

Message: Bless the Lord
Sermon Series: Better Together
By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison
1 Chronicles 29:10-20
October 6, 2019

Daniel assisting

Cardboard Testimonies (during worship) PM = highlight students, intro Chris
Communion (pick up prayer packets) United in Prayer – 6pm in Chapel (praying
for BT)

God has lavishly blessed us through Jesus, the Holy Spirit and His church. It is essential we feel blessed by God. “Blessed” is who we are in Jesus Christ. “*I am blessed*” is our identity. If we do not think we are blessed, we believe we are ignored (at best) or cursed (at worst). After receiving His grace, we get to return the favor – we can bless the Lord in return. To bless the Lord means to praise God’s holy Name. Praise becomes its own love language. Exalting God fills us with gratitude, generosity and joy. It shifts the focus from our limitations to God’s surpassing power. Our applause of God becomes the language of heaven. When we bless the Lord, we speak good of Him. To bless the Lord means to speak and sing. Our words have such power. They reflect what is in our hearts. When we continually speak the praises of God, we are lifted up. I think of one of the managers of a restaurant I frequent who always says when I ask her how she is: “*I am blessed and highly favored.*” In fact, I join with her when she says it. She could answer in a lot of ways – but this is her habit. We don’t just bless the Lord when everything goes our way. Think of Job. After losing all his possessions, his health and his children, he said: “*Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*” (Job 1:21) When Paul was in Philippians (Acts 16) he was beaten with rods and thrown into jail, yet he and Silas were singing hymns and praying while in stocks and chains. Blessing the Lord was at the heart of the early church. APPLICATION: We can develop our affections for God in many ways. Learning to bless the Lord is strategic. It opens our hearts to His love. It removes obstacles and barriers that prevent our hearts from being free. Many Psalms reveal this theme. Blessing God is a frequent language of the converted heart.

The 4th sermon in our “Better Together” series. We’ve spent 3 weeks in 1 Chronicles 28.

A review: David's dream was to build a Temple for God, but since he had dirty hands from warfare, God prohibited him from building it. To get it done, he turns to 3 places:

1.) He spoke to the leaders, officers and his mighty men & warriors. (Jesus had his mighty men, too.)

2.) **Solomon**. He wanted his son to be a Mighty Man, too. He detailed what must be done. It would be very hard: *"Be strong and courageous and do it. Do not be afraid and do not be dismayed."* God would be with him and would not leave or forsake him. Furthermore, people would support him.

3.) The **assembly**. 1st time to get all the people together to hear his vision. This will be hard and sacrificial, but if they will buy in, sacrifice, commit and work together, the result will be spectacular.

1 Chr. 29:1-2a *And David the king said to all the assembly, "Solomon my son, whom alone God has chosen, is young and inexperienced, and the work is great, for the palace will not be for man but for the Lord God. So I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able..."*

David tells them 2 things:

1.) David tells them **Solomon**, his son, will be his successor. However, he will be young and inexperienced. Building the Temple will be an enormous project. It will be very difficult. He needs help.

2.) He says he has **personally committed/sacrificed** to make this happen. (Share personal story)

2 results from his words:

1.) Freewill Offerings ⁶ *Then the **leaders** of fathers' houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and the officers over the king's work.* ⁷ *They gave for the service of the house of God 5,000 talents and 10,000 darics of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of bronze and 100,000 talents of iron.* ⁸ *And **whoever** had precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the Lord, in the care of Jehiel the Gershonite.*

2.) ⁹ *Then the **people rejoiced** because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly.*

1 Chronicles 29:10-20

Therefore David blessed the Lord in the presence of all the assembly. And David said: "Blessed are you, O Lord, the God of Israel our father, forever and ever. ¹¹ Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the

kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. ¹² Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. ¹³ And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name. ¹⁴ "But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. ¹⁵ For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding. ¹⁶ O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own. ¹⁷ I know, my God, that you test the heart and have pleasure in uprightness. In the uprightness of my heart I have freely offered all these things, and now I have seen your people, who are present here, offering freely and joyously to you. ¹⁸ O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep forever such purposes and thoughts in the hearts of your people, and direct their hearts toward you. ¹⁹ Grant to Solomon my son a whole heart that he may keep your commandments, your testimonies, and your statutes, performing all, and that he may build the palace for which I have made provision." ²⁰ Then David said to all the **assembly**, "**Bless the Lord your God.**" And all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers, and bowed their heads and paid homage to the Lord and to the king.

Note 3 things about this text:

- 1.) David blesses God. If you don't know how to pray, pray this prayer. He emphasizes **God's** Sovereignty. He tells of God's nature and divine attributes. There is humility in his prayer – everything they have as individuals and as a nation is from the hand of God. It all belongs to God.
- 2.) David prays for a **family** member, his son, Solomon, who will succeed him as King. He prays for Solomon to have a "whole heart" and that he will keep God's commandments.
- 3.) ²⁰ Then David said to **all the assembly**, "**Bless the Lord your God.**" He tells the **congregation** to bless God.

Application

1. Worship/praise. Connects us with God. It moves our focus from all the junk in life that is so miserable. There's so much sorrow and pain in this life. We are bombarded by our limitations. There is no limitation with God. Give God praise. Don't be afraid, agitated, angry or anxious. Bless and do not curse. Guard your tongue. Speak faith.

2. Giving freely/joyously. 2 Cor 9:6-15 *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, "He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God. For the ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God. By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission flowing from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others, while they long for you and pray for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!*

Q: "How many times does it say in the Bible, "God loves?" The answer = ONCE. "for God loves....a cheerful giver." "for God so loved" is in the past tense, but there's only one time where "God loves" in present tense. It's not that we are earning God's love by giving generously, but it is a response to the generosity of a giving God. Sometimes I've HAD to give....almost sowing in tears. Sometimes I've given out of duty and responsibility. But giving joyfully is at the heart of God. Jesus didn't begrudge giving to us. Hebrews 12:2 says, "*Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*" Begin with the end in mind. When we remember the Ascension to heaven and that because of Jesus we're headed there, then we can endure our crosses, too.

Next Sunday is our Dedication Sunday for Better Together and for our 2020 Stewardship Commitment. We invite you to bless the Lord with us as we sow our seeds of investment for the Kingdom of God. As you receive communion today, we will have prayer packets for you to take that will help you make your commitments. (Hold it up and have a screen shot of it)