

3 Unpopular Truths About Blessing

One of the most foundational truths that has anchored me in God is the realization that I have been chosen. As a new believer in 1978, I looked around and wondered why I was the only Jewish person who believed in Jesus in my whole school, which had many Jews. Then I realized that I believed because God had revealed Himself to me in a way that He had not revealed Himself to the other Jewish people in my school. I realized He had chosen me.

Taking a hold of this truth will give you a confidence in your relationship with God that can come no other way.

God Will Bless You in the Wilderness

After God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He led them to the promised land through the wilderness. Along the way, the people began to grumble about not having enough to eat, and God responded to their complaints by supernaturally meeting their needs.

God provided quail in the evening, and supernatural manna appeared on the ground each morning. This happened six days a week for 40 years. God provided for the Israelites in this way the entire time they wandered in the wilderness.

This happened thousands of years ago. But I want you to know that God will do the same for you. You may not receive manna and quail, but when you face wilderness experiences, God will meet your needs. Remember, Jesus said not to worry about what you will eat or what you will drink because your Father knows you need these things; if you just seek Him first, He will supply all your needs (Matt. 6:25-33).

The apostle Paul wrote that the Old Testament, the Tanakh, was

“written as an admonition to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come” (1 Cor. 10:11). One of the things we learn from the Old Testament is that God supernaturally provides for His people. God provided for the children of Israel when they were wandering in the wilderness, and He will provide for you.

God May Not Bless You Until After You Repent

It is important for us to understand that the Father’s love for us is unconditional. But sometimes people today are so grace-oriented that they do not understand the power and necessity of repentance. They don’t seem to realize it’s the grace of God that leads us to repentance.

In order for us to experience God’s presence consistently, we have to repent. This truth is seen throughout the New Testament. John the Baptist’s message was “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). And Jesus taught the same thing (Matt. 4:17).

We see it also in the Hebrew Scriptures. Jeremiah said if the people of Israel would truly mend their ways (repent), and if they practiced justice; did not oppress the alien, the orphan or the widow; and did not shed innocent blood or follow after false gods, then God would let them dwell in the land He gave their fathers forever and ever. The point is that repentance was required for people to receive the fullness of God’s blessing.

Please hear me today: God loves us so much, but we need to put Him first in our lives and seek after Jesus. When we do this, the Spirit of the Lord is going to draw closer and closer to us, and we are going to experience His glory and His pleasure more and more. You see, we are partners with God. God does His part, but we have to do our part. Repentance precedes the blessing of God. “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8).

God Will Bless You When You Suffer for Righteousness’ Sake

There will be times when you will be rejected because of your faith in Jesus. Persecution will come. But I want you to understand that there is nothing to fear when these things happen. When you suffer because of your love for God and your faithfulness to His Word, you will experience a closeness and a deep fellowship with God that can't be experienced when life is easy. Peter told us that even if we suffer, if we're doing it for righteousness' sake, we are blessed. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake" (Matt. 5:10).

This is why Paul said he would rather boast in his weakness. He said, "[God] said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. So I take pleasure in weaknesses, in reproaches, in hardships, in persecutions and in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

Don't be afraid of the world. Don't be intimidated by the agnostics, the atheists and those who call Christians narrow-minded haters because we proclaim that Jesus is the only way. Do not back down. You're going to be rejected. You're going to be persecuted.

You have been chosen by God not just to reign with Jesus, but to suffer with Him as well. But don't be afraid. Be a soldier. Be willing to take some blows because of your love for Jesus and your defense of the gospel. You are going to be rewarded for it. Be strong and courageous in your love of God. {eo}

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