

THE BIG IDEA: You and I have more than enough to ensure that more have enough.

The Take-Off

Illus: Meeting Matt in registration line at Wingate and giving him my car

My goal this morning is to have you walk out taking a fresh look at the things you already have and being more resolved to live a blessed life.

Today is the 4th and final part of our Blessed! series, and so let's briefly recap what we've learned:

- God wants us to be blessed, and 9 x in the first 9 verse of Jesus' first sermon, He used the word blessed (which also means happy)
- God wants us to be blessed because He wants to bless others through us
- All of us will encounter what we call "blessing blockers" and we may not feel blessed. That's okay, because God can make a way through whatever is in our way. Usually, the blockers are sin, situations, and stupid people.

This morning, we want to try to land this whole series by taking a look at some of the most blessed people in the Bible and then learning how we can put what they did into practice in our own lives.

1. 3 blessed people

- Mark 2:1ff:
 - he allowed a crowd to gather
 - he allowed a mess to happen (not like the janitor at the Columbia church!)
 - he trusted Jesus with his house
- Mark 12:41-44
 - another unnamed example
 - generosity may not make you famous, but it gets you noticed by God
 - Jesus used her as an example of the difference between tipping God and trusting God
 - Cf. Luke 7:44-47
 - Giving is directly tied to understanding grace
 - Getting what we don't deserve often translates into giving what we can't afford
 - Our gratitude is revealed in our giving
 - Illus: woman in Brazil giving us her last crackers
- Luke 19:8-9
 - Zacchaeus is more than a SS character
 - he was a jerk (one of those stupid people we talked about last week) that suddenly showed some interest in Jesus
 - v. 6 says he received Jesus gladly (a lot of people do), but it wasn't until verse 8 happened (over the top generosity) that Jesus said what's found in verse 9 (the pronouncement of salvation)
 - Obviously, our good works can't save us, and Z wasn't saved because he did something
 - But the switch from stealing to generosity revealed the change from selfish to servant in his heart

2. 1 stingy person

- There are 3 (4 if we count the woman with the long hair and tears on Jesus' feet!) great examples of people that Jesus would call blessed, and we'll see in a moment that there is a lot we can learn from them
- But in Luke 18, we find that we can also learn from a stingy person
- Look at vv 18-23:
 - Jesus asked him to be a resource person, but he refused
 - When it came to doing, this man was golden; but when it came to giving, he wasn't.
 - We need to get the fact that Jesus didn't run after him saying "just give me something!!"
 - Jesus asked for it all, and didn't accept less than that.

3. Practical takeaways

- We can't rent generosity; we have to own it.
 - it cost the 4 friends some time and energy to get their friends to Jesus, but it cost the owner a roof!
 - Illus: the boy who gave \$100 to missions by selling his brother's shoes

- b. Let God talk you out of a yes instead of talking you into one
 - I love how Zacchaeus went way farther than he probably even had to
 - the first response of his heart was a yes, and we need to start from a yes, too
 - way too many times we start with a no, cross our arms, and dare God to move us
 - a generous heart naturally leads to an open hand
- c. Blessed people may say no now in order to say a bigger yes later
 - there will be times that God will say no, but the generous person knows that He's just laying the foundation for something bigger down the road
 - love the story of Todd White, who says no to eating out with his large family until he can tip the server the same amount as the bill
- d. Generosity will happen at all levels and in all kinds of ways
 - the widow who age all she had shows us that blessed people never see not much as an option
 - blessed people don't do percentages; they meet needs
 - as a college kid, i didn't have the money to get Matt to Maryland for the funeral, but blessed people keep looking for easy to say yes, and so I gave him what I had - a car
 - no matter how much - or how little - we may have, **you and I have more than enough to ensure that more have enough.**

The Landing

God wants us to be blessed, because He wants to bless others through us. That means that blessed people have a very different perspective than others: as long as they have something, they have something to give. And that kind of generosity spreads like wildfire. As we close, here is one example of that:

Selling lemonade to help a neighbor

When you're 8 years old, it can be tough to help out anyone financially. But that didn't stop Johnny Karlinchak last year after a giant oak tree crashed through his neighbor's house in Springfield, Va.

Karlinchak first went to his piggy bank and gave his neighbor, Elissa Myers, \$1.25. Then he set up a lemonade stand to raise more money, [reports the Washington Post](#). He made \$21 the first day, then \$108 when he tried again, and \$233 on a busy Saturday.

"I lost many, many things that day," Myers told The Post about the storm. "But things did not make me cry. The overwhelming kindness of Johnny did." The storm caused about \$200,000 in damage to her house.

Karlinchak's 6-year-old sister Kelly had died four years earlier in a car accident. His neighbors supported the family so much that they didn't have to cook a meal for nine months, The Post reports.

Generosity finds a way to say yes.

Mark 2 doesn't tell the story of the man who wrote Jesus a check to help fund a healing service in downtown Capernaum. It tells the story of a homeowner who let his roof be demolished and never said, "stop!"

His generosity literally went through the roof, and when ours does, people in this city will be changed just like people in that town were.

You and I are blessed, and **we have more than enough to ensure that more have enough.**