

“Sow in Peace”

Proverbs 2:1-8; James 3:13-18

September 19, 2021

I. Introduction

a. Story – Gift and Blessing

i. Friends sometimes ask me – what did Natalie get you?

1. Nothing is almost invariably the reply.

2. Now, look, I didn’t get Natalie anything for her birthday well, maybe some chocolates but nothing lavish.

ii. *Definitions - is that gift is something given to another voluntarily, without charge while blessing is some kind of divine or supernatural aid or reward.*

1. Divine or supernatural aid

a. Natalie doesn’t need to give me gifts, because she’s, in herself, something better than that – she is a blessing from God Almighty.

i. **Genesis 2:18** – Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

2. Gifts are temporary, blessings are ongoing.

iii. Giving gifts is far easier than being a blessing

1. In fact, gift-giving can, at times, be very self-serving.

a. One of the tricks that salespeople use is that gift-giving forces a subtle obligation on the receiver

II. It was God’s plan to bless everyone through his people

a. **Genesis 12:1-4** – Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

i. The majority of the Old Testament history after that is the story of How Abraham’s offspring did with their original mission.

1. How well were they being stewards? When they were Holy, things were good, prosperous and peaceful. However, when they failed at that task, they were evil, awful and downright despicable.

a. A lot like us, I might point out.

b. Adam and Eve were given the task of stewardship over all creation

i. **Genesis 1:27-30** – So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for

food. And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so.

1. Creation is a blessing for Abraham’s children, one we’re charged with shepherding along with all of God’s children,

III. We become Abraham’s successor through Jesus Christ

- a. **Galatians 3:7-9** – Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.
 - i. **Romans 11:17-18** – But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you.
 1. Arrogance of the other branches
 - a. Arrogant - having or revealing an exaggerated sense of one's own importance or abilities.
 - i. Sometimes arrogant people give the best gifts.

IV. As fulfillment of an Abrahamic covenant, the people of God continue to function as a blessing to the world.

- a. There is a specific way we do it
- b. **Matthew 28:16-20** – Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
- c. This is what keeps us out of a gift-giving mode in mission.
 - i. Gifts sometimes come across as arrogant
 - ii. Plus, gift-giving isn’t our deal, being a blessing is our deal.

V. We’re gonna party

- a. Be a blessing!
- b. Don’t lose sight of the big picture and the big picture assumes.
 - i. Going to a party. One where you only know a few participants? Or one where you’ve got a good chance of meeting somebody quickly
- c. Kajiado

VI. How are you being a blessing?