WORD

Another aspect of blessing is spiritual. God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing (**Ephesians 1:3**)! God wanted to show His love to us even before we were born, because He is gracious and wanted to adopt us into His family. In the Roman world, an adopted child had more rights than a natural-born child! We have an inheritance in heaven, sealed for the Day of Redemption. There's also a material side to God's blessing (**2 Corinthians 9:8**) so that we have an abundance to be able to do what He wants us to. Indeed, He promised to supply all our needs, and the context of this was Paul's ministry needs that were provided for by the Philippians (**Philippians 4:18-19**). When we are looking after others' needs, God will bless us.

II. THE "WHY'S" OF GOD'S BLESSING

God promised Abraham great blessings so that all the nations will be blessed through him (**Genesis 12:1-3**). Twenty-five years later, Abraham still wasn't a "great nation" because he didn't have a son though he tried to do things his way. But God told Abraham that He will fulfill His promise, but Abraham has to do it God's way (**Genesis 18:17-18**). Several years later, God told Abraham to sacrifice his one and only son, Isaac, and when Abraham obeyed Him, God provides His own sacrifice (a ram) and reiterates the blessing for Abraham so that all the nations will be blessed through Abraham's seed, Jesus Christ. We are blessed today because Abraham obeyed God. The Lord gave the same promise to Isaac, and to his son, Jacob with the same purpose — that all the nations and families of the earth shall be blessed in them, and in their descendants (**Genesis 26:4, 28:14**). This thread of promise runs through the whole Bible (**Isaiah 42:1,6, Galatians 3:13-14**). God planned that through Abraham's seed, all the nations, not just Israel, will be blessed. All nations will be touched with the gospel of Jesus Christ (**Psalms 67:6-7**).

Our calling is to be a blessing to all the nations. God blesses us to bless the world! The Philippines is at a very strategic part of the world where 90% of unevangelized peoples live known as the "10/40 Window". Truly, we have been blessed so we can be a blessing to the world! We must do our part in praying for, giving to, and serving in our church's missions efforts. This is not just a ministry within the church, this is our ministry as a church (**Matthew 28:19-20**) and one day, we'll join all nations in a great song of worship before God's throne (**Revelation 5:9**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

How do we fail to "look" (ask) to Jesus for our mission outreach? Are we "doers" before "askers"?

2. Setting It Right.

Who are the people that God has placed within your sphere of influence that you can reach with the gospel? Name each of them.

3. Living It Out.

How often do we fail to give thanks for what the Lord has done? Do we have proactive ways to remember God's goodness in and through the outreach to which He allows us to be involved?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for the people around you who need God's blessings; be a channel of that blessing and share to them what you have received from the Lord. Above all, share Jesus to them, let them hear the gospel that they too may come to worship and honor Christ as Savior and King.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort for the Sudanese people caught in violence and conflict.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; tension in East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.
- Continue to pray for the rest of Israeli hostages to be restored back to their families safely.
- Pray for Israel and the war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory.
- For the recent political and social upheaval in the US to result in spiritual awakening in the church and a great spiritual harvest.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, deacons, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

MEMORY VERSE

PSALMS 67:7

⁷ God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.