



St Barnabas Cray

God's Blessing: Faith and Grace in Christ

Weekly Devotional Journey

Monday - The God Who Blesses: Understanding Divine Favour

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

Devotional Thought

What does it mean to be blessed? It is a word we use with surprising ease — a casual 'bless you' when someone sneezes, a warm 'God bless' as we part ways. Yet beneath the familiarity lies something extraordinary. The word 'blessing' in Scripture carries the weight of divine favour, of God turning his face towards us in grace and goodness. It is not a vague spiritual sentiment; it is the active, intentional movement of God towards his people.

The priestly blessing in Numbers 6 was not a polite formality. It was a declaration of God's covenant

commitment to his people. When Aaron and his sons pronounced these words over Israel, they were not generating blessing through their own power — they were channelling and announcing what God himself had determined to do. The blessing originates in God. It flows from his character: his faithfulness, his mercy, his steadfast love.

Notice the threefold structure of the blessing. God will bless and keep — protecting and preserving his people. God's face will shine — the image of a father beaming with delight at his child, a king granting an audience of favour. God will lift his countenance — the opposite of turning away in displeasure — and give peace, that deep shalom which is wholeness, flourishing, and right relationship.

This is the God we worship. Not a distant deity who must be appeased, but a God who leans towards us in grace. And yet we must resist reducing blessing to material comfort or the absence of difficulty. True blessing, as we shall discover this week, is far richer — it is participation in God's purposes, being drawn into his great story of redemption for all peoples.

As you begin this week, allow the full weight of this blessing to settle on you. You are not merely fortunate. You are favoured — known, kept, and graced by the living God.

Reflection Question

When you use the word 'blessing' in your everyday life, what do you typically mean by it — and how might God's understanding of blessing be deeper or different from your own?

From Sunday's Sermon

"What do we mean when we say that we desire God's blessing on someone? We want things to go well with them. But the more you look into it, you realise it covers a range of meanings — wishing somebody well, praising God for who he is, thanking him for his help and his goodness towards us."

Today's Application

Begin this week by deliberately reclaiming the word 'blessing' from casual usage. Today, take five minutes in the morning to read Numbers 6:24-26 slowly and prayerfully, receiving it as God's personal word to you — not a formula, but a promise.

Then, as you move through your day, try to notice three specific moments where you sense God's favour at work: perhaps in a conversation that went unexpectedly well, in a moment of unexpected peace, or in the quiet provision of something you needed. Write these down in a notebook or on your phone.

Finally, choose one person in your life today — a colleague, a family member, a neighbour — and speak a genuine word of blessing over them. It might be as simple as telling them you are grateful for them, or praying quietly for them as you part ways. Blessing is meant to flow through us, not simply to rest upon us.

Morning Prayer

Gracious Father, I come before you this morning with open hands and an open heart. Forgive me for the times I have used the language of blessing carelessly, without truly grasping the depth of what you offer. You are the God who turns your face towards me — not in judgement, but in grace. Let that truth sink into the deepest parts of who I am today. May I receive your blessing not as something I have earned, but as the gift it truly is — flowing from your steadfast love and your covenant faithfulness. And as I go about this day, make me a channel of that blessing to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

Receiving What God Has Given

Evening Reflection

As this day draws to a close, it is worth pausing to consider how well you actually received God's blessing today. There is a difference between knowing that God blesses and truly living as one who is blessed. So often we move through our days at such a pace that the grace of God washes over us without ever truly soaking in.

Mary, when she received the astonishing news that she would bear the Son of God, did not rush past the moment. She pondered. She magnified the Lord. She allowed the reality of what God was doing to expand within her until it overflowed in praise. Her soul, she said, rejoiced in God her Saviour — not because her circumstances were easy, but because she had grasped something of the character of the God who had chosen her.

Tonight, let your evening be a moment of pondering rather than rushing. Where did you notice God's face shining upon you today, even in small ways? Were there moments of unexpected grace — a conversation that encouraged you, a burden that felt lighter than expected, a quiet sense of being held? These are not coincidences. They are the fingerprints of a God who blesses.

Rest in this truth: you are kept by the God who never turns his face away from those who belong to him.

Evening Reflection

Where did you notice God's grace or favour today, even in moments you might have overlooked in the busyness of the day?

Evening Prayer

Lord, as I rest tonight, I thank you for the ways your blessing has been present in this day — even in the moments I nearly missed. Teach me to live with eyes open to your grace. Give me a heart like Mary's, that magnifies you even in the ordinary. I receive your peace as I sleep. Amen.

Tuesday - The Faith of Abraham: Trusting God Beyond the Horizon

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. (Hebrews 11:8 ESV)

Devotional Thought

There are moments in life when God calls us to move before we can see clearly where we are going. Abraham knew this experience profoundly. At seventy-five years of age — an age when most people are consolidating, not uprooting — he received a call from God to leave everything familiar: his home, his extended family, the security of what he knew. And the remarkable thing is not merely that he went. It is that he went without a detailed map, without a guaranteed outcome, without anything to hold onto except the word of a God he had come to trust.

The writer of Hebrews places Abraham in that great gallery of faith not because he was perfect — he was not — but because he chose, repeatedly and at great personal cost, to believe that God was trustworthy. His faith was not passive optimism. It was active, costly, and directional. He packed up his belongings, gathered his household, and walked through hot, dry, dusty desert towards a land he had never seen, because God had said it would be his.

What does this kind of faith look like in practice? It is not the absence of questions — Abraham had plenty of those. It is not the absence of fear — the desert journey was no small undertaking. It is, rather, the decision to keep moving in the direction God has pointed, even when the way ahead is not fully clear. It is choosing to believe that the God who called you is the same God who will sustain you.

This matters deeply for us today. Many of us are waiting for certainty before we obey. We want to see the full picture before we take the first step. But God rarely works that way. He calls us to trust

him with the horizon we cannot yet see, and to discover his faithfulness one step at a time. Abraham's story is an invitation to that kind of courageous, forward-leaning faith.

Reflection Question

Is there an area of your life where God seems to be calling you forward, but you are waiting for more certainty before you respond? What would it look like to take one step of faith today?

From Sunday's Sermon

"Abraham obeyed because he trusted God in spite of not knowing where he was going, and continued to trust God. God had not only told Abraham that he had this special place he wanted to give him, he promised to make Abraham into a great nation and to bless him and through him, to make him a blessing to all the peoples of the world."

Today's Application

Abraham's faith was not merely intellectual — it was embodied and active. It showed up in the decisions he made, the direction he walked, the tent pegs he pulled up. Today, consider where in your own life faith is being called upon to become action.

Identify one specific area where you sense God's leading but have been hesitant to respond — perhaps a conversation you have been avoiding, a commitment to your church community you have been putting off, a step of generosity you have been delaying, or a relationship that needs mending. Write it down clearly.

Then take one concrete, small step towards it today. You do not need to resolve the whole situation — Abraham did not arrive in Canaan on day one. But he did leave Haran. What is your 'leaving Haran' moment today? Speak to a trusted friend or prayer partner about it, and ask them to pray with you and hold you gently accountable this week.

Morning Prayer

Lord God, you are the God who calls people forward into the unknown and meets them there with your faithfulness. I confess that I often want certainty before I obey, and I mistake caution for wisdom. Give me the faith of Abraham — not a faith that has no questions, but a faith that chooses to trust you even when the way ahead is unclear. Show me where you are calling me to step forward today, and grant me the courage to move. You are my shield and my very great reward. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion**The God Who Keeps His Promises****Evening Reflection**

One of the most striking features of Abraham's story is its slowness. God promised Abraham a son, and then Abraham waited. And waited. More than twenty years passed between the promise and its fulfilment. During those years, there must have been moments of doubt, of wondering whether he had misheard, of looking at his ageing body and his wife Sarah's and thinking that the arithmetic simply did not work.

And yet God had not forgotten. He had not moved on. Every time Abraham's faith wavered, God returned to renew the promise. He was not exasperated by Abraham's questions. He was patient, persistent, and utterly committed to what he had said he would do.

This is a profound comfort for those of us who are in a season of waiting. Perhaps you are holding a promise from God that has not yet been fulfilled. Perhaps the gap between what God has said and what you can currently see feels enormous. Abraham's story does not promise that the waiting will be short. But it does promise that God does not forget, does not abandon, and does not fail to deliver what he has committed himself to do.

As you rest tonight, bring your waiting to God. Name the promises you are holding. Trust the God who kept faith with Abraham across decades of uncertainty.

Evening Reflection

What promise from God are you currently waiting on, and how might Abraham's story reshape the way you hold that waiting?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank you that you are a promise-keeping God. Where I have grown weary in waiting, renew my hope tonight. Where I have doubted your faithfulness, forgive me and restore my trust. I lay my uncertainties before you and choose, like Abraham, to believe that you are good and that you will do what you have said. Grant me rest as I trust you. Amen.

Wednesday - God Will Provide: The Costly Nature of Blessing

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. And to this day it is said, 'On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.'
(Genesis 22:13-14 NIV)

Devotional Thought

The story of Abraham and Isaac on Mount Moriah is one of the most searching passages in all of Scripture. It is uncomfortable, and deliberately so. God asks Abraham to do the unthinkable — to offer up the very son through whom all of God's promises were to be fulfilled. And Abraham, in an act of extraordinary, agonising faith, obeys.

We are not meant to rush past the difficulty of this story. Abraham must have wrestled deeply in the night before that journey. Isaac — by this point not a small child but a young man strong enough to carry the wood for the sacrifice — trusted his father implicitly. The silence between them as they climbed the mountain together is one of the most poignant silences in the Bible. And then Isaac's question: where is the lamb for the offering? And Abraham's answer, trembling with faith: God will provide.

He did not know how. He could not see the ram in the thicket yet. But he spoke from the deepest conviction of his heart — that the God who had called him, who had promised him, who had given him this son against all natural odds, was a God who could be trusted even here, even now, even with this.

And then the sermon draws our attention to something breathtaking: many hundreds of years later, at the very same place — Mount Moriah, later called Calvary — God did what he had asked Abraham to do. He gave his own Son. He did not withhold him. The ram in the thicket was a shadow, a foretaste, of the Lamb of God who would take away the sin of the world. The place where Abraham said 'God will provide' became the place where God ultimately did.

Blessing, we discover, is never cheap. It is always costly. And the costliest blessing of all was the cross.

Reflection Question

How does the knowledge that God did not withhold his own Son change the way you understand both the depth of God's love for you and the nature of true sacrifice?

From Sunday's Sermon

"The amazing thing is that many hundreds of years later, God provided his own Son, Jesus. And it was at the very same place where Abraham had been willing to sacrifice his own son. God sent his son to die on the cross at a place later called Calvary to pay the price for our sins."

Today's Application

The name Abraham gave to that mountain — 'The Lord Will Provide' — was not just a historical marker. It was a declaration of theological truth that echoes through all of Scripture and into our own lives. God is Jehovah Jireh, the God who sees ahead and provides.

Today, take time to reflect on an area of your life where you are genuinely struggling to trust God's provision — whether financially, relationally, vocationally, or spiritually. Write a short prayer of surrender in your journal, naming the specific fear or need and deliberately handing it to God.

Then spend a few minutes meditating on the cross. If God did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32). The cross is the ultimate guarantee of God's provision. Let it anchor your trust today. Consider also whether there is something in your own life that you are holding too tightly — something you need to place on the altar of trust before God.

Morning Prayer

Lord, you are the God who provides. You did not withhold your own Son, but gave him freely for me. Forgive me for the times I have doubted your provision or clung to my own resources rather than trusting in yours. Today I name before you the places where I am afraid, the needs I cannot meet in my own strength, the fears I carry quietly. I lay them before you as Abraham laid Isaac on the altar — not because I fully understand, but because I trust that you are good and that you will provide. Thank you for the cross, the ultimate proof of your love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

When God Provides in Ways We Did Not Expect

Evening Reflection

Abraham did not find the ram before he climbed the mountain. He did not see it when he laid the wood. He did not see it when he bound his son. The provision came at the very last moment — when Abraham had already committed himself fully to obedience, when there was no other explanation left but God.

There is something deeply instructive here for those of us who want to see the provision before we take the step of faith. God's timing is rarely our timing. His provision often comes not at the beginning of the journey of trust, but in the midst of it — sometimes only when we have exhausted every other option and every other source of confidence.

Look back over your day. Were there moments when something you needed arrived in an unexpected way or at an unexpected time? Were there moments when a burden lifted, a door opened, or a word of encouragement came from an unlikely source? These are the rams in the thicket — the quiet, particular, personal provisions of a God who sees and who acts.

Rest tonight in the assurance that the God who provided for Abraham is the same God who sees your need tonight. He has not forgotten you. He is already at work ahead of you.

Evening Reflection

Where did you see God's unexpected provision or care today — even in a small or quiet way?

Evening Prayer

Jehovah Jireh, my Provider — thank you for seeing me today. Thank you for the ways you have provided that I may not have even noticed. Open my eyes to your faithfulness. As I sleep, I trust that you are already at work in tomorrow. I rest in you. Amen.

Thursday - Blessed to Be a Blessing: God's Global Purposes

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. (Genesis 12:2-3 NIV)

Devotional Thought

One of the most important words in God's promise to Abraham is a small but weighty one: through. God did not simply promise to bless Abraham for Abraham's own sake. He promised to bless him so that through him all the peoples of the earth would be blessed. Blessing, in God's economy, is never merely personal. It is always purposeful. It is always missional.

This is the great sweep of Scripture's narrative. God chooses one man, Abraham, and through him one family, and through that family one nation, Israel — not because they are more deserving than others, but so that through them God's blessing might reach every nation, every tribe, every tongue. The particular is always in service of the universal. The blessing of the few is always intended to overflow to the many.

This theme reaches its magnificent fulfilment in Jesus. He is the descendant of Abraham through whom all the nations of the earth are ultimately blessed. The great commission — go and make disciples of all nations — is the New Testament expression of the same ancient promise. Every people group, every language community, every culture on earth is within the scope of God's redemptive purposes.

The sermon beautifully illustrates this with the work of Bible translation among the indigenous Enlhet people of Paraguay. For years, a community of faithful people supported the painstaking work of translating God's word so that people who had never heard it in their own language could

now read and receive it. That is Abraham's blessing reaching Paraguay. That is God's ancient promise being fulfilled in our own generation.

And this reframes everything. We are not blessed merely to be comfortable. We are blessed to be a conduit — to carry the grace we have received into the lives of others, into our communities, and into the world. The blessing stops flowing when we dam it up for ourselves alone.

Reflection Question

In what ways are you currently allowing the blessing you have received from God to flow outward to others — in your relationships, your community, and beyond?

From Sunday's Sermon

"God promised to make Abraham into a great nation and to bless him and through him, to make him a blessing to all the peoples of the world. And all the nations of the earth, all the peoples everywhere in this world and every country will be blessed because you have obeyed my voice."

Today's Application

The principle of being blessed to be a blessing is not an abstract theological idea — it has very practical implications for the way we live, give, and relate to others.

Today, consider three spheres of your life: your home, your workplace or neighbourhood, and the wider world. In each sphere, ask yourself: how is God's blessing flowing through me to others?

In your home: Are you bringing grace, patience, and generosity into your closest relationships, or are you consuming the blessing without sharing it?

In your workplace or neighbourhood: Are there people around you who have not yet encountered the love of God? How might you be a deliberate presence of blessing — through kindness, integrity, practical help, or a timely word?

In the wider world: Consider whether you are supporting, praying for, or giving to any work of global mission — Bible translation, church planting, relief work. If not, this week might be the moment to take a first step. Even a small, regular financial gift to a missionary organisation is an act of participating in God's global purposes.

Morning Prayer

Father of all nations, thank you that your purposes have never been small or narrow. You called Abraham so that all peoples would be blessed, and you have called me into that same great story. Forgive me for the times I have treated your blessing as something to accumulate rather than to share. Open my eyes to the people around me who need to experience your grace through my life. And give me a heart that beats for the nations — for every people who has not yet heard the good news of your Son. Use me, Lord. I am available. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

The Blessing That Reaches to the Ends of the Earth

Evening Reflection

The Book of Revelation gives us a glimpse of where God's great story of blessing is heading. In that magnificent vision, John sees people from every nation, tribe, people, and language standing before the throne, and the living creatures and the elders and thousands upon thousands of angels join in one vast, thunderous chorus of praise: Worthy is the Lamb who was slain.

This is the destination of the promise made to Abraham. This is what 'all peoples on earth will be blessed through you' looks like in its final, glorious fulfilment. The blessing that began with one elderly man in Mesopotamia, who dared to trust an invisible God and leave his home, will one day culminate in a redeemed multitude from every corner of the earth, united in worship before the throne of the Lamb.

You are part of that story. Whatever your background, whatever your nationality, whatever your history — if you are in Christ, you are a child of Abraham by faith, an heir of the promise, a participant in the most extraordinary story ever told.

Let that truth expand your sense of what your life is for. You are not just getting through the week. You are part of an eternal, global, magnificent work of God.

Evening Reflection

How does the vision of people from every nation worshipping together before God's throne change the way you see your own small acts of faithfulness and blessing today?

Evening Prayer

Lord of all nations, I worship you tonight as the God whose purposes are vast and whose love reaches to the ends of the earth. Thank you that I am part of your story. Keep my heart global, my prayers wide, and my hands open. To the Lamb who was slain be blessing and honour and glory and might, forever and ever. Amen.

Friday - Choose Life: Responding to the God Who Blesses

Morning Devotion

Today's Verse

This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Deuteronomy 30:19-20 NIV)

Devotional Thought

We have spent this week tracing the golden thread of God's blessing through Scripture — from the priestly blessing of Numbers, through the faith of Abraham, to the costly provision of God's own Son on the cross, and outward to the nations of the earth. Now, on this final day, we arrive at the unavoidable question: how do we respond?

Deuteronomy 30 is one of the most urgent passages in the Old Testament. Moses stands before the people of Israel and presents them with the starkest of choices: life or death, blessing or its opposite. And he does not leave them in suspense about which they should choose — he tells them plainly: choose life. The urgency in his voice is that of a father who loves his children and knows what is at stake.

Jesus echoes this same urgency. He speaks of a final separation — sheep and goats, those who inherit the kingdom and those who are turned away. He says, 'If you love me, you will keep my commandments.' He is not introducing a works-based salvation; he is describing the natural fruit of a life genuinely transformed by grace. Love and obedience are not opposites. Love is the root from which obedience grows.

And the good news — the glorious, liberating good news — is that we are not left to make this choice in our own strength. In Christ, we have been given every spiritual blessing in the heavenly

places. We have been chosen, adopted, redeemed, and forgiven. The law of the Spirit of life has set us free. We are not striving to earn God's favour; we are responding to favour already lavished upon us.

The call to choose life is not a burden — it is an invitation into the fullest expression of what we were made for. We were created in God's image, crowned with glory and honour, designed for relationship with the God who blesses. To choose him is to choose the life we were always meant to live.

Reflection Question

In the most honest part of your heart, are you living as someone who has genuinely chosen life — who is actively loving God, listening to his voice, and holding fast to him? What might need to change?

From Sunday's Sermon

"We sometimes forget how sobering, how serious what God is saying, how serious this really is. I call heaven and earth as a witness today against you that I have set before you life and death, blessing and its opposite, cursing. Therefore, choose life that both you and your descendants may live."

Today's Application

Choosing life is not a one-time decision made at conversion — it is a daily, active, ongoing orientation of the whole self towards God. It involves the mind, the will, the affections, and the habits of our lives.

As you conclude this week's devotional journey, take time for a genuine spiritual review. Ask yourself honestly:

Am I regularly reading and meditating on God's word, allowing it to shape how I see the world and

make decisions? If not, commit to a specific, realistic plan — even ten minutes each morning.

Am I walking in obedience in the areas where I know God has spoken to me? If there is a clear area of disobedience or avoidance, name it before God today and take one step towards repentance and change.

Am I continuing in the faith — stable, steadfast, not drifting from the hope of the gospel? If you have been drifting, reach out to a trusted friend, a pastor, or your church community this weekend. You were not designed to walk this road alone.

Choose life today — not as an act of fear, but as an act of love towards the God who has blessed you beyond measure.

Morning Prayer

Lord God, as I come to the end of this week's journey, I am overwhelmed by the breadth and depth of your blessing. You have blessed me in Christ with every spiritual blessing. You have chosen me, adopted me, redeemed me, and forgiven me. You have lavished your grace upon me. And now you invite me — you urge me — to choose you in return. Today I choose life. I choose to love you, to listen to your voice, and to hold fast to you. Not because I am worthy, but because you are faithful, and because your Son has made a way for me to stand before you holy and blameless. May the rest of my days be lived in the light of your blessing, and may I carry that blessing to everyone I meet. To you be all glory, honour, and praise. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Evening Devotion

The Blessing That Has No End

Evening Reflection

We end this week where all of Scripture ultimately points — not with a command, but with a promise. The same God who blessed Abraham, who provided the ram on Moriah, who sent his Son to Calvary, who is gathering people from every nation to himself — this God has set his love upon you. Permanently. Irrevocably. Extravagantly.

Paul writes in Ephesians that God has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. Not some blessings. Not a few blessings on our better days. Every blessing. The full inheritance. All of it, secured in Christ, given to us by grace.

This is the note on which to end the week. Not striving, but receiving. Not anxious, but resting. Not uncertain of God's love, but settled in it. The priestly blessing with which we began — the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you — is not a wish. It is a reality, established in Christ, sealed by the Spirit, and available to you right now.

Go into your weekend as one who is blessed. And carry that blessing into the world around you, that all peoples may come to know the God who blesses.

Evening Reflection

As you reflect on this week's journey through Scripture, what is the one truth about God's blessing that you most want to carry with you into the days ahead?

Evening Prayer

Father, thank you for this week of lingering in your word and your grace. Thank you that your blessing is not fragile or conditional on my performance, but secure in Christ. As I rest tonight, I receive your peace. May your face continue to shine upon me, and may I shine your light into the world. To you be blessing and honour and glory and might, now and for ever. Amen.