



THE PURSUIT OF GODLINESS

*3. Godliness is Contagious,
Generation after Generation*



28 JUNE, 2020

Please click on text in **RED** to listen to music or join in singing on YouTube. When finished, please shut down YouTube and you will be returned to this page. Thank you

Welcome Church and Welcome to Worship!

Last Sunday we celebrated Fathers' Day and were conscious of the fact that, many men are fathers **of ...** and many others are fathers **to...** We also discovered, everyone has a three dimensional responsibility and commitment: to thank God for our Fathers without judging them, to pray for ourselves seeking God's wisdom to be Fathers (which includes Mothers praying for their husbands/partners as Father of/to their children, and where appropriate, committing their sons to be Fathers whose heart is set on and guided by God Himself!

Godliness is indeed contagious, and can be passed from one generation to the next. Unlike COVID-19 which kills, the Pursuit of Godliness brings life and God's blessings, from one generation to the next!

LISTEN **Be Still for the Presence of the Lord** **(MP 50)**

As the music plays, read these selected Bible Verses. When done, you may shut the music.

Exodus 20:5-6 - *I lay the unrepented sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.*

Deuteronomy 7:9, 10 - *Understand, therefore, that the Lord your God is indeed God. He is the faithful God who keeps his covenant for a thousand generations and lavishes his unfailing love on those who love him and obey his commands.*

Psalms 25:12-13 *What man is he that fears the LORD? . . . his seed shall inherit the earth.*

Psalms 105:8 *He always stands by his covenant (a promise only God can keep because He is God), the commitment He made to a thousand generations.*

Psalms 112:1-2 *Blessed is the man that fears the LORD, that delights greatly in his commandments. His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.*

Proverbs 20:7 *The just man walks in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.*

OPENING PRAYER

I will sing about the wonders of your love forever, O God!
I will tell everyone I meet, about your faithfulness to all generations!
I will declare that your love stands firm,
that your faithful love is as enduring as the heavens above!
Blessed are those who know you as their God,
for they walk in the light of your presence!

HYMN

Jesus calls us her to meet Him

(BPW 12)

PRAYER FOR OUR NATION AND THE WORLD

Our country is in the middle of a great battle. We do not need to arm ourselves for this battle with physical weapons. This battle requires the whole Armour of God (Ephesians 6:10-18). When dressed with God's armour, the best way to battle is on our knees. And the best source for ammunition is neither the news nor social media, rather every Word of God.

James tells us, *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results* (5:6). We may not have the power to meet the Queen, the Prime Minister or other luminaries in government, but we can pray for them, and God can do mighty things through our prayers. We may not be able to change other peoples' hearts or minds with our words, but we have the power to pray for them and see God do miracles in their hearts through our prayers.

Dear God,

As we face uncertain times in our nation and the world, we ask you Lord, to comfort us with your presence. We are comforted by the knowledge that You alone are our Savior and Lord, and the ultimate Master of life, but we need the comfort of Your presence right now. We trust our nation to Your loving care, Lord. Send Your Spirit to touch the hearts of our nation's leaders. Give them Wisdom to know what is right, and the courage to do it. Guide us in all our ways with Your light and Your truth, so that we may seek Your will in our lives and impact the world around us for Your Kingdom. In Jesus' Name we pray.

AMEN

HYMN

Great God, we sing your guiding hand

(BPW 552)

PRAYER for OUR COMMUNITY

Loving Father, When we don't know how or what to pray, the Holy Spirit knows.

When all we can muster are sighs and groans, the Holy Spirit knows those also.

When we feel that we aren't even worthy to approach You, the Holy Spirit goes before us and with us, and You, Loving Father welcome us with arms open.

We pray for those who this week

are scheduled to go into hospital....,

need medical attention....,

are worried for loved ones going through difficult times....,

are waiting... for news - outcomes - reports,

need your healing balm to restore and renew a relationship....,

We offer You our thanks for answered prayer

We are especially thankful, you have protected us a Church community, from the virus going around the world.

We thank you for the advice and attention we have received to stay safe.

We thank you the unstinting, dedicated service by all who work in the medical and care sectors. Keep each one safe, and reward them for their devotion.

God of hope, show us how to work for justice together, standing up for what is right, stepping in when something's wrong, shouldering each other's burdens, holding each other accountable, righting the wrongs we've done and speaking truth to power.

Fill our hearts with love for you and our neighbour so that we may work with you in healing our land from sickness and injustice.

We pray this in the Name of Him who said, *anything you will ask in My Name, I shall do for you, so that The Father may be glorified in his Son, Jesus the Christ, your Son and our Saviour.*

AMEN

MESSAGE



The family-owned luxury watchmaker Patek Philippe run full-page award-winning advertisements showing a father and son (from 2018, included mothers and daughters) studying, playing, talking and various other activities campaign. The caption always read,

*You never actually own a Patek Philippe.
You merely look after it for the next generation*

Message: A Patek Philippe watch is not only for telling time. It’s beyond time. It is an heirloom that transfers value across generations. The joy one generation has being user and caretaker of an item of value, is same joy of inheriting the item by their next generation, but the joy is not in owning the value of the item, but the joy it brings to each future recipient, that **they were**

remembered, without being known!

I own two of my father’s watches, one he bought for himself and one I bought for him. When he died, Mum gave me both. One is not as valuable as the other, but they both bring joy and happy memories when I wear them.

God’s blessings from generation to generation is the story of the Bible. The earliest inter-generational blessing was given to Abram. Note God’s specific promises:

“Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father’s family, and go to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you.”

There are several things to note. God’s promises are always in the first person, **I**. God’s promises also convey His intent. To Abram, God makes 4 specific, **I will...** promises; the word **will** in the second and last sentences, is the assured outcome of God’s promises.

First, God asked Abram to separate and distance himself from his father’s family, his relatives and the country of his birth because idol-worship had taken over the land of his birth (*there is a long background story to Abram’s life gleaned from reliable extra-Biblical*

and non-Biblical sources, which would distract from our focus today, but I am happy to go through this if anyone is interested).

God never asks us to do something He will not support. *Go to the land I will show you.*

God promised to personally take Abram where was to go and show him where to settle; God intended to journey with him, meet his needs throughout, and keep him safe. To obey God's **Go!**, Abram had to act in obedience by separating himself, never to return to his homeland, see his relatives, including his father's family.

Second, God had a plan by which, blessing Abram would be a blessing to many, resulting in Abram's descendants becoming a nation. Yet Abram lived to see only **ONE** child, Isaac as his descendant. If I were Abram (and thankfully I am not!) towards the end of my life, I would be tempted to say to God, *Hey God! I trusted You and believed, You would deliver on Your promise! I don't see the nation you promised me!*

Obviously, Abram could not see God's plan, nor understand His arithmetic, that his one son Isaac would have two sons, Esau and Jacob, and the latter would have 12 sons who would be the 12 tribes, the foundation of the nation of Israel, in only three generations!

Third, having promised Abram dominion over a nation, God promised him the blessing of "fame", and the blessing of being a spiritual leader, a channel of His blessings, *that you will be a blessing to others!* The only One who can bless us is God, but only when we are wholeheartedly in His service as His hands and feet and mouth, God would channel His blessings to others, specifically those in need.

Too often we happily receive the abundance of God's blessing, but keep it for ourselves. One of Jesus' parable is sadly titled, "The Rich Fool" (*Luke 12:16-21*). Titles can be as pejorative as they can be demeaning, in this case specially to those whom God has blessed financially. Perhaps a better title would have been, "People who hide God's blessing."

The parable was about a farmer who produced a good harvest and his barns were full. In God's economy, when barns are full of God's abundance, the overflow belongs to those in need! This successful farmer wanted to, *tear down my barns and build bigger ones! Then I'll have room enough. And I'll sit back and say to myself, "Friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy!"* Imagine the cheek of this "rich" farmer to think, God would call him *friend*, when he did not want to bless the poor with his abundance!

Finally, God promises to bless those who bless Abram, and to those who go out of their way to curse him, be it out of envy, covetousness, resentment, resentfulness, bitterness, spite, jealousy, suspicion, distrust, mistrust, insecurity or hatred, will fall under the curse of

God. Whom God blesses, cannot be “un-blessed” as the story of Baal’am and Bal’ak informs us (read Numbers 22-24).

In a politically-motivated battle of words, Bal’ak thought he could subdue the Jews just as they were about to enter the land God promised Abraham, rob them of all power by casting curses on them. Baal’am, a well known and powerful sorcerer and prophet was brought in. After being thoroughly humiliated by his talking donkey, Baal’am, found himself incapable of cursing the Jews. Instead, he bestowed on the Jews four tremendous blessings¹, the last which foretells the coming Christ and His redeeming work.

Baal’am’s final words were, *Balak the king of Moab has brought me from Aram, from the mountains of the east saying, “Come, curse Jacob for me and come invoke wrath against Israel.” How can I curse whom God has not cursed, and how can I invoke wrath if the Lord has not been angered?*²

Anyone and everyone can be a recipient of God’s blessings. There are no qualifications and there are no requirements; only obedience.

The story of God’s blessings on Abram, is the story of salvation: leave your past, for God has a glorious future for you. I will make you into someone you can never dream to be, but I will not tolerate anyone who tries to rob you of my blessings. You will enjoy my blessings in your new life, so that you can be a blessing to others, and that is how, all the families of the earth will be blessed, because of you.

Author Jill Briscoe says about husband Stuart's mother, *She was was a grand old lady, a wonderful Jesus-lover and glory-to-God-giver, who was called home to heaven a long time ago, but her legacy lives on, inspiring their whole family; “there isn't a day that goes by when Stuart or I don't quote her! Now here I am, getting on in age, and I'm wondering, Will I have the same impact on the next generation? How about you?”*

Whatever age or stage we're at, God calls us to be a blessing to the next generation. Jill Briscoe offers three simple, yet powerful ways to do this:

FIRST, love the next generation! Love the child next door or the teenager across the street. Love the children at your church—even the ones who are loud and unruly! Every one of us can go out and show Jesus' love to the children He's placed around us.

¹ The first set of blessings is in Numbers 23:7; the second, Numbers 23:18; the third, Numbers 24:2; and the fourth, Numbers 24:15

² Bamidbar Rabbah 20:21 (a religious text holy to classical Judaism. It is a Midrash (textual interpretation) comprising a collection of ancient rabbinical homiletic interpretations of the book of Numbers).

SECOND, pray for them. The most powerful thing we can do for the next generation is get on our knees for them. And it's something they can do nothing about. Even if they reject what you say, they're helpless against your prayers.

THIRD, teach them. Children need someone to show them how to live in Christ, and you have years of wisdom to share. Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6).

God's blessings never age; they are meant to be used. So let Jesus love, pray, and teach about God's Kingdom through you and you will make an impact not only on the next generation, but for generations in eternity!

God wasn't attracted to you and didn't choose you because you were big and important. The fact is, there was almost nothing to you. He did it out of sheer love, keeping the promise he made to your ancestors. God stepped in and mightily bought you back out of that world of slavery, freed you from the iron grip of (sin). Understand this: God, your God, is God indeed, a God you can depend upon. He keeps his covenant of loyal love with those who love him and observe his commandments for a thousand generations. He is the God who personally repays anyone who hates him, ultimately destroying that kind of person, for the purpose of wiping out sin. The Lord does not waste time with anyone who hates him; he repays them personally and on time.
(Deuteronomy 7:9-10)

Isn't it worth praying for our children (and/or children we know and are fond of) who will influence their children and so on until Christ's kingdom is established on earth?

AMEN.

PRAYER

Our child(ren) (*name yours, or children you know and love*). We are so grateful for your life, and thank God for you. We love you dearly, trying to love you as God does, but His love for you is perfect, ours is not. We have no words to express our gratitude to God for giving you life, and entrusting you to us. When we have not lived up to God's standard of being a parent, forgive us. We do not pretend to understand your world, our dear child(ren); we cannot perform miracles and wonders to fix all the problems, but we know Someone who can. Into His care we submit you our dear child(ren). Enjoy a close relationship with God, closer than the one we had, and teach your children to do the same. When we meet in God's kingdom and don't see you wearing the valuable jewellery or watch handed down to you, the fact you are there is the greatest joy we will have. In the Name of Christ who will hold open for you, the door of Heaven. **AMEN**

HYMN

Great is Thy Faithfulness

(BPW 553)

BENEDICTION

Whoever welcomes you welcomes God, and they will share in God's blessings.
Whoever is not welcoming of you, nor hear what you have to say, pray God be merciful to them.

Quench our thirst for love; Satisfy our hunger to be known, and
Assure us, we are prophets of Your welcome.

Let us go to proclaim this peace in God's name, in the spirit of service of our Christ,
and for the glory of the Holy Spirit. **AMEN**

*As a member of Botley Baptist Church, please do not forget to remit your tithe and offering,
either directly into the bank or drop-off your envelope at Church.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FAITHFULNESS IN TITHING AND GIVING

*If you are not attending this Church and would like to contribute to its ministry,
please click "EMAIL US" at the top of the home page to know more.*

THANK YOU.