

GIVING A BLESSING

It is imperative that, as fathers, grandfathers and potential fathers we purpose and promise to pass on a positive biblical blessing to each of our children! Genesis 27:34 says that, "*When Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with an exceedingly great and bitter cry, and said to his father, 'Bless me, even me also, O my father!'*" Why do children cry out for their father's blessing?

"Bless" = literally to *bow the knee. It carries the idea of a father formally bowing down to his wife and children to esteem, ascribe value, lift up, encourage, recognize, affirm and accept in order to reproduce character beyond yourself.* Did your father ever pronounce a biblical blessing upon you? How did he do this? What difference did it make or would it have made in your life?

Carefully reflect on each part of the Biblical pattern for giving a blessing in the pages that follow. We strongly urge you to begin with your first child no matter how old and make a commitment to pronounce a blessing on each of your children.

We will provide some work space for you to record some draft ideas but we encourage you to put these on your computer or extra sheets of paper. Be sure to include your wife in on this as she will undoubtedly have some great insights and ideas.

A FATHER'S BLESSING TO HIS CHILDREN ALWAYS...

1. BEGINS WITH A DECISION TO OBEY GOD

(Gen 12:1-8; 17:1-8) Personal obedience to God always brings blessing to you and to your family for generations to come (12:7; 26:1-5). Disobedience always brings a curse which must be broken (12:10-20; 20:1-12; 26:6-11). Every day a father must decide between Bethel (House of God. Symbol of fellowship with God) and Ai (Heap/ruin. Symbol of friendship with the world). Write out a prayer now of your commitment to show your love for God (John 14:15, 21, 23, 24; 15:10) by becoming even more obedient to the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit trusting that your children will reap the benefits of your obedience.

2. OFFERS A MEANINGFUL AND APPROPRIATE TOUCH



(Gen 27:26-27) There is no transference of a blessing apart from a meaningful touch. A father must literally become 'God' with skin! When was the last time you were close enough to your child to 'smell' their heart, mind, spirit, motives, aspirations? (Mark 1:40-42; 10:13-16)

Consider your wife and each of your children. What would be the most sensitive, sincere, meaningful and appropriate touch for each of your

family members? Think through by visualizing what this might look like. This 'touch' may be given individually as a stand alone act or combined with the actual spoken blessing. Remember that with God, words are never enough!

For example; 4 year old: put them on your lap with a smothering bear hug. Teen aged daughter: a firm hug from the side with a kiss on the cheek. Older Son: a hand on the shoulder followed by a manly hug. Wife: A close embrace with a kiss on the earlobe...followed by doing the dishes to show sincerity!

3. CONTAINS A PERSONALLY SPOKEN MESSAGE

(Gen 27:27; 49:3, 8, 16) The power of spoken words is incredible! (Proverbs 18:21; James 3:3-6) It is a true saying that today's words told tomorrow rob others of real blessing (John 1:14). So with much grace and truth, we want you to write out a 3-5 sentence (or longer) blessing for each of your family members which will be read/given to them at an appropriate time in the NEAR future. This blessing needs to be positive, full of hope for their future and expresses your personal insights into an expectation for their lives from a father's perspective. Don't worry if they don't understand them at the time. They can be typed up and given to them as they grow older as a reminder. The act is as much for the Lord as it is for them.

Example: *"Joy Helene Bowers, I am so very thankful that God has given you as a special gift to our family. Honey, I sense strongly that the Lord has His hand on your life and that He has given you a sensitive heart, a servant's attitude and a passion for people as well as a keen ability for languages, music and culture. God will most certainly use all of these in your future to be a blessing to many both at home and overseas. God has also given you a growing vision for overseas missions which I want to affirm. Mom and I will do all in our power and make our resources available to help you in this quest. I am so proud to be your Dad and promise to pray for you every day. "*

4. ATTACHES A STATEMENT OF HIGH VALUE

(Gen 27:28-29) We must consistently ascribe to our children their real value and worth before God. If we do not, they will switch their God-given price tags and estimate their value according to their performance, productivity, position and possessions.

(Isaiah 43:1-4. Luke 15:11-32 ring, robe, roast). Think about just one sentence that could express the worth of your child to God and to you. Example:

“Justin, I love you and will always be proud to be your dad.”

“Susan, I’m so very thankful that of all the fathers in the world, God chose me to be your dad!”

“Jim, though you are my adopted (step) son, in my heart you are as my very own blood son given to me as a precious gift of God.”

5. PAINTS A VISUAL WORD PICTURE OF FUTURE HOPE AND CHARACTER

(Gen 27:27-28: 49:28) The idea here is almost like a biblical nick name which esteems, encourages and edifies a child (wife). It is like a term of endearment with special meaning in the heart of the hearer.

Issachar (Gen 49:14) _____

Dan (Gen 49:16-17) _____

Naphtili (Gen 49:21) _____

Joseph (Gen 49:22) _____

Simon (Matt 16:17-18) _____

Assign a name of character and endearment to each of your family members. Caution, the older they are the more they need to own it. For example, Perry’s brother named his oldest son, ‘Rocky’ as a blessing to communicate that he would be a fighter for the Lord all his life...and that is exactly what he has become over the past 20 years!

6. MAKES A SINCERE COMMITMENT OF PERSONAL RESOURCES (Gen 27:36) Get involved in their lives! Do not speak empty words or make promises you have no intention of fulfilling. Back up your promises with the commitment of your life and resources! Become an observant student of what your children need. (Esther 2:11. Gen 26:24, 28:15, 48:21; Josh 1:9; Jud 6:12; II Sam 7:3; 1 Chron 22:18, 28:20; II Chron 20:17; Is 41:10, 43:5; Jer 1:8, 19, 15:20, 30:11, 42:11, 46:28; Matt 28:20) What exactly will you and your wife promise/commit to doing in order to help them become all that God has planned for them? (spiritually, emotionally, relationally, financially, mentally, time, prayer, teaching, training, opening doors of opportunity, encouragement)

7. CHALLENGES THE NEXT GENERATION TO PASS IT ON (48:15-16) Give your children a vision for at least 3 generations out. (Psalm 78:5-8). For example you may want to give them a vision now while they are young to pass on what they are learning from you even though they may not even be old enough to date! Encourage them to become great parents, church members, disciplers, evangelists, servants, administrators and leaders for the Lord!

IF YOU HAVE FELT A CURSE, NOT A BLESSING

Perhaps your father never gave you a biblical blessing. It is probably because his father never taught him how or gave him one. No matter. Your Heavenly Father is greater than their failure. In fact, your father may have spoken a curse into your life in the form of

"You'll never amount to much..."

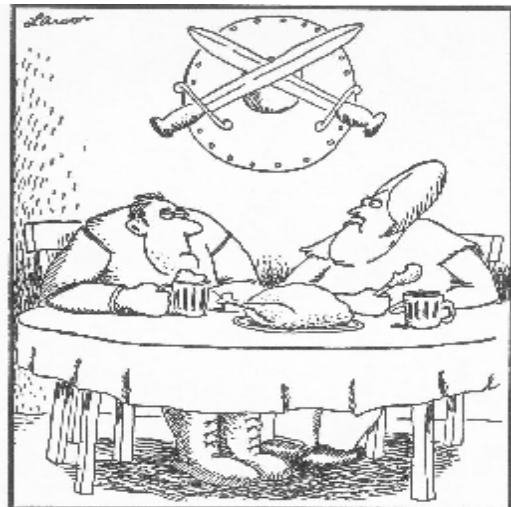
"I wish you weren't so stupid..."

"I told you not to..."

"Couldn't you be more like..."

If your father purposely or inadvertently proclaimed a curse on you, we encourage you to think through the following steps.

1. Trust that God will turn a curse into a blessing. (Deut 23:5)
2. See the Father's faithfulness in the midst of your father's failure. (Numbers 22)
3. Purpose to give a blessing in response knowing that God is fully capable of meeting your deepest needs. (I Peter 3:8-12)
4. Ask God in prayer to turn your father's curse into a real blessing in your life.



"And another thing ... I want you to be more assertive! I'm tired of everyone calling you Alexander the Pretty-Good!"