

## God Time Day 1: A Blessed Life



Read Numbers 6:24-26

*<sup>24</sup> May the Lord bless you and protect you; <sup>25</sup> may the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; <sup>26</sup> may the Lord look with favor on you and give you peace.*



In each verse, underline the blessings (the part that says, “May the Lord \_\_\_\_\_.”)

Then, in each verse, draw a box around the outcome of each blessing (the part that says “and \_\_\_\_\_.”)

God lays out these three blessings:

- The Lord’s blessing will protect you.
- The Lord’s presence (“*face shining on you*”) allows you to experience His grace.
- And the Lord’s favor brings you peace.

We get in trouble with the expectations we often have about these blessings. We think protection means we will have a life without pain, loss, or struggle. We think God’s grace (God giving us what we do not deserve) will lead to financial success or some type of “gift from heaven.” We think God’s peace should lead to a life without any fighting, arguments, or conflict.

Unfortunately, these common expectations are based entirely on worldly definitions fueled by our own selfish desires and not on what God wants or desires for us. God’s protection will often come in helping us move through pains and trials, not avoiding them. God’s grace comes in His forgiveness, healing, and invitation to be a part of His kingdom expansion. God’s peace has nothing to do with having a life of ease, but rather about the peace of knowing that God’s love is unwavering and that we no longer are slaves to shame and fear.

Are your expectations of God’s blessings worldly or real?



Pray for God to help you have the right expectations.

## God Time Day 2: Misunderstood Blessings?



Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount talking about the blessings of God. But some of what follows is not what typically would be referred to as “blessings.”



Read Matthew 5:3-11.

*<sup>3</sup> Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the humble, for they will inherit the earth. <sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. <sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. <sup>8</sup> Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. <sup>9</sup> Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs. <sup>11</sup> You are blessed when they insult you and persecute you and falsely say every kind of evil against you because of me.*

Underline who Jesus says is “blessed” in the above verses.



Circle the word *mourn* in verse 4.

We rarely associate grief and mourning with blessing. Here, Jesus is referring to spiritual mourning, the response of grief we should feel about sin. Spiritual mourning/grief drives us to repent and turn away from our sin, leading to forgiveness. This is similar to how mourning a loss leads us to a place of healing. (Read 2 Corinthians 7:10.)



Circle the words *persecute(d)* in verses 10 and 11.

You probably wouldn’t consider persecution a blessing, but those who are different tend to be persecuted. If you are not persecuted, it could be because there is little evidence or impact of your faith. (Read Acts 5:41)



Recall an event or circumstance you initially didn’t think was a blessing that became a blessing in the end.

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Consider also that current struggles or hardships in your life could later turn into blessings.

**God Time Day 3: Fish Out of Water**



Read 1 Peter 2:1-5.  
<sup>1</sup> Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. <sup>2</sup> Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation, <sup>3</sup> if you have tasted that the Lord is good. <sup>4</sup> As you come to him, a living stone—rejected by people but chosen and honored by God— <sup>5</sup> you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Peter writes to the church and challenges them to live differently from the rest of the world. Having heard Jesus teach the Sermon on the Mount in person, Peter makes it very clear that following Jesus will cause us to be “rejected by people.”

In the verses above, underline what Peter says should **not** be a part of our lives.



Now, circle what Peter says should be a part of our lives.

If we are living a life that is following Jesus, we will stand out from the rest of the world. And isn't that the point?

Draw a box around what we are *being built to be*. (Verse 5)

This term is a throwback to Exodus when God called the nation of Israel to be a “kingdom of priests” (Exodus 19:6). There were two defining qualities of priests. First, the priests were set apart, different. Second, they were to serve God and serve the people by pointing them to God.

Do those around you notice that you are different?

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Plan one thing you can do today to point those around you towards God.

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**God Time Day 4: Worth It**



Being different and living in contrast to what the rest of the world says is “right” can be difficult and painful. Perhaps you might be asking yourself, “What’s in it for me?”



Read Matthew 5:12  
*Be glad and rejoice, because your reward is great in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

The rewards this world has to offer are no match for the blessings of God. Jesus begins the Sermon on the Mount by turning the understanding of “blessing” upside-down. He then follows up with this encouragement to focus on our eternal reward. The rewards of this world are temporary. Heaven’s rewards are eternal.



Is there one thing God has been calling you to do, but you have been afraid to try? Plan to do it today and trust the results to God. You will be rewarded for it.

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**God Time Day 5: Life Is Hard, So Carry On**



God wants you to have a full and blessed life, but life is hard. Therefore, with His guidance, focus on the choices that you can control and celebrate the joys as they come.

You may have heard of the *Serenity Prayer* attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr and its association with Alcoholics Anonymous. Recite this prayer and apply it today:



*“God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.*

*Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time, accepting hardship as the pathway to peace. Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it. Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His will. That I may be reasonably happy in this life, and supremely happy with Him forever in the next. Amen”*