

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

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One of the greatest miscalculations or faults in the church today is not properly focusing on our obtainable mission and goals called out in Scripture for the church.

- I have missed it!
- Most pastors miss it!

Is it a problem that cannot be overcome? NO!

I am constantly asking our pastor how many people have come to Christ this year...in a way, holding him to the fire for our church not seeing people come to Christ (being saved) and baptized. Winning souls (seeing numbers added to the kingdom) has been a major goal for me...and hopefully you. I also know that the pastor is concerned about it and he is preaching his heart out in presenting heartfelt, God anointed messages as to our people and visitors in being accountable to God.

Proverbs 11:30b, "...and he who wins souls is wise."

After praying and listening to God (via Scripture), I have come to realize that winning souls is very important...but, that the ultimate focus of the local church should be ministering to fellow believers (teaching them to

grow in the Lord).

1 Corinthians 9:10-13, "Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.¹¹ You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.¹² This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.¹³ Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else."

I have seen people (children and adults) come to Christ and then see them fall by the wayside due to the local church congregants not ministering and mentoring to them. We fail when we do not appropriate their participation, involvement, and partnership in our church's programs for ministering to others.

What have I missed? What have pastors missed all over the country today?

1. Starting the new convert on their journey in the new life in Christ from the ground up,
2. Leading them to be successful in areas they can participate in,
3. Failing to use them in their level of ministry where they are, and
4. Helping them to grow into the levels of involvement that would eventually lead them to being a soul winner.

I have been reading various websites and I am seeing a trend in our churches of not focusing on the individual's walk toward being more like Jesus. Jesus performed miracles and he loved people!

Jesus stressed preparation and power to be a blessing!

If you want to learn how to witness for Christ...first, develop a habit of being a blessing.

ALL CHRISTIANS CAN DEVELOP A HABIT OF "BEING A BLESSING!"

What can leaders do to develop this important trait?

- Avoid forcing individuals too quickly into areas in which they do not feel naturally comfortable,
- Encourage them to be spontaneous and natural rather than forced.
- Change the focus from witnessing in the hardcore sense of trying to win people to Jesus...to simply being a blessing. God said to Abraham, "*I will bless you and you shall be a blessing.*" Genesis 12:2

Quite possibly, the most frequently used word in the Christian's vocabulary is blessed. "Have a blessed day," "blessed to be a blessing," and "God bless you" are just a few of the ways we put it to use.

- Simply being a ready and willing servant of God
- Teaching the church to be any kind of blessing to anyone...whenever God opens the door of opportunity.

What does it really mean to be blessed?

The word blessed derives from the Greek term makarios, which means "fortunate," "happy," "enlarged," or "lengthy." This is the kind of happiness that comes from receiving favor from God.

Consequently, blessed can also be translated "favored." In the New Testament, it usually carries the meaning of being "blessed by God." As in the case of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who was "*blessed among women*" (Luke 1:42-45, 48), it was the Lord God who had blessed and favored her.

While material blessings are certainly included in God's favor, the Bible ascribes a much fuller meaning to the word blessed. Perhaps the most well-known use of the word blessed in the Bible is found in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12; Luke 6:20-23). Jesus used the term blessed in the framework of the Beatitudes to describe the inner quality of a faithful servant of God. This blessedness is a spiritual state of well-being and prosperity—a deep, joy-filled contentment that cannot be shaken by poverty, grief, famine, persecution, war, or any other trial or tragedy we face in life.

In human terms, the situations depicted in the Beatitudes are far from blessings, but because God is present with us through these difficult times, we are actually blessed by Him in them.

The true servant of God is blessed, regardless of circumstances, because God has favored him or her with a fully satisfied soul (Psalm 63:1-5; John 4:14). The material things we crave can never bring genuine happiness or contentment. True fulfillment can only be found in a relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1-2).

As a Leader...What to Do! (Continued)

- Emphasize the importance of being prepared through prayer.
 - *Encourage the congregants to pray ever morning for God to bring individuals their way who need (God's and ultimately your) help in some way.*
 - *Encourage the congregants to pray every morning for God to help them quickly recognize a great opportunity.*
- Suggest that they may not see special opportunities every day, but the more we pray, the more opportunities we will have to be a blessing.
- It is important to know that the Holy Spirit will help us recognize the opportunities to be a blessing even when we might not be seeing the opportunity in the flesh.
Thank God for the Holy Spirit residing in you.
- Build anticipation and excitement about what God will do through participation.
- Regularly give the people an opportunity to tell what has happened when we are open to the opportunities to be blessed.
- Be sure to point out that not every opportunity to be "a blessing" is necessarily or always going to be super spectacular...but, every "Being a Blessing" incident is important and needs to be rejoiced!

And One to Grow on....so important!

Progressive Development:

As "being a blessing" involvement develops, coach and lead them into "Hardcore" witnessing...**WINNING PEOPLE TO JESUS**
CHRIST AS SAVIOR!

LESS THAN 10% OF CHRISTIANS EVER WIN ANYONE TO

**CHRIST AS SAVIOR...
BUT WE ALL NEED TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BEING A
BLESSING!**

NOTE: The Bible measures blessedness differently from how people of the world measure it:

"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him" (James 1:12).

- To those who rest in God, He grants an inner state of joy that is unaffected by external trials.
- What is this promised "crown of life?"

It is the never-ending, victorious life in the world to come, where all trials will be ended. The marvelous blessings we experience now are minor compared to the benefits God has stored up for us in His eternal kingdom (1 Corinthians 2:9).

*Write your Troubles
in the Sand
Carve your Blessings
in Stone*

Once we belong to Christ, we are expected to continually grow in our faith, which requires a deeper understanding of His Word. The author of Hebrews scolded his readers for remaining as babes in the faith instead of maturing from milk to solid food (Hebrews 5:11-14). Just remember, as you learn, never allow your newfound knowledge to make you prideful.

We Are Blessed to Be a Blessing