

Real Blessings and Family Dysfunction

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Please consider donating to this work in the San Francisco Bay Area online at ChristChurchEastBay.org. Good morning. I am Abigail Todd and I am part of CC Kids.

Today's scripture reading is from the book of Genesis, chapter 25, verses 21 to 23, and chapter 27, verses 1 to 4, and 15 to 34, as printed in the liturgy.

A reading from the book of Genesis. Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was childless. The Lord answered his prayer and his wife Rebecca became pregnant.

The babies jostled each other within her and she said, why is this happening to me? So she went to inquire of the Lord. The Lord said to her, two nations are in your womb and two peoples from within you will be separated.

[1 : 05] One people will be stronger than the other and the older will serve the younger. When Isaac was old and his eyes were so weak he could no longer see, he called for Esau, his older son, and said to him, my son.

Here I am, he answered. Isaac said, I am now an old man and don't know the day of my death. Now then, get your equipment, your quiver and bow, and go out to the open country to hunt some wild game for me.

Prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat so that I may give you my blessing before I die. Then Rebecca took the best clothes of Esau, her older son, which she had in the house, and put them on her younger son Jacob.

She also covered his hands in the smooth part of his neck with goat skins. Then she handed to her son Jacob the tasty food and bread she had made. He went to his father and said, my father.

Yes, my son, he answered. Who is it? Jacob said to his father, I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing.

[2 : 06] Isaac asked his son, how did you find it so quickly, my son? The Lord your God gave me success, he replied. Then Isaac said to Jacob, come near so I can touch you, my son, to know whether you are really my son Esau or not.

Jacob went close to his father Isaac, who touched him and said, the voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau. He did not recognize him, for his hands were hairy like those of his brother Esau.

So he proceeded to bless him. Are you really my son Esau, he asked. I am, he replied. Then he said, my son, bring me some of your game to eat so that I may give you my blessing.

Jacob brought it to him and he ate, and he brought some wine and he drank. Then his father Isaac said to him, come here, my son, and kiss me. So he went to him and kissed him.

When Isaac caught the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, ah, the smell of my son is the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed. May God give you heaven's dew and earth's richness, an abundance of grain and new wine.

[3 : 06] May nations serve you and peoples bow down to you. Be lord of your brothers and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed. After Isaac finished blessing him and Jacob had scarcely left his father's presence, his brother Esau came in from hunting.

He too prepared some tasty food and brought it to his father. Then he said to him, my father, please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing. His father Isaac said to

him, who are you?

I'm your son, he answered, your firstborn Esau. Isaac trembled violently and said, who was it then that hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it just before you came and I blessed him and indeed he will be blessed.

When Esau heard his father's words, he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, bless me, me too, my father. The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.

All right. What a wonderful recitation from Psalm 23. And what a wonderful reading from Genesis 27. I don't know if you have read many Russian novels, but Leo Tolstoy was a Russian novelist and he wrote a novel called Anna Karenina.

[4 : 22] And the opening of that novel, the very first sentence, he says, Happy families are all alike. Every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way.

If you came here today and you're feeling a little discouraged about your family, the message of Genesis 27 is cheer up because things could be a whole lot worse.

Okay. The holy family we meet here is actually quite unholy and therefore quite unhappy. And that's crazy because if you're familiar with Genesis, you go to Genesis 24, what you find there is one of the first and best love stories in all of world literature.

It's a story about how Isaac and Rebecca became husband and wife. And then we heard a little bit in Genesis 25 there where Rebecca, his wife, is barren.

She's struggling with infertility for 20 years. And Isaac prays for her for 20 years. And it says that Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife and the Lord answered his prayer.

[5 : 35] So it's an amazing love story. But by the time you get to Genesis 27, they're not speaking to one another. They are at cross purposes with each other.

This marriage is in trouble. And so if you're reading the story, you're thinking to yourself, well, what happened to this marriage made in heaven? What happened to the spiritual union?

What happened to their covenantal intimacy? Why are they now prayerless? They're not even talking to God. Why are they so dysfunctional?

Why are they so uncommunicative? And by the way, aren't these supposed to be God's chosen people? Aren't they supposed to be carrying within themselves the very promises of God and the blessings of God on Abraham to all the nations of the world?

Why are they being such poor spouses and partners to each other in this story? And what's more, how did they become such terrible parents to their kids?

[6 : 41] Now, when we planned our parenting class for today, we did not look ahead at the scripture lesson. But God knows. God has a sense of humor.

And the story is, of course, much deeper than this. But parents, don't show favoritism to your kids. Don't compare them with each other.

Don't say, hey, this is actually my kid and that's your kid. Don't have divided loyalties. And of course, if you get nothing else from today, it's fine to dress your kid up on Halloween.

But please, do not go to the level of Genesis 27 and dress up your favorite kid in order to deceive your spouse that they're actually blessing their favorite kid.

I say this because the Bible is actually quite shocking. We come to it with certain expectations. We come to the Bible thinking it's going to give us some sort of spiritual uplift, thinking that the Bible is going to give us some moral inspiration, maybe a little chicken soup for the soul.

[7 : 47] And we very quickly begin to realize that the Bible is this soap opera of epic proportions. Right? It's a bizarre reality TV drama. And in one episode after another, we witness this just tragic downward spiral of human failure.

And today's story is actually quite bleak. There's jealousy. There's power struggles. There's deception. There's betrayal. It's like a Russian novel. And it basically ends with everyone falling apart, trembling violently, crying bitterly.

Everybody feeling spiritually uplifted so far? All right. Awesome. So what we're going to talk about is we're going to talk about the power of God's blessing and the dysfunction of God's family and the triumph of God's grace.

The power of God's blessing, the dysfunction of God's family, and the triumph of God's grace. First of all, the power of God's blessing. The word bless or blessing in Genesis 22 or 27 occurs many times.

It occurs 22 times. It's a key word in this text. And you hear it there in verse 4 of Genesis 27 where Isaac says to Esau, he says, prepare me the kind of tasty food I like and bring it to me to eat so that I may give you my blessing before I die.

[9:14] And then down in verse 19, it says, What does that word blessing mean?

It's a religious-sounding word. We say a blessing at a meal. We say bless you when you sneeze. We say I'm feeling so blessed when life is going well.

We say, you know, bless you or bless in the south. We say bless your heart. But we post pictures on Instagram of our recent vacation, and we say hashtag blessed.

But what does the word even mean? It's that the English word is just so vague, actually. It's so weak and so shallow that we need to go back to Genesis 1 where the story of the Bible begins with this God who brings life out of the darkness, and he's ordering this beautiful world, and he gives the first blessing in the Bible.

And he blesses the animals that he's made. And what does he say to them? He says, Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth.

[10:22] Fill the sea. Fill the sky. So blessing is about flourishing. It's about the multiplication of life. Blessing is about God sharing his life-producing ability with others.

And we read in Genesis 1-2 that God then blesses humans, and he says, I'm making you in my image. You're gonna be fruitful and multiply with life, and you're to rule and steward over the blessing that I've given to this flourishing world.

And of course, as we've been tracking the story, Genesis 3, pretty immediately, humanity says, Well, no, we don't want the blessing that way. We want the blessing this way. We want the blessing on our terms. And then the world begins to fall apart.

Fast forward to Genesis 12. I think we have a slide on this where God chooses one couple. He blesses Abraham and Sarah. He says, You're gonna have a huge family. You're gonna be fruitful. You're gonna multiply with life. And through you, my blessing of spiritual life is gonna go out to all the nations. And this is God's plan.

[11:30] This is God's way that he's going to reverse the curse on humanity through this one family. That the blessing of spiritual life on Abraham and Sarah is the thing that's driving the drama of the book of Genesis.

And really, it's the thing that's driving the drama of the whole Bible. You just can't get the Bible unless you get that. And so our story today says, you know, okay, without God's blessing of life, there's no hope for this world that's stuck in sin and death.

And right now, this blessing moving from one generation to the next generation, it really hangs in the balance. Here you have Isaac, the son of Abraham.

Isaac, the son of promise, the son of the covenant, the son of blessing. And he has a wonderful, believing wife, but they have no kids. And in Genesis 25, 21, his wife Rebecca has been barren for 20 years.

That's a problem. How's the blessing going to go on to the next generation? So Isaac prays to the Lord on her behalf. He intercedes for her. And the Lord uses the means of his prayer to bless her with life.

[12:49] And he blesses her not just with one kid, but with two kids in her womb. And the question is, which of those sons is going to inherit the blessing? And that's the question that's driving the entire plot line.

You with me so far? Now, I want to argue, and I think the text, the narrator argues, that even though Isaac, Rebecca, Esau, and Jacob are wrong in the way that they give and receive this blessing of life, this divine blessing of life, and we'll get to that in a moment, they are absolutely right in their desire to have it.

They're absolutely right because there's no greater treasure in the world than this divine blessing of life on Abraham because through him and through his descendants, God has said salvation is going to come to the whole world.

And what's surprising in this text is that Isaac intends to pass this blessing on to Esau, but he actually gives it to Jacob instead. And you may be wondering to yourself, like I was wondering when I read it, why didn't Isaac just take it back?

Anybody wondering that? Why didn't he just say, Jacob, you scoundrel, you're not even my favorite child. Jacob, you're a cheater and you're a deceiver and you're canceled, right?

[14 : 06] I take it back. Well, I don't know about you, but my older brother taught me when I was a kid, there are no takebacks, right?

There are no do-overs. That got pounded into the old brain here. And we all know that since childhood, but also, it's just not how blessings work. You know it from your own story. You know it if you've gone to counseling or talked to your therapist that the words people say to us, whether they're words of blessing or they're words of cursing, they have power, don't they? They stick in our heads, they get lodged in our hearts, they work their way into the innermost parts of our being, and those words of blessing or those words of cursing, they shape our lives. They form our narratives and our beliefs about ourselves in this world. They form our thoughts and our feelings. They shape our sense of identity and belonging and meaning and purpose in the world.

[15 : 06] And so you can't just take them back. Many people, I've seen many people spend a good portion of their lives seeking a blessing that they wanted from a parent but they never got.

And I've also seen many, many people trying to get over words of cursing that lodged inside of them like shrapnel that's sort of creeping up to their heart. And what we should have learned as kids and what we should have said to each other as kids is sticks and stones may break my bones but words can make or break my very soul.

Right? Words have deep power. It's not just as simple as take it back. And if that's the way it is with our everyday words and our offhanded comments, our simple words of affirmation or condemnation, our simple encouragement or criticism, then how much more so with this divine supernatural blessing and this end of life last will and testament moment with the son of Abraham speaking formal words, speaking legal and binding words, passing on not just his parental and personal blessing but passing on the life-giving blessing of Almighty God.

Can't just take it back. So how does this apply to our lives? Well, I just want to say that every single one of you and every person you meet is made for God's blessing and you're never going to be content without it.

The book of Ecclesiastes has a wonderful verse. In Ecclesiastes 3.11 it says, God has set eternity in the human heart. St. Augustine famously said, O Lord, you've made us for yourself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in you.

[17 : 06] And what Ecclesiastes and what Augustine is saying is, look, you have a God-shaped eternity-sized hole in your heart and only a God-shaped eternity-sized blessing is going to fill it.

And we see people, maybe you're one of these people, you try to find the blessing in the approval of your parents. You try to find the blessing in the arms of a lover.

You try to find the blessing in fancy degrees from elite universities, from the security of a big bank account, from the satisfaction of a successful career. You try to find the blessing in the comfort of food or drink.

And it's kind of elusive, right? I've been thinking about this a lot as our daughter is a senior in high school and she's applying to colleges, applying for scholarships, and that means that we've been receiving a ton of mail over this past year, an incredible amount of mail from admissions offices that are recruiting her to apply.

And these glossy mailers are making massive promises to my daughter about how her life is going to change for the better, how her life is going to improve dramatically should this particular school decide to confer upon her the blessing of acceptance.

[18 : 33] Right? And everything hangs on getting accepted, getting in. If the right people say you're the right person and you can come to this institution, you'll be blessed.

And this is very important because where you go is who you're going to be, right? Your degree, the brand, the friends, the network, the job prospects, your earning potential, we have the ability to give you the blessing.

C.S. Lewis was a professor at the University of Oxford and Cambridge and he gave a lecture called The Inner Ring, capital I, capital R, Inner Ring.

And this is a lengthy quote but I think it's worth giving to you. He says, I believe that in all men's lives at certain periods and in many men's lives at all periods between infancy and extreme old age, one of the most dominant elements is the desire to be inside the local ring and the terror of being left outside.

Think of our longing to enter the inner ring, our anguish when we are excluded and the kind of pleasure we feel when we get in. The desire is one of the great permanent mainsprings of human action.

[19 : 55] It is one of the factors which go to make up the world as we know it, this whole pell-mell of struggle, competition, confusion, graft, disappointment, and advertisement and if it is one of the permanent mainsprings then you may be quite sure of this.

Unless you take measures to prevent it, this desire is going to be one of the chief motives of your life from the first day on which you enter your profession until the day when you are too old to care. Whether by pining or moping outside rings that you can never enter or by passing triumphantly further and further in, one way or the other you will be an inner ringer.

The quest of the inner ring will break your hearts unless you break it. To a young person just entering adult life the world seems full of insides, full of delightful intimacies and confidentialities and he desires to enter them but if he follows that desire he will reach no inside that is worth reaching.

The true road lies in quite another direction. See Lewis thought quite a lot about where does the blessing lie? Right?

[21 : 07] Does it lie in that inner ring out there? And he personally found that the only inside worth reaching the only inner ring worth being a part of was entering into the power of God's blessing.

Stepping into the inner ring of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit which Jesus calls eternal life or abundant life or divine life. And I just want you to know that if you don't come into the power of God's blessing and you don't let the power of God's blessing come into you, you will spend the rest of your life looking for it in inner rings that make really big claims and really big promises but can never actually give you the thing.

So that's the power of God's blessing. And I want to talk for a little bit about now the dysfunction of God's family because now hopefully we see the need for this divine blessing of spiritual life and why this family was so right to desire it and to seek it but I also want us to look at all the wrong ways that they sought to give it and to receive it.

And I want to walk through each family member and show you how they're all wrong though some of them are relatively less wrong than others. Okay, you tracking with me?

Basically, if you want your family to be miserable, if you want our church to be miserable, be like these people. Okay? In this patriarchal context, Isaac bears the most responsibility as the leader of the family.

[22 : 50] You can quibble with that in your modern feminist ways but that's just the world that we're talking about. And he's the heir of the promises and the covenant with Abraham.

And so the question is, is this old and blind man merely the victim of Rebekah's ruse and her deception or is there something more going on in the story? And also in the ancient Near East, Esau bears big time responsibility as the firstborn son and again, you might not like that structure but that's what it is.

And the question is, is Esau, this manly man, this hunter dude, is he merely the victim of Jacob's lies and trickery or is there something deeper going on?

And I want to say that like life, this story is way more complex than all the headlines. Because if you look at verse four, Isaac says to Esau, he says, prepare me the kind of tasty food, the kind of delicious food that I like and bring it to me to eat so that I may give you my blessing before I die. Basically, Isaac had been a man of God, he had been this person who was persistent in prayer and was known for his spirituality but at this point in his life, he's known less for his spirituality and more for his sensuality.

[24 : 08] He's controlled by his mouth, he's controlled by his stomach and somehow his appetite for meat has become more powerful than his theology.

And he's become basically like Esau, if you know the story in Genesis 25, Esau sold his birthright for a pot of lentil stew. And so both Isaac and Esau surrender something that's eternally precious, something that is a precious long-term good in order to immediately satisfy their appetites.

And what's more, if you look at Genesis 24 to 28, it's very clear that Abraham and Sarah went to great lengths to find Isaac a wife who shared their spiritual vision, shared their values, shared their training and their faith in the Lord.

But Isaac seems to have not done that for Esau and Esau goes out and he marries a Canaanite wife, basically a wife who doesn't believe anything about the God of Israel, Yahweh, Elohim. He not only marries one Canaanite wife, he marries two Canaanite wives who basically just care nothing about God, nothing about the promises of God, the covenant of God. They don't care anything about what we read about in Genesis 18-19 where it says, Abraham, you're to direct your children and your family to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just.

[25 : 38] Esau doesn't care about that. These women don't care about that. And what I want us to see is that Isaac, though he started strong, he ends weak and he ends passive.

And his physical blindness is a sign of his spiritual blindness. His eyes can't recognize God's leading because he should have seen that Esau was actually spiritually unsuitable, that Esau was actually an unbeliever.

He despised the Lord. He despised his family. He despised his role. He despised his birthright. He held it all in contempt. He said, it's completely worthless to me. I'd rather have this pot of stew. And what's worse is that Isaac also knows this word of the Lord from Genesis 25, verse 23.

This word that came to Rebekah where the Lord said, the older will serve the younger and my will is for the blessing to bypass the older one and for the younger one to be stronger and for the younger one to be the ruler.

That God in his sovereign freedom said, I want to reverse and I want to turn upside down the norms of culture. Isaac knew that but he stubbornly resisted that clear word of the Lord and said, well that's not how I want to do it.

[26 : 55] And so like Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 who loved that forbidden fruit more than they loved trusting and obeying God. And like Esau in Genesis 25 who loved that pot of stew more than he loved his spiritual birthright.

In this story Isaac loves barbecue more than he loves God. And the question for us is do you ever resist the Lord like this?

Do you ever resist the Lord's word and his will and his way for you like this? Like Isaac and Esau do you ever put your appetite before principle? Do you ever put self-indulgence before the just thing and the right thing?

Do you ever put immediate satisfaction before long-term spiritual values? Have you ever found yourself in a place where you're just unwilling to submit to the plans of God when they differ from your own desires?

Isaac and his love for a comfortable life, Isaac and his love for good food has put him in this precarious place where he's not only neglecting his parental duties but he's also become spiritually indifferent to pleasing the Lord.

[28 : 18] And that's a very dangerous place to be. Just so you know, passing on the blessing was meant to be a public affair. Okay? You're supposed to call your whole community together, get your whole extended family, all your kids and your spouse and you're to have this moment.

But Isaac says, no, I'm going to conspire to have this private clandestine meeting with only one son and I'm not going to share it with my wife. Now, guys, I'm still figuring some stuff out about marriage.

But here's one thing I do know. Do not keep secrets from your wife. Ladies, can I get an amen on that? Okay. Now, ladies, if you see your husband trying to thwart God's plan that he's given in his word, what should you do?

Should you dress up your favorite child like it's Halloween and act like a con artist? Should you pull up a heist on your husband through trickery and manipulation and deceit and domination?

Your husband definitely should not be keeping secrets from you. He definitely should not be favoring your most rebellious child and he should not be flat out refusing to obey the Lord.

[29 : 34] But what should you do? You should go talk to him. You should go have a conversation with him. You should go and say, honey, I'd like to discuss a spiritual matter that's very important to me.

And again, I'm still figuring some stuff out about marriage but here's one thing I do know is ladies, your husband cannot read your mind. Amen? And here's the other thing, if he could read your mind, he still won't get it.

You're going to have to spell it out for him and then explain that and then give a further explanation of that. Like he's, we're slow. And what I want you to see is that Rebecca's spiritual values are

actually sound.

I think she's the most sound person spiritually in the story. Right? She goes to inquire of the Lord. She desires to be faithful to God's word.

She treasures the birthright and the blessing. She wants God's will to be done. All of those are good and right things. Her spiritual values are sound but her methods are deplorable.

[30 : 42] And she goes about trying to pass on God's blessing in all the wrong ways. as if the right ends justify wrong means. And basically instead of dropping to her knees in prayer or instead of going to her husband and saying can we have a conversation?

Both of which would have been the faithful and commendable thing to do. Rebecca says to herself desperate times call for desperate measures. And I'm going to do a righteous thing in a very unrighteous way.

And so she reacts to Isaac's deceitful behavior and his failure to be the kind of spiritually discerning person that he was supposed to be. And she launches this counter conspiracy perpetuating a more hurtful ruse that exploits her husband's weaknesses his blindness his appetite and Jacob goes along with his mom not only deceiving his father but look in verse 19 it says Jacob said to his father I am Esau your firstborn I've done as you told me please sit up and eat some of my game so that you may give me your blessing and Isaac asked his son how did you find it so quickly my son the Lord your God gave me success he replied you ever have you have you ever done it's a dangerous thing to be a spiritual person to use the name of God to use the things of God actually to further your own personal interests and my point is this that if you look hard enough into the mirror of Genesis 27 and you don't see something of yourself reflected back to you if you can't identify with the failings of this holy family then you might be as blind as

Isaac was blind because at times we fall as badly as this and I can say that now I couldn't say that as a young pastor but I've been a pastor 20 years at times we fall as badly as this and if I had time I'd show you all the spiritual and relational dysfunctions that catch up with this family in the end all the ways they reap what they sow and they're paying just dearly we'll see it as we go through the story they're experiencing all the consequences of just going against God's moral law and you might be saying well pastor why are you trying so hard to discourage us today and I'm actually trying to do the exact opposite I'm trying to encourage you because if God can bring about salvation in a context of such unprincipled behavior by literally every fallible member of the covenant family the chosen people of

God each one of them self-centeredly seeking their own interest all of them acting out of impure motives and misdirected intentions their virtues almost always serving as vices if that's what God can do here then perhaps in his mercy and grace he can bring about salvation in our own lives as well right if God can overcome their weaknesses and if he can use them warts and all then perhaps he can use me perhaps he can overcome your messiness perhaps he can use us as well so that's why I like to end talking about the triumph of God's grace we talked about the power of God's blessing and the dysfunction of God's family but let's talk about the triumph of God's grace you know what's outrageous in this story it's meant to strike us as outrageous is that the power of God's blessing is almost squandered it's almost lost because

[34 : 42] God's people are so dysfunctional that's outrageous and the second thing that's outrageous is that God's intentions to bless his elect God's intentions to bless Jacob are actually forwarded by the most underhanded tactics the most Machiavellian manipulation you can imagine I don't even know how this is in the Bible it's crazy but actually the most outrageous thing of all is that God consistently brings his scandalous intervening grace into the lives of people who do not deserve it into the lives of people who aren't even really looking for it and into the lives of people who are perpetually resisting it and even after they've gotten it they don't even appreciate it what this story tells us is that God's grace cannot be silenced by conflict or alienation nor can it be chased away by exploitation and deceit and in spite of all this family's machinations and mischief the divine purpose stands and despite all the appalling misdeeds of fallen infallible men and women like us

God's gracious blessing to give life God's sovereign election of his people continues on and his purposes ultimately are fulfilled and this is one thing we see over and over in the book of Genesis is that this God of grace he loves to draw straight lines with crooked sticks in Genesis 50 the very end of the book one of the sons of Jacob his name is Joseph he says this he says what you intended for harm and evil God intended for good and the saving of many lives if the kingdom of God coming

into this world dependent on us and our faithfulness it would never happen but the good news is that the kingdom of God is totally and completely dependent on God's sovereign grace God's gracious blessing of life that overrides all absolutely all of our miserable failures and so the question as we conclude is how can you get the blessing of

God's triumphant grace in your life how does it become operative in your life well it's interesting when you turn the gospel of John Jesus is called the only begotten son of God he's the eternally beloved son of the father who's been forever in the state of living under the blessing of the father and then you go to the end of the gospel and it says that Jesus gave up that blessing by taking on not just human flesh but by dying on the cross now why would Jesus give up his blessing of being the eternally begotten and beloved son of the father the answer is because he wanted you to have it the apostle Paul says in Galatians 3 he says Jesus redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us for it is written curse it as everyone who is hanged on a tree and he took on that curse

Paul says so that the blessing given to Abraham might come to us through Jesus Christ see on the cross Jesus is in a way Jesus is dressing up like us and he's getting the curse that we deserved so that when we believe in him we get the blessing that he deserved and he came to give you all of the blessing that's his all the blessing all the inheritance of being the first born son so when you look at that blessing in verse 28 where it says in Genesis 27 28 may God give you the of heaven's dew and of earth's richness an abundance of grain and new wine may nations serve you and peoples bow down to you be lord over your brothers and may the sons of your mother bow down to you may those who curse you be cursed and those who bless you be blessed surrounded by all of his loyal and adoring subjects and so the question as we come to this table of abundant grain and new wine this royal feast that's set before us is

Jesus Christ resurrected from the dead is he your king and through Jesus have you had lavished upon you the love of God the father and in Jesus Christ have you had put into you the presence and the power of the Holy Spirit of God and has he invited you to come and feast with him around this table of abundance this table of victory because if that's you no matter how dysfunctional you are no matter how undeserving you are you're part of the nations that God is gathering together in this blessing that are serving Jesus and bowing down to Jesus and blessing Jesus and that means that you're living under the power of God's blessing and that means that the triumph of God's grace is going to be true for you so friends let's come to this table expectant that as we come we're children of the blessing that here we get heaven's dew and earth's richness that here we get an abundance of grain and new wine here we get to sit down with the king of kings and the lord of lords around whom all the nations are bowing down and will one day bow down and say you are the

[41 : 02] Lord this is where the blessing! In the name of the Father Son and Holy Spirit Amen