



Grace Hill Church

#blessed. “She was “blessed” to get into school of her choice.” “So blessed for all the love,” she wrote, to approximately 900 of her closest friends. There’s nothing quite like invoking holiness as a way to brag about your life. But calling something “blessed” has become the go-to term for those who want to boast about an accomplishment while pretending to be humble, fish for a compliment, acknowledge a success (without sounding too conceited), or purposely elicit envy. Blessed, “divine or supremely favored,” is now used to explain that coveted Ted talk invite as well as to celebrate your grandmother’s 91st birthday. (NYTimes, 5/2/2014)

Happy are you, O Israel! Who is like you,
a people saved by the Lord,
the shield of your help,
and the sword of your triumph!
Your enemies shall come fawning to you,
and you shall tread upon their backs.” (Deut 33.29)

Therefore the Lord waits to be gracious to you,
and therefore he exalts himself to show mercy to
you.
For the Lord is a God of justice;
blessed are all those who wait for him. (Isaiah 30.18)

Blessed is the one who considers the poor!
In the day of trouble the Lord delivers him;
the Lord protects him and keeps him alive;
he is called blessed in the land;
you do not give him up to the will of his enemies.
The Lord sustains him on his sickbed;
in his illness you restore him to full health.
(Psalms 44.1-3)

Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus
said to him, “Have you believed because you have
seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and
yet have believed.” (John 20.28-29)

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it
comes upon you to test you, as though something
strange were happening to you. 13 But rejoice insofar
as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also
rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed. 14 If
you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are
blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests
upon you. (1 Peter 4.12-14)

And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are
those who are invited to the marriage supper of the
Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words
of God.” (Rev 19.9)
Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they
may have the right to the tree of life and that they
may enter the city by the gates. (Rev 22.14)

July 20, 2014

Expressing Our Love and Praise: Worship in Song

Declaring What We Believe: New City Catechism #50 (Newcitycatechism.com)

Of what advantage to us is Christ's ascension?

Christ physically ascended on our behalf, just as he came down to earth physically on our account, and he is now advocating for us in the presence of his Father, preparing a place for us, and also sends us his Spirit.

Welcoming Each Other (Kids may go to Sunday School)

Giving Worship to God: Offering

(Gifts to Grace Hill support the life and work of our church community. We have a goal of twenty percent of gifts going to local and global mission, including Samaritan Health Clinic, Justice Matters, Young Life, and church planting in N. American and Asia.)

Hearing God’s Word: Scripture Reading *Matthew 5.1-12*

Seeing the crowds, he went up on the mountain, and when he sat down, his disciples came to him.

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 “Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 “Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Understanding God’s Word and Our Lives: Sermon

Jesus’ View of the Truly Fortunate

1. *The Bible’s Answer to the Question of Blessedness*
2. *Living Out Our Mission of Blessedness*
3. *Locating the Treasure of Our Blessedness*



Grace
Hill
Church

Recognizing our Brokenness: Confession of Sin

Public Prayer

Our Father, we are all searching for blessedness in many places: vocation, income, luxuries, savings, insurance, food, rest. We work for it, beg for it, plot for it, steal it, manage it, and hope for it. But we admit that we have very little lasting sense of achieving it or living in it. Forgive us our misplaced ideas of blessing and our naive approaches to try to get it.

But you offer and give blessedness from the beginning of the Bible to the end. And Jesus calls us to see that it occurs *in him*. It is among the very *first* things he does. Give us eyes to see that His unique approach works: acknowledging our need, being filled by Him, we are *then* able to live in a mission of blessing to give to others. Our blessedness is actually a treasure, rich and full, lasting and beneficial, because *he* himself has become our treasure.

Private Reflection

The Grace and Forgiveness of Christ

And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God." (Rev 19.9)

"Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates." (Rev 22.14)

Remembering Jesus with Bread and Cup: Lord's Supper

Jesus called those who find their life in His death and resurrection to receive the bread and cup as a tangible sign to remember and be strengthened by His Gospel. It is a spiritual meal for all who believe in Him. While Jesus spent time with everyone, he also shared the bread and cup only with those who followed him. Children who have not yet become *communing members* should not take the bread and cup but talk with our pastor or an elder about their personal faith.

On the fourth Sunday of the month, we come forward as families, groups and individuals to receive the bread and cup and for a prayer of blessing. The second Sunday, we remain seated, with time to personally remember Jesus' death and resurrection for us with the bread and cup. Whether you take the elements or not, we encourage you to either come forward for prayer or use the time for personal reflection about your relationship with Jesus.

**Juice is in the outer ring; wine is in inner rings.*

Taking hold of the Good Word: Benediction ("the good word")

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. (Heb 13.20-21)

Prayers for Those Not Taking the Bread and Cup

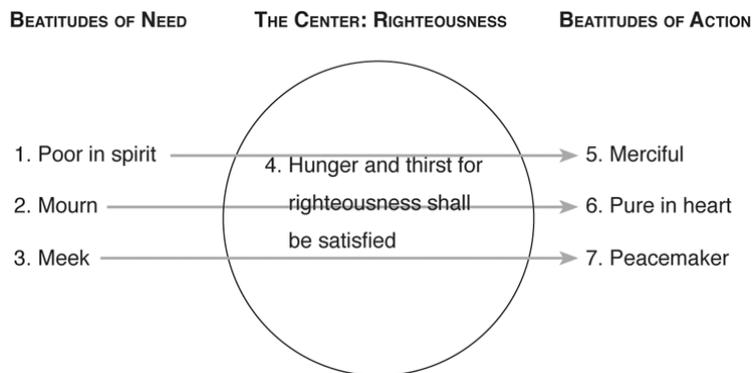
Prayer for Those Searching for Truth

Lord Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reason for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me and open me to the reality of your identity. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to you yourself and the life you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am more wicked and sinful than I ever dared allow, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, to give me complete forgiveness and rightness with God. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, in joy I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.

Image from Daniel Dorani, *Matthew, Vol 1 & 2*.



Grace Hill seeks to live by and testify to the grace and truth of Jesus Christ (John 1.14-18). We are affiliated with the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, a Presbyterian denomination with a rich history of living in Christ's grace and truth.

Our pastor is Ross Durham. He can be reached by email ross@gracehillchurch.net or by cell phone at 919.593.2169.

Address: 515 Meadowlands Drive, Suite 500, Hillsborough, North Carolina 27278 919.617.1792
www.gracehillchurch.net Facebook: Grace Hill Church Twitter: @gracehillchurch