

SERMON NOTES

Sunday 9th July

sunnysidechurch

Stories of faith: The Lord bless you!

Bible passage: Ruth 2.19-23; Ephesians 1.15-23

Introduction

- Response to experiencing kindness is to pray God's blessing on people
- 7 prayers of blessing asking for God's protection and provision on others in Book of Ruth

An attitude of gratitude

- Gratitude is good for us as it turns us outwards and reminds us that we are dependent on others to make our lives truly enjoyable and fruitful
- Gratitude recognises what we have enjoyed as a gift with a giver
- Gratitude (being grateful for something) moves to thankfulness (being thankful to someone)

Thanking the giver

- Bless him! Recognises kindness experienced comes from God
- Gratitude rooted in understanding of relationship with God
- Bless him! Asks God to repay kindness with protection and provision

Conclusion

'Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights' James 1.17

Some questions for discussion

1. What and/or who are you thankful for today?
2. Read Ruth 2.19-23. What do you notice about this passage?
3. There are 7 prayers in the Book of Ruth (1.8-9; 2.4; 2.12; 2.20; 3.10; 4.11-12; 4.14-16) How do these add to your understanding of Naomi's prayer 'The Lord bless him'?
4. In what ways does Naomi's prayer reflect her understanding of God as Shaddai (Almighty Lord: provider and protector)?
5. Rebecca spoke about the difference between gratitude and thanksgiving. Why might thanksgiving be a richer thing?
6. Read Ephesians 1.15-23. What does Paul's prayer add to your understanding of blessing and thanksgiving?
7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages? It might be something to pray about, something to think more about, something he wants you to talk to someone about or something he wants you to do. Make a note of it so you don't forget!

I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

Ephesians 1.16

Why not spend some time using Paul's prayer to pray for those you know and all at Sunnyside?

Revd Rebecca Fardell