



A Fountain of Blessings – Leader’s Guide

Begin by singing together the Doxology, “*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow*” LSB 805.

We just praised God for all our blessings. In one minute, list as many blessings as you can.

- Encourage group to share items from their lists.
- Ask if anyone listed hardships, trials, and difficult situations? Why or why not?

Picture a fountain in your mind. How would you envision a “fountain of blessings.”?

- Be accepting of any and all ideas – these are their opinions. The following sections will attempt to lead the participants to recognize that blessings come to us from a wide variety of – and often times unexpected – sources.

Read James 1:2. Can a trial be a blessing?

- Idea for sharing #1: A popular contemporary Christian song is “Blessings” by Laura Story. You may want to secure a copy of this song and play all or part of it to add to the discussion.
- Idea for sharing #2: There is a Chinese parable that tells of an old man who lived with his son in an abandoned fort. One night the old man’s only horse wandered away. His neighbors all came to say how sorry they were about his misfortune. He replied, “How do you know this is ill fortune?” A week later, the horse came home, bringing with him a whole herd of wild horses. The neighbors came again, this time to congratulate him on his good fortune. The old man replied, “How do we know this is good?” As the days went on, the man’s son began to try to break the horses by riding them. One of them threw him and broke his leg. Again, the neighbors came to tell him how sorry they were about his bad luck. The old man asked, “How do you know it is bad?” A few days later along came a Chinese warlord who conscripted all able-bodied men for his private war. But the old man’s son, with his broken leg, was far from able-bodied and avoided the draft. Once more, the neighbors gathered to rejoice with the old man at his good fortune. The story continues on in this manner. The point should be obvious: God often blesses us through trials, and what we think is “good fortune” may not always be good for us.

Give your definition of “blessing.”

- Encourage the group to share their ideas.
- One sense of the meaning is “a formula of words through which you express hope and prosperity and good things.” This usage is expressed in Genesis 27:36 and Deuteronomy 33:1.
- Another understanding of the word is “good things that happen to us.”

Read Romans 8:28-39. How can these words add to your definition of “blessing”?

- If a blessing is “something good,” we are told that God causes all things to work for our good. In other words, everything can be a blessing.
- In Hebrew, the same word is used to speak of God blessing us (giving us gifts) and our blessing God (praising Him). However, the meaning is different. As the hymn at the beginning affirms, God is the source of all blessings, both spiritual and physical. (See “The Lutheran Study Bible” note on Ephesians 1:3-14, p. 2017.)

Read Ephesians 1:3. How would you define the phrase “every spiritual blessing” in this verse?

- In Christ we have everything we need to be at peace with God: rescue, restoration, forgiveness, life, salvation. There is no need for any spiritual blessing that has not been provided by Jesus.

Read John 4:14. How does this shape your image of a “fountain of blessing”?

- A bubbling spring is a constant source of fresh water. Jesus provides ongoing satisfaction for all our needs by giving “every spiritual blessing.”

Read Matthew 6:25-33. How does this passage put “physical blessings” into their proper perspective?

- We often spend inordinate amounts of time focusing on “all these things” that are nowhere near the importance of “his kingdom and his righteousness” (v.33). However, our gracious God knows what we need and provides all that and more in our lives.

Read Malachi 3:10. What does this tell us about physical blessings?

- God has given us every blessing. When we give an offering, it is from what He has given. And we will never be able to out-give God. He continues to shower down blessings upon us.

As the source of all blessings, God wants us to be conduits through which His blessings, both spiritual and physical, flow to others. In a sense, each of us should be a fountain of blessing for the world around us. How does Paul describe this in Romans 15:27-29?

- The Jews and the Gentiles share with one another the blessings they have received from God.
- Paul says that he wants to share with the Romans the blessings he has received if and when he is able to come to them. Again, he shares only that which was given him by God.

How are you doing as a fountain of blessing in your life?

How could you be a better fountain of blessing in your life?

- Give the participants some time for quiet reflection on both of these questions. Encourage them to pray for God's guidance during this time. You might want to play an instrumental version of the song "Blessings" quietly during this time.

Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered (Proverbs 11:25).

- Remind the group that God constantly blesses His people. Even as we share our blessings, God blesses us more and draws us closer to Himself.
- You may want to share that The Message Bible renders this verse this way: *The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped* (Proverbs 11:25 *The Message*).

Offer a closing prayer in which you thank God for the blessings He has provided. Ask Him to help everyone present as they strive to be a fountain of blessing to the people they encounter in their lives.

If a closing song is desired, consider using "*Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*" LSB 686.

Scripture references are from the ESV unless otherwise noted.

A Fountain of Blessings
Written by: Rev. Michael Mattil, Sherman, Texas
Published by: Lutheran Women's Missionary League 2013



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