

## **GOD BLESSES**

**May the Lord bless and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you His favour and give you His peace (*Numbers 6:24-26*).**

The first page of the *Toronto Sun* told the story of a father and grandfather from Alabama who left a bucket of baseballs that he used to pitch to his son and grandson. His son and grandson are both adults now, so he no longer needs this bucket of balls. He decided to take this bucket of balls to a nearby batting cage to leave for anybody there who could use them. Before leaving the bucket of balls behind, this man left the following note attached to the bucket:

**FREE**

*HOPE SOMEONE CAN USE THESE BASEBALLS IN THE BATTING CAGES. I FOUND THEM CLEANING OUT MY GARAGE. I PITCHED THEM TO MY SON AND GRANDSON FOR COUNTLESS ROUNDS. MY SON IS NOW 46 AND MY GRANDSON IS NOW 23. I AM 72 AND WHAT I WON'T GIVE TO PITCH A COUPLE OF BUCKETS TO THEM. THEY HAVE BOTH MOVED AWAY. IF YOU ARE A FATHER, CHERISH THESE TIMES. YOU WON'T BELIEVE HOW QUICKLY THEY WILL BE GONE. GOD BLESS*

*P.S. GIVE THEM A HUG AND TELL THEM YOU LOVE THEM EVERY CHANCE YOU GET!*

This heartfelt note eventually made it onto the local ABC news in Alabama and onto Twitter. What stood out to me about the note is how this man acknowledged the blessing that God gave him spending countless hours using these baseballs to pitch to his son and grandson at the batting cage. It was a blessing from God that he still cherishes and now wants to pass on to somebody else who may experience the same blessing with their son or grandson.

When I spotted the words "God Bless" in his note it got me thinking about the blessing God asked Aaron and his priestly sons to share with the people of Israel:

- MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND PROTECT YOU.
- MAY THE LORD SMILE ON YOU AND BE GRACIOUS TO YOU.
- MAY THE LORD SHOW YOU HIS FAVOUR AND GIVE YOU HIS PEACE. (Numbers 2: 24-26)

This ancient blessing helps us to understand what a blessing was meant to do. Its five parts convey the hope that God will:

- 1) BLESS AND PROTECT THEM,
- 2) SMILE ON THEM AND BE PLEASED,
- 3) BE GRACIOUS, MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE,
- 4) SHOW HIS FAVOUR TOWARD THEM OR GIVE HIS APPROVAL,
- 5) GIVE PEACE.

When we ask God to bless us or bless others, we are asking God to do these five things.

This father and grandfather certainly felt that God had blessed him all these years he spent time throwing baseballs in the batting cage. By using the words “GOD BLESS” in his heartfelt note, we see that he wants God to bestow these five things on whoever takes that bucket of baseballs. This man’s actions also provide us with a Christ-like model of how we can encourage others and show love toward others as a result of the blessings God has bestowed upon us.

THANKSGIVING is a time of year when we pause and reflect upon the many blessings God has given us through our lives. Every one of us has accumulated so many blessings from God throughout the years. Have we followed this man’s example and shared our blessings from God with others? We often say “God bless” to others but how often do we follow it up with sacrifice on our part like this man did? Instead of just saying “GOD BLESS” with our words, let us be motivated to do it as well with our giving like this man did:

- GIVE SOMEBODY A PHONE CALL AND BLESS THEIR DAY,
- GIVE SOMETHING YOU NO LONGER USE AND BLESS SOMEBODY ELSE WITH IT,
- GIVE UP SOME OF YOUR TIME AND BLESS SOMEBODY BY DOING AN ERRAND.

The possibilities are endless in what we can do to bless others just as God has blessed us. May each time we say "GOD BLESS" to somebody, remind us of the powerful lesson from the bucket of baseballs and may we think, what can I give or do to bless others out of my love for God.

One day I may have a bucket of balls to give away too. My bucket will not be filled with baseballs, but basketballs. I already have a bucket with 4-5 basketballs that Coral and I use for shooting baskets out front of our house. Just like the father, I see it as a blessing from God each time I do so with Coral. Will I shoot baskets with a grandson or granddaughter one day? If I do, it will be another blessing to me from God.

It will be many years before the basket filled with basketballs will leave this house. I will cherish every day as a blessing from God and will cherish the opportunity one day to bless somebody else who could enjoy this too (if they still bounce by then).

Let's cherish every blessing from God and use every blessing from God to bless others, too.

God Bless and Keep Safe.

Pastor Dean