

Gratitudes - part 1 – blessing not complaining

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BIG IDEA – God’s economy is fueled by blessing! Blessing God and blessing others.

scripture focus - Psalm 103:1 ESV “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!”

What is it like to have a perfect day, a perfect family, perfect relationships, a perfect community of believers...the “perfect life”? Sounds impossible, right? What if we told you that it may have more to do with our **perception and persistence** than having “perfection.” Get ready for The Season of Gratitudes! **And, to focus on our own attitudes of gratitude – our gratitudes?**

I can imagine this hits a nerve in many of us who are hard-core REALISTS.

Realism is the world of dark and dangerous, where someone is always out to get my parking spot, my place in line or my peace of mind.

I have to confess, “**Hi, my name is Glenn, and I am addicted to negativity!**” It’s been ten minutes since my last [cognitive distortion](#).”

Bless and blessing - there are three words in the Old Testament and two words in the New Testament for us to understand how these words work with our gratitudes. And it’s in these words we find the basis of how to grow in our gratitudes!

In the Old Testament:

1. **barak** - Strong's Number: 1288, means to kneel, respect or praise.
2. **berakhah** - Strong's Number: 1293, means a gift or present.
3. **esher** - Strong's Number: 835, happiness, blessedness

The Hebrew people see blessing as something that **comes from God, returns back to God and is liberally distributed to others**. It’s blessing in coming, going, giving and receiving! Jewish thinkers explain that to bless means to **increase in joy, in peacefulness**.

Jewish scholar, Dr. Nathan Lopes Cardozo notes:

“How wise were the sages of Israel when they instituted the custom of making a blessing on almost anything, whether it is eating, drinking, observing natural

phenomena, or smelling extravagant aromas. They depicted all these activities as nothing less than totally miraculous.”

New Testament

Let's quickly take a look at the New Testament words for bless and blessing.

1. Makarios - Strong's Number: 3107, happy
2. Eulogeo - Strong's Number: 1288,

In the New Testament, there are two primary Greek words translated as “**blessing.**” **Makarios** carries the meaning of happiness that we just looked at. The Beatitudes of Matthew 5 and Luke 6 describe the happy state of those who find their purpose and fulfillment in God.

Eulogeo focuses more on good words or the good report that others give of someone and also describes the blessing that we say over our food (Matthew 26:26). This word is where we get our English word “eulogy,” in which we speak well of one who has passed away. Ephesians 1:3 blesses God for all the blessings that He gives us in Christ, and 1 Peter 3:9 instructs us to bless those who mistreat us, because we were called to receive a blessing from God.

You'll be happy when or if...

You're **poor** in spirit.

You **mourn**.

You're humble.

You hunger and thirst for **justice**.

You're **merciful**.

You're **pure** in heart.

You work towards **peace**.

You are persecuted because of doing **right**.

And when people **insult** you.

When people **persecute** you.

When people **lie** about you,

Speak all kinds of evil about you because of me.

These BE-Attitudes are what exactly what clashes with our ME-Attitudes!

NOTES to DIG DEEPER

Scriptures

Psalms 103:1-5 **ESV** <https://bible.com/bible/59/psa.103.1-5.ESV>

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

Psalms 34:1-3 **ESV** <https://bible.com/bible/59/psa.34.1-3.ESV>

“I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the Lord; let the humble hear and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!”

Matthew 5:3-12 **NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/mat.5.3-12.NLT>

“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.”

Romans 12:9-16 **NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/rom.12.9-16.NLT>

“Don’t just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God’s people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. **Bless those who persecute you.** Don’t curse them; pray that God will bless them. **Be happy with those who are happy,** and **weep with those who weep.** Live in harmony with each other. Don’t be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don’t think you know it all!”

Matthew 5:43-48 **NLT** <https://bible.com/bible/116/mat.5.43-48.NLT>

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! **Pray for those who persecute you!** In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.”

Luke 6:27-28 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/luk.6.27-28.NLT>

"But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your enemies! Do good to those who hate you. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who hurt you."

1 Peter 3:8-9 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/1pe.3.8-9.NLT>

"Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. **Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing.** That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing."

Numbers 6:24-26 NLT <https://bible.com/bible/116/num.6.24-26.NLT>

"May the Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you his favor and give you his peace."

Questions for Life Groups

Q: Have you been addicted to negativity?

Q: Have you experienced **cognitive distortion**? Explain.

Q: Agree or disagree about God's economy being fueled by blessing?

Q: What do you think about David blessing God at some of his worse moments in life?

Q: What can we learn from the Psalms about that?

Q: How are you with this counter-cultural, counter-intuitive list of blessing (happiness)?

Q: Did your family speak good words or bad ones over you growing up?

Q: Is it **easy** or **difficult** to speak good words over those you love?

Diving Deeper into God's Word

Strong's Concordance

Berakah (barak: to kneel, bless) a blessing - benefit (1), blessed (1), blessing (48), blessings (11), generous (1), gift (3), most blessed (1), peace (2), present (1).

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Barnes' Notes on the Bible

Psalm 103:1 Bless the Lord, O my soul - The word "bless," as applied to God, **means to praise, implying always a strong affection for him as well as a sense of gratitude. As used with reference to people, the word implies a "wish" that they may be blessed or happy, accompanied often with a prayer that they may be so.** Such is the purport of the "blessing" addressed to a congregation of worshippers. Compare Numbers 6:23-27. **The word "soul" here is equivalent to mind or heart: my mental and moral powers, as capable of understanding and appreciating his favors. The soul of man was "made" to praise and bless God; to enjoy his friendship; to delight in his favor; to contemplate his perfections.** It can never be employed in a more appropriate or a more elevated act than when engaged in his praise.

Jamieson-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary

Psalms 23:1-4. Even in distress, which excites supplication, there is always matter for praising and thanking God (compare Eph 5:20; Php 4:6).

Internet Links

15 common cognitive distortions

1. filtering
2. polarization
3. overgeneralization
4. discounting the positive
5. jumping to conclusions
6. catastrophizing
7. personalization
8. control fallacies
9. fallacy of fairness
10. blaming
11. shoulds
12. emotional reasoning
13. fallacy of change
14. global labeling
15. always being right

Gratitude Bible Verses - <https://www.biblestudytools.com/topical-verses/gratitude-bible-verses/>

What is a blessing according to the Bible?

In the New Testament, there are two primary Greek words translated as "blessing." *Makarios* carries the meaning of happiness that we just looked at. The Beatitudes of [Matthew 5](#) and [Luke 6](#) describe the happy state of those who find their purpose and fulfillment in God. As in the Psalms, the best life is available for those who love and fear God and order their lives according to His Word. [Romans 4:6-8](#) ties this happy blessing to those whose sins are forgiven, for they know the relationship to God has been restored. *Eulogeo* focuses more on good words or the good report that others give of someone and also describes the blessing that we say over our food ([Matthew 26:26](#)). This word is where we get our English word "eulogy," in which we speak well of one who has passed away. [Ephesians 1:3](#) blesses God for all the blessings that He gives us in Christ, and [1](#)

[Peter 3:9](#) instructs us to bless those who mistreat us, because we were called to receive a blessing from God.

[F.I.R.M \(Fellowship of Israel Related Ministries\)](#) – **Thoughts on blessing.**