
Divine Blessing

The Story

Genesis 30

My Story

1. What does it mean to be blessed? How is being blessed different from being happy?
2. What is the biggest blessing you have ever received? Do you feel you are blessed? How so?
3. Are we blessed because of something we do, something God does, or some other reason?
4. What does it mean to be grateful for what you have? What does it mean to be content in life?
5. Do you think your use of social media impacts how you view blessings, gratitude, and contentment? Why did you answer this way?
6. How do you compare yourself with others? How do you see these comparisons impacting your sense of being blessed? How do they impact your gratitude? Your contentment?
7. Is there ever a positive way to compare yourself to someone else?
8. Chris talked about instant gratification and waiting on the Lord for His timing. What does instant gratification mean? What does it mean to wait on the Lord?
9. Do you live your life for instant gratification, or do you generally wait for the Lord's timing? Why did you answer the question that way? Now ask someone who knows you well - do they think you tend to seek instant gratification or that you tend to wait patiently? If there is a difference between what you think about yourself and what they think about you? Why is that?

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10. Chris mentioned a quote by Pastor John Ortberg - "The soul's infinite capacity to desire is the mirror image of God's infinite capacity to give." What does this quote mean? Thinking of your own life, how has this been true?
11. What do you think happens when our soul's desire is out of whack or we desire harmful things? How can this impact you individually? How can this shape and impact society? What can you do about it in your own life? What can you do about it on a larger scale? Read 2 Chronicles 7:14 and Acts 1:8. How do these verses help guide you? What does God say needs to happen, and how does He equip us to be His agents in this?

Digging Deeper

Read through these guiding scriptures and answer the corresponding questions.

Read Genesis 30

1. Think of each person who made a decision in this account of Jacob and his wives (verses 1-24) - Jacob, Rachel, and Leah. Where did each go wrong? Can you see any redemption here? What is the redemption? What does this tell you about our God?
2. Towards the end of this chapter, we see Laban again try to trick Jacob by devising a scheme to get out of paying Jacob for his work, but it didn't end up working out as Laban planned. What happened? Can you think of a situation in your own life where something similar has happened - someone tried to deceive or scheme you, and God gave you wisdom to avoid falling into the trap?
3. What does the Bible teach us about deception? Search for verses discussing deception in the Bible (for example, here are a few: Galatians 6:7-8, Proverbs 10:9, Proverbs 12:19-22, James 1:21-25, Galatians 5:16-24, etc). How do those verses relate to this account in Genesis 30? How do they relate to your own life?

Read John 3:16, John 15:9-17, John 17:20-26, 1 John 4:7-21, Romans 5:1-11, Romans 6:23, Romans 8:35-39, 1 John 3:1, 1 John 1:5-10, Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 2:1-10, Ephesians 3:14-21, Psalm 5:11-12, Psalm 36:5-7, and 2 Corinthians 5:14-15.

1. Chris told us that God loves each and every one of us, and we didn't earn that love, but God gave it to us freely. Even more importantly, the Bible tells us God loves you. Do you believe that God loves you personally? Why?

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2. Reading over those verses, what does God say about how He loves you? Write down your key takeaways from these verses.
3. Are there other verses you can think of that speak about God's love for you? Share these in your life group as an encouragement to others. If you're not in a life group, share them with someone you know.
4. As you read these verses, what purposes does God give us for why and how He loves us?
5. Reading these verses, how do you see each individual in the Trinity (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) loving you?
6. How does God's love for you give you hope? How does that hope help you persevere? Talk this over in your life group; share your own story in this to help others in your group.
7. When you spend time remembering and sitting in God's love for you personally, what does that do to your outlook and thought process? What actions does that motivate you to take?

Bringing It Home

1. God's word is filled with accounts of people being blessed and God's promises of blessing His people. Spend some time in your group sharing scriptures that speak about how God blesses us as followers of Jesus. How do each of these scriptures speak to you personally? How have you seen God apply these to your life?
2. Why does God bless His people? Why do you think God has blessed you personally? If someone told you that God blesses us because He loves us, what does that mean to you? If someone told you that God blesses you so you can overflow that blessing and bless others, what does that mean to you?
3. Do you find yourself always wanting and pushing for the next best thing, or are you mostly content with your life? Why do you answer that way? If you find yourself mostly discontent, why do you think that is? What do you think contributes to your always wanting something more, something "better"?

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4. Do you think you are grateful for what you have? What in life are you grateful for (write some things out)? How are gratitude and contentment related?
5. Do you believe God wants us to be content? What's the difference between being content and being complacent? Spend some time talking this concept of gratitude and contentment over with God. Ask Him to speak to you and guide You in His word. What is God telling you? What will you do with what He's telling you?
6. Have you ever seriously considered how the media you consume and contribute to (social media, "news" shows, talk radio, opinion shows, etc.) impact you personally? By considered, we mean you think and pray about it, seek God's word for what He tells us about where we focus our thoughts impacts the way we perceive, think and live, ask others who care about you, and see the impact media has on you, etc. If you haven't seriously considered this, would you commit to considering that question this week? Start with these three areas - how does your use of these kinds of media impact whether you feel blessed? How does it impact your personal sense of gratitude? How does it impact how content you are in life? What will you do with what you learned through this process?
7. Do you believe God is mad at you or dislikes you because you have failed? Do you think that you have to be perfectly obedient in order to be loved by God or saved? Read Romans 3:23-24, Romans 6:23, Romans 10:9-10,13, and 1 John 1:8-9. What do those verse say?
8. Rather than perfect obedience (which isn't attainable in this life), we are saved by accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, forgiven by admitting and confessing our sins to Him, and blessed by having a close relationship with Him (relational proximity to the Blessed One as Chris put it). How has this proven to be true in your life? Share your story around this with your life group.
9. God loves YOU - personally and individually; you didn't earn that love; God chooses to give His love to you freely (if you need a reminder of what that looks like, check out the second series of scriptures in the Digging Deeper section of this Study Guide). Knowing and believing that God loves you personally and individually like this changes EVERYTHING. What will you do with this realization? Will you commit to being an encourager? How will you share this truth with others? What specifically will you do to encourage others by telling them or reminding them of God's love for them? Discuss this in your life group and come up with ideas for how you can share how much God loves other people and how the realization of that truth has changed your life.