

Growing Deeper
The Good Life - Part One

Week One – *Counting Every Blessing*
Psalm 103:1-13

Spend FIFTEEN - Day One

1. When you think about the ways in which you've been blessed, what types of things come to mind first? Make a quick list of broad categories (family, friends, physical comforts, etc.)
2. Looking over the broad categories, do you feel you're more blessed than you deserve to be or do you feel there's some area of your life where you're lacking in blessing? Explain your answer.
3. Read Psalm 103:1-13. Do you see benefits listed in these verses that are not on your list? Were they omitted from your list because you don't have them or because you've not considered them as blessings?
4. The benefits listed in Psalm 103 demonstrate that the manners in which God blesses us are far more diverse than most of us realize. What steps could you take to broaden your concept of blessings?
5. Read Psalm 29:10-11. How would your faith be affected if you took seriously God's intention to be a blessing to you?
6. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer, asking God to open your eyes to the many ways He blesses you.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two

7. Do you believe in luck? Is it acceptable for a Christian to say good luck to someone when you wish him well? Explain your answer.
8. In today's culture, the words luck and blessings are often used synonymously. What is the essential difference between being blessed and being lucky?
9. Read Psalm 103:1-13. Who is the source of all of the benefits shown?
10. Look again at verse 13. What analogy does the psalmist use to describe God? How does that picture affect the way you see God's motivation to bless you?
11. Is it better to have luck on your side or God on your side? Explain.

12. Read Malachi 3:17. As God's children, He considers all of us to be His treasures. How might God expect us to take care of His treasures?
13. Since God treasures us enough to intentionally bless us, shouldn't we trust Him to take care of us? As you conclude your FIFTEEN, ask God to help you trust Him to know what is best for you.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three

14. Look back at your list of blessings from day one this week. How would you describe that list? Are there mainly blessings people generally consider good or are there some hardships on your list as well?
15. Describe a time in your life that was difficult yet, over time, you came to see as a blessing. What did it take for you to see it as a blessing?
16. Read Romans 5:3-5. Use your own words to describe the progression of hardship to hope in these verses.
17. Look again at verse 5. What does hope in God never produce?
18. Read Psalm 25:2-4. What does the psalmist ask of God in verse 4 in order to keep his hope in Him?
19. When we look back over how faithful God has been, we see evidence of goodness, even through our struggles. End your FIFTEEN by confessing those times you doubted His faithfulness. Ask Him to teach you His ways so that you may always trust His blessings, whether they seem good at the time or not.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four

20. Imagine for a moment what it would be like if you had all of the money you ever wanted and you never had to think twice about buying anything your heart desired. How does this exercise make you feel about the blessings in your life? Now imagine the opposite is true. You have no idea where your next meal is coming from, maybe even your next glass of clean water. How does this affect the way you feel about your life?
21. Our perspective can greatly change the way we see our blessings. We can easily become dissatisfied and forget what God has done for us when we compare our situation to the situations of those who appear to have more. Yet when we compare ourselves to those who have less, it is easier to remember what we have. Read Psalm 77:9-14 and summarize what happens to our perspective when we focus on what God has done for us.
22. The truth is, when we take a closer look at most people's lives, what may appear to be blessings to us may be hardships to them. Many famous celebrities have decried the inability discern who their true friends are once they've achieved wealth and acclaim. How might living the life of an average person (assuming you're not rich and famous) have its advantages?

23. God has lavished a great love on all of us through His son, Jesus. Read Ephesians 1:7-9. How does remembering this affect how you see your blessings?
24. Close in prayer, thanking God that He loves us enough to do what's best for us, even when we do not always recognize it ourselves.

Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five

25. Is it easier for you to recognize blessings in your own life or in the lives of others? Does it seem that some people are more blessed than others?
26. Read Psalm 107:43. Whether or not recognizing blessings in your own life comes naturally to you, what type of person counts her blessings?
27. What naturally follows when you remember God's blessings?
28. Another word for acknowledgment and gratitude could be appreciation. How does it affect your relationship with another person when you feel appreciated by them?
29. How does appreciating someone affect how you feel about them?
30. It's almost impossible to feel neutral, much less negative, about someone when you are truly appreciative of what he's done in your life. This is even more true when it comes to God. After all, He's done more for us than anyone else ever could - even more than we could do for ourselves, no matter how hard we tried. As you finish your FIFTEEN, read John 10:10 and thank Jesus for the life He freely offers you.