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THE HOUSE, NOT THE PICTURE OF THE HOUSE

Genesis 27

The late best selling author, Robert Ludlum, wrote a novel that opens with a man being rescued from the Mediterranean Sea by some fishermen, after they found him floating unconscious, with two gunshot wounds in his back. One of the fishermen takes care of him and helps him heal. As the man recovers, he realizes he has no memory of his past. He doesn’t know who he is. He doesn’t even know his name. He begins to find out that he has surprising abilities, such as the ability to speak several languages, but also some frightening combat capabilities. He realizes he notices things other people don’t usually see. Those abilities combined with the gunshot wounds hint at a violent past. It is discovered that he has a tiny chip implanted in his hip that contains information to a safe deposit box at a particular bank. He can’t live with no memory, no knowledge of who he is. That is no life at all. So he goes to that bank to begin his search for his identity. He eventually learns his name is Jason Bourne, and slowly he begins to learn about who he is. Thus begins *The Bourne Identity*, which spawned an entire franchise of books and movies, including, *The Bourne Supremacy, The Bourne Ultimatum, The Bourne Sanction, The Bourne Deception, The Bourne Revelation, The Bourne Culmination*. Actually I made up those last two. But we should not forget *The Bourne Preparation*, which is the Jason Bourne cookbook. Okay I made that up too. There’s no cookbook.

I think that story has at least a faint parallel with all of us. The central conflict of that story revolves around Jason discovering and coming to grips with his real identity. It was unbearable for him to not know who he really was. We have a similar issue in our lives. Our identity is a significant issue for all of us. We have some indications, some faint reminders, some vague pointers to what our true identity is, but it often lies out of reach. It is unbearable for us to not know who we really are. We will never truly be at peace, we will never be able to live freely until we discover who we really are. Laurie and I have a couple of friends who are desperately trying to find their identity, but doing so in futile ways. It feels like we are watching a slow motion train wreck in progress.

Today we are going to look at an incident from Genesis that may not look like it at first glance, but it actually speaks to the question of identity. Let’s look at Genesis 27.

ISAAC TRIED TO DERAIL GOD’S PLAN

At issue in this chapter is Isaac’s blessing. He was an old man. He was frail, his eyesight had faded to nearly nothing, and he knew that his death was not far off. It was traditional in that day for the head of a family to give his blessing to his children before he died. Knowing that he could go at any time, Isaac determined that he needed to fulfill that function.

This blessing was not the same as the birthright that we encountered back in chapter 25. The birthright of the firstborn son was to get a double portion of the family inheritance and usually to also become the leader of the next generation. However, the firstborn did not always become the next patriarch of the family. It was up to the previous patriarch to declare who would have that position in his final blessing. The firstborn could receive a double portion of the inheritance without being declared the next leader of the family. The double inheritance was commanded in the Law. Deuteronomy 21:16-17 required the oldest son in a family to get a double share of the inheritance.

By law the firstborn son got the double inheritance, and the inside track on ruling over the clan. But that last privilege was not a done deal. The next patriarch was only finally determined when the dying leader gave his blessing. It was possible for a firstborn to get the inheritance of the birthright, but not the position of patriarch. In fact, that happened in the next generation of Abraham’s clan when Judah was given the position of leader instead of Reuben, who was the first born. A dying patriarch might determine that the firstborn son did not have the character to be the next patriarch and choose another instead. That’s what happened with Reuben.

We learned in chapter 25 that God had already made it clear that Jacob was to be the next patriarch. But Isaac preferred Esau. Jacob has already demonstrated that he had a big character issue when he cheated his brother, and that character flaw shows up again in this chapter. However, Esau wasn’t exactly a wise and respected statesman. But Rebekah and Isaac had gotten into playing favorites with their boys, always a bad and destructive idea. Isaac favored Esau big time. He wanted no part of Jacob becoming the next leader of the clan. So he determined to give that blessing to Esau.

Normally, in his final days a failing patriarch would call the entire family together and would pronounce a blessing on each child. As part of that he would pronounce a blessing declaring one of them to be the new patriarch. Isaac cooked up a plan to do an end run around what he knew Rebekah wanted. Instead of bringing the family together, he would give Esau his blessing in private. That way he would avoid any ugly scenes with his wife. He told Esau to go out and kill an animal, maybe a deer, and bring him some venison they could eat as a celebration meal as Isaac gave Esau his blessing.

REBEKAH SCHEMED TO DERAIL ISAAC’S PLAN

However, Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, overheard the whole thing as Isaac shared his scheme with Esau. She was determined not to let Isaac short circuit what she knew to be God’s plan, that her favorite little boy, Jacob, get the blessing of becoming the new patriarch. So she pulled Jacob aside, told him to go kill a couple of goats and she would cook a dish with them so it would seem like venison. He could pretend to be Esau and trick his dad into blessing him.

Jacob, who has already shown himself to be a shady character by fleecing his own brother, was initially cool to this plan. He didn’t have any moral compunctions about it. He was just afraid he would get caught. Convincing Dad that Jacob was Esau was a dicey proposition. If Isaac caught him trying to pull a fast one, Jacob was going to get a curse, not a blessing. And that seemed an entirely likely outcome to Jacob.

Rebekah had a plan. She would get some of Esau’s clothes, which usually smelled pretty gamy, and put them on Isaac. Plus, she would cover any bare skin with some hairy goatskin in order to convince Isaac that it hairy Esau standing before him. She said if the plan did go sideways Jacob could blame her for it so the curse would fall on her, not him. Assured of that, Jacob agreed to the subterfuge.

JACOB LIED TO HIS FATHER

We see the character flaw of Jacob on full display in this story. He goes to see his failing dad, bringing him some “tasty food.” Isaac asks who he is because he can’t see well enough to know. Jacob tells a bald-faced lie, “I am Esau, your firstborn. I have done as you told me. Please sit up and eat some of my game, so that you may give me your blessing.” Isaac is surprised and asks how he could have hunted and killed an animal, then cooked it so quickly. Jacob says, “The Lord your God gave me success.”

Jacob lied directly to his father, then added to that lie by claiming God had helped him, when God had nothing to do with it. Jacob, the con man, had no problem scamming his own father, and playing the God card in the process. Isaac senses something isn’t quite right. He asks this son to come close so he can touch him, wanting to verify that it really was Esau. When he touches him he says, “The voice is the voice of Jacob, but the hands are the hands of Esau.”

I did the math and figured out that Isaac was operating at about 60% of human capacity at that point. All 5 of his senses were involved in this incident. He used his sense of taste to taste the food, which was like a classic Esau dish. Check. Verse 27 says he caught the smell of Esau’s clothes. Check. But his hearing was working well enough to tell him that wasn’t Esau’s voice. Problem. His eyesight couldn’t tell one boy from the other. Problem. So at that point it was 2 senses for, 1 against and 1 (eyesight) abstaining on the identity of this man claiming to be Esau. It came down to his sense of touch. His sense of touch told him that was one hairy fellow, so clearly it must be Esau. So 3 senses, taste, smell and touch in favor of Esau, 1, hearing, against, and 1 abstaining. Hello, Esau.

What that tells me is that Isaac’s senses of taste, smell and hearing were all in working order. But his eyesight obviously was not, and apparently his sense of touch was not either. We went with Toby and Anna and their girls to the Safari Park earlier this year. One of the highlights for the girls was the petting zoo. I petted some goats there. What I would conclude from that is that if Isaac mistook some goatskin for the hairy skin of his first son, that particular faculty was not working very well. The skin of the goats did not feel anything like human skin, hairy or otherwise. So 40% of Isaac’s senses were malfunctioning, and that was enough to tip the scales and make this scam work.

Now convinced that the son before him was Esau, Isaac blessed him. He asked God’s blessing of abundance on him. But he also said, “Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you.” That was likely the traditional wording of a declaration that a son was the new patriarch, since Jacob only had one brother.

ESAU WANTED REVENGE

Esau happily returns to his father bringing along a plate of freshly barbecued venison, looking forward to getting his dad’s blessing and knowing he will at last be able to get back at his sniveling, conniving brother for cheating him out of some of his inheritance. Maybe Jacob will get the double portion, but as the new patriarch Esau will have ways to get back at him.

Of course, when Esau shows up, Isaac knows immediately what has happened. Verse 33 says he “trembled violently.” He was mad. But there was nothing he could do about it. He had already given the blessing to tricky Jacob and he couldn’t take it back. Since it was obtained by fraud that blessing wouldn’t stand up in a court of law today, but back then the tradition was that the blessing was irrevocable. Esau whined, because he has learned that maybe having the birthright and the blessing were more important than some stew. He begged his father to bless him too.

Isaac did bless him, but there could only be one patriarch of the family, and that position had been filled. The blessing Esau got wasn’t a great one. The key element of it is in verse 40, “you will serve your brother.” Great. Bless you my son. Your brother will rule over you.

Esau was mad. He’s now been cheated twice by his sneaky, con man brother. Verse 41 says he, “Held a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him. He said to himself, ‘The days of mourning for my father are near; then I will kill my brother Jacob.’” Right. We’ll see who is going to rule over the family. Jacob’s not going to do much ruling after he’s dead. How do you think it was going to turn out if the rugged hunter went after the mama’s boy chef wannabe? I’d say Jacob’s goose was cooked.

Rebekah figured the same thing. She knew what Esau was thinking. The only way Jacob was going to survive was if he got far away from Esau. So Rebekah told Jacob to pack his bags and get out of town.

SIGNIFICANCE

This is a story filled with terrible family dysfunction. The two parents having favorite sons created a bad situation. Isaac and Rebekah both were scheming against each other. You can be sure after Rebekah outwitted Isaac that their relationship did not get stronger or closer. Jacob has now twice cheated his own brother, and this episode ends with Esau plotting to murder Jacob. I’m sure holiday dinners at that family’s table must have been a barrel of laughs. But there are some big lessons for us in this story.

EVERYONE WANTS THE BLESSING

In this story the central conflict was about Isaac’s blessing. Both boys wanted it. Earlier Esau had not cared about such things, but in the meantime he has figured out that his shortsightedness has caused him to miss out on something important, and he doesn’t want that to happen again. Jacob definitely wants Isaac’s blessing. Rebekah wants it for her favorite boy and Isaac wants it for his.

But what is this blessing about? In that case it had something to do with position and power in the family. But there was a larger underlying matter going on. It was about Dad’s approval. It was about him having confidence that this boy should be the patriarch because he is worthy of that role. It was about identity, about knowing who you were. And ultimately it was about having a blessed life. It was about experiencing what Isaac said in verse 28, “May God give you heaven’s dew.” Heaven’s dew was a metaphorical way of saying heaven’s blessing that is life giving. Water was symbolic of life, and dew would be a gentle giving of life. In his blessing of Esau, Isaac said he would live “away from the dew of heaven above.” He was not going to experience the blessing of getting life from heaven, the life of richness and blessedness.

When we read this story we might easily think it has no relevance for us. It was so long ago in a culture that has almost nothing in common with modern day Southern California. We don’t have patriarchs and don’t make a big thing about some blessing from a dying patriarch. But this incident speaks to a powerful longing in the heart of every human. All of us want a “blessed life.” That is as true today as it ever was. There are probably as many different ideas about what that blessed life actually is, as there are people on the planet. Each of us has some concept of what it would look like and they’re not all the same. In many cases we may not even be clear on exactly what it is, but we know we want it, and for most of us, we know that what we have right now is not quite it. At least not fully. But we all want that.

Everyone wants “the good life.” The good life is a “blessed life.” But who has the good life? Is it the rich, the famous, the beautiful, the powerful, the successful people? Exactly what is the good life? There is no agreement among people on those questions. But everyone wants it. We all want the blessing that produces it. It is also true that much of the dysfunction of the human race comes from our competing with each other to get that life, just as was true with Esau and Jacob.

WE OFTEN MISUNDERSTAND THE NATURE OF THE BLESSING

I have had conversations many times with fellow Christians in which I have asked them how they are doing and they will say something along the lines of, “we are doing very well. God has really been blessing us.” Almost every time what they have meant by that is that their business was very successful or in some way they were getting a lot of money, or in some way their circumstances were enjoyable. I come away pondering the question, if your business wasn’t doing well, if you were struggling financially, if your circumstances were difficult, would that mean that God is not blessing you? Can someone who is poor or struggling be blessed?

Watch out for your answer to that question, because you could easily find yourself at odds with Jesus. He launched the Sermon on the Mount by saying, “Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of God.” I recently came across an interesting quote by the singer, Madonna, who is not someone I quote a lot. But she said, “Money is like everything. Money is like sex. It’s like food. They’re all manifestations of God. They’re blessings we get, but they’re not what’s going to make us happy. They’re not real. They don’t last. There’s only one thing that lasts and that’s your soul. And if you don’t work on that, and you don’t pay attention to that, then all the money in the world is not going to help you.” That’s a person who has success, fame, money in abundance. She admitted that she’s looking for answers, because she doesn’t have them.

Esau would get material wealth. Genesis 36 tells us that at one point he and Jacob both had so much in the way of possessions and material wealth that they had to move away from each other to make room for all their herds and flocks. But he didn’t have the blessing.

But wait, didn’t Isaac’s blessing include material wealth? Yes, it did. In Genesis 27:28 his blessing included, “earth’s richness, an abundance of grain and new wine.” But there is a fact we easily and often forget. It was likely something that Jacob and Esau missed. The Old Testament had many promises of physical abundance to God’s people. But those promises were given as a picture of something greater to come. They were intended to depict spiritual truth in a graphic way. The physical abundance of the Old Testament was a symbol, a picture of spiritual abundance in the New Testament. Material fullness was not the point, it was a picture of spiritual fullness.

Laurie and I used to watch a show on television called *Hawaii Life*. It is one of those HGTV shows that feature people seeking to buy a home, in this case in Hawaii. The agent shows them 3 or 4 homes, then they decide which one they want to try to buy. It was helpful for me because most of the time I wouldn’t want any of the houses they looked at, and I couldn’t afford them even if I did, which was good because we aren’t going to live in Hawaii. But on one show the people looked at a house that I loved. Looking at it I thought, “That’s my dream house!” It was right on the beach, it had a beautiful pool and the house was spectacular. It was, of course, outrageously expensive. But suppose that Laurie, knowing how much I liked that house, got a picture of it, and one day said, “I know you love that house we saw on TV, and I really want you to have it.” And she hands me the picture. Do you think I would say, “Wow, Laurie, I can’t believe this! Thank you so much. I now have this house that I’ve dreamed of. This is perfect”? No, that would be silly. Having a picture of the house is not having the house. It is not even close to the same. When we have material abundance, success, acclaim, power, all we have is the picture of the reality. Madonna is right. It is not the real thing. The real thing is spiritual riches, spiritual fullness. Is it any wonder that people who have all the things that people tend to think of as “the good life” end up still not satisfied and wanting something else? They have the picture, but that doesn’t mean they have the real thing. If you have the picture but not the reality, you’ll feel empty.

Well what is the real thing? I want to read a quote to you. It is by Dr. John Sowers, who is a well known author and speaker. He said, “We are a generation searching for Dad. Fatherlessness has become the new cultural norm. This story is being written into the lines of my generation. A story that can be heard in our songs, seen in our movies, read in our blogs. A story of grief and pain, of loneliness and rejection.” He says so many sons and daughters today, “don’t know their true name. They are searching for who they really are. They bring this question of identity to anyone who will listen. They are willing to look anywhere to find it.”

He’s right, that story shows up a lot in songs and movies. This week one day I turned on the TV just looking for something to watch and stumbled on the old classic, *Top Gun*. I love the opening of the movie so even though I’ve seen it countless times I decided to watch the first few minutes. I kind of got caught up in it and watched more than I planned. But in that movie Maverick’s relationship with a deceased dad is a big motivation. I began reflecting on that theme and realized that same theme shows up in a lot of my favorite movies. It is the central conflict in *Field Of Dreams*. It shows up in *Lion King*, *A Beautiful Day In The Neighborhood, How To Train Your Dragon, The Rookie*, *October Sky, Trouble With The Curve* and countless others.

Wait, fatherlessness? How does that come into play? Esau and Jacob had a father, so that can’t be the issue. It’s not fatherlessness that’s the issue. It’s something fatherlessness tends to produce. It has to do with identity. The good life, the blessed life, is a life in which the person knows who he or she is, knows their identity, knows their value, their worth, and is at peace with that value. My guess is that neither Jacob nor Esau fully grasped that’s what they wanted. But that’s what the blessing ultimately was truly about, and that’s what we long for. It is crucial to a blessed life, and without it we will never feel truly blessed.

Here is a little thought experiment. Consider two individuals. The first individual is a person from a privileged family. This person has all the advantages privilege can offer. And as this person reaches adult years they are given status in society, money, and set up to have great success, which proceeds to follow. But this person never experienced dad’s blessing. Never felt dad loved them and approved of them and was proud of them. The second individual is from a poor family. This family had none of the privileges of wealth. They had no power, no status, and it was a struggle just to have food to eat and be able to pay the bills. This person as an adult will have to fight to make a way in the world. But this person was loved unconditionally by Dad. Dad communicated how proud he was of this child and showered the person with approval. He gave that child a powerful sense of security, identity and love. Which of those 2 do you suspect comes closer to living the good life? I submit to you it is likely the second who will have a life of joy and peace, but the first will never know a moment’s true joy and satisfaction. That privileged person will always be looking for something that is missing.

Laurie and I have been watching reruns of the old *Dick Van Dyke* show. Some of them are hilarious. But in one we watched recently the main characters, Rob and Laura Petrie, are invited to a pretentious party full of snobby, artsy people, to honor a famous writer. They feel awkwardly out of place. When I watched it, I had a brief flashback of an experience from my distant past. I had a very wealthy roommate one year in college. He invited me to his home one weekend. One Friday night he drove us in his hot Pontiac Firebird to his family’s mansion-like home in LA, where I encountered their gardener, their maid, their nanny and their cook. This was a different world for me. I didn’t know people who had multiple servants. At dinner time in the formal dining room we sat at a table that would comfortably seat at least 16 people. I sat across from my roommate at the middle of the table, down at one end was his mother, and at the other was his father. It was just the 4 of us at that big table. It was like something out of a movie. His dad wore a suit, his mom, a very nice dress. I was wearing jeans, a regular shirt and tennis shoes. I felt really awkward. There was silverware on the table in front of me, but no plates. I thought this was going to be a very unfulfilling meal with no food to eat. But then the dad picked up a bell and rang it. A door opened and the cook came in carrying bowls of soup, which she proceeded to set down in front of each of us. Then she left the room. So the meal went, with the servant bringing each course in turn. I was out of my element. I was a middle class kid from Bakersfield. Yeah, Bakersfield, the armpit of California, the place where lizards go to die. I wasn’t Gomer Pyle, some unsophisticated rube from Chunky, Mississippi, whose daddy pumped out septic tanks for a living. But I was from a very different stratum of society, and we all knew it. It was obvious. I felt utterly and uncomfortably out of place. I was not used to that kind of wealth, to servants and that lifestyle. My roommate was. Did he have a blessed life? No, he didn’t. I was from an average family in nowheresville, but my parents gave me the blessing of love, security, approval, pride. I have always had a sense of my identity, and been pretty much secure in it. So I’ve had a life with a lot of joy and peace. Not perfect, but compared to my friend, my life has been heaven. My friend’s family would go on to exhibit dysfunction that would rival that of Isaac’s. He himself would get married, but his marriage didn’t last very long. He would marry again, and that was better, but he would deal with serious depression and mental health issues throughout his life. As far as I know he still fights that battle today.

So you’re saying the blessing we all seek is the blessing of parents, especially a dad, who love us and shower us with approval? Not quite. I’m saying the blessing we seek is having the sense of identity and worth that such parents contribute to. But that is not the final answer. The blessing that leads to the true good life, must include 3 things. It must include **affirmation**, or love is another way to say that, an **identity**, including one’s worth, and a **destiny**, or a future. It has been interesting to me to note again how Laurie is blessing our grandchildren. She continually affirms them, telling them how much she loves them, what wonderful things she sees in them, she tells them how precious they are, and she talks about what kind of people they will be in the future. She’s giving them that affirmation, that sense of identity, and a destiny. She did that same thing for our kids. I realized she has been blessing me for 41 years, doing the same thing for me!

Someone might say, “I never had that blessing. My parents, especially my dad, totally failed to give it to me. Am I then condemned to never experience the blessed life?” The answer is no you are not condemned to that fate, because while parents can and should be part of the process, there is a much larger issue that is crucial to all of us. It is that we were created to receive God’s blessing. Isaac’s blessing ultimately was only a picture of the greater blessing that can only come from God. The blessing that ultimately is foundational to life, is the divine blessing. Remember what Jacob said. It is to have God give us heaven’s dew.

It is the nature of God to bless. We see that in the very beginning. In Genesis 1:22 after God created all the creatures of the land, sky and sea it says, “God blessed them.” In Genesis 1:28 after he created humans it says, “God blessed them.” Genesis 9:1 tells us that after the flood, “God blessed Noah and his sons.” In Genesis 12:2 when God called Abraham he said to him, “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you.” Ephesians 1:3 says God “has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing, including the affirmation that comes with his love, an identity in Christ and a destiny, a future.

In Numbers 6:22-26 God gave a formula for the blessing the priests were to give Israel. “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” Verse 27 concludes, “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.” They would be given his name, a special identity and destiny as the people of God. Revelation 2:17 is an enigmatic verse. Scholars debate its meaning, and there is no consensus. However, there is something we can learn from it. “Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who is victorious, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give that person a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to the one who receives it.”

Hidden manna is God’s provision of life in Christ. He is the bread of life. But what’s the white stone? What’s with the secret name, known only to the one who receives it? There is no agreement at all among scholars on the significance of the white stone. I think that’s all right. I think the important element of that verse is that God will give those who are victorious, who stand firm in Christ a new name, one that is just for them. In other words, they are given a special, unique name that is theirs alone. The name represents their identity. God gives us an identity. It is an identity that is special, unique to each of us. And that ultimately is what we all need to know. We need to know that we are indeed special, unique, and uniquely loved and that our existence matters. We each play a role in God’s mosaic of history that only we can play. Truly we are wondrously made.

It is significant that God uses the image of Father for himself. Yes, a dad’s blessing is powerful. But ultimately the blessing that we all need is the blessing that comes from the heavenly Father. It is the love and affirmation, the identity and worth, the future and destiny that only he can give. It is this blessing that can give us the blessed life, the good life, even if we did not receive a blessing from our earthly parents. We can know that we are loved by God who says he delights in us, and nothing can separate us from that love. We have an identity. He has given us a new name. Just as Simon, the fisherman, was given a new name by Jesus, known as Peter, the rock, on whom Jesus would build his church, so he gives us a new identity. God gives us a new identity as his holy priests who are on earth to declare the glory of the one who called them. And he has given us a destiny, an eternal future in glory that nothing can ever dim.

WE COMMONLY FAIL TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO GET THE BLESSING

Both Esau and Jacob thought the blessing mostly had to do with position, power and wealth, and they thought it was up to them to obtain it. Rebekah and Isaac thought the same. And so do we much of the time. It’s about getting something in this world, especially in terms of status and wealth, and it’s about doing whatever we think is necessary to obtain it. What that produced was competition, manipulation, maneuvering, conflict, anger, and estrangement. It ended up completely blowing the family apart. The irony is that Jacob was given the role of patriarch, leading the family, and then he was separated from them for 20 years. When he came back all that was left was his brother whom he had cheated twice. Unfortunately for us, the pursuit of what we think is the blessing by doing whatever we think we have to do to get what we want, has the same effect. It leads to competition, manipulation, maneuvering, conflict, anger and estrangement. And that’s what you see everywhere in the world.

The heavenly Father’s blessing is what we need. It brings us security, peace, joy and hope regardless of whatever else may be happening in our lives. We don’t get it by bargaining, working, manipulating, scheming. We can’t gain it by our own merit or ability. No amount of effort will obtain this blessing for us. We get this blessing by faith. We receive it as a gift that God offers to us in Jesus Christ. Then we learn to live by faith in that blessing forever.

If you haven’t discovered this new identity God has for you in Christ, put your faith in Jesus. If you are a follower, trust in that identity. Thank God for it. Remember the words of the song we did earlier, *You Say.* It says to God, “all that matters now is what you think of me.” When we try to find our affirmation, our identity, our destiny in something other than God’s blessing, we inevitably distort our priorities, damage our relationships with others and banish peace from our hearts. So trust in God’s blessing. See your identity as his beloved child, called to a great destiny of bringing glory to his name, heading for eternal citizenship in his kingdom.