



Life Group Study Notes

"The Great Commitment"

Ps. Kore Bendix - November 19, 2017

Warm Up (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- What is a small thing that blesses you?
- What makes you happy when you are feeling down?
- What do you do for a loved one when they are feeling down?

Word (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at www.bethelworld.org

Genesis 1:26-28 ESV *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 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."*

God designed us to manifest his image everywhere we would go and in everything we would do. He blessed humanity with the intention that we would bless everything we would touch. God wanted us to leave everything better than when we found it. People and things should experience the overflow of God's blessings through us to them.

To understand what it means for God to have blessed us, we need to know that the Hebrew language conveys the idea of God imparting his goodness to us. He is fully committed to giving himself to us. All of who he is and all of what he can do is given to us, so that we might go into the world and express his blessing everywhere.

Genesis 12:1-3 ESV *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."*

God reiterates his intention and commitment to bless humanity. He selected Abraham to be one through whom God could bless all the nations. In spite of the ongoing rebellion of humanity, God persisted in his purpose to bless humanity. One could easily understand if God had rejected humanity in response to humanity's rejection of him as demonstrated by our willful disobedience. But he didn't and doesn't!

Luke 5:4-11 ESV *(Jesus) said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men." And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.*

When Jesus blessed Peter the fisherman, the story didn't end with Peter's blessing of the extraordinary catch of fish. Peter and his friends responded properly to God's blessing. They gave themselves unconditionally to the Giver of the blessing for the purpose of bringing his blessings to others.

Luke 12:13-21 ESV *And he told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man produced plentifully, and he thought to himself, 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?' And he said, 'I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God."*

Jesus' warning is solemn. To selfishly absorb God's blessings and not be concerned for the needs of others is condemned in the most serious manner by Jesus. God wants us to bear his image. He blesses us to be a blessing, just as he did Abraham.

Galatians 3:13-14 ESV *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.*

Discussion (10-15 minutes)

Choose one of the points below, and discuss how the lesson applies to our lives.

- What does it mean for God to bless you?
- Why does God want us to bless others?
- What is the danger of failing to be a source of God's blessings to others?

Prayer (10-15 minutes)

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- Thank God for the giving of himself and especially of his Son and Spirit to us.
- Ask God to make us more aware of the manifold ways he blesses us.
- Ask God to make us more aware of the opportunities we have to bless others.