

Lesson for November 1, 2009

## Review of Our Spiritual Assets

### Divine Blessings and Privileges and Opportunity

#### Divine Blessings

When a person trusts Jesus Christ as personal Savior, a potential is established for blessing from God. Salvation is based on the grace of God, apart from any human merit, as is the Christian Way of Life. (Titus 2:11-12) Therefore, the potential for blessing is based on the grace of God. A blessing is a benefit bestowed upon the believer by God.

Why does God bless or bestow benefits on believers? Since blessings were given to us in eternity past and based on the grace of God (Ephesians 1:3), it is impossible for the believer to earn or deserve the blessings of God. In other words, God *does not bless you because of your works*, even if they are legitimate divine production (i.e. witnessing, giving, praying, etc.). God blesses you on the basis of His righteousness resident in your soul (Matthew 6:33, II Corinthians 5:21). This allows God to be just and in keeping with His grace policy (even if you are not living your spiritual life). You cannot coerce God into blessing you by what you do or do not do. However, it is your choice to access or appropriate these blessings. The way to access divine blessing is to increase your capacity to receive blessing by learning and applying Bible doctrine under the control of God the Holy Spirit. And remember that the production of divine good is itself a divine blessing.

Increasing capacity in your life is a grace function. Under your right pastor-teacher, you study and apply Bible doctrine, which produces growth and increases capacity. Remember that God is not going to give you more than you can handle. Therefore, divine blessing comes as a result of compliance with God's system of blessing. Is your volition involved? Absolutely! You are the one who must choose to trust Jesus Christ as your Savior, you must choose to study and apply the accurate teaching of God's Word to your life, and you must choose to allow God the Holy Spirit to control your life. Accordingly, God is waiting to send blessings to each of us. (Isaiah 30:18)

In order to understand the concept of increased capacity, we need to briefly review the Royal Priesthood and the Royal Ambassadorship of the believer. Remember our illustration? Your spiritual life is represented by a vertical line (which is your relationship with God), as a Royal Priest. A horizontal line represents your Christian life (which is your relationship with other people), as a Royal Ambassador. Together we call this the Christian Way of Life.

## Page 2, Divine Blessings

As a Royal Priest, we represent ourselves before God, which is always a private matter. When we sin and remove ourselves from fellowship with God, we are able to go directly to the throne of God in prayer and utilize I John 1:9, which restores fellowship. The more time you spend studying and applying accurate Bible teaching under the control of the Holy Spirit, the faster your capacity will increase. This translates into spiritual advance and eventually leads to spiritual maturity (our goal as believers). The only way that we are going to increase our capacity to receive God's blessings is to develop our relationship with God.

As a Royal Ambassador, we represent the Lord Jesus Christ to the world. (II Corinthians 5:17) This, of course, involves interaction with others. This representation is a spiritual service and DOES NOT contribute to your spiritual growth or your capacity for blessing as a believer. It is a result of your growth. It is a blessing in itself and a means for you to be a blessing to others.

Now, let's review the grace provisions of God for the Church Age believer.

- 1) *Life support* - God keeps you and me alive for a purpose after salvation. This purpose is to glorify Him as a witness for the Supreme Court of Heaven against Satan and his demons. By trusting Jesus Christ as Savior and fulfilling God's plan for our life, we demonstrate to Satan and his followers the justice of God. (Psalm 68:19-20)
- 2) *Temporal supply* - God has promised every believer certain blessings regardless of their spiritual status. Food, clothing and shelter are a few. (Matthew 6:25-34)
- 3) *Security in two stages* - God provides physical protection in the devil's world by means of guardian angels and government entities, to name a couple. He also provides spiritual security by holding us "in the hollow of His hand" and by giving us the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. (Hebrews 1:14; John 10:28)
- 4) *Spiritual provision* - This involves the spiritual blessings of the 40 assets received at salvation and temporal blessings such as family, finances, jobs, etc. It also involves blessing by association at the workplace, at school, at home, or in an organization and historical impact on a nation. Undeserved suffering is also a spiritual provision, though it may not seem so at first glance, but it is a means of growth and increased dependence upon God. And finally, dying grace is provided where God gives a maximum amount of His grace in a believer's death as a testimony to those you leave behind.

## Privilege and Opportunity

Never before in the history of the world has the believer in Christ had the privilege and the opportunity that is afforded him today. The Church Age in which we live is an unparalleled dispensation with numerous advantages for the believer. The privileges and opportunities that we have been given are not only unique, they are “above and beyond all that we could ever think or imagine.” (Ephesians 3:13-21)

Jesus Christ has secured forever the *strategic victory* (the skillful planning and management in getting the better of the adversary) over Satan. At salvation this victory places the believer in a place of maximum strength with the potential to win the *tactical victory* (the procedure for gaining advantage or success over the adversary) over Satan, the World (Cosmic) System and the Sin Nature. Our union with Christ (Positional Sanctification) guarantees the opportunity to overcome the obstacles that are placed before us (or that we place before ourselves) in order to execute the Christian Way of Life and glorify God while we are on earth.

Many privileges are given to the believer at the moment of salvation and many are given after salvation. However, opportunities must be seized by personal volition. As a believer, you are the most privileged person on the face of the earth, but at the same time you may be missing the opportunities for fantastic blessing by not executing God’s plan, purpose and will for your life. Tactical victory comes over a period of time as the believer makes thousands of right decisions regarding God, himself, others and circumstances. Winning the tactical victory is done by the believer who is being empowered by God the Holy Spirit as he organizes his life around right priorities: Jesus Christ must be the most important person in your life, learning and applying accurate Bible doctrine must be placed above personal pleasure or your career, and virtue (a strict adherence to the truth) must drive every decision you make in life. (Ephesians 4:14-15)

Privilege in life is always accompanied by responsibility. This is also true with the Royal Family of God. Our first responsibility, of course, is to God as Royal Priests, and our second responsibility is to others as Royal Ambassadors. Christ’s strategic victory secured only *potential* for the tactical victory. As believers, we all have equal privilege and equal opportunity to execute the Christian Way of Life. Some believers will choose to do so and some will not. Those who fail in their responsibility to God will experience a life of misery and unhappiness. Those who choose to embrace and fulfill their responsibility to God will experience a life of peace and happiness.

## Winners and Losers

There are two types of believers: *winners* and *losers*. Winners are the believers who win the strategic *and* the tactical victory. Losers are the believers who win *only* the strategic victory. Winning the strategic victory is done by a single decision to believe in Christ as Savior. Winning the strategic and tactical victories is done by a single act of faith in Christ *and* many additional decisions thereafter to obey God's Word and execute the Christian Way of Life. (John 3:36; Ephesians 5:15-18)

The *loser-believer* makes a single decision to trust Christ as Savior and this brings God glory. This person *will* also glorify God for all eternity. Even though the loser-believer has won the strategic victory and possesses the righteousness of God, he will suffer divine discipline and self-induced misery because of his failure to win the tactical victory. He lives in Satan's "cosmic system" and constantly makes wrong decisions from a position of weakness. The loser-believer makes *self* number one priority in his or her life.

The *winner-believer*, after trusting Christ as Savior, makes many right decisions that glorify Christ. Therefore, he glorifies God both in time and in eternity. The winner-believer has won the strategic victory and possesses the righteousness of God and is advancing to spiritual maturity where he will win the tactical victory. The winner-believer does suffer, but it is for divine blessing *and* he shares the happiness of God. He lives in God's "power system" and constantly makes right decisions from a position of strength. The winner-believer makes *God* number one priority in his or her life.

Being a winner or loser believer is determined by personal volition. You make the choice to be a winner or a loser. God does not force anyone to trust Christ as Savior, or to obey His mandates after salvation. God is not a "puppet-master" manipulating the believer's every thought and action and He is not a "magician" with a magic wand to wave in order to fix your problems. However, God has designed the Christian Way of Life in a way in which *all* believers can become winners. By following God's predesigned plan for you as outlined in His Word, any believer can be a success. It begins with making the right decision, as a believer, to learn, believe and apply Bible doctrine. If you're waiting for God to *make* you do something or to *make* you think a certain way, you're waiting in vain. GOD IS ACTUALLY WAITING ON YOU TO GROW UP SPIRITUALLY AND TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR OWN SPIRITUAL LIFE. Of course, this can be done only through the power of God the Holy Spirit.