

## **Blessed to Be a Blessing – January 2, 2011**

### **Lifestyle Change**

**Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. Acts 20:34-36**

With the arrival of the New Year many of us have already resolved to achieve a lifestyle change. Whether it is healthier eating, weight loss, more family time, career change or a multitude of other things we are on board for 2011 to be a better year than 2010. It is a time for putting away the failures of the old year and embracing the goals before us to be happier, healthier, and more successful. The fair question to ask is, where is God in all of this?

God calls us to a lifestyle change also. Consider our own lives measured against the lives of the apostles, prophets, and faithful forerunners in the faith. How are we the same? How are we different? The sameness is easy to identify. We are all sinners, prone to breaking the commandments with ease on a regular basis. That puts us in familiar company with the rest of the world. The differences might be harder to identify, but not impossible when one studies the Scriptures.

Consider the heroes of the faith. They set aside their self centeredness in response to God's love for them. No matter their specific situation that is the common thread---the lifestyle change God calls His people to undergo. By God's grace they recognized the fullness of their blessings in the Gospel and that through that Gospel they had been called to be a blessing to others. They were not merely to be receptacles of God's grace, but also conduits of that grace distributing His love to others by their words and deeds. They were "blessed to be a blessing".

So are you and I. We are "blessed to be a blessing" also. We are blessed in the waters of holy baptism by a loving God who calls us out of

the darkness of sin into His marvelous light. In the forgiveness we have received through Christ Jesus who died and rose again for us, we are called to a lifestyle change. We are called by the power of the Gospel to live according to God's holy will and be His blessed servants to a world lost in sin.

This year at Grace Lutheran, Lord willing, we will live under the theme "Blessed to Be a Blessing". During that time we shall explore how as God's people we can be equipped for service to Him and to His people. We are indeed "blessed to be a blessing". Take time to count those blessings and ask God to give you the wisdom to use those blessings in a manner that gives Him the glory and serves the purpose of expanding His kingdom.

Pastor Jacobs

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