

GOD WANTS *to* BLESS YOU!

How *to* Experience the
Unconditional Goodness of God



CHÉ AHN



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Che Ahn, *God Wants to Bless You*

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To my beautiful bride
and best friend,
Sue Ahn



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Introduction

How This Book Came to Be

God Wants to Bless You! is about living a blessed life, and it was birthed in my spirit in a unique way. In December 2013, while my family and I were on our winter vacation after Christmas, I received an unusual message on my cell phone. It was more of a short prophetic word of encouragement from my good friend Bob Hartley. Bob is a successful businessman in Kansas City with an extraordinary gift of prophecy. The message he left on my cell phone ended up bearing significant weight in my life and the ministry God has asked me to steward.

Bob told me that I was to decree ten scriptural blessings over my local church, HRock Church, and also over our network of churches, Harvest International Ministry (HIM). I got excited. I had been seeking God for the new message

series that I would start in January, and I had been stuck on what to preach. When I heard the phone message, my spirit leapt—I knew Bob’s message was from the Lord. I eagerly called him back.

“Thanks, Bob, for leaving the message on my voice mail. That is great—I am to declare ten scriptural blessings over my church starting in January. So . . . what decrees am I suppose to make?”

“I don’t know,” he replied. “I didn’t get specifics from God. I just heard that you were to make the decrees. I think God wants you to seek Him about what they are.”

I was a little disappointed, and I almost said, sarcastically, “Thanks a lot, Bob.” But he was right. I knew God wanted me to seek Him about His blessing, a blessing that is real and alive in my life, and express it in such a way that would bless all who heard those decrees. Around this time, one of our HIM pastors, John Park, told me over dinner that he had given a message on the blessings of God and declared them over his congregation. It had been a tremendous blessing to his church. He e-mailed me his sermon notes.

After much prayer, I compiled ten decrees of blessing, first pronouncing them over my congregation at HRock Church in Pasadena. I was surprised by the response of our church members; many started to experience breakthrough in their lives. Increasingly, I am learning that a certain kind of power is released in a decree that is not present in merely a teaching about blessing. I believe that these decrees will change your

life and that you, too, will receive significant breakthrough as you speak them over your life.

God's Nature Is to Bless

As I travel the world, I constantly meet Christians who understand that God does indeed bless them but who show little evidence of that blessing in their lives. In honest and intimate conversation, many tell me that they have listened to many teachings about blessing, but they feel unworthy to be blessed. They may be struggling with some type of addiction, have had an affair, realize they have manipulated others for personal gain or failed to achieve some goal they deemed important. Whatever the reason, they judge themselves not good enough and feel guilty and ashamed.

Without realizing it, these souls have put conditions on God's blessings, turning the blessing into a payoff for good performance. They fail to understand the unconditional love of Abba God, who desires to bless them more than they desire to be blessed. They disqualify themselves from the blessings that He would freely give if only they would receive them by faith.

Their situation reminds me of a fable told by the late Dutch priest and author Henri Nouwen: There was a man who would meditate every morning under a tree close to a riverbank. One morning, as he finished meditating, he noticed

a scorpion floating helplessly in the water, close to drowning. The man stood on the tree roots and stretched over the river to pick up the scorpion, but it stung his outstretched hand. Instinctively, he drew his hand back and winced. But, determined to assist the scorpion, he stretched over the river again to pull it out of the water. Once again the scorpion stung him, this time deeply penetrating his hand with its poisonous tail.

The man yelled in pain and drew back his hand, which was now swollen and bloody. At that moment, a passerby saw him and said, “Are you crazy? Only a fool would risk his life for the sake of an ugly, evil creature like that. Don’t you know you could kill yourself trying to save that ungrateful scorpion?”

The man looked calmly at the passerby and gently said, “My friend, just because it is the scorpion’s nature to sting, that does not change my nature to save.”¹

We must not confuse our actions with God’s nature. Nothing we do or fail to do can change the fact that Abba God desires to bless us. It is His nature to do so. We can react with unbelief and push Him away because we do not feel worthy. We can hold on to negative thoughts. Like the scorpion we can remain helpless and struggle when He has supplied for our every need in abundance and longs for us to receive His supply.

Ephesians 1:3 tells us, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual

blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Every blessing in the heavenly realms God has already given to each believer, based on the greatest event in history: the death and resurrection of Jesus. But our job is to pull it down to earth by faith. This book is written to encourage believers to boldly step forward, decree God’s blessing over themselves and others and learn to wear God’s blessing well.



PART I

The Power of Blessing

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1

The Blessing Hunger



When you walk into a jewelry store, you never see the diamonds displayed on a white backdrop. They always have a dark setup, usually black velvet. In order to really appreciate God's love and His heart to bless—the diamond—let me paint a dark framework of humanity's need and hunger for the Father's blessing.

A Fatherless Generation

The present young generation are losing their fathers. Some fathers disappear before their children are even born, their identity unknown. Other fathers are alienated through divorce and disappear over time. Still others are emotionally distant or unavailable due to preoccupation with careers or other personal interests. We live on an orphan planet.

Absent fathers leave their children with tremendous unmet needs that frequently lead to destructive consequences. Children often wind up looking in all the wrong places as they try to attain an inner sense of security and significance that only a father can provide. *The Fatherless Generation*, for example, reports that more than 70 percent of runaway children, pregnant teenagers, youth with behavioral disorders, high school dropouts, and youth in prisons come from fatherless homes.¹

The dilemma of fatherlessness was captured well in *The Breakfast Club*, one of the most popular teen films of all time. Though it was set in the mid-1980s, its principles are almost timeless. The movie follows five high school students from different social strata and their journey of self-discovery during nine hours of Saturday detention. Two are highly popular, the “social princess” and the “buff athletic jock.” The others are on the outer fringes of school society, the “brainy nerd,” the “basket case” and the rebellious, defiant “misfit.”

At the start of their detention day, they regard each other with contempt and exchange verbal putdowns. It appears that they have nothing in common, but as time passes, they become increasingly self-disclosing as they engage in various activities. By the end, through transparent discussion, they discover that they all share a powerful need: to be accepted and validated by their parents, especially their fathers.

In compelling ways, this unmet need has shaped the personality and behaviors of each student. The jock and brain are both trying to live up to their fathers’ incessant demands

to perform and feel increasingly doubtful of their ability. Both in their own ways find themselves unsure of their identities and caught up in behaviors to maintain their public images that leave them with self-contempt. The basket case has adopted aberrant behavior to attract the attention of her neglectful parents, while the misfit vents his anger toward his physically and emotionally abusive father in rebellion toward all authority figures. One can easily forecast a future mental hospital placement for the basket case and prison sentence for the misfit. The princess struggles with her privileged image that masks the reality of her parents' failing marriage and forces her into a role she experiences as self-alienating.

With their longing for parental validation unmet, all of them have embarked on a life journey to find some way to fulfill their inner restlessness, without success. Unless somehow resolved, this quest will likely continue to dominate the rest of their lives, whether they realize it or not.

Desire for affirmation from our fathers is a deep human need. Without it we wander in life, looking for ways to patch up the deficits it leaves. Those of us who have enjoyed the presence of a loving, involved father can count ourselves fortunate indeed. But as many benefits as the active, loving presence of a father brings, there is another, even deeper longing that we all experience but do not know how to satisfy. At some point, we experience a void within that we cannot fill.

We try to gratify our hunger with achievement, success, wealth, fame, attainment of “stuff,” sexual exploits and on

and on, but nothing satiates us. Everything we grasp in a bid for fulfillment turns to ashes. Everywhere we turn, the grass is greener than where we stand. The toys we buy, vacations we take or temporary relief we seek through drugs or alcohol do not keep us from waking up in the real world, with the incessant, unidentified longing still gnawing in our hearts. Sometimes this longing is like faint background noise and sometimes it stares us in the face, but it is always there, reminding us that we seek something more.

God understands our condition. In Isaiah 55:2–3 He admonishes,

Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live.

He is letting us know that only *He* has what we are looking for.

We long for Father God’s blessing. We were created for blessing, and without it we develop a deep, insatiable inner hunger. Unless we look to God, we will not be satisfied. A human father’s role is to protect, provide and establish his children’s sense of identity. In a similar manner, Abba God intended that His blessing would impart into each heart His image of our identity (“Who am I?”) and our destiny (“Why am I here?”).

A Father's Blessing

The way Abba God blesses His children can be experienced through the blessing of a parent. My whole life and ministry changed when I received a blessing from my dad, Dr. Byung Kook Ahn. He went home to be with the Lord in 2010, and his life showed that he was a great man of God, the first Korean Southern Baptist pastor in America when he immigrated to the U.S.A. in 1958. But my upbringing was rocky, to say the least.

God showed me that I had bitterness toward my dad. So, in 1996, when my parents came to Pasadena from their home in Fairfax, Virginia, to attend my brother's wedding, I thought it was a good time to talk to him personally and ask his forgiveness for the wrongful attitudes I had toward him. I was dropping him off at the Pasadena Hilton to join my mother after we watched some football together, and after I parked the car, I began to share my heart.

“Dad, before I begin, I want to say I deeply love you and honor you.” I took a deep breath and continued. “But, Dad, I am still hurting over the rejection I felt when you physically punished me as I was growing up. I feel that you crossed the line, and as a fellow pastor, I realized that you had physically abused me. God also showed me that I am still bitter about this, and I want to repent before you and ask for your forgiveness.” I had never confronted him on this issue before.

Sadness immediately came into his eyes. I could almost see tears welling up. “After all these years, you are still hurt over what happened when you were a kid?” he asked incredulously.

“Yes,” I continued. “Dad, you don’t have to respond to what I am sharing with you. Just getting this off my chest and expressing what I have wanted to say for a long time is healing enough.” My father and I talked for several more minutes. He went into the hotel and I drove home.

A few minutes after I arrived home, my mother called. Now *she* was crying on the phone. But my mom was crying for me. “Ché, your dad told me what happened. Will you forgive me for not protecting you better when Dad was hitting you?” She went on, “As a pastor’s wife and as an Asian woman, I couldn’t intervene even though I wanted to.”

I was shocked by what she was saying to me. This is the first time my mom had asked me to forgive her for anything. “Mom, I understand. There is nothing to forgive,” I said.

Then she told me that my father wanted to talk to me and handed him the phone. My first thought was that Dad was mad at me for exposing him, and fear came into my heart. What happened next is something I will never forget for the rest of my life.

As my father picked up the phone, he said with deep tenderness and compassion words I had never heard him say or expected him to say: “Son, you just asked for forgiveness, but I realized I have never asked you for forgiveness. I realize

that what I did to you as you were growing up was wrong. Will you forgive me?” he humbly asked.

I was stunned. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. I regained my composure enough to assure him that of course I forgave him. Then he added, “Son, you know how proud I am of you. And I love you very much.”

What I was hearing shocked me. It was the first time I ever heard the words *I love you* from my dad. I did not know whether to cry, laugh or shout. “Dad, I love you, too,” was my only reply. We said good-bye, and as soon as I hung up the phone, I started to dance around the house, pumping my arm and shouting, “Yes!” I was healed by my father’s words of blessing.

Abba God began His relationship with us by giving a Father’s blessing after creating Adam and Eve: “Then God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground’” (Genesis 1:28 NLT). Notice that God established both their identity and their destiny with this blessing.

Throughout the rest of this book, I will be inviting you to step forward and receive Father God’s blessings. He wants to bless you. He has always had blessing in mind for you. Blessing is *His* idea, and nothing less than His blessing will ever satisfy the constant drive within you for what you have never been able to identify.

C.S. Lewis described our situation well: “If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world.”²

You were made for another world—you were made for God’s Kingdom and His blessings.