



blessed to be a Blessing **Pastor Charlie Berthoud**

Sunday, August 2, 2026

“Blessed to be a Blessing” | Genesis 12:1-3 | Pastor Charlie Berthoud

“Life is Difficult.”

This is the first sentence in Scott Peck’s classic book *The Road Less Traveled*. And he is correct. Life can be very difficult. At various times, we all deal with grief, uncertainty, broken relationships, dashed hopes. The Bible knows about the difficulty of life. There are 150 psalms in the book of psalms and about one third of them are laments—crying out to God about difficult situations. Psalm 13 is one example:

How long will you forget me, Lord? Forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long will I be left to my own wits,
agony filling my heart? Daily?
How long will my enemy keep defeating me?

Sometimes I think we don’t give enough room for sadness and hurt in our common life as a church.



It’s too easy for us, especially on Sundays, to make ourselves members of the Fine Family. Do you know The Fine Family? They are the ones who when asked “how are you?” will respond, “Fine!” no matter what is going on.

Mr. Fine could be thinking “I’m gonna lose my job, our marriage is a mess, I’m drinking too much, the kids are getting in trouble.... But I’m just FINE!”

Here at Covenant, I’m glad that we try to make space for each other, to carry each other’s burdens, to recognize that we all have struggles.

Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (Gal 6.2)

So on this Sunday, when our focus is the blessings we have, it’s important for us to acknowledge that being a Christian doesn’t mean our lives will be free from difficulty and hardship.

What it *does* mean is that in the midst of those difficulties, we are called to look for the blessings, and maybe even to share the blessings?

A couple of weeks ago I had a long chat with someone—not a member of this church—who has been given a few months to live. He’s understandably sad and a bit confused, but he’s also seeing things in a new way—with gratitude for the years he has been given, gratitude for his family and friends, gratitude for the simple joys of a good meal, a sunset over a lake, the stars in the sky.

In the midst of the very real darkness, he’s also recognizing the blessings

Our scripture reading today is about blessings, and it’s one of the foundational stories of our faith.

Abram and Sarai were old and childless, and in biblical days, children were considered a sign of blessing. Then God surprised them, telling them that they would have many children and as many ancestors as the stars in the heavens, and that they would be a blessing to everyone. Listen for God’s word.

The Lord said to Abram, “Leave your land, your family, and your father’s household for the land that I will show you.

I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and you will be a blessing....

All the families of the earth
will be blessed because of you.”

Setting aside the complicated questions of ownership of the land of Israel and settler colonialism, the idea of this passage is foundational to our faith. God blessed Abram and Sarai, not so they could simply have lots of kids and go on nice vacations. God blessed them explicitly to be a blessing to others. It’s the title of the sermon: We are blessed to be a blessing.

In Christian language, we celebrate that in Jesus Christ God loves us, with a steadfast love. We affirm what Romans says, that neither death nor life, nor anything else in all creation can separate us from the love of God. We affirm the words of the hymn, “O Love That Will Not Let Me Go.”

We are loved by God, but not just so we can sit back and say “God loves me, isn’t that great.” We’re loved for a purpose; we are called to share that love.

The most important teaching of Jesus makes it clear: love God, love our neighbors, and even love our enemies.

Learning and living. Blessed to be a blessing.

A few years ago, there was a social media trend,
#blessed.

People were posting carefully curated images of well
being, with pictures of vacation, new clothes, fancy
restaurants, always smiling families

It was like The Fine Family on Facebook.

I sometimes want to respond: What are you going to
do with the blessing? It's not just for you. How are
you going to live differently and share that blessing?

Today, I'm hoping we can take a moment, even if some of us are in a difficult season of life, to think about
our blessings and what we can do with them.

At a very basic level, we're all alive today. What a blessing! How can we bless someone else this very day?

We're going to do something new and different today. I'd like to invite the ushers forward.

We have a reverse offering in our worship, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous member of
Covenant.

To help us think about how we are blessed in order to be a blessing to others, everyone who is here today
will be offered a \$10 bill. The ushers are going to hand them out now.

The invitation is that you use this \$10 to bless someone else this week. There are a variety of ways you
could do this.



Ideas to be a Blessing

- Charity
- Drive thru
- Gift card
- Flowers
- Cookies
- Coffee, lunch, ice cream



There may be people here today
who need the \$10 to get some
food or help to pay a bill.

How can you be a blessing to
someone?

If you're not sure what to do, you
could always put your \$10 in the
offering lectern in the rear of the
sanctuary. But I encourage you to
take it and make good use of it.

As you leave the sanctuary, the ushers will have index cards and we would love to hear what people have done with their \$10, so if you like, bring the card back next week.

My hope with this that those ten dollar bills will make a difference, and maybe more importantly they will help us to remember that every day we can be a blessing to someone else.

Let us pray

Loving God, we thank you for the gift of today and for the blessing of just being alive, today, right now. We thank you for the beauty of creation, for all the good people around us, and for your steadfast love. We thank you for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, who calls us to new meaning and purpose. We thank you God for all these and many other blessings. Help us to find ways to bless other people this week, with our words and our deeds, with our time and talent and treasure. Hear our prayers, amen.