

Sermon Title: The Generational Blessing – June 26, 2011 (Scripture is from ESV)

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 61:6-9

Introduction

Good afternoon everyone. My name is John-Michael Becker and I am the healing and deliverance ministry leader for New Philadelphia Church as well as one of the pastors here. The title of today's message is, "The Generational Blessing." Before I get started, let me take a moment to pray for us...

Pray

Darker Times

As I have led the healing and deliverance ministry at this church I have led numerous people out of all sorts of sin and trauma. Many of the testimonies in our church are pretty amazing. Our church has had multiple people who were double orphaned, as in they lost their parents when they were young and then their foster or adoptive parents passed away as well or abandoned them. We have had plenty other very sad stories of abuse, rejection, neglect, along with tons of people who struggled with sexual addictions, drug addictions, and the occult. For a while I thought that New Philly just seemed to attract desperate people, but I've come to realize that sadly almost all of our generation has similar trauma, addictions, and struggles. Two and three generations before us endured the trauma of the world wars and for Koreans the Japanese occupation. And the last generation before us rebelled, turned to sex and drugs, and became consumed by materialism. And our generation is the fruit of the past few generations.

We live in a country that has one of the worst suicide rates in the world, if not the very worst. It is also a country that is believed to have the worst abortion rate in the world. Parents work all day and let the school system and academies raise their kids. The neglect is causing for more and more kids who need role models and quality attention from adults.

I came to Korea at the very end of 2005 to live in a children's home in Seoul. God gave me a vision to eventually go into North Korea and build orphanages there and gather the children. I wasn't sure whether I would marry in my life at that time, but I felt pretty strong inside that I didn't want to have kids of my own. I felt there were too many hurting kids out there and that I should adopt the kids in my orphanages as my own. I felt such a mindset was admirable and I wouldn't want to have to divide my time and interests between the kids at the children homes and kids I might have.

But God blew up that mindset just as He began to open my heart to the thought of marriage. In early 2009 I attended a small, secluded North Korea conference. Nearly all the speakers were Korean and spoke in Korean, but there was one guest speaker who came just to speak twice. He was an American evangelist with a strong voice and a ton of charisma. He spoke a lot about identity in Christ and the authority that we possess. At one point he asked the congregation how many kids we planned to have. And then, with emphasis, he stated, "You must have at least *four* children! Otherwise we are losing the battle! We aren't multiplying!" He also emphasized that we must raise them to be like Christ and to have faith. He shared some wild stories about his oldest daughter having angelic encounters and getting baptized in the Spirit when she was just a few years old.

It was during this retreat that God began to open my eyes to the generational blessing. For so long I had been so focused on rescuing people from curses and from bondage and trauma, but now God was calling me to focus on the blessings. It was also during this retreat that God opened my eyes to how every verse of Isaiah 61 had a deep prophetic message over my life and over Korea. Let's look back at that chapter and read verses eight and nine again...

Isaiah 61:8-9 – For I the Lord love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give them their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them. Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see them shall acknowledge they are an offspring the Lord has blessed.

These verses make it clear that **we should expect our descendants, our offspring, to be blessed by the Lord.** We have made our covenant with God, and so the children we bear will be marked by God's grace. This is the opposite from the generational curses that we receive when we commit idolatry or make any type of covenant with a sin or Satan. The mindset is simple: sinful and evil lifestyles produce curses while righteousness and justice produce blessings.

The evangelist mentioned how so many in sin are busy producing so many offspring, while Christians are only having one or two children. Curses are multiplying exponentially while blessings are dwindling. It was almost as if he was crying out to us, "Hurry up and get into a godly marriage and have children!"

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob

I felt a bit overwhelmed by his message. Before the conference I still wasn't even sure if I wanted to marry in my lifetime, and now I was feeling this conviction in me that I needed to have at least four kids or I'm not doing my job as a Christian. I needed some time to reflect on what he had just shared and let it settle in me. Thankfully, the next eight hours of the retreat were almost all speakers giving long sermons in Korean, so I zoned out a bit and reflected on the generational blessing.

We all know God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God loves to refer to Himself in this way. And so I began reflecting on their lives. Abraham was told He would be blessed by God multiple times, so **Abraham walked in faith and he was in fact blessed.** Eventually he had Isaac, who was also told he would be blessed by God. Isaac didn't get as many visitations as Abraham, but he walked in the same faith of being blessed and he was in fact blessed everywhere he went. But for Isaac had Esau and Jacob, the interesting thing was that neither son felt they were blessed. Esau sold his birthright and treated his inheritance with contempt. Jacob on the other hand strived for the blessing and even deceived his father for it. And what did Jacob end up with from striving for the blessing? A rock for his pillow as he ran for his life from his brother Esau. He had nothing. It was at this time that God appeared to him and spoke blessing over him. Jacob still strove as he served his uncle Laban, but it was during that time that Jacob began to realize his true identity in God and receive blessings far greater than his uncle and all the workers around him. The blessings were growing and Jacob ended up having 12 boys who were blessed by the Lord.

I had always focused on generational curses before. Abraham lied about his wife multiple times. Isaac committed the same deception and also lied about his wife. And Jacob's name was actually "he deceives" and his life was filled with lying. But I knew that God didn't refer to Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob because He is the God of

generational curses. God is God of blessings, particularly through family. His command from the beginning was to be fruitful and multiply.

Turn in your Bible to Malachi 2:15. This is a passage about marriage and about how God hates abuse and divorce. Malachi tells us that God made husband and wife one. And what is one of the main purposes of a husband and wife becoming one? Let's read...

Malachi 2:15 – Did he not make them one, with a portion of the Spirit in their union? And what was the one God seeking? Godly offspring. So guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.

God desires godly offspring. One of the purposes in marriage is to produce children who are blessed. And this is what should be expected when a man of God and a woman of God come together.

God continued to speak into me more revelations about the generational blessing at the retreat, but I needed more time to process it all. And I needed more faith. While I had witnessed in my life some amazing children with wild spiritual gifts and powerful discernment, I still wasn't convinced that this should be the case for every child from a godly marriage. There was one Christian couple that I knew was super anointed and I knew they had children, so I was curious if there were traces of generational blessings in their kids. The names of this couple are Rolland and Heidi Baker.

Some of you are familiar with Heidi and Rolland Baker from Mozambique. They have an amazing ministry that has planted tons of churches and children homes all over the nation and there have been countless signs and wonders done through them. I had wondered about their children for some time, and then interestingly, about a year ago, I heard this story from a friend of mine who served with their ministry in Mozambique...

A while back my friend was having dinner with different friends one night in Mozambique, including Rolland and Heidi Baker's son. While they were eating, Heidi Baker's son was sketching someone. At the end of their meal, he picked up his sketch and showed it to another person at the table who was visiting from America and asked him if the person he drew looked familiar. The person visiting from America was shocked to see a perfect sketch of his ex-girlfriend, whom he had broken up with before going to Mozambique while searching for his calling in life. While in Mozambique he had felt God speaking to him about his past relationship and that he should get back together. The drawing by Heidi Baker's son was another clear and powerful message to him. He ended up returning to America and marrying her and they have a beautiful relationship.

Was it just coincidence that Heidi and Rolland's son received such creative spiritual gifts? Or does their son have an extra layer of grace and blessings over him as a result of Heidi and Rolland's faithfulness and righteousness?

Jonathan Edwards

Allow me to share another example. In the late 1800's Yale University researched two men and their family lines: Max Jukes and Jonathan Edwards. Both of these men lived in the 1700's and had many descendants. Max was labeled an atheist while most of you have likely heard of Jonathan Edwards, a mighty man of God, who was one of the leaders of the Great Awakening that happened in America during his lifetime. While the bloodline of Max Jukes is known to have produced many thieves, drunkards, prostitutes, and even murderers, the

exact numbers are disputed so I'm not going to go into detail about them. But listen to the numbers for Jonathan Edwards, and these were from a report in 1900...

"More than 100 lawyers, 30 judges, 13 college presidents, over a hundred more professors, sixty physicians, 100 ministers/missionaries/theological professors, 80 men elected to public office including 3 mayors, 3 governors, several members of congress, 3 senators, and 1 vice president, 60 became authors with 135 books of merit, 75 army or navy officers, and some other descendants with other prestigious jobs."

What is interesting to note is that while Jonathan Edwards is known as a mighty man of God, his wife also had wonderful character and a beautiful faith in the Lord. In fact, Jonathan Edwards was known for promoting gender equality in the 1700's and is known for having been inspired by his wife's walk with God. It is clear that their love and devotion to God together released beautiful blessings over their descendants for generations. They truly left a legacy.

Joseph (Claiming Your Blessing)

So many of you, as a result of your parents and even grandparents faithfulness, possess many different types of blessings. For me, I know because my parents were so honest about their money and faithful in giving that I have been blessed with favor regarding money. I have lived off of support for five and a half years now and have never gone through a time of lacking or poverty. I recognize that there has been a special grace over my life that has protected me from different traps and has helped me grow with the Lord. While my dad has influenced so many people through his love and faithfulness, it's clear that God has increased His influence at work through me. And I know my dad is the first to be proud and excited for me. In fact, he has told me his prayer for me all along is that I receive a double portion of the anointing and blessings he has received. My dad is a wonderful example of a father of generational blessings.

So how have I received my blessings? **For one, I followed the example of my father.** My dad demonstrated to me how to tithe and give to missions. My dad taught me how to save money and have integrity. My dad demonstrated to me faithfulness in the Word and in prayer. I received so much of my blessings by simply witnessing the actions of my father and following them. Any person who is honest with their money and tithes and gives offerings should expect to be blessed. There should be an expectation of favor. For many of us though it is hard to trust in God's promises of blessings unless we have seen others set an example for us.

What About Those Without Faithful Parents?

So what about those of you who don't have a father or don't have parents who were good examples? What about those without faithful parents? Does this limit your generational blessings? No, but I have to be honest in saying it makes receiving your generational blessings a bit harder. Let me explain...

I have done healing and deliverance sessions for certain people who have experienced different perverted men touching them on the subway or in other public places and even exposing themselves to them. For these certain people, it wasn't a chance one-time happening, but something that has been repeated throughout their life. These people literally have a target on them in the spiritual realm. And I can almost always trace it to a generational curse. Because of the actions of their parents or grandparents, they have different holes and openings in the spiritual realm that the enemy has taken advantage of.

And because of the poor example of their parents or because of the sins of their parents and grandparents, these people naturally have a bit harder time understanding that God is a good father who is a good gift giver and loves them unconditionally.

We tend to receive the revelation that God is our provider through our own earthly father's provision. If we lacked a father or had a father who wasn't a good caretaker, there can be a lie that consistently speaks to us that God won't provide or that God will only provide if we are absolutely perfect. These are lies, of course. The prodigal's father gave him a robe, a ring, new sandals, and a feast. For what? For wasting his inheritance on prostitutes and parties and then returning home covered in pig grime? Of course not. The prodigal's father gave him such gifts and love simply because the prodigal was his son. And a true father's love is unconditional. God's love is unconditional and His blessings and gifts are unlimited.

So for those who have had a father who has not provided or been good at blessing or giving good gifts, **then you honestly need to forgive your father for these shortcomings. And then you need to renounce the lie that God the father would ever not provide or bless you or give you good gifts. That lie must be renounced!** It is then that you will be able to begin receiving and walking in your generational blessings.

A number of you listening have a similar prophetic gifting as Heidi and Rolland Baker's son. But if I were to tell you that you have that gifting, you would likely reject it as a lie or think that you'll not be able to have that gift for a long time. But think about Heidi and Rolland's son. He grew up in a lifestyle of miracles. His parents and so many other people of God around him were consistently healing the blind, the deaf, the crippled, and even raising the dead. The spiritual realm wasn't foreign to him. So discovering his gift wasn't that hard. His parents had already set the example he needed to walk in the supernatural.

And those of you here at New Philadelphia Church, can I tell you that you are in the right house? You have fathers here in this house who are demonstrating to you the power of the Spirit. For a time it was just Pastor Christian walking in the anointing, and then it was just a few core leaders, but now we see everyone in the church walking in the healing anointing on the mission field and imparting the power of God on those we lay hands on. You may have not had faith and the supernatural demonstrated to you well as you grew up, but now you are seeing it consistently. And faith is rising up. Your true identity in Christ is overtaking you. And the blessings of the house are filling you. Amen?

But there are also generational blessings for us that go beyond our own family and New Philadelphia Church. Turn with me in your Bible to Galatians 3:7-9

Galatians 3:7-9 – Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.” So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

Please repeat after me, “**I have the blessings of Abraham.**” Yet another identity we have in Christ. We are sons of Abraham! And so we have the blessings of Abraham!

Last year I gave a message “Why Pray For Israel.” I actually spoke about the generational blessing in that message. If you haven't listened to it yet, then you really need to listen. You will learn more about the blessings we possess through Abraham and you will also understand why it is so critical for us to pray for Israel. Listen to that message!

Every descendant of Abraham had blessings. I know I already mentioned how Isaac and Jacob were blessed, but did you know that Ishmael and Esau were blessed as well? While neither of them pursued God, the blessings of Abraham still eventually overtook them. Ishmael had twelve sons who became fathers of nations. Esau became the father of the Edomites and had so many children and riches that he laughed at Jacob's attempts to bless him. Esau had no material needs. And if you look at the Jewish people today, despite their lack of faith in Jesus, they still have the blessing of Abraham over them and so many of them are prosperous and have amazing achievements in pretty much every field. Church, we possess the same blessings of Abraham! AND, we are walking in faith like Isaac and Jacob, unlike Ishmael and Esau. So we should expect blessings not just in the physical but in the spiritual as well. We should expect the dreams and visitations that Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph experienced.

The main ingredient for walking in our generational blessings is faith. If we live in the flesh, we will likely repeat the sins of our parents and grandparents. But if we live in the spirit and in faith, we will become aware of blessings we never knew of before and will walk in them with confidence. We need to claim our identity in Christ that we are the sons of Abraham and have the blessings of Abraham. And we need to ask God to demonstrate these things to us so that we can really believe them.

Do you all remember Gideon? He was man who believed he was the weakest of his family who was the weakest of his clan which was the weakest of Israel. You talk about a poor identity and little faith! But God called him a mighty warrior. And as Gideon began to believe, God granted Gideon signs to build his faith. It culminated in God sending Gideon down into the enemy Midianite camp to overhear two men talking about a wild dream that symbolized Gideon destroying the Midianite army. It was at that point that Gideon received all the faith he needed to walk in his true identity and in the amazing favor of God. And so Gideon destroyed the Midianites and became a mighty judge over Israel.

God is faithful to us. He is never upset when we ask for help as we claim our true identity in Him. He sees us growing in faith, and He grants us the signs and experiences we need to continue to grow. God is a father to the fatherless. While our own parents may have failed in some areas, God will still demonstrate to us what we need to see in order for us to receive the blessings we have inherited in Him.

Brief recap

So to briefly recap what I've shared so far... each of us have generational blessings from our family, our church, and most of all from being a descendant of Abraham. In order for us to fully receive our blessings from our family and our church we need to follow the example of those who father us. And in order for us to walk in the fullness of the generational blessing we need to ask for faith. If we are true descendants of Abraham then money, housing, family, and guidance should never be a concern for us. God will provide, shelter, release love, and guide us through everything. He did this for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and He will do this for us too.

Change in Mindset

And now I want to bring a similar mindset change as that evangelist did with me when he challenged us to have at least four kids. I want to challenge you all to have kids. Many kids. More kids than you can count! Healing and deliverance ministry is critical before having kids because you want them to be from a relationship that is fully blessed, not carrying any

residue from a sinful past. If the husband and wife are clean, it is a guarantee that the children will be blessed.

But I am not just talking about kids from a godly marriage though, I'm also talking about spiritual sons and daughters. So often our mindset is, "What can I get out of this?" **But the truth is that true love is not about receiving but is instead about giving away.** And while if all of us were to have four kids we may have grown the body of Christ and increased the blessings on our children, there are still plenty more who are currently living under the curses of this world and need freedom.

Some of the stories of the people that attend this church, especially the younger ones, are really shocking. A number of you have a family background that is worse than most of the kids at the children's home I serve at. But hearing about such backgrounds doesn't depress me, instead it excites me because you are in the right place.

I truly believe that God is sending more of these young people with such difficult pasts to this church not just to rescue them and set them free, but to also empower them and set them up as fathers and mothers of the orphans of North and South Korea. They will be the ones who will be able to identify with and give hope to the orphans of North Korea most effectively. So many of the leaders here endured such difficult pasts but are now the pastors and small group leaders who are fathering and mothering others, releasing generational blessings they never knew they possessed.

Look back with me at Isaiah 61:8-9. You all are familiar with the first few verses of this chapter. "The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me ("Why has He anointed us?") to preach good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captive and release from darkness for the prisoner... and on and on. Did you notice that the chapter is addressed to you and that the Spirit has been set upon you to minister to "them" (the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, the prisoner)? And now look at the promises of Isaiah 61:8-9.

Isaiah 61:8-9 – For I the Lord love justice; I hate robbery and wrong; I will faithfully give **them** their recompense, and I will make an everlasting covenant with **them**. Their offspring shall be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples; all who see **them** shall acknowledge they are an offspring the Lord has blessed.

Who is God making an everlasting covenant with? He is making an everlasting covenant with the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, and the prisoner. He is making an everlasting covenant with those whom we father and mother. He is taking those that we take in as our own and marking them with His love and with such a strong generational blessing that the whole world will see them and acknowledge that they have been marked by God.

Church, you are blessed. God has made an everlasting covenant with you. You are being fathered in this house and generational blessings are being released into you. More and more, the nations are acknowledging that we are a body of Christ that the Lord has blessed. Just ask churches we have visited in India, Philippines, Indonesia, and other nations.

And now I want to challenge you church, spread the love. I want to tell you that your children, especially the children you will have out of a godly marriage, will bear so much more fruit than you. And you will be proud of them. The more you father and give away, the stronger the generational blessing will grow.