

Blessed as a Gift Devotion

Bible readings: Genesis 1: 1, 27, 31; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, 8:9

You are a gift! You are a unique creation. As of November 2022, you are 1:8,000,000,000 (that is, one in eight billion people, the estimated population of the world). There has been no one like you since Adam and Eve. There will be no one like you, ever. Unique is an understatement! "Gift" is a blessing of God.

The ESV Study Bible says: "God made this world and all that is in it: **'In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth ... God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them'** (Genesis 1:1, 27). He created human beings to be like Him and to have unhindered fellowship with Him, and when His work of creation was finished, He saw that it was **'very good'** (Genesis 1:31)."¹

But you don't feel "very good"; you have limitations. You are not perfect. You are flawed, sinful. You want but are disappointed when not receiving. Called to live in family and friendship, you often live in isolation, exclusion, and separation. Others hurt you. Sometimes you return the same intentionally. You want a full life—no suffering. Some are disabled. Others do the disabling, especially as you incapacitate your neighbor through neglect, shame, and scorn. You serve others poorly but demand they serve you in perfection.

"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Christ emptied Himself for you! Though you are poor in spirit and afflicted, Christ became poorer for you. He endured your shame, your suffering, and your penalty of death on the cross in your place. In this you are redeemed—His poverty buys your richness. His death and His suffering of God's wrath buy your freedom. Your sin costs His life. His satisfaction freely restores your life. **"For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"** (Romans 6:23).

This Gospel truth frames every message from Lutherans For Life. Your life's value and worth are beyond measure. Silver or gold cannot buy it. Christ's body and blood secure it. God Himself provided the Lamb. By His stripes you are healed.

¹ Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 2501).

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Whatever days of trouble confound you, God turns to you with His favor and grace! The enemies—sin, death, and the power of the devil—cannot overcome you. In Christ, they are overcome! The Lord protects you. By faith you trust His loving care and providential support. By faith you live in His peace and joy even when, by sight, life often doesn't look "very good."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

YOU are the gift of comfort to others. As Christ gave you the gift of comfort in Himself, forgiving you and blessing you with His eternal life, He calls you to share that gift with others. In love, in support, in caring for needs, and in speaking the forgiveness of Christ to the afflicted and suffering spirits and bodies of your brothers and sister of humanity, you give the comfort of God! **YOU** are blessed as a gift in Christ, to the world—in Life Week 2023 and every day!

We pray: Almighty and everlasting God, who gave Your only Son to be a High Priest of good things to come, grant us, Your unworthy servants, to have our share in the company of the blessed, through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen.