

**Built by the Lord: Fall Family Focus  
Families, Bless God!**

Franklin Church of Christ  
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AM Worship

**Introduction:**

Following the tragic day of 911, bumper stickers and signs sprang up everywhere saying, "God Bless America!" During that time, I saw another bumper sticker that I thought was extremely appropriate and which I liked even better. It said, "America Bless God!" I have no doubt one of our greatest and most necessary pleas is for God to bless our families. We will examine that in the next and final lesson of our focus. However, before we ask God for His further blessing, we, as families, need to learn to bless God. Blessing God means saying good things about Him. As we learned about "Family Worship" we learned we need to spend time praising God. But we may ask why should our families bless God?

**Discussion:**

- I. Because He is God.
  - A. Read **Job 38-41**. Our God is absolutely amazing. He is the one who created the world in six days by speaking it into existence. He is the one who sustains it by the power of His word. He is God and all things are His. His power, His vengeance, His grace, His everything are overwhelming. Therefore we should offer our sacrifices of thanksgiving (**Psalm 50:1-15, 22-23**).
  - B. As the elders and living creatures in **Revelation 4:2-11** stated, our God is worthy to receive glory and honor and power. We ought to give it to Him just because He is worthy. One of the most evocative passages in the scriptures is **Ezekiel 1**. It contains a great deal of strange imagery. Sadly, many people have taken this chapter and stretched it beyond its original intent. The intent, I believe, is to simply get us to **vs. 28**. When Ezekiel saw the image of God on His throne of magnificent cherubim, he fell on his face. How much more should we fall on our faces as families before this great and amazing God?
  
- II. Because He is a loving Father.
  - A. Too many of us view God through the relationship we had with our earthly fathers. If you had a great relationship with your dad, then you probably have no struggle seeing God as a benevolent and loving Father. On the other hand, if your father was flawed, abusive, angry, partial or unloving, you may have a tendency to wonder why anyone would ever want to say anything good about a father, even our Father in heaven.
  - B. I had a great dad. Don't get me wrong, he made mistakes. However, in general, for me, he was great. Therefore, it is easy for me to see God as a loving Father. Perhaps you were not as lucky as me. Perhaps your father disciplined you out of embarrassment or vengeance, therefore you struggle as you look at God as a Father. To be sure, our heavenly Father disciplines us and at times that seems harsh. But His discipline is for our good, training us to enjoy the peaceful fruit of righteousness (**Hebrews 12:7-11**). Perhaps your father could not be bothered by your cares or looked down on what he considered the trivial plights of a child and brushed you off with the words, "Grow up." Our heavenly Father cares for us and wants us to bring our cares and concerns to Him (**I Peter 5:7; Philippians 4:6**). Perhaps your father only loved you when you lived up to certain standards or he showed favoritism to your siblings who lived up to those standards better. Our heavenly Father's love is not given based on how smart we are, how good looking we are, how athletic we are or even how much like Him we are. Our Heavenly Father loves us because He is love (**I John 4:8, 16**). Finally, perhaps your earthly father was self-centered and never responded to your requests with good gifts or perhaps he was a guilt ridden father who lavished you with gifts to make up for how bad he was at everything else. Our heavenly Father is not like that. Rather, He gives us good gifts, gifts that benefit us and refuses to give us gifts that destroy us (**Matthew 7:7-11; cf. II Corinthians 12:7-10**). This leads us to the third reason our families should bless God.
  
- III. Because every good and perfect gift comes down from Him.
  - A. According to **James 1:17**, every good and perfect gift comes down from God. Did the sun shine on you? Bless God (**Matthew 5:45**). Did the rain water your crops? Bless God (**Matthew 5:45**). Were you able to live, move and breathe? Bless God (**Acts 17:28**). Were you able to conduct

any business? Bless God (**James 4:13-15**). Were you able to give generously? Bless God (**I Chronicles 29:14**). On and on the list could go.

- B. Perhaps we should take a cue from our youngest children on this one. They often understand the extent to which God has blessed us better than we do. Little children know to bless God for Jesus, the Bible, their mommy and daddy, their brothers and sisters, their home, their beds, their dolls, their toy cars, their puppies, their kitty cats, their friends—Bobby, Susy, Billy, Mary, Jane, Steve, Emily, Bailey, Cody, the other Bobby, etc., their food, their shoes, their Bible class teachers, their grandma and grandpa and the pretty little red bird they got to see out the dining room window this morning. Children can see this better because they haven't gotten to an age in which God uses them as part of the answers to their prayers (**cf. Ephesians 3:20-21**). I think because God answers our prayer for food, clothing and shelter by letting us work and manage money, we forget to see God's hand in it. We need to bless God like little children because He is involved and every good gift comes from Him. Thus far we haven't even really covered the spiritual blessings. Consider **Ephesians 1:3-14**. He has given us forgiveness, redemption, sanctification, justification, adoption as sons, cleansing and purification. He has provided us with guidance through His word (**Psalms 119:105**). He has provided us with brethren in the church (**I Corinthians 12:18**). As the song says, you should "count your many blessings, name them one by one." Our Father has blessed us with good gifts and He deserves our blessing in return.

IV. Because He established this plan for the family.

- A. In **Genesis 2:18-24**, God established the family. It was His first institution. In this passage, He establishes husbands, wives, parents and by implication, children. Notice his reason for doing so. "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." The family was instituted out of God's goodness to man. God has not created us to be solitary individuals. He has created us with emotional needs that can only be filled by other people. To help fulfill these needs, God created the family.
- B. The guidance and wisdom you received from your parents and grandparents is a blessing from God. The companionship you have received from your spouse is a blessing from God. The joy and legacy you have gained from your children is a blessing from God. All of the good memories you have from this core group comes directly from the hand of God and His establishment of the family at the beginning of time.
- C. Sadly, some will say this is reason to be angry with God. Just as Satan messed up the very first family through Eve's sin and then later through Cain's, we know many families have been wounded and even broken by Satan's influence in the home. Because of that, too many are unable to look at the family as a blessing and a reason to bless God. In that case, may I encourage you to examine the scriptures again with an eye toward God's plan. Give praise to God for His plan and His ideal with the family and allow any shortcomings of your family's past to be another reason you despise the devil and all of his works.

V. Because He made all of this worthwhile by sending His Son to die for us.

- A. Every morning we wake up. We get the kids up, cleaned, fed, dressed and off to school. We drudge off to work. Or we do our work around the home. We try to fit every possible form of responsibility into 24 hours of our day. We fall into bed exhausted, probably stressed because we did not complete our goals for the day. Then we wake up and do it again. The sad thing is, when we back up and take a big picture look at life, the picture doesn't get any better. Consider a few passages from **Ecclesiastes**.
- B. **Ecclesiastes 1:3-4, 10** asks what is the advantage for any of us? One generation comes and then we go and the next one comes. It seems to be an endless cycle. Each of us reaches for something new, but in the end we learn there is nothing new. **Ecclesiastes 2:1-11** shows that all of the possible pursuits under the sun attain the same end—"behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun." **Ecclesiastes 2:18-19** explains that we work hard and build up a legacy and then have to leave it to someone else. Who knows what they will do with it? Keep in mind the wise man who wrote this had a son named Rehoboam. **Ecclesiastes 3:18-20** demonstrates that no matter what we do, the great equalizer, death, will

take us all. If we spend too much time thinking about it, we will all come to the same conclusion the Preacher did in **Ecclesiastes 1:2**, “Vanity of vanities; vanity of vanities! All is vanity.”

- C. As **Psalm 127:1-2** says, we build and we guard. We arise early and retire late. We eat the bread of painful labors. But what is the point? Why do we keep it up? Why not just escape this vain and futile existence? Why? Because God has made what would otherwise be a futile, vain and miserable existence into something all important. He sent His Son to die for us providing us a hope for something beyond this life. When Jesus died to wash our sins away, God made this life more than a futile playground of His bad sense of humor. He turned it into a training ground for our eternal destiny. Consider some parables such as the Parable of the Talents in **Matthew 25:14-30**. Or the Parable of the Unrighteous Steward in **Luke 16:1-12**. I think we make a mistake in believing that heaven is nothing more than eternal worship assembly around the throne of God. While I don't fully understand what it is, I believe these parables demonstrate God has plans for us in eternity. We often hear that this life is not a dress rehearsal, it is the only one we get. However, I sometimes wonder if this life is not exactly that—the dress rehearsal for eternity. Those, who, through the grace of Christ, devote themselves to seeking the kingdom and righteousness of God will be entrusted with true responsibilities and blessings in eternity. With that in view, suddenly what seems monotonous and meaningless is filled with purpose. We are not spinning our wheels. We are not involved in mere busy work. This has meaning, because our God has provided for our eternities through the forgiveness of His Son.
- D. Sadly, too many of us are focused on the physical and material blessings. I remember one time discussing the question with my family about what God has done for us that warrants us serving Him. We began by listing things like health, house, family, food, clothing and shelter. We pointed out that He didn't just bless us with these things, but He blessed with nice things. I was then reminded of something I had recently read that pointed to Job. In **Job 1-2**, Satan, with God's express permission, removed all of those things we just listed. Job lost his house, his family, his source of income, his food, etc. His only remaining family member turned on him. His friends came and ceased to be friendly. Yet through it all, despite how upset he was with God, even perhaps overstepping the bounds or propriety in questioning God, Job maintained his faith and service to God. Why? **Job 19:25** says, “As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth.” Job understood the most important thing that God did for him was not maintain a hedge of material blessing about him (**cf. Job 1:10**). The most important thing was redemption. God was Job's savior, spiritually. No matter our material blessings. God has already accomplished this for His children. He is our Redeemer. No matter the house, health or heirs He grants us, He has provided us with sanctification, justification and redemption through the blood of His Son. Not only that, He has accomplished all those things for our families—our spouses, our children and our grandchildren, if we raise them to seek first God's kingdom and righteousness. For that, above all else, He deserves blessing from us.

### **Conclusion:**

Certainly, we want to be blessed by God. However, the reality is God has blessed us. Now, more than us, He is the one who deserves blessing. Our families must learn to bless and praise God—because He is God, because He is a loving Father, because every good and perfect gift comes from Him, because He established the family and because He made all of this worthwhile by sending His Son to die for us. Let us all bless God in our families.