



HOW TO WRITE A BLESSING TO YOUR CHILD

Where Does “The Blessing” Come From?

In modern times, a father’s blessing echoes the original blessing from God the Father to humanity. God intends for this to mirror one of His first blessings to the Father of Israel: Abraham.

“And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed” (Genesis 12:2-3 ESV)

But this isn’t the only place within Scripture. Throughout the Old Testament, fathers and sons give and receive blessings that mirror God’s blessing to humanity. In Genesis chapter 27, Jacob and Esau compete for their father Isaac’s blessing. Later in Genesis, Jacob blesses his twelve sons in unique and powerful ways. And even in the New Testament, Jesus “took [the children] in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them.

Using the brief overview of the five key elements of the blessing, you can create life-changing moments for your family.

Key Elements of The Blessing

Throughout Scripture, the blessing always included five key elements:

1. Meaningful and Appropriate Touch
2. A Spoken Message
3. Attaching High Value
4. Picturing a Special Future
5. An Active Commitment

Each of the elements serves a specific purpose for both the one giving and the one receiving the blessing. Now, let’s take a closer look at each of these key elements.

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1. Meaningful & Appropriate Touch

First, meaningful touch was an essential element in Old Testament homes. We read in Genesis 27:26 that Isaac said, “Come near now and kiss me, my son.” This incident was not isolated. Within Scripture, blessings contain meaningful touch and a caring background from parent to child.

Meaningful touch has many beneficial effects. The act of touch is key in communicating warmth, personal acceptance, affirmation, even physical health. For any person who wishes to bless a child, touch is an integral part.

Blessing Steps for Parents: Meaningful Touch

- Think about how Best to Communicate Meaningful Touch to your Child
- Place your Hands on their Head or Shoulders
- Consider Holding their Hands
- Look them in the Eyes

2. A Spoken Message

Next, the second element involves a spoken message. Today, words of love and acceptance are seldom received in many homes. Sometimes, parents assume that simply being present communicates the blessing. However, a blessing fulfills its purpose only when it is spoken verbally.

For a child in search of the blessing, silence communicates confusion. Children who are left to fill in the blanks when it comes to what their parents think about them will often feel insecure. Spoken or written words at least give the child an indication that they are worthy of some attention.

Within counseling, we see many adults interpret their parents’ silence in exactly that same way. Their parents may provide basic needs. However, without actual words, there is uncertainty of how much they are valued and accepted.

To see the blessing grow in the life of a child, we need to verbalize our message. Good intentions aside, good words — spoken, written and preferably both — are necessary to communicate genuine acceptance.

Blessing Steps for Parents: Spoken Message

- Use your Own Words
- Write Down the Blessing in a Special Journal, Notebook, or Bible
- Avoid Silence Before and After you Bless your Child

3. Attaching High Value

Meaningful touch and a spoken (or written) message lead to the next element. To powerfully convey intentional meaning, the words must attach high value to the person receiving the blessing.

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In blessing Jacob (thinking it was Esau), Isaac said, “Surely, the smell of my son is like the smell of a field which the Lord has blessed. ... Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you” (Gen. 27:27, 29).

That blessing pictures a very valuable person! Not just anybody merits having nations bow down to him! And while we might think that saying someone smelled like a field would be criticizing him, that is not the case. This type of field was one where there was tremendous growth and life and reward. Imagine a record-setting harvest and surplus of food. That’s the picture Isaac gives his son.

As you may have noticed, Isaac uses a word picture (the field) to describe how valuable his son is to him. Word pictures are a powerful way of communicating acceptance. In the Old Testament, they were key to communicating a message of high value to a child.

Blessing Steps for Parents: Attaching High Value

- Communicate your Kid’s Value through a Word Picture
- Think about your Child’s Gifts
- Emphasize their Talents, Characteristics, and Interests
- Affirm their Hopes and Future

4. Picturing a Special Future

Next, the fourth element involves picturing a special future for the person receiving the blessing. Isaac said to his son Jacob, “May God give you of the dew of heaven, of the fatness of the earth. ... Let peoples serve you, and nations bow down to you” (Gen. 27:28–29).

One distinction is necessary between Isaac’s blessing and the act of picturing a special future for a person today. Because of Isaac’s unique position as a patriarch (God’s appointed leader and a father of the nation of Israel), his words to Jacob carried with them the weight of biblical prophecy. We today cannot predict another person’s future with such biblical accuracy. But we can help those see a future that is full of light and opportunity. We can let them know we believe they can build an outstanding life and future with the strengths and abilities God has given them.

Our Lord himself speaks quite eloquently about our future in the Bible. In fact, He assures our present relationship with him and what He has in store for us as His children.

We need to picture just such a special future for our children if we are serious about giving them our blessing. With this element, a child can gain a sense of security in the present and grow in confidence to serve God and others in the future.

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Blessing Steps for Parents: Special Future

- Provide Security by Reassuring your Child of God's Plan for their Future
- Show that you Value them both in the Present and the Future
- Be Specific with your Hopes for their Future

5. An Active Commitment

For the patriarchs, not only their words but God himself stood behind the blessing they bestowed on their children. Several times God spoke directly through the Angel of the Lord to the patriarchs confirming his active commitment to their family line.

Today, parents need to rely on the Lord to give them the strength and staying power to confirm their children's blessing by expressing a similar active commitment. They, too, have God's Word through the Scriptures as a guide, plus the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

Why is active commitment so important? Words alone cannot communicate the blessing; they need to contain a willingness to do everything possible to help the one blessed be successful. We can tell a child, "You have the talent to be a very good pianist". But if we neglect to provide a piano for that child to practice on, our lack of commitment has undermined our message.

When it comes to spending time together or helping develop a certain skill, some children hear, "Wait until the weekend". Then, it becomes, "Wait until another weekend" so many times that they no longer believe the words of blessing.

Blessing Steps for Parents: Active Commitment

- After you Give the Blessing, Check in with your Child
- Provide Opportunities for your Child to Live Out their Blessing
- Support the Value and Future that you Envision for your Child
- Remind them of How God Loves them and Will Continue to Support them

Adapted from <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/how-to-bless-your-child/>
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