Franklin Church of Christ
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AM Assembly

# How to Get Blessed

**Introduction:**

Do you want to be blessed? Do you ever look around at all the other people and see their wealth, health, spirituality, togetherness and think how lucky they are? Do you ever wish you could be blessed like everyone else? I know I feel that way sometimes. I must have been feeling that way this week as I read **Luke 11:27-28** because these two verses struck me in a way I had never seen them before. Jesus had been performing miracles, casting out demons and teaching. While He taught, a woman in the crowd spoke up, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!" (ESV). What exactly is this woman saying? She is actually not talking as much about Mary, Jesus' mother, as she is herself. What she is really saying is, "I wish I had a Son like You. Your mother is so lucky. I wish I could have been that lucky." Who knows but perhaps in her mind she had thoughts like, "You should just see the bum of a son that I got stuck with." This is not just a matter of fact statement about Mary, it was a wish about the woman's own life. Let's consider this statement and Jesus' response and see what lessons we can learn about being blessed.

**Discussion:**

I. Our tendencies as represented in **Luke 11:27**.

A. The woman who spoke up while Jesus was teaching represents the natural tendencies we have as we consider being blessed. I have to be careful here, because I don't want to make too blanket of a statement. Perhaps you have never felt like this woman did. I know I have and I tend to believe many others have as well. Examine the tendencies represented by this statement and own them if they are yours.

B. The four tendencies this woman represents.

1. *We tend to envy everyone else's blessings*. Just think about this for a moment. This woman has witnessed the miracles of Jesus. She has heard him teach. Of all the things that could occupy her mind, what rose to the top. "Look at how blessed your mom was, Jesus, to have you as a son." Do we sometimes have that tendency? Do we envy the houses, cars, families, jobs, abilities of others?
2. *We tend to fixate on the blessings we didn't get*. This is the other side of envying the blessings of others. After all, this woman wouldn't have been envious if she had been Jesus' mother or if she had a son she thought was better than Jesus.
3. *We tend to think being blessed is a matter of being lucky*. What did this woman think about when she considered the blessing? "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you were nursed." That is such a strange statement. And yet, notice the emphasis. The emphasis is not really on anything that Mary controlled. Think about this mothers, did you choose the children that you bore in your womb and that you had to feed? Of course not. You just bore and fed the children you were given. Do you see how this is a statement not just about being blessed but being lucky. Do we sometimes have that tendency when we see the blessings of others? They are so lucky to have that job, house, car, family, education, health, etc. We must not confuse being blessed with being lucky.
4. *We tend to think we're just unlucky*. This is the other side seeing being blessed as a matter of being lucky. Since we are envious, fixating on the blessings we haven't received and think it is largely a matter of luck, we think we must be unlucky. Therefore we stew in our own resentments, bitterness and depression thinking nothing will ever go right for us because we are so unlucky.

II. Jesus' response in **Luke 11:28**.

A. For the longest time, I had read this passage as just a simple statement about hearing God's word. I never really saw it as a corrective statement by which Jesus was trying to set this woman on the right path. But that is exactly what He is doing. He saw all the human tendencies that would keep this woman from being blessed and trying to get her on a path of blessing.

B. Essentially, His statement corrected the woman in three ways.

1. *You can be blessed*. Not everyone could bear Jesus in their womb or nurse Him at their breasts. That was Mary. Yes, that was a blessing, but it was not the greatest blessing. Who

did Jesus say could receive the greatest blessing? Those who hear God's word and keep it. The great thing is all of us can do this. This is not reserved for the lucky few. Even the woman crying out to Jesus could do this. She had been listening to His teaching, all she had to do now was follow it. You may have tendency to think you are unlucky and therefore can't be blessed. Jesus corrects that. You can be blessed.

2. *But you have to work for it*. This is the troubling part of this. Because we have a tendency to think that blessing comes from luck, we want to sit back and wait on it to happen. Jesus points out that blessing comes to those who work for it. They actually have to hear the word of God. They have to hunt it down and open their ears. Then they actually have to do what it says. Blessing doesn't come to the lucky, it comes to the working. Think about it, I was not blessed with a great garden this year. Some of you may have been. Do you know why? Because I didn't work at it and you did.
3. *Because blessing comes to those who obey God*. This is really the summation of Jesus' statement. Being blessed is not about winning the lottery of life. It is about submitting to God so that He will bless us. As **James 4:8** says, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you" (ESV).

III. Lessons for us today if we want God's blessing in our lives.

A. Three things we must quit if we want God's blessing in our lives.

1. *We must quit waiting for a lucky break*. The woman was waiting for a lucky break. Maybe she would be lucky enough to have a great son too. If we are waiting for lucky breaks, even when we get them we will squander them. We must quit waiting for the lucky break. Consider the supposed lucky break of Mary. **Luke 1:26-38** reveals the night Mary learned she would bare and nurse Jesus. The angel said she had found favor with God (reminiscent of Noah who found favor in the eyes of the Lord). Her last statement drives home this point. She said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (**Luke 1:38**; ESV). Blessing doesn't come to the lucky. It comes to those who obey God. So quit waiting around for your lucky break.
2. *We must quit comparing ourselves to others*. Do you remember Peter in **John 21:15-22**? Jesus had just displayed great love to Peter, forgiving him for his denials, re-enfolding him and providing him work in the kingdom. He had let Peter know that the promise he had made but been to weak to fulfill would happen. He letter Peter know that He would grow strong enough to actually die for Jesus as he promised. What did Peter think about? "Lord, what about this man?"—presumably asking about John. Jesus essentially responded that the blessings the Lord had in store for John were John's and the blessings He had in store for Peter were Peter's. Jesus told Peter to quit worrying about John's blessings. Quit comparing. If we really want to enjoy God's blessings, we need to follow this. The woman was comparing herself to Mary and therefore couldn't see the potential for blessing in her own life. If we want God's blessing, we have to quit comparing ourselves to others.
3. *We must quit grumbling and whining*. **Philippians 2:14** says we must do all things without grumbling or complaining. Whether this woman realized it or not, her statement was not a great spiritual proclamation. It was actually a form of whining and complaining about her own lot in life. Let me ask you this. Have you ever been in a bad way and whining or grumbling about it ever changed anything. As I was writing this point into my outline, it was raining outside. How unlucky that was for me. Guess how much my whining and complaining did to change that. Not a thing. Grumbling and whining doesn't help. It merely saps our energy and focuses us on the negative, depressing us. If we really want God's blessing, we need to quit our grumbling and whining.

B. Three things we must start if we want God's blessing in our lives.

1. *We must start seeing the blessing in the present moment*. Think about Jesus' statement to the woman again. She had focused on something that happened to someone else in the past. Jesus' statement actually focused on something that was happening right then. She interrupted Jesus while He was teaching. She was so focused on somebody else's blessing she wasn't even paying attention to the blessing she was experiencing right then. She was listening to Jesus teach. She was hearing the word of God right then. All she needed to do

to be blessed was pay attention, quit interrupting and start doing what she heard. We need first to remember that God really does want to bless us (**Matthew 7:7-11**). He is not wanting to withhold from us. Further, we need to recognize the blessings He is giving us even now (cf. **Matthew 5:45**). Finally, we need to remember that He works everything out for our good or for our blessing when we love Him (**Romans 8:28**).

2. *We must start studying*. Jesus said the blessed ones are those who hear the word of God. The lesson from that is obvious. We had better get into the Word and start studying. Do not lose sight of this. Jesus did not say, "Blessed are those who hear the word of Oprah Winfrey, Dr. Phil, John Maxwell, Ken Blanchard, Jack Canfield, Billy Graham…" He said, "Blessed are those who hear the word of God." I'm not saying those other people don't say good things. I like some of them. The point is for all the good we might get out of their words, we get real blessing from God's Word. As Paul said in **Acts 20:32**, we are blessed by the Word because that will produce salvation. Let me make something very clear here. I hope you do not see this as some kind of health and wealth gospel. I truly believe when we spend our time in God's word our lives will look better. Our jobs will better, our health will be better, our finances will be better, our families will be better. However, that is a general rule, not an absolute statement. Job stands out as a great reminder that sometimes, even when we do everything right, things still go wrong. We need to remember that the real blessing is that ultimate and eternal salvation. Don't give up on that blessing just because God isn't giving you other blessings along the way.
3. *We must start working*. Jesus not only said we needed to hear the word of God but we also needed to keep it. Blessing takes more than listening to sermons and going to Bible classes. It takes more than having a daily Bible reading plan. We actually have to let God's word sink into our hearts and start doing it. That takes work. Remember what Paul said in **II Timothy 2:15**, we need to be workmen who are accurately using the Scriptures. The fact is the Bible is filled with instruction for us to receive God's blessing. The question is just whether or not we will do what it says. For instance, **Matthew 6:33** says if we seek first God's kingdom and righteousness, God will add to us the blessing of caring for our physical needs. The question is not will God bless us, the question is will we do what God has said in order to receive the blessing. If we want God's blessing, we must start working.

**Conclusion:**

Do you want to get blessed? Then get after it. God wants to bless you, but He doesn't bless people on the lottery system. He blesses us when we get up off our backsides, quit our envying and complaining and start doing what He says. Start that and in a few years you will look back and be amazed at the blessing you have received.