

# Getting God's Blessings

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 24 May 2026

Preacher: Joshua Winters

[ 0 : 00 ] Well, last Sunday we heard about how Jesus was falsely accused by the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. Jesus had driven out a demon from a possessed man and they accused him of doing it by the power of Satan.

And we heard Jesus respond to that with great wisdom. He showed very clearly that that was not only false but absurd.

And he reminded them, he told them, he declared to them that he drives out demons by the power of God. And that it's evidence that the kingdom of God is now breaking into the world.

Jesus also made it clear that he had far more knowledge of how fallen angels think and behave and scheme than we do.

Well, on the heels of that, suddenly a woman in the crowd shouts to Jesus.

[ 1 : 06 ] I'm reading from Luke chapter 11 verse 27. As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.

Now, I don't know about you, but I can't help but chuckle at this. We could go with even more literal translation. Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts at which you nursed.

Of course, it's a sort of poetic way of speaking where a person uses the parts to refer to the whole. In this case, it's the mothering parts of the body to refer to the whole, the mother.

And so the meaning is captured well by that first one we looked at. Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.

What makes me laugh about this is that it's just a funny thing to say. It's a funny thing to shout out in this moment, especially in public.

[ 2 : 15 ] It's sort of a roundabout way of giving Jesus a compliment. She so appreciated Jesus, how he cast out the demon, how he responded to the Pharisees.

She just had to say something. And it's kind of like saying, Jesus, your mom was blessed by God to have you for a son. It must have been a special gift of God's favor for your mom to have you in her womb and to have you snuggled in to nurse from her.

But then listen to what Jesus says back to her in response. Jesus replied, blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.

Now why does Jesus respond this way? At first we might think, well, maybe Jesus just can't take a compliment. Well, no, that's probably not it.

Then we might wonder if there's just something not quite right with what the woman said. After all, Jesus says rather in there. He seems to correct her statement. But no, that's probably not it either.

[ 3 : 39 ] After all, as we heard from Luke back in chapter 2, the angel said that Jesus' mother was highly favored. And Mary's relative, Elizabeth, said, blessed are you among women.

And there's definitely some truth to that woman's statement. Jesus' mother was blessed to have him as her son. Why Jesus responds this way to her, it just doesn't say.

All we can really do is meditate carefully on Jesus' response. Blessed are those who hear the word of God and obey it.

That statement answers a question. And the question is, what makes a person blessed? What makes a person blessed?

Let's reflect on that word, blessed, for a few minutes. We know from reading the Bible up till this point that God is the one who blesses people.

[ 4 : 50 ] His blessings are the good gifts that come from Him. God's blessing is His showing favor to people.

And we could look back on the countless examples in the Old Testament of how God had blessed different people through history. And when we do, we find at least two different kinds of blessing.

Some blessings came as sheer gifts of God's grace to people. The blessings of God to Abraham are an example.

Abraham didn't do anything to earn God's favor. God just started appearing to him. And appearing to him again and again.

And promising him all kinds of wonderful things. And so there are blessings of God's grace. Things we do nothing to earn or deserve.

[ 5 : 49 ] Things God gives simply because He is kind. And generous and loves to give. Then a little later on in the story. About 400 years after Abraham.

We come to a moment where God enters into a formal covenant relationship with the descendants of Abraham. And here too we read about God's blessings.

But this time it's a different kind of blessing. These blessings we're about to read about are actually part of the terms of the covenant that God made with Israel.

Let me just read a few of those verses from Deuteronomy chapter 28. This is God speaking through Moses to the nation of Israel. If you fully obey the Lord your God.

And carefully follow all His commands I give you today. The Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. All these blessings will come on you and accompany you.

[ 6 : 54 ] If you obey the Lord your God. You will be blessed in the city. And blessed in the country. The fruit of your womb will be blessed.

And the crops of your land. And the young of your livestock. The calves of your herds. And the lambs of your flocks. Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed.

You will be blessed when you come in. And blessed when you go out. The first thing that we notice here is that these blessings are conditional.

If you fully obey the Lord. And carefully follow His commands. Then I will bless you in all these ways.

That's different from what we heard with Abraham. And so we see these two kinds of blessing from God. We have unconditional blessings.

[ 7 : 53 ] Unmerited favor. Just gifts of grace. And then there are these conditional blessings. We might think of them as maybe the rewards.

That God promised for obedience. But here too we have to be careful. Because there isn't really a neutral option. If we keep going in this chapter of Deuteronomy.

Chapter 28. We read later on in verse 15. However, if you do not obey the Lord your God. And do not carefully follow all His commands and decrees.

I'm giving you today. All these curses will come on you. And overtake you. And then it just goes on. And it lists out the same blessings. But in the form of curses.

And this is where things start to feel a little bit unclear maybe. Maybe there's a question that's rising up in our minds. You know, what do I need to do to have the blessing of God in my life?

[ 8 : 54 ] And if we're looking at the account of Abraham in Genesis. The answer seems to be just believe. Just trust His word. Have faith. But then if we're looking at passages like this in Deuteronomy.

With Israel later on. And asking that same question. The answer here seems to be obey the law. Fully keep the commandments of God.

And then you'll have the blessing of God in your life. So which is it? Is it faith? Or is it obedience? obedience? Well, by the time we get to the New Testament.

We start to hear some interesting things about these two things. We're just going to read a little snippet from the book of Galatians. Chapter 3.

Starting in verse 7. This is Paul talking to the people of Galatia. He says, Understand then that those who have faith are children of Abraham.

[ 10 : 01 ] Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith. And announce the gospel in advance to Abraham. All nations will be blessed through you.

So, those who rely on faith are blessed. Along with Abraham, the man of faith. For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse.

As it is written, Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the law. Clearly, no one who relies on the law is justified before God.

Because the righteous will live by faith. The law is not based on faith. On the contrary.

It says, The person who does these things will live by them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. By becoming a curse for us.

[11:04] For it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole. He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles.

Through Christ Jesus. So that by faith, We might receive the promise of the Spirit. Now there is a lot in there.

And we could take all day just on this passage. But let's just pull out a few things. Paul seems to make the point here. That we must rely on faith.

In God's word. Just like Abraham did. To receive God's blessing. He also seems to be saying that if we try and rely on works. Merely external obedience.

Obedience. Apart from faith. We will get nothing for ourselves. Under the terms of the law. Except the curses.

[12:02] That God promised. And so we learn from Paul here. That faith is absolutely essential. For obtaining God's blessing. In our lives.

We shouldn't even think about trying to keep God's commandments. Without faith. In our hearts. But then. As we just heard in those last couple verses.

Paul takes us a step further even. Verses 13 and 14. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. By becoming a curse for us.

For it is written. Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole. Christ redeemed us. In order that the blessing given to everyone. Abraham might come to the Gentiles.

Through Christ Jesus. So that by faith. We might receive the promise. Of the Holy Spirit. So there is even more here.

[13:00] Jesus came to take the curses of the law. That we deserve. Upon himself. So that we could be redeemed to God. And so that the unconditional blessings.

Promised to Abraham. Abraham. Could be given to all. Who have faith in God. Like Abraham did. So.

We come up to this truth. When it comes to blessing. There is significant blessing. From God. That comes to all. Who have faith in him. And it comes.

Not because we fully keep. The law. And the commandments. We couldn't. But because of Jesus. And what he did for us.

We talked about that a little bit. A few Sundays ago. There is a new covenant. There is a new and better relationship. Between God and man. And Christ brought it about.

[13:59] And it's better. Than the old covenant. It secures and guarantees. Many wonderful. Blessings of God. To those who simply put their faith in Jesus.

Paul says it this way. In Romans chapter 4. He says. Now to the one. Who works. Wages are not credited as a gift.

But as an obligation. However. To the one. Who does not work. But trusts God. Who justifies the ungodly.

Their faith. Is credited. As righteousness. The greatest blessings. That we can have from God. Cannot be earned.

By external. Obedience. Like a worker. Earns their wages. It doesn't work like that. The greatest blessings. We can have. From God.

[14:57] Come as a gift. To those. Who simply trust. In him. Another wonderful passage. That's related to this.

Ephesians chapter 1. I'm just going to read verse 3. Paul says. Praise be to the God. And Father of our Lord. Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us.

In the heavenly realms. With every spiritual blessing. In Christ. Christ. And then Paul goes on. For another 10 verses. To list off. All these blessings.

That we have. All these things. That are ours. Through Christ Jesus. They come to us. Not because we obey. Or disobey. But because we have believed.

In Jesus. And have been united to him. They come to us. In Christ. Through Christ. As gifts of grace. Christ. But now back to our passage.

[15:54] In Luke 11. And to what Jesus said. To the woman in the crowd. Blessed. Are those who hear. The word of God.

And obey it. We might wonder. After all those other things. We've just heard. Which are true. Why does Jesus put the emphasis. On obedience here.

Rather than faith. The question is. What makes a person blessed? And Jesus says this. Those who hear the word of God.

And obey it. Are blessed by God. Is Jesus taking us back. To the old covenant law. And urging us to seek.

God's blessing. By obeying. The commandments. I don't think so. What I think is going on here.

[16:52] Is that faith. Real faith. In God. Is implied. In this statement. Of Jesus. Sometimes as we read.

Those passages. In Galatians. And Romans. That we just looked at. We come out of them. Ready to drive a wedge. Between faith. And obedience.

We come out of them. Ready to say. That the Christian life. Is all about faith. And faith alone. But what we sometimes miss. Is that obedience. Doesn't just get thrown out the window.

In fact. Faith and obedience. Go together. They were always meant. To go together.

Now. Faith. By itself. Is the basis. Of our right standing with God. That much is clear. From the scriptures. Faith is the only way.

[17:54] That we enter into. God's many blessings. Things. But. All obedience. Obedience. Must also. Come out of. The faith that we have.

For it to be genuine. To say it another way. If we hear the word of God. And truly believe it. Truly. Take it seriously.

Then we will. Obey it. Faith and obedience. Go together. Let's hear this from. James. James chapter 2. He says it better than anyone ever could.

James says. What good is it my brothers and sisters. If someone claims to have faith. But has no deeds. Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes.

And daily food. If one of you says to them. Go in peace. Keep warm. And well fed. But does nothing about their physical needs.

[18:56] What good is it? In the same way. Faith by itself. If it is not accompanied by action. Is dead.

But someone will say. You have faith. I have deeds. Show me your faith. Without deeds. And I will show you my faith.

By my deeds. You believe that there is one God. Good. Even the demons believe that. And shudder.

You foolish person. Do you want evidence that faith without deeds. Is useless. Was not our father Abraham. Abraham considered righteous.

For what he did. When he offered his son Isaac. On the altar. You see that his faith. And his actions. Were working together.

[19:55] And his faith. Was made complete. By what he did. So James reminds us. That true faith. Is inseparable.

From obedience. To God's commands. Abraham. Abraham. He says. Showed. That his faith. Was genuine. How? By obeying God's command.

To offer Isaac on the altar. And if you're not familiar. With that story. God didn't make him go through. With killing his own son. It was a test. But Abraham showed.

That he had faith in God. By obeying. God's command. True faith. Cannot be separated. From the obedience.

That springs from it. In fact. If we look in the book of Romans. It's twice there. But we'll just look at the first. Example. Paul actually calls. Obedience.

[20:53] The obedience. Of faith. He starts off. In Romans chapter 1. By introducing. Himself. As an apostle. And. How he has come to proclaim.

The gospel. And what's the goal. Of all of the work. That he's doing. As an apostle. It's this. Through him. We receive grace. And apostleship. To call all the Gentiles.

To the obedience. That comes from faith. For his name's sake. Here it is again. True faith. Cannot be separated.

From obedience. A saying. Widely attributed. To Martin Luther. In the days. Of the reformation. Is. We are saved.

By faith alone. But the faith. That saves. Is never alone. It's always accompanied. By the works. That it does.

[ 21 : 49 ] Or in the actual words. Of Martin Luther. From his commentary. On the book of Romans. He said this. He said. Faith. Is a living. Busy. Active.

Mighty thing. And so. It's impossible. For it. Not to do. Good works. Incessantly. He said. It's impossible. To separate.

Works. From faith. Quite as impossible. As to separate. Burning. And shining. From fire. Father. And so.

With those things in mind. I think. Jesus has no problem. Telling this woman. And the whole crowd. That what we must do. To know the blessing of God. In our lives.

Is to hear. His word. And obey it. Faith. Is implied. He's talking. About hearing.

[ 22 : 48 ] God speak. Believing. What is heard. Taking it to heart. Taking it seriously. So. So truly. That obedience. Is what follows. And really.

We didn't even have to go through. All those other passages. To see this. Jesus phrases it. Very simply. And powerfully. On purpose.

What is our response to be? If we desire to know. God's blessing. In our lives. God pouring his goodness. And favor upon us. We need only. To listen carefully.

To what God is saying. And do what he says. That's it. Jesus doesn't go into detail.

Here. About how. We will be blessed. By God. He doesn't elaborate. On what blessings. Each of us. Will experience.

[ 23 : 53 ] At least. Not. Here. He does talk about. Some of those things. In other places. Though. But I think.

When we hear this. Sort of. One line statement. Blessed are those. Who hear the word of God. God. And obey it. The question.

That we're moved to. Is. Do we believe that? Do you really believe that? As we begin to.

To respond to Jesus. By trusting. And obeying his words. Again. And again. And again. Again. We start to see. All kinds of things. That God has said.

Through Jesus. Through the apostles. Through the whole Bible. People. And it starts to get. A little more clear. How. God blesses people. It's not the same.

[ 24 : 51 ] For everybody. Though there are some things. That we all have in common. What are those. Unconditional things. That God gives to us. Through Christ.

Well there's lots. In here about that. We heard some of those. Already. But there's other places. Which show some of the unique ways. That God may. Bring. A blessing.

Into. Our lives. Some of those places. In the Bible. Bring correction. They help us see that.

Of course. We cannot earn. God's. Favor. Or his blessings. He's not like a vending machine. Of blessing. Where we. You know. Put in the right. Combination of things.

And a prayer. And out comes what we want. Or need. Some of God's blessings. Even come. Somewhat naturally.

[ 25 : 48 ] From obedience. Because. Doing the right thing. Is. A kindness to others. And it's good for us. And we.

We reap what we sow. In relationships. When we live God's way. In accordance. In accordance. With his commandments. It just has this sort of. Natural. Built-in blessing.

That comes with it. Others of God's blessings. We may never know. Unless we just do. What Jesus says. Unless we make every effort.

To obey God's words. That we have heard. God has. God has. God has likely. Let all of us. Learn some things. The hard way.

To teach us. To listen. And to obey. God. And even. That he does that. Is a blessing. In disguise.

[ 26 : 45 ] Isn't it? That God brings. Into our lives. Those formative moments. And even. Let's us. Face. The consequences.

Of our actions. That too. Is a blessing. There's another place. The Sermon on the Mount. Where Jesus tells us.

Not to worry. About the things. We need in life. But to seek first. God's kingdom. And his

righteousness. And there's a promise. That goes with that. That if we do that. All the things.

That we need. Will be given to us. As well. And so. God. God blesses us. With provision. Of everything we need. When we seek him. When we draw near to him.

When we listen. And respond to his word. With obedience. I want to get. A little more practical. And just give an illustration. Because we're kind of.

[ 27 : 41 ] Talking abstractly here. Blessed are those. Who hear the word of God. And obey it. What do those words. Mean for us. If we're deliberately. Ignoring.

God's word. Maybe you've gotten. Into the habit of. I'm just going to. Give a hypothetical. Example here. Maybe you've gotten.

Into the habit. Of going places. You shouldn't. Online. On your phone. Or. Of spending. A lot of time. That you could have been.

You could have spent. Doing. Other things. That you should be doing. A lot of time. Just scrolling. Through mostly. Worthless stuff. Or online shopping.

Or I don't know. Fill in the blank. Whatever. What might be going on. In your heart. In those moments. It could be lust.

[ 28 : 39 ] It could be. Greed. Coveting. It could be. It could be. Looking for something.

Other than the Lord. To soothe. Whatever grief. Or pain. Or anxiety. You're feeling. And maybe you know.

It's wrong. Maybe. As you. Do this. You can think of. At least. One of God's commandments. That. Runs this. Right against it. Ah. I'm not really listening.

To him. And then. What do we sometimes do? Well. Might come back to this. Day after day. After day. And then.

What do we tend to do? Well. We. We hide the habit. And when someone asks. What we're doing. We. Omit. Some of the details.

[ 29 : 34 ] Maybe tell a lie. Or. Something that's just. Mostly true. Because we feel guilty. We feel shame. And then.

When we feel those things. What do we sometimes do? Go back to that habit. For some more. Escape. Some. Some alleviation. Of that guilt. And what relationships.

Are we neglecting. With the time. That we could be spending. With others. While we're in this.

Pursuit of this. Thing. Or in this. Behavior. Or this attitude. Sometimes we think.

Of disobeying God. As just a single. Transgression. And that. That is disobeying God. But it's more than that. It's a relational thing. It's where we turn away.

From God. In our hearts. And we start ignoring him. And we stop listening. To him. And before we know it. The effects of that decision.

[ 30 : 30 ] Begin to compound. And pile up. And of course. The natural blessings. That God has given. When we do what's right. They don't flow.

From those. Sins. It's the opposite. Those things. Ruin. They damage. They destroy us. They get us looking. And thinking inward.

About ourselves. And we become distant. From people. And we try to hide. And we try to minimize. That shame. And that guilt. That we feel. And if that's where we're living.

If we belong to Christ. Here's some good news. God will bring the blessing. Of discipline. Into our lives. To bring us back.

He will bring. The blessing of correction. To us. He may withhold. Some blessings. From us. Jesus said.

[ 31 : 26 ] That those who prove. Faithful with little. Will be entrusted. With more. But if we're not being faithful. With what God has given to us. He may not give us.

The more that we're hoping for. He may let us. Live in that spot. For a while. We're not ready for it. We might squander it. And so if we belong to Christ.

God acts in these ways. Out of love. To bring us back to him. So that we soften our hearts to him. So that we learn to. Listen to his word.

And obey it. That was a sort of hypothetical. But. What if we did the opposite? What if we put the full weight.

Of our trust. In God. In Jesus. In his words. What might our lives. Look like then. If we're doing everything we can.

[ 32 : 24 ] To obey the Lord. And to serve him. With all of our hearts. To seek his kingdom. Won't he supply all our needs? Won't we have more joy?

Isn't it wonderful. When someone asks you. How you're doing. Or what you've been up to. And you can just tell them the truth. And feel no guilt or shame. No need to hide.

Our relationships improve. As we. Give ourselves to loving one another. As Jesus has loved us. God gives us things.

That we don't even need. For our enjoyment. As we stop coveting. Or buying stuff that we don't need. To satisfy our own cravings.

This is not a perfect picture. But. It's a start. I think you get the idea. How might God bless us. If we give our whole hearts. To hearing his word.

[ 33 : 28 ] And obeying it. Truly. There's only one way to find out. And that's to do it. What about you? Where are you at.

In your relationship with God today? As you look at these words of Jesus. On the screen. Do you believe them?

Do you believe that God will bless you? If you hear his word. And obey it. Does that make you hungry.

To hear more. Of God's word. Are you making every effort. In faith. To obey God. Is there any area. Of your life. Where right now. You know. You have not been obeying. God's word. Is the spirit of God. Right now.

[ 34 : 32 ] Bringing anything to mind. About how you have been living. Things you need to confess. And repent of. Actions taken.

That you know. Are wrong. Attitudes. You've been holding on to. That you know. Have been putting distance.

Between you and God. Desires. That you've been feeding. That you know are sinful. We're going to end it right here.

And I just want to. Take a time. Let's take a time now. To pray quietly. To confess to the Lord. To speak to him. To bring those.

Things to him. Let's pray. Thank you.

[ 35 : 53 ] Thank you.

Father in heaven, we thank you that for every time that we have sinned against you, that we have disobeyed you, you have made a solution for our guilt.

We thank you for the cross. We thank you for what Jesus did there so that we could be forgiven.

We thank you for that wonderful promise. Not only are we forgiven, but our sins are remembered no more.

We thank you for this promise of blessing that we've been looking at, this simple promise that if we hear what you say and obey it, you will bless us.

And I pray that each one of us would draw near to you and embrace these words. Give us a willingness, Lord, to hear your word.

[ 37 : 20 ] Give us a willing spirit to obey your word. Help us believe that when we do, that's when life is best.

That's how you have made us. We ask for this in Jesus' name. Amen.