

Formative Practice Guide: Bless

Read Numbers 6:22-27

To bless is to communicate some truth or benefit that flows from God's love and commitment to his people. In the passage above, Aaron is instructed to bless the people. This blessing is not only affirming how God will care for them, but it is founded in their unique covenant relationship to God. This is a pattern for blessing throughout the Bible. In fact, we are encouraged to bless one another as well.

Spiritual Exercises:

Plan time in your upcoming schedule to include the following exercises in your routine.

Consider someone you are particularly close to and talk to them about their unique God-given talents, experiences, and personality. Place your hand on their shoulder (symbolically if you aren't physically able/comfortable), thank God, and pray for God's favor their lives.

Ask God to reveal passages of the Bible that you can read over someone else as a blessing. Pick one new person for each day to pray a blessing over using Scripture. If you feel so inclined, let that person know your prayer and the specific passage of Scripture.

Familiarize yourself with the "In Christ" statements below. Be ready to share specific Christian-identity statements the next time a friend is needs to be reminded of their relationship to God and identity in Christ.

Guided Reflection:

Reflect on these concepts throughout your day. Feel free to also set aside some distraction-free time for more intentional reflection.

What is it like for you to give or receive a blessing? How comfortable are you with seeing God's handiwork in the midst of those words?

Are you more inclined to share words from Scripture or words from your heart? How can you grow in your ability to see the Spirit of God working through both sources of blessing (Scripture and personal expression)?

Connecting the Practices

This practice is closely related to giving and receiving. To bless is to give (and receive) a message of God's faithfulness and love through the mediums of prayer, bearing witness, worshipping, journaling, or an every-day conversation.

In Christ, you are...

- blessed with every spiritual blessing (*Ephesians 1:3*)
- the salt of the earth (*Matthew 5:13*)
- the light of the world (*Matthew 5:14*)
- a child of God (*John 1:12*)
- a friend of God (*John 15:15*)
- chosen and appointed to bear fruit (*John 15:16*)
- declared righteous (*Romans 5:1*)
- resurrected to new life (*Romans 6:5*)
- no longer a slave to sin (*Romans 6:6*)
- dead to sin and alive to God (*Romans 6:11*)
- a slave of righteousness (*Romans 6:17-18*)
- under no condemnation for my sin (*Romans 8:1*)
- free from the law of sin and death (*Romans 8:2*)
- a joint heir with Christ, sharing His inheritance (*Romans 8:17*)
- the dwelling place of God (*1 Corinthians 6:19*)
- a member of Christ's body (*1 Corinthians 12:27*)
- a new creation (*2 Corinthians 5:17*)
- reconciled to God (*2 Corinthians 5:18-19*)
- entrusted with a message of reconciliation (*2 Corinthians 5:19*)
- the righteousness of God (*2 Corinthians 5:21*)
- holy and blameless (*Ephesians 1:4*)
- adopted into the family of God (*Ephesians 1:5-7*)
- sealed with the Holy Spirit (*Ephesians 1:13*)
- spiritually alive (*Ephesians 2:5*)
- seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (*Ephesians 2:6*)
- God's workmanship, made to do good works (*Ephesians 2:10*)
- righteous and holy (*Ephesians 4:24*)
- a citizen of heaven (*Philippians 3:20*)
- at peace (*Philippians 4:7*)
- a citizen of the kingdom of God (*Colossians 1:13*)
- forgiven of my sins (*Colossians 1:14*)
- set free from the bondage of sin (*Colossians 1:14*)
- chosen of God, holy and beloved (*Colossians 3:12*)
- a child of light and not of darkness (*1 Thessalonians 5:5*)
- an heir to eternal life (*Titus 3:7*)
- a holy partaker of a heavenly calling (*Hebrews 3:1*)
- cleansed of sin (*Hebrews 13:12*)
- a member of a royal priesthood, a holy nation (*1 Peter 2:9*)
- an alien and stranger to the world I live in (*1 Peter 2:11*)
- an enemy of the devil (*1 Peter 5:8*)
- a participant in the divine nature (*2 Peter 1:3*)
- what I am, by God's grace (*1 Corinthians 15:10*)