



Showered With Blessings

By Rev. Larry Schaefer

Blessed be
the God and
Father of our
Lord Jesus
Christ, who
has blessed us
in Christ with
every spiritual
blessing in the
heavenly places.

Ephesians 1:3

*Rev. Larry Schaefer serves
at Our Savior Lutheran
Church in Orlando, Florida,
and is also the assistant to
the Executive Director at
Rebecca's Garden of Hope.*

When I greet members of my congregation with the usual "Hello" or "How are you?" their response is often spirit-directed: "I am blessed and highly favored." This, in turn, has become my response to others.

Blessings are God's way of lovingly providing what we need — not what we want — in alignment with His will. *For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure* (Philippians 2:13).

Everything He gives us is good. *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change* (James 1:17).

Saint Paul reminds us of our overflowing blessings: *The grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus* (1 Timothy 1:14). *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* (2 Corinthians 9:8).

God's grace in Christ overflows for you and for me, and out of God's generosity, we are prompted — as was the Good Samaritan (Luke 10) — to help and bless those around us, including those who are not a part of our group of family or friends.

So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others (Philippians 2:1–4).

John writes in his Gospel: *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth ... And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace* (John 1:14, 16).

It is because of God's free-flowing agape love that we are able to love others, loving as we want to be loved. Loving not just in word but in our actions toward each other. That is how we are truly blessed and become a blessing to those around us.

Dear Father of our Lord, and Savior, Jesus Christ, through studying your Word, help your Spirit grow in us each day. Use me to share the overflowing blessings of your grace, always looking for opportunities to help others on our journey. Amen. *Q*