

Bible Blessings

Introduction:

We hear the word “bless” used in our society very often. When people sneeze one says, “bless you.” When one exhibits extraordinary talent in the arts, music, athletics and so forth we view them as “blessed.” Some exclaim, “have a blessed day,” and “you are a blessing in my life.” And still others say, “bless you” after a good deed has been done. What does the word “bless” really mean and how should we use the word today? The Bible has much to say about the word “bless.” This lesson shall examine the word “bless” as it is used in the Word of God and thereby help us determine how to properly use the word.

I. Definitions of the word “bless”

- A. The American Heritage Dictionary tells us that the word can be used in reference to sanctifying one, to invoke divine favor upon, to confer well-being or prosperity upon one, to endow, as with talent... happy” (187).
- B. The word “bless” may be used in a variety of context as the study shall illustrate.

II. The word “bless” in the OT

- A. The Hebrew word “*barak*” means “to bring a gift to another while kneeling out of respect. The extended meaning of this word is to do or give something of value to another” (Hebrew Lexicon at www.ancient-hebrew.org). God “blessed” Abraham in that he gave him (and all humanity) the opportunity to be forgiven of sins (cf. Gen. 12:1ff). God gave Sarah a son (Isaac) and thereby “blessed” her (cf. Gen. 17:15-17). God gave Job all necessities of life and even more (Job 1:10).
- B. Another Hebrew word that is translated blessed is “*ashere*” which means “happy or very happy” (Young’s Concordance 98) (cf. Ps. 1:1; 2:12 etc.).
- C. The most general way the word “bless” is used in the OT is the idea of speaking well of one or to express honor (cf. Gen. 9:6; 14:19; Ps. 31:21 etc.).

III. The word “bless” in the NT

- A. The NT uses the word blessed (*eulogeo*) in a general way to express honor upon one such as God / cf. II Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; I Tim. 6:15. Individuals are said to be blessed in the since that they are spoken well of (cf. James 1:12; Rev. 1:3). The Greek word “*eulogeo*” is used to signify “to speak well of, praise, honor” (LS 327) (cf. the use of God and man at James 3:9).
- B. Another use of “*eulogeo*” is the idea of conferring a blessing upon another. Paul said, “*Bless them that persecute you; bless, and curse not*” (Rom. 12:14; cf. also Matt. 5:44; I Cor. 4:12).
- C. *Eulogeo* is also used to identify one who is a recipient of God’s gracious gift to forgive man of their sins (cf. Acts 3:26; Rom. 4:6-8; Gal. 3:8-9; Col. 1:12) (i.e., spiritual blessings of Eph. 1:3).
- D. One is blessed when provided with the necessities of life (Heb. 6:7).
- E. The Greek word *makarios* is used in the beatitudes at Matthew 5:3-10. *Makarios* = “happiness, those with good fortune” (LS 484)...

IV. How should I use the word “bless” today?

- A. Societal propriety would license the use of “bless, blessing, blessed” as to bestow favor, wish one well in the area of prosperity and health, to indicate talent, and to express happiness.

- B.** The Bible uses the word “bless” to indicate one who receives God’s promises, prosperity, happiness, expressing honor, to identify one who is doing well or good in health and morality, obtaining physical needs from God, and desiring that others would gain God’s spiritual promises.

Conclusion:

The Christian is blessed in that he or she is a recipient of God’s gracious gift of the forgiveness of sins. God is blessed in that He holds a lofty degree of honor. While the Christian is to pay attention and respect propriety in our society I cannot possibly say that one is blessed when in error. I can; however, wish God’s blessings upon all men. I can also say that I desire that my fellow man have a “blessed” (i.e., happy) day. All blessings have their root in God’s being and purpose for man. When I use the word bless today, I ought to consider the source of those blessings. Let us praise God through whom all blessings flow and give Him thanks (cf. I Thess. 5:18).