

**Slide 1**

# How To Live A Blessed Life

## Acts 20:33-35

### Introduction

1. Would you consider your life a blessed life?
2. What does it mean to be blessed?
3. The answer to this question depends upon your viewpoint.

**Slide 2**

4. Many consider themselves blessed if certain externals are in place:
  - a. **Health:** A strong, healthy body.
  - b. **Financial Abundance:** More than enough money to pay bills, enjoy some luxury items, travel and live comfortably.
  - c. **Loving Relationships:** A happy family, a stable, loving home life and supportive friends.
  - d. **Success and Influence:** Career advancement, high status, and the ability to achieve personal goals.

**Slide 3**

5. Others believe to be blessed our life must have more of an inward focus:
  - a. **Inner Contentment:** A profound sense of peace and joy that remains even during trials, loss or suffering.
  - b. **Peace of Soul:** The knowledge that our relationship with God is secure, our sins are forgiven, we are daily walking in His will.
  - c. **Inward Characteristics Which Promote Blessedness:** Humble, merciful, pure in heart, peacemaker
  - d. **Dependence on God:** We recognize our need for God instead of relying solely upon ourselves.

**Slide 4**

6. As Paul stood before the Ephesian elders for the last time, he reminded them of his own example when he had been with them:
  - a. Of being free from greed

“I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothes.” (Acts 20:33)
  - b. Of providing for his own needs and even for the needs of his co-workers.

“You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my own needs and to the men who were with me.” (Acts 20:34, NASB95)
7. Paul called upon them to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself had said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)
8. These words of Jesus are found nowhere else in Scripture.
9. It seems that those who were with Jesus during His earthly ministry had heard Him say this and had passed it down to others.
10. There are two questions I want us to consider this morning:
  - a. How do we live a blessed life?
  - b. Why are those who give more blessed than those who receive?

**Slide 5**

## **When We Give . . .**

### **A. WE SEEK TO BECOME MORE LIKE GOD**

1. God is the bountiful giver.

“He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things” (Acts 17:25, NASB95).

2. This reinforces what Moses had written over 1,400 years earlier.

“Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.” (Genesis 2:7, NASB95)

3. James reiterated it in his letter.

“Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down

from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow”  
(James 1:17, NASB95)

**4. Our children are His gift to us** (Psalm 127:3)

[Solomon] “Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, the fruit of the womb  
is a reward.” (Psalm 127:3, NASB95)

**5. Consider what David said of God concerning his own birth** (Psalm 139:13).

“For You formed my inward parts;  
You wove me in my mother’s womb.”

(Psalm 139:13, NASB95)

**6. The ability to enjoy the fruits of our labor is a gift from God.**

“Moreover, that every man who eats and drinks sees good in all his  
labor—it is the gift of God.” (Ecclesiastes 3:13, NASB95)

**7. In teaching His disciples how to pray, one of the requests He taught them  
and us to make to our heavenly Father is “give us each day our daily bread”**  
(Luke 11:3).

**8. The greatest gift God has ever given is the gift of His only Son** (John 3:16).

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that  
whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16,  
NASB95)

**9. This gift results in another gift, eternal life, of which Jesus spoke and of  
which the apostle Paul taught** (Romans 6:23).

“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in  
Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 6:23, NASB95)

**10. And there is something else which God gives us to help us in our  
heavenward journey** (Acts 2:38).

“Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the

forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (*Acts 2:38, NASB95*)

11. And if this isn’t enough, consider what the apostle Paul wrote to the saints in Rome (*Romans 8:32*).

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (*Romans 8:32, NASB95*)

12. Jesus was just like His Father in that He was constantly giving:

- a. He gave food to the multitudes:

1) The 4,000 He fed from seven loaves of bread and a few small fish (*Matthew 15:32-38; Mark 8:1-10*)

2) The 5,000 He fed from five loaves and two fish (*Matthew 14:15-21; Mark 6:33-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:5-14*)

- b. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, strength to lame limbs, cleansing to the lepers and life those who were dead (*Matthew 11:5*).

- c. He gives us His peace so that we don’t have to be troubled or fearful in life (*John 14:27*).

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.” (*John 14:27, NASB95*)

- d. He gives us rest for our souls (*Matthew 11:28*).

“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.” (*Matthew 11:28*).

13. What is it that prompts all of this giving? It is the simple fact that “God is love” (*1 John 4:8*).

14. If we are to be like God then we, too, are to be givers.

15. When Paul was encouraging the believers in Corinth to give in support of the saints back in Jerusalem, he wrote “Each one must do just as he has

purposed in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

- a. We do not give grudgingly or of necessity, nor because our circumstances or social position make it acceptable to do so.
- b. We give out of motives which are pure and holy — because we seek to be followers of God, and as His beloved children, we do as our Father in heaven does.

## Slide 6

### B. WE OBEY GOD

1. In the days of Moses, God told the Israelites not to forget the poor and needy among them (Deuteronomy 15:11).

“For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, ‘You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.’” (Deuteronomy 15:11, NASB95)

2. When the people presented their thank offerings and free-will offerings to God at the temple, it was always out of gratitude for His abundant blessings in their lives.
3. When Jesus sent his twelve disciples out to preach and teach He told them “Freely you received, freely give.” (Matthew 10:8).
4. In His Sermon on the Plain which we find in chapter six of Luke’s gospel, we find Him saying to his audience, “Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure—pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return.”” (Luke 6:38, NASB95)
5. The apostles taught the same principle:
  - a. Paul taught Timothy: “Instruct those who are rich in this present world . . . to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share” (1 Timothy 6:17a, 18).
  - b. The writer of the letter to the Hebrew Christians wrote “do not neglect

doing good and sharing, for with such sacrifices God is pleased”  
(Hebrews 13:16).

- c. John in his first letter said, “whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 John 3:17, NASB95)

### Slide 7

## C. OUR SOULS ARE BLESSED

1. When we are constantly receiving,
  - a. We risk the danger of becoming selfish.
  - b. We become the central focus of our attention.
  - c. We depend upon a constant stream of things necessary to satisfy our desires.
    - ❑ Ultimately, we deteriorate both morally and spiritually.
2. When we are giving, when we are spending our time, thoughts, sympathies, strength, money and whatever else on behalf of others, it is then the seeds of all that is good and noble into the lives of others.
3. It was Solomon who wrote, “He who is generous will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor” (Proverbs 22:9, NASB95).
3. When we give, we build up in ourselves a character in which the Lord takes great delight.
  - a. We are imitating what is good (3 John 11)
 

“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God” (3 John 11).
  - b. Ultimately, we are imitating God (Ephesians 5:1).
 

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children” (Ephesians 5:1).
4. To receive is to be happy on the outside, to be happy in the moment.
5. To give is to be inwardly and continually blessed.

### Slide 8

**D. WE BECOME THE RECIPIENTS OF GOD'S GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES**

1. As Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, "God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7).
2. In the days of old, God's people were exhorted to "honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first of all your produce" (Proverbs 3:9).
3. Solomon wrote that God would bless those who gave with such a liberal heart and willing hand, "so your barns will be filled with plenty and your vats will overflow with new wine" (Proverbs 3:10).
3. David said, "How blessed is he who considers the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the day of trouble. The Lord will protect him and keep him alive, and he shall be called blessed upon the earth" (Psalm 41:1-2).
4. I don't believe than any man has ever regretted being a cheerful giver, and many have been blessed for their giving.
5. Long ago, God promised, "those who honor Me I will honor" (1 Samuel 2:30).
6. Jesus taught that he who gives a "cup of cold water" to "one of these little ones" "shall not lose his reward." (Matthew 10:42).
7. The greatest blessing which you and I long to receive will come on the day when our Lord returns in His glory with all His holy angels.
8. He will sit on His glorious throne and says to us, "Come you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 25:34).
  - a. "I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat" (v. 35a)
  - b. "I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink" (v. 35b)
  - c. "I was a stranger, and you invited Me in" (v. 35c)
  - d. "I was naked, and you clothed Me" (v. 36a)
  - e. "I was sick, and you visited Me" (v. 36b)
  - f. "I was in prison, and you came to Me" (v. 36c)

## Conclusion

1. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive.
2. We are blessed men and women because we are the recipients of every good and perfect gift which God sends down to us.
3. We are a blessed church because of our Lord's presence among us.
4. But we are also blessed by what we give.
5. Will you give, not just of your financial blessings, but of your time, your strength, ability, encouragement.
6. Even if you are not a Christian today, you have received God's blessings, because, as Jesus said, He "sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matthew 5:45).
7. Jesus gave His life as a ransom for your soul, will you give your life to Him in obedient faith — dying to your old self and being buried with Him in baptism?