



*Blessed are those who keep God's statutes and seek God with all their heart.
(Psalm 119:2)*

There are a lot of blessings in the Bible. God was just plain busy blessing people in many different ways. Like this one: *For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*
(Jeremiah 29:11)

Or, you could check out the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, and discover that a whole bunch of people we wouldn't expect to be blessed (or at least wouldn't expect to *feel* blessed) are blessed beyond measure.

Of course, blessings come in all shapes and sizes, and in many different ways. For example, I came across this story recently about a 97 year-old Jewish woman who repeats the same blessing every night in her prayers.

As a little girl she lived in Poland as the war was getting started. She was the youngest in her family and somehow managed to escape to Israel. Her family was supposed to follow, but none of them made it. Her mother gave her a letter before leaving Poland for Israel in 1941; it would be the last time she ever saw her mother. In the brief story about this woman, she doesn't say how she survived or if anyone took her in. She focused solely on the letter from her mother, because it contained a blessing.

Every night during her prayers, the now old woman prays that she will get to live another three years to make it to one hundred, and then she recites this blessing:

Wherever you go, may people always recognize that you have a beautiful heart.

I'm not going to try to unpack what it means to have a beautiful heart, or how that might speak to your faith journey or your relationship with Christ. Instead, I'm going to leave it alone for you to take as a mantra for your day. I know you will interpret it in the way that is most significant for you, and I trust that God will bless you through both your discernment of its meaning, and it's application for your life.

May you be blessed, and may you be a blessing to others.

Pastor Chuck

Let us pray. Lord, thank you for your great love and blessing over our lives. Thank you for your favor which has no end, but lasts for our entire lifetime. Forgive us for sometimes forgetting that you are intimately acquainted with all of our ways, that you know what concerns us, and that you cover us as with a shield. We ask that we would walk in your blessing and goodness today. Let your face shine on us. Establish the work of our hands and bring to fulfillment all that you have given us to do in these days. We pray that you would make our way purposeful and our footsteps firm out of your goodness and love. Give us a heart of wisdom to hear your voice, and make us strong by your favor and grace. Amen.