

Theme: God commands a blessing upon His people who live in unity through gathered worship and shared lives.

I. Intro - The Crisis of Community

- A. Robert Putnam - Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (2000)
- B. Sherry Turkle - Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other (2012)
- C. Susan Mettes - The Loneliness Epidemic (2021)
- D. This is clearly an issue in our culture right now!
- E. Is community important? Where is it found? How is it built?

II. Community Is Good and Pleasant

- A. Behold a good and pleasant thing!
How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! Psalm 133:1
 - 1. Behold - Hebrew word for “take notice”!
 - 2. This is good AND pleasant!
 - a. Jerome - few things are both good AND pleasant
 - b. Some things are good but not pleasant
No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. Hebrews 12:11
 - 1. Photo of me after an unpleasant run!
 - 2. But it was good for me!
 - c. Some things are pleasant but not good

He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. Hebrews 11:25

- 1. Sin is usually pleasant - in the short term!
- 2. But it is not good - and it leads to death!
- 3. But here is something that is good AND pleasant!
- B. The good and pleasant community
How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! Psalm 133:1
 - 1. Good and pleasant - when we live in unity!
 - 2. Spoken as pilgrims draw near to Jerusalem and anticipate gathering in the worship of Yahweh.
 - 3. But this is more than just God's people gathered for prayer and worship - they live/dwell in unity.
 - 4. True Christian community begins in united worship of Jesus but it produces unity in mission and life.

III. The Blessed Community

- A. Good and pleasant - like precious anointing oil
It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. Psalm 133:2
 - 1. It is like precious anointing oil
 - 2. Oil was good and pleasant to feel and smell
Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel. Proverbs 27:9 ESV
 - a. Oil was used to soothe and heal the skin

b. Oil of perfume was used for its pleasant smell

3. This is a lot of oil - overflowing to the beard & robes
4. This is like the oil that anointed Aaron & high priests
5. This was the most special and valuable oil of all
6. This is a picture of an abundance of good and pleasant blessing!

B. Good and pleasant - like abundant dew in a dry land
It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. Psalm 133:3

1. Egypt lived by the flooding of the Nile
2. Israel lives by dew and rain - not the flooding of the Jordan River
3. Mount Hermon - tallest mountain in Israel (photo)
4. Hermon was well watered - Zion was much drier!
5. Our trip to Zion National Park - like Zion in Israel it is beautiful but it is dry!
6. But when God's people live in unity, it is like the great dew of Hermon falling on dry Jerusalem at the Temple!

C. Good and pleasant - because God commands blessing
For there the Lord **bestows** his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133:3 NIV

For there the Lord has **commanded** the blessing, life forevermore. Psalm 133:3 ESV

1. The NIV is too weak - God COMMANDS blessing!

2. This is the only verb in the whole Psalm!
3. God blesses His city, His Temple, His people
4. But the blessing is when they live in unity!

D. Understanding the blessing

1. The blessing comes down from God to His people
It is like precious oil poured on the head, **running down** on the beard, **running down** on Aaron's beard, **down** upon the collar of his robes. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were **falling** on Mount Zion. Psalm 133:2-3

- a. Running down, down, falling - all downward (נָרַד)
- b. Blessing is not something we can create or conjure by our desires or actions; it comes down at the command of God.
- c. All we can do is be where God commands the blessing - as part of His people worshipping and living in unity.

2. The blessing of God is abundant

It is like precious oil poured on the **head**, running down on the **beard**, running down on Aaron's beard, **down upon the collar of his robes**. ³ It is as if **the dew of Hermon** were falling on Mount Zion. Psalm 133:2-3

- a. So much oil it drips from head to beard to robes!
- b. The dew of Hermon is so abundant that it feeds the rivers below!
- c. When God commands blessing for His people it is supernaturally abundant, overcoming any obstacles trying to prevent it from reaching His people.

3. The blessing of God is eternal

It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133:3

- a. The primary blessing of God is eternal life!
- b. God certainly blesses His people now with temporal blessings, but the biblical focus is on the blessing of eternal life.
- c. This reminds and reorients our focus from temporal blessings that come and go to the eternal blessings of life and joy God's people are given! This is a priceless blessing!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Am I where God commands the blessing?

For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133:3

1. God commands His blessings THERE
2. If I want to receive God's abundant blessings I must be THERE, for that is where He pours out the blessing.
3. So where is "THERE"?
 - a. God's blessings are found only in Jesus Christ
For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God. 2 Corinthians 1:20
 1. ALL of God's promises are "YES" in Christ - and nowhere else
 2. I will talk about Jesus and Psalm 133 in After Hours
 3. I urge everyone to come to Christ to receive the abundant life God has for you, now and in eternity!

b. God's blessings are found in His people gathered for worship

1. The Psalm is an ascent Psalm - pilgrims gathering for worship at the Temple
2. The Psalm speaks of the High Priest - who ministered at the Temple
3. The High Priest actually spoke the blessing of God over the people assembled for worship.
4. There is a blessing that comes from gathering with God's people for worship as the Spirit works among us and as we are strengthened through corporate worship, prayer, fellowship, Word, and sacrament!
5. When the benediction is spoken - God still blesses His people!
6. To choose to not gather with God's people when they come together for worship is to choose to NOT be blessed! How foolish!
7. Gather with your brothers and sisters to worship - and be blessed!

c. God's blessings are found by walking in unity with His people in sharing life

1. This begins with gathering for worship but extends to all of life!
2. The Psalm speaks of living together in unity - this is more than just worship.
3. We see this in the Book of Acts
They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47

- a) Note this includes both gathered worship and daily life
- b) They worship together in public, gather in homes, and eat and share life together
- c) Corporate worship and prayer have a symbiotic relationship with community - they foster and fuel community, and also are reinforced by community.

4. Am I living in unity with God's people?

- a. This does require work as all relationships have difficult times
- b. But if we make our unity in Christ primary rather than political, social, economic, or other issues we will live in unity with other believers.

5. Make this a priority this fall!

- a. Make gathering for worship a priority!
- b. Come early and stay late for fellowship
- c. Get in a connect group!
- d. Invite someone over for dinner or to a park
- e. Join with others in a hobby, to go to a ball game or museum - work to build community!

B. The Table of blessing

1. This is the Table of blessing where we celebrate Jesus and His work for us
2. Here we experience our unity with Christ and one another
3. Here we receive the blessing of God!

The Blessed Community of Prayer

Psalm 133
 August 28, 2022
 Communion
 Numbers 6:24-26

Teaching keywords: Blessing; community; church; prayer

The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Numbers 6:24–26

How good and pleasant it is when brothers live together in unity! ² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down upon the collar of his robes. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the Lord bestows his blessing, even life forevermore. Psalm 133