

Giving a Blessing, Being a Blessing

It is intriguing to contemplate blessings, their sources and the specifics of how they come to us. But first let us see a definition from Webster. **Blessing:**

1. the act or words of one that blesses approval, encouragement
2. a thing conducive to happiness or welfare
3. grace said at a meal.

True biblical blessings go far beyond such simple definitions. Blessings from God are seen abundantly in scripture, but God also calls on us to bless one another. The early Christians used the Greek word *eulogia* to mean a blessing of words or an act of encouragement; it is the source of our English word “eulogy” given at a funeral. (There is another Greek word for “blessing” used in the New Testament: “*makarios*” - giving happiness and being the source of joy. It is seen in the *beatitudes*, in Matthew 5:3-11. Most English translations render the word “blessed” but some say “happy.” One of our finest Greek Lexicons (referred to as BDAG, for Bauer, Danker, Arndt & Gingrich), says this word means, “**pertaining to being fortunate or happy because of circumstances, fortunate, happy.**”

God blesses us in many ways, but He also calls on us to bless one another. In a world of chaos, violence and grief, true blessings are precious, indeed. Whether we share blessings of words (*eulogia*) or blessings by arranging circumstances, (*makarios*), blessings are more precious than many realize.

After giving some specific directions about ways to treat one another in I Peter 3, Peter writes, “**8** To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; **9** not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, **but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing,** (NASB, emphasis supplied). God is calling on each of us to be giving blessings to one another, in word and in circumstances.

All of that said, it would be hard to describe the depth and the breadth of the blessings (in both words and circumstances) that this congregation, the Pine Valley church family has been and continues to be for Sandy and me. Rare indeed, are the church / preacher / secretary blessings that rise to the high calling of walking in the beautiful path of blessings that Jesus has shown us. But Sandy and I live in these blessings, because of you. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all the blessings you share. You not only *give* us blessings, you *are* a blessing in our lives.

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