

Blessed Be Our God Who Has Blessed Us

Franklin Church of Christ
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AM Worship

Introduction:

Have you ever blessed God? In **II Corinthians 1:3**; **Ephesians 1:3** and **I Peter 1:3**, we are told that God is blessed. The point of these passages is not that God holds a state of blessedness. Rather, the point is that God is worthy of blessing. He is worthy to be blessed by us. But what does that mean? The term translated “blessed” in these passages is a compound word that literally means to speak good things. In other words, it refers to praising God or honoring God. Our God deserves to be spoken of in terms of honor and reverence. He deserves nothing less. But does our God only deserve to be honored in word? Our God deserves much more than just words of praise. Examine **I Peter 1:3-5** and learn how truly worthy our God is to be blessed and how that should impact not only our words but our life.

Discussion:

- I. Because God has begotten us to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus (**I Peter 1:3**).
 - A. God has “begotten us again.” This refers to our rebirth. As Jesus taught in **John 3:3, 5**, we must be born again. God accomplishes that when we are baptized into Christ. He works in our baptism (**Colossians 2:12**) to make us new creatures, alive from the dead (**Ephesians 2:1, 10**). This highlights not just our rebirth, but also the fact that we have become God’s children. As Paul said in **Ephesians 1:5**, those in Christ are adopted as sons. Paul also taught in **Romans 8:16-17** that if we are sons, we are heirs with Christ. Of course, this leads us to Peter’s next statement. We must hold off on that for a moment.
 - B. Now that we are children of God we have a living hope. How amazing this blessing from God is. We, who once were without hope (**Ephesians 2:11-13**), have now been drawn near by the blood of Christ and have a living hope. Our hope is described in **Romans 8:23-25**. We are awaiting the finalization of our adoption that will occur when this body is redeemed. We do not see it yet, but we have the earnest expectation and confidence that God will redeem these wretched bodies and resurrect them as glorious incorruptible bodies (**I Corinthians 15:42-44**).
 - C. God has granted us this hope through Jesus’ resurrection. This corresponds with Paul’s teaching in **I Corinthians 15:12-27**. Paul argued that we can be assured of our resurrection because Jesus was resurrected. Our resurrection will occur at His coming. We have a hope in our resurrection, because we see logically that there would be no point in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ if our destiny were simply to die and simply be dead.
- II. Because God has begotten us to a heavenly inheritance (**I Peter 1:4**).
 - A. God has granted us an inheritance. As we learned from **Romans 8:16-17**, since we have been begotten to this living hope, we are heirs with Christ.
 - B. Our inheritance is in heaven. The inheritance is not something in this life. While there are numerous blessings in this life that come from being a child of God, the real blessing for which we are striving is eternal life in heaven (**cf. Matthew 19:29**). Since the inheritance is in heaven and not here, we must not be deterred from it because of what happens here. In fact, a great deal of Peter’s letter is about that very point. Persecutions, oppressions and troubles happen to Christians. But we did not become Christians to receive an easy life. We became Christians to receive eternal life. Do not take your eyes off of that (**Philippians 3:13-14; Colossians 3:1-2**).
 - C. Because our inheritance is in heaven, it is incorruptible, undefiled and will not fade away. How many people would become Christians if they were promised a million dollars? But how good a reward is that? It can be lost and stolen. It can only purchase things that break down. It perishes with the using. And it loses its value when we die. As Jesus taught in **Matthew 6:19-20**, it is not a good reward at all. That is why the reward God offers is so great. Our inheritance cannot be lost or stolen, it is reserved. It does not break down, it is incorruptible and undefiled. It does not perish with the using, it never fades away. When we die, our reward does not lose its value. Rather, it is at death that we fully realize the value of our inheritance.
- III. Because God is guarding us by His power through faith (**I Peter 1:5**).
 - A. These blessings are reserved in heaven for a particular group of people—those who are kept by the power of God through faith.

- B. We are kept by the power of God. That is, God is our guard. He has not left us alone to face the hardships of life. He is keeping us so that what happens to us will not separate us from Him. God is more powerful than anything that happens to us here. This corresponds with Paul's more detailed explanation in **Romans 8:31-39**. Nothing can separate us from God. We must not be distracted from the goal by hardships. Too often we allow hardships to turn us from God, believing He has abandoned us or is punishing us. Rather, our hardships should increase our faith in God, recognizing that He can deliver us. I think of Daniel's three friends, Hananiah, Meshael and Azariah, who knew in the face of seemingly certain death that their God was keeping them and had an inheritance reserved for them and God would deliver them from Nebuchadnezzar, even if He did not deliver them from the fiery furnace (**Daniel 3:16-18**).
- C. God's power works in conjunction with our faith. Nowhere does God promise to maintain the reservation for those who abandon their faith in Him. In fact, this statement is actually the thematic and central point of this passage we are studying. Peter's whole point in the book is to focus Christians on the reward God has promised, His faithfulness to grant the reward and to, therefore, provoke Christians to maintain faithfulness even in the face of hardship and persecution. Everything we have studied in this passage was meant to lead to this point—these blessings are only given to those who maintain their faith. Paul reiterated this concept in **Colossians 1:21-23**. God has reconciled us to Him so we can be presented as righteous, blameless and above reproach. Through this we gain the resurrection of life and the reserved inheritance. But this only happens "***if*** indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel..."

IV. Because He has done all this through His abundant mercy (**I Peter 1:3**).

- A. We have discussed some really great things that God has done for us. But still we have not really seen why He deserves to be blessed by us. God deserves to be blessed because He did all this by His abundant mercy. He did not do it because He owed us. If so, then He would not deserve blessing. He would not even really deserve gratitude (**Romans 4:4**).
- B. When we were born again, confessing our faith in Christ, repenting of our sins and entering Christ in water baptism, we did not earn these blessings. When we continued on, steadfast in the faith and not moved away from hope, we did not become worthy of the blessings God has given. Rather, we were simply trying to do what we should have been doing all along anyway. At that point, we are still no more than unworthy slaves (**Luke 17:10**).
- C. Our God deserves to be blessed, because He has been merciful to us. When you consider the great mercy He has offered through His Son, we learn that He does not deserve to be blessed on Sunday—but every day. He does not deserve to be blessed in congregational worship—but in constant, continued devotion and personal worship. He does not deserve to be blessed in this building—but in our homes, our workplaces, our schools and in every place. He does not deserve to be blessed in word or in tongue—but in deed and in truth.
- D. God deserves whole-hearted devotion, not just good words about Him. We must not be as those about whom Isaiah prophesied, drawing near with our mouths but holding our hearts away from Him, following after manmade ideas (**Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:7-9**). Every choice we make should be made with the desire to please our God, honoring Him and His will above all other choices. This is the blessing God deserves.

Conclusion:

Our God has given us blessings we do not deserve. How much more must we grant Him the blessings He does deserve? Do your words bless God? Do your actions bless God? Do your decisions bless God? Our God deserves to be blessed.