

# Everyday *Life*

**BLESSED**



## **Featured Articles:**

Blessed Now and Always

Talking About The Blessed Life

Blessed

BLESSED! #Blessed May Not Mean What You Think...

## FROM THE EDITOR

# Always Hope

Dear Readers:

If there is ever a word that you should fully understand, it is the word "Blessed." Let me share with you why.

One of the many benefits the children of God have is that they are lavished with the unmerited favor and protection of the Almighty God. This is called blessed. You see, if you want the unmerited favor of God, then you must be walking in obedience to His commands. In other words, you need to be doing what God wants and expects from you. This means you're blessed. As dedicate and determine for yourself to follow Him and His ways, you are automatically under His divine protection. You are blessed.

Being blessed means that you will consecrate yourself unto the Lord. It will require you to dedicate your life to the Lord's purposes. When you choose to do this, you will be declared holy for His service. You are now fully assured God's purposes and plans for your life will be brought forth. You are blessed.

Now as a child of God, you have been redeemed. This means you no longer belong to yourself. You belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. You have taken on the mind of Christ and you are led by the Holy Spirit. You now walk in the favor of God upon your life. Your life has worth. Your life has power. Your life has value. In exchange, God has given you your life as a gift. You are blessed. You have been saved from a life of poor choices, which leads to misery and destruction. You have been rescued. You are blessed.

In order to have the blessed life, you have to revere and honor God. In Jeremiah 17:7(GWT), it states, "Blessed is the person who trusts the LORD. The LORD will be his confidence." Note this, this verse states that the person who is blessed is the one who trusts the LORD. This means you trust His ways, His leading, His direction, His path, and you obey His commands. When it says "the LORD will be his confidence," that means the Lord is his assurance, his backbone, his courage, his determination, and his boldness. Did you catch that? It's all about His everything. He is providing everything you need as you trust in Him to have the blessed life. The only thing you and I are required to do is to obey and trust in Him. In a nutshell, when you are trusting God, you are blessed. When you put your confidence in the Lord, you are blessed. When you follow in His ways, you are blessed.



**Your life has worth.**

**Your life has power.**

**Your life has value**

Your comings and your goings shall be blessed. And when you believe everything He tells you, you are blessed.

One of my life's bible verse is found in Luke 1:45(GWT), "You are blessed for believing that the Lord would keep his promise to you." The ultimate blessed life is the life that believes God in everything He says even if to you, it doesn't make sense. When you believe Him, regardless of what your circumstances show or tell, you are telling God, "I trust you completely and I will do it Your way." Then, you are blessed.

Now do you understand why it is important to fully comprehend the word "Blessed?" In this issue, you will find our feature story by Evangelist Kofi Acheampong who further explains what is required to live and receive a blessed life.

May you be blessed.

Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro  
Editor In Chief

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# BLESSED

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# BLESSED NOW AND ALWAYS

AN INTERVIEW WITH DR. TERESA ALLISSA CITRO

**Everyone wants to live what is called the blessed life, to have all their needs and desires met. The question is are we doing all that we can in order to have the blessed life. We decided to speak with Dr. Teresa Citro who has been preaching and teaching obedience to God for as long as we can remember. It is what she has consistently preached, and it is what she consistently lives. EL Magazine decided to explore what does it mean to be blessed and have the blessed life. So, we talked with Dr. Citro to get her thoughts on what being blessed means and what the blessed life is.**

**Linda:** Why did you pick the theme "Blessed" for this issue and what does it mean to you?

**Dr. Citro:** I picked the word "blessed" because in the holiday season we are celebrating Thanksgiving and Christmas. We are receiving blessings from the bountiful crops of the fall on Thanksgiving, and then on Christmas we are celebrating God's gift to all of mankind, His Son Jesus Christ. We are truly blessed because of Him.

**Linda:** I remember, Dr. Citro, that one of your favorite bible verses comes from the story of Mary which is found in Luke 1:35(NIV), "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!" Why is this one of your favorite bible verses?

**Dr. Citro:** I can't help but to picture myself as a young woman, fully dedicated to serving God, and doing what He requires of me. Mary was this kind of young woman. She had a holy encounter with the Angel of God. The Angel called her, "You who are highly favored." Why was she highly favored? Because she was a servant of the Most High God. God could trust her to birth her son Jesus Christ through her womb. God knew she had a backbone. She was her own woman, and regardless of what anyone would say about her. Her first priority was to honor God no matter what the cost. That earned her the title, "You who are highly favored." I want God to address me as that too. Don't you?

**Linda:** Yes, I do, and so should every child of God. What do you want the readers to know?

**Dr. Citro:** I want them to know there are blessings in heaven ready to be showered on us. There are things God has created for us to birth. For Mary, it was bringing forth the Living Son of God, the highest of all callings, but there are high callings God has for us too in different ways. The only way they are going to come forth is by living a life that pleases the Lord. We must have a life of prayer, reading His Word, applying His Word to our situations and circumstances, trusting Him when things don't make sense, and ultimately obeying to the detail what He is requiring of us.

**... there are blessings in heaven ready to be showered on us.**

**Dr. Citro's life theme summed up in one word: OBEDIENCE. In just the last year alone, Dr. Citro has just opened Citro Cosmetics and Skincare, has the Forever Yours Wedding Band Line by Citro Fine Jewelry Collection at Princess Diamonds in Burlington, Massachusetts, and has been ordained as a reverend with the American Evangelistic Association. As a witness who watches her live her life up close, I can truly say that if one wants the blessed life, obedience is an absolute essential, a must.**



# Talking About The Blessed Life

EVANGELIST KOFI ACHEAMPONG

Evangelist Kofi Acheampong is a man who has dedicated his life to serve and honor God. Although I don't know him personally, I have participated in his Facebook live prayer sessions. Every time I have joined, I have been praying specifically about things and have asked God to show me truth or confirm those things. God has used Evangelist Kofi to confirm and answer questions I have been in prayer about. I never told him of all the times God had used him to confirm things nor did he know what I was praying about. I'm excited for him and his wife and for what the future holds for them in the Kingdom of God. When God equips someone like Evangelist Kofi with specific gifting, God uses them, and Evangelist Kofi has been given gifts that bring massive glory to the Kingdom of God. He has been used in the gifts of healing, knowledge, wisdom, and prophecy. He is an excellent teacher and preacher. His sincerity and love for people is genuine. I know this because I have been on the sidelines listening to his teaching and his preaching. I wanted to know how real he was. In a world where there are a ton of wolves in sheep clothing, I wanted to know if he was the real deal. He is the real deal, and he is anointed by God. I took my questions to him and asked him to describe what the blessed life is truly all about. We have it wrong. We think if we are not driving luxury vehicles or living in glamorous houses that we are not living the blessed life. So, I didn't tell him my thoughts on the blessed life. I simply asked him the question, "What is the blessed life? And what does it mean to you?" While there are many who will twist the Word of God for their own personal gain, Evangelist Kofi gives us a humble yet biblical response.

## Getting to know Evangelist Kofi Acheampong

**Dr. Citro:** Where are you from originally?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Ghana, West Africa.

**Dr. Citro:** When did you come to accept Christ as your personal Savior, and when did God call you into the ministry?

**Evangelist Kofi:** I gave my life to Jesus in March 2011 in Worcester, Massachusetts, and I immediately knew I was called to the ministry.

**Dr. Citro:** Where has your ministry taken you globally?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Just a few countries. I will have traveled to about 7 countries by January.

**Dr. Citro:** What does your personal prayer life look like?

**Evangelist Kofi:** I pray as often as I can. I pray in tongues. I use prayer points. I worship and meditate on the Word of God. I also wait quietly to hear from God.

**People often forget that a blessed life means good health, provision for daily needs, and then some, and most importantly, a life that is honorable and filled with integrity and respect.**

You would think someone who comes from a third world country would be talking about the prosperity gospel. Instead, Evangelist Kofi speaks about obedience which leads to living the blessed life. People often forget that a blessed life means good health, provision for daily needs, and then some, and most importantly, a life that is honorable and filled with integrity and respect. Evangelist Kofi absolutely lives this life, and this has been seen not just by me but by the other thousands of lives he has reached. He is an inspiration who does all he can to minister the Word of God effectively.

**Dr. Citro:** I follow you and your ministry, and I know God has blessed you. Can you give us an example how God has blessed you in your life and in your ministry?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Most importantly, God has blessed me with the most beautiful woman on earth and great Spiritual father which is invaluable.

**Dr. Citro:** What are the top three things you personally do that has led you to this blessed life you're living?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Pray through everything. Read the Bible. Attempt to do new things.

**Dr. Citro:** Do you have a favorite bible verse that is your go-to verse about living the blessed life and why?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Psalm 138:8, "The Lord shall perfect that which concerns me."

**Dr. Citro:** According to the Word of God, what is blessed life?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Living in life knowing that you are living it in Christ Jesus.

**Dr. Citro:** Is living the blessed life for everyone?

**Evangelist Kofi:** The Bible says, in Eph 1:3, God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly in Christ Jesus. So, as long as you are in Christ, you are blessed already, not going to be blessed, but has been blessed.

**Dr. Citro:** What must one do in order to live the blessed life?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Remain in Christ. Read the Bible. Obey the Bible. Do the Bible. Obey the Bible. Pray a lot, and work hard. Don't leave your life to chance.

**Dr. Citro:** Can you miss the blessed life, and if yes, how can you miss the blessed life?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Living in sin, not living for Christ, not obeying the Word of God, not believing that you have been blessed by God.

**Dr. Citro:** Can you give us one or two examples in the bible of someone who missed out on having the blessed life and how that person missed out on the blessed life?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Gehazi was supposed to succeed Elisha, like Elisha did after Elijah, but went against the instructions of his master in 2 Kings 5. Judas lost his place after he sold Jesus.

**Dr. Citro:** Can you give us one or two examples in the bible of someone who had the blessed life and what that person did in order to have the blessed life?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Abraham is one of the greatest examples. He lived in obedience to God and God blesses him, and we still talk about him today. We can talk of David, who won God's heart through worship. I can talk of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I can talk about Esther, Ruth, and Naomi. The Bible is full of such people. But ultimately Jesus Christ the Blessed One. God so blessed Him because of His obedience to God.

**Dr. Citro:** If you were to give counsel on the top five things one needs to have the blessed life, what would that counsel be?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Believe God. Believe His Word. Believe God wants you blessed. Believe you can be blessed. Work towards receiving all that God has for you. Think of others; be blessing to others

**Dr. Citro:** How do you deal with people who want to live the blessed life but don't want to do what they must do so that they can be blessed?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Focus on those who want to do, not those who don't want to do. You can't force anyone against their will. I know blessings don't always immediately fall and that sometimes we have to wait for them.

**Dr. Citro:** What do you say to people who feel hopeless and want to give up?

**Evangelist Kofi:** Habakkuk 2:3

**“Living in life  
knowing that  
you are  
living it in  
Christ Jesus.”  
This is where  
it's at.**

**Dr. Citro:** Is there anything you would like to share about yourself personally with the readers?

**Evangelist Kofi:** You can watch me preach on [YouTube.com/revivaltoday07](https://www.youtube.com/revivaltoday07) and you follow me on Facebook at [facebook.com/worldevangelistic](https://www.facebook.com/worldevangelistic) and instagram [@evangelist\\_kofi](https://www.instagram.com/evangelist_kofi).

I am humbled by all the responses he has given me to all of my questions and it's simple and clear cut, "Living in life knowing that you are living it in Christ Jesus." This is where it's at. When one is serving Jesus Christ and doing all that God wants them to do, then you have found your blessed life. I cannot emphasize this enough. It is the life I have chosen, and it is the life that I am living. Evangelist Kofi gave us clear answer as to what God wants and expects. In conclusion, I pray you come to the same realization Evangelist Kofi, my staff at Everyday Life, and I have come to. If you want the blessed life you will do what is necessary to obtain the blessed life as we have learned from Evangelist Kofi. Should you want to know more about Evangelist Kofi's ministry, the links are: [YouTube.com/revivaltoday07](https://www.youtube.com/revivaltoday07) or [facebook.com/worldevangelistic](https://www.facebook.com/worldevangelistic) and instagram [@evangelist\\_kofi](https://www.instagram.com/evangelist_kofi).



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RAHAB'S This exclusive beautifully custom-designed, gold, stainless steel bracelet is the first piece of jewelry released from THE THREAD OF HOPE COLLECTION, called Rahab's Thread of Hope, with the inspiring Thread of Hope Logo which represents hope and reminds those who wear it that no matter what they're going through there is hope. PVD Gold is corrosion resistant, very durable, and has a longer lifetime. All proceeds from Rahab's Thread of Hope goes to help women and children who are victims of sex trafficking. When you receive your purchase, it will come in a jewelry box. Don't forget to order yours today for your loved ones. You can purchase Rahab's Thread of Hope at [www.threadofhope.org](http://www.threadofhope.org).



# BLESSED

PRINCE OBINNA, JP

**"Thou shalt be blessed above all people..."**  
Deuteronomy 7:14;

One of GOD's priority agenda for HIS children is for them to live a blessed life.

He said in 3 John 1:2, **"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."**

However, being blessed is not just about material comfort; the Bible says in **1 Corinthians 15:19, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."**

So what does it mean to be blessed?

1. To be blessed is to live a life of solution provision for your generation.

**Genesis 12:2 : And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing.**

2. A blessed life is a life that models GOD's goodness.

Where people looking at you see the goodness of GOD visibly; helping them to know the realness of GOD.

**Psalms 136:1-2 : O give thanks unto the LORD; for HE is good: for HIS mercy endureth for ever. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for HIS mercy endureth for ever.**

3. A blessed life is a life where you are an asset to GOD and HIS kingdom on the earth.

**Isaiah 58:12 : And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.**

Apostle Paul, having lived a blessed life of being an asset to GOD said; **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.**  
**2 Timothy 4:7.**

4. A blessed life is a life that draws people to the kingdom of GOD even without words.

**2 Corinthians 3:3: Forasmuch as ye are the manifestly declared to be the epistle of CHRIST ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living GOD; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart.**

- The major purpose of CHRIST's death is for the salvation of humanity; so when our life draws people to HIM, we are living a blessed life.

5. A blessed life is a value adding existence to your family, friends, community and generation.

**Genesis 18:19: "For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which HE hath spoken of him."**

- The goodly, value adding life of Abraham produced a lineage of blessed people: direct children and nation.

I have realized that the death of blessed people in our time is largely because we lack the major requirement for GOD to bless us and make us a blessing.

And that major requirement is having a **COVENANT RELATIONSHIP** with GOD.

Having a covenant relationship with GOD involves many components:

1. **Absolute Obedience:**

We have a generation that spend time analyzing the WORD of GOD and end up being paralyzed in life and destiny.

**“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”** -Isaiah 1:19

Obedience requires our unquestionable compliance with the WORD, principles and doctrines of GOD as contained in the Holy Scripture.

2. The second component of covenant relationship with GOD is **Zealous Service** to GOD and HIS kingdom on the earth.

**“For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.”** -Psalm 69:9

**“I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him.”** -Psalm 89:20

- The blessing of GOD is for those who serve HIM zealously.

**“And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy GOD require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy GOD, to walk in all HIS ways, and to love HIM, and to serve the LORD thy GOD with all thy heart and with all thy soul.”** -Deuteronomy 10:12:

3. **Kingdom First Mentality** is the third component of a covenant relationship with GOD. The Bible reveals it as the key for King David's blessed life.

**‘For the sake of the house of the LORD our GOD, I will seek your prosperity.’** -Psalm 122:9 (NIV)

- King David had a kingdom first mentality; therefore he made it clear that his purpose for seeking wealth (a component of blessing) was solely for the house of GOD.

4. The fourth component of a covenant relationship with GOD that guarantees a blessed life is **our readiness to DEFEND GOD and HIS kingdom** on earth at all times especially in this generation that is deteriorating in perversion.

- David said, **“Is there not a cause?”** -1 Samuel 17:29

To walk in blessedness we must always find a cause to defend GOD and HIS kingdom for.

5. The fifth major component of covenant relationship with GOD that guarantees us a blessed life is to **STAND FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS** even when all (especially religious people) do not agree with us. Determine to be the last man standing on the path of righteousness.

**“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”** -Psalm 1:1

**“Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee. I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.”** -Psalm 139:21-22

Beloved, material or physical comfort is not the beginning and end of blessing or a blessed life; because all shall be burnt by fire:

**“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same Word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” -2 Peter 3:7**

A blessed life therefore is a life that is an asset to humanity and of value to GOD and HIS kingdom on the earth.

I welcome you now to a life of blessedness as you make up your mind to surrender your life to the Lord JESUS CHRIST and determine to walk in covenant relationship with HIM from now. HE said **“Come, and I will make you...”** -Mark 1:17.

JESUS CHRIST is ready and will make us a blessing to ourselves; to our generation and to HIS kingdom on the earth.

Shalom!

**Prince Obinna; JP**

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# BLESSED!

## #Blessed May Not Mean What You Think...

PASTOR STEVE ALANI

Search #blessed on Instagram, and you will find more than 100 million posts. The hashtag highlights pictures of beautiful places, toned bodies, new babies, graduations, successes, and abundance. Scrolling down, you'll see recent business startups, wonderful technology, new marriages, and fancy cars.

All of these are good things, gifts given to humanity by a loving God. But the hashtag seems to say this is the only way God blesses us—by giving us obviously good things. Have we defined the blessed life as one of abundance and power, popularity and success?

Imagine, instead, opening your Instagram feed and reading a story about a woman who has just lost her job. In her post she wonders how she'll cover her next mortgage payment, how she'll get school supplies for her children, and how she'll pay for the repair her car desperately needs.

What should her hashtag be? #notblessed?

Or what about a post by a mother whose child lives with a myriad of birth-related problems? Her most recent status talks about physical suffering, learning disabilities, and the independent life her child will never have.

**Her hashtag? #cursed?**

**#Blessed According To Jesus**

In Luke 6:20–22, Jesus describes a life of blessing that is, at the very least, countercultural:

- Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.
- *Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.*
- *Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.*
- *Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man!*

As we read Jesus's description, we notice several things. First, the blessing he describes isn't shallow, passing, or temporary. It's a deep, enduring sense of satisfaction. This isn't the good feeling that warms us for a moment and then fades. This is a rooted, deep-in-your-gut joy that doesn't shift with circumstances.

A picture of the blessed life is also found in Psalm 1. Here, the psalmist describes the blessed person as one who delights in the law of the Lord, meditating on it consistently. He is like a tree near water whose leaves don't wither in drought. His blessing endures despite circumstances. And Ephesians 1:3 tells us that God *"has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms."*



True blessings are anything but temporary.

### **Upside-Down Blessing**

So who are the recipients of this kind of blessing? According to Jesus, this kind of blessing comes not to those who are rich, powerful, successful, and popular. Rather, it comes to those who endure suffering.

In Jesus's upside-down kingdom, these people know an enduring joy and blessing that doesn't dwindle as their situation changes. There is blessing that comes when you are powerless, for only then can you know the wealth and power of the coming kingdom. There is blessing when you are needy, for only then will you be satisfied with Jesus himself. There is blessing when you grieve about the brokenness and sin in the world, for only then will you laugh later when Jesus sets it right. Blessed are you now if you are excluded because of your connection to Jesus. That exclusion will lead to greater reward.

Unlike the fleeting happiness brought by sparkling circumstances and popularity, the conditions of neediness and dependency on God are the real places of blessing in his kingdom. Why? Because these things don't change with our circumstances. In fact, when we are weak, needy, grieving, or excluded because of Christ, the joy we have in Jesus somehow grows stronger.

### **You Are #Blessed**

And this is good news for everyone who belongs to Christ. Though we may never get tickets to that concert or a reservation for dinner at that restaurant, we have a place in Christ's kingdom. Yes, our place at his table will inevitably come with suffering of many kinds (Rom. 8:17), but it will also come with greater blessing than we can imagine.

As believers, we should rethink our metaphorical and literal hashtags. Instead of just pushing through or trying to ignore suffering, Jesus is encouraging us to cherish it—not because grieving is easy or because powerlessness is pleasant, but because these conditions make us more aware of our need for him. As Corrie ten Boom wrote, "You can never learn that Christ is all you need, until Christ is all you have."

Are you in a place of weakness, grief, or exclusion because of Christ? Hear his words of blessing over you: Yours is the kingdom of God, you will be satisfied, you will laugh, and great is your reward in heaven. You will be #blessed.

Pastor Steve Alani  
Lead Pastor LifeMap Ministry International

**“You can never learn that Christ is all you need, until Christ is all you have.”**

# Power Surge

DR. CAROL DRAKE WHEATLEY

## **I'm Blessed & Highly Favored...and I lie about other stuff, too.**

I ran across an old friend last week and said, "Hi! How are you doing?"

"I'm blessed and highly favored," she responded without much conviction.

Trying to sound cheerful, I said, "Great! How's the new job?"

"Oh, I got fired last Friday for missing too much work."

I was a little taken aback by her news and asked, "Why did you miss work?"

"I'm struggling," she hesitantly replied.

"Struggling with what?"

"Oh, you know, struggling; but God's got this."

"What are you expecting Him to do for you?"

"Oh, God knows my needs," she answered almost cryptically as she stroked a sling supporting her arm.

"Well, can I at least pray for you?"

"No, I'm fine...really. I'm blessed and highly favored."

\*\*\*\*\*

If you're a Christian, I mean a real Christian who doesn't mind dropping the "J" word out in public, you've no doubt had a conversation similar to this. People lie about their lives all the

time and they do it because they think it makes them sound spiritual. Their rationale is that, "If I tell someone I have a problem in my life or a sickness in my body, they'll think I'm not very spiritual and I'm not a good Christian and I don't have faith." They're right. You'll probably be judged by other Christians.

**People lie about their lives all the time and they do it because they think it makes them sound spiritual.**

There is a real problem in the body of Christ today when it comes to how we read the scriptures and how we apply them to any given situation. This issue is partially to blame when the world calls us hypocrites... because we often are! Let me offer some clarification by using the above conversation as an example of a classically misunderstood scripture.

In Romans 4:17 we read a discourse between God and Abraham regarding God's promise to him and Sarah that they would have a child

and have posterity. They had been childless for decades and were hoping against hope that they would conceive like God promised them. In that context, Paul the writer of the Book of Romans, says that God "calls those things which do not exist as though they did..." This is definitely in the context of Abraham and Sarah receiving the promise of a child, an heir; but we clearly see mentioned in verse 24, that this promise is also imputed to those of us who believe in the God who raised Jesus from the dead. Not every single scripture is for every single person, but there is opportunity for blessing in each scripture when it is understood and used properly to speak God's words over our lives.

**...but the Word says that by the stripes that Jesus bore on His back, I'm already healed.**

I realize that these words are in a context which promises the lineage of our salvation, but the actual concept is applicable to just about anything. This is not, as some preachers contend, a "blab it and grab it" platform. Actually, none of God's words create a "name it and claim it" platform. That's the world's interpretation of the gifts and blessings that God has given to the church.

As I see it, here's the big deal: Our Christian friend is obviously suffering from something. If she's got a bone sticking out of her arm, it might not be a far stretch to assume she has a compound fracture. But our "super-spiritual" or "religious" Christian refuses to admit that she tripped and fell down and broke her arm. Now remember, the scripture says to "call those

things that **are not** as though they are." But here we see this confused sister calling those things "that **are** as though they are not." That's exactly the opposite of what the scripture says! So, what does this scripture really mean, anyway?

It means that we are not to deny the things that happen in our lives, but are to trust and boldly declare the Word of God over our situation... any situation. We speak the scriptures out loud because they are the truth and Mark 11:26 says that whatever we say—if we believe it in our heart—we'll have the things we say. That's pretty straightforward. We have both Old Testament and New Testament evidence that God wants us to say what it is we expect from Him, but our saying has to be the scriptures.

Here's how the conversation might have gone if our friend had a mature **working** knowledge of the Word of God:

"Hi! How are you doing today?"

"I lost my job but I'm not worried because I know that God is the source of my provision!"

"I can stand in agreement with you for that!"

"And as you can obviously see, I'm struggling with a broken arm, but the Word says that by the stripes that Jesus bore on His back, I'm already healed. It hurts a little now, but God's word assures me that it's fully restored. Hallelujah!"

"Well, it looks to me that, in spite of your difficulties, His goodness and mercy are following you! God bless you!"

There is a huge difference between just mouthing "blessed and highly favored" and actually living it. Cliché is rampant in the body of Christ because people really don't know what the scriptures say and so they just repeat what other people say because it sounds good. The problem is, these kinds of sayings have no life in them. Hebrews 4:12 reminds us that it is the **word of God** that is alive and powerful. When we declare the word of God, the Life-giving Spirit in us is the power behind the words we speak and the One who causes what we say to come to pass. Babbling something that "sounds" like scripture has no life, and no blessings.

What do real blessings look like? They look like truly compassionate, loving people, speaking the word of God out loud over a situation or a person. Blessings look like people taking the Word of God and putting it into action: laying hands on the sick, casting out demons, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead and telling mountains to move. (Those mountains are often called cancer, or divorce, or drug addiction, or bankruptcy or PTSD and they have to remove themselves from your life when you tell them to.) Real blessings are when our friends don't state the obvious but instead speak God's word over us. Real blessings are the things that we are genuinely grateful for...things we say "Thank You" for to a loving Father who forgave us through the shed blood of His son Jesus. Genuine gratitude results in more blessings and continual favor. Until we renew our minds and until we are truly grateful for the blessings we already have, we will have to settle for things that sound like scripture but have no power.

### ***The bottom line...***

Being blessed is something that God wants for us more than we want it for ourselves, and His favor is always with us because we are accepted in the Beloved. We **are** blessed and highly favored when we have a close, intimate

relationship with the Father. Remember, Jesus Christ came to enable us to have that relationship with God by sending us Holy Spirit. But going around parroting what everyone else says just because you think it makes you sound spiritual is not God's best. He wants to be with you and He wants you to want Him. Beloved reader, spend time with Him. Meditate on the scriptures. Pray. Listen. Rest in Him. Blessings and favor are not things we seek after, but are things that truly follow us when we are in a personal relationship with Him.

If you've thought about what it might be like to really know God and not just know **about** Him, and to experience the power you hear real Christians talking about, it's a simple thing to do. Just ask Him to come into your life. You may not know this, but He **already** forgave your sins, so don't worry about not being "good enough" to be a child of the living God. He accepts us just the way we are when we call out to Him. So just call. He'll come. He'll make His home in you and provide you with a home in Him. He'll never leave you and never forsake you. He loves you, and wants what is best for you. All you have to do is want Him, too, and submit your life to Him.

May the Lord bless you and pour His favor upon you!

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# **Everyday Life Picks the 2019 Fall/Winter Fashion Must Have “The Leather Jacket.”**

I'm so excited that finally we can purchase a vegan or faux leather jacket for those who are sensitive to wearing animal products. I couldn't believe how many beautiful, colorful, and different sizes leather jackets are available to us ladies, this season. Just in time for the Holiday Season, that will carry us into the rest of the winter months, and early spring. A definite must have.

The new leather jacket designs are gorgeous. The jackets can be worn with any style you choose and are comfortable with. You can dress them up or down. Even making them an elegant part of an outfit. I love what we can do with the little black leather jacket. It reminds me of the little black dress, we women love to own and wear.

Go ahead, and pair it with jeans or fancy pants. Create a more sophisticated look. Pair it with a dress or skirt. My daughter loves to wear her vegan leather jackets with a dress underneath and jeans. I prefer to wear mine with a skirt and tank top. You can wear the little leather jacket anywhere you like. There is no right or wrong way to wear it. It is wonderful to create your own look. It can be worn to parties, or just to grab a cup of coffee with a friend. It is interchangeable for day to evening with anything you like to wear. Here's a few different looks. I love my little black leather jacket, with my leather skirt, and silk shirt. It is a piece of clothing I love to own because I can match it up with all of my clothing. A great investment that will get you a lot of use, and give you different looks.































# KEEPING SKIN HEALTHY DURING WINTER MONTHS

BY DR. TERESA ALLISSA CITRO

The winter cold and dry air can leave your skin irritated. The way to combat dry skin is to consider following the following tips. It is important to take care of your skin so that you can retain your skin's healthy natural moisture. You can minimize your winter itchy and red skin by incorporating the following suggestions into your daily routine, keeping your skin moist and supple.

## **Limit Shower Time and Temperature**

Limit your shower to ten minutes or less, and use lukewarm water. Hot water actually dries out the skin. It stripes your skin of its natural oils. Consider not taking such a hot shower, and keep the shower time at a minimum. It might feel warm and cozy to stay. Taking hot showers might feel good to do, but a quick shower will cut down the damage on the skin. Pat your skin dry, instead of completely drying it off. Think of it like using a toner after you wash your face. Water will absorb back into the skin. Apply a good body cream to keep it nice and moist.

## **Avoid Using Hot Water to Wash Your Hands**

During the winter, avoid using excessively hot water. Using hot water tends to cause your skin to turn red. According to the Centers for Disease Control, using cooler water to wash your hands is as effective at killing the germs found on your hands. Using cooler water is less damaging to your skin, and less irritating, too. Use a good hand lotion as often as you can throughout the day especially after you have washed your hands.

## **Use Gentle, Fragrance-Free Cleansers**

This is so important for you skin. The wrong soap can worsen your skin. Making it itchier and drier. Some regular bar soaps may contain irritating ingredients and fragrances. This is already a problem for the skin. Instead, opt for a fragrance-free, moisturizing cleanser. Please be aware that some products labeled "unscented" may actually contain fragrances. Please look for one that specifically is labeled, "fragrance-free." You can also prevent winter skin problems by using less soap. You should consider limiting the use of soap to just necessary parts of your body such as hands, feet, under pits, and private areas.



## **Your Facial Skin-Care Regimen During Winter Months**

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends you stop using products that contain alcohol and fragrances. I believe we should stop using alcohol regardless of the winter months. Alcohol dries your skin. During the dry winter months exposing your skin to ingredients such as alcohol and fragrance will create more of an issue. Remember that some toners also contain alcohol. You might want to use caution using toners during the winter months. Using fragrance- and alcohol-free face moisturizers is very important. Use an intense and richer moisturizer on your face during the night.

## **Your Lips**

The winter months is harsh on your lips. The winter dry months bring with it dry, cracked lips. It's imperative to apply organic moisturizers on your lips. Remember, try and stay away from harmful ingredients found in so many lip products. Applying a moisturizer lip balm can help heal dry, cracked, and chapped lips. Choose products that are as natural and organic as possible.

## **Eat Right and Stay Hydrated**

Although it is important to implement all the above to help the skin stay moist and hydrated from the outside. It is also important to understand that when the skin is very dry it can be helped by eating the right foods, and or take supplements. Eating or taking supplements that contain omega-3 or omega-6 fatty acids is a good thing to think about doing. Check with your doctor for their opinion especially if you are on certain medicines or diets. It is always the best choice to eat right, stay hydrated, and have enough sleep.

## **De-Stress Your Life**

This one thing plays a major role in skin problems. During the winter months we celebrate 5 major holidays. Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, and New Year's Day. Never mind the most stressful time of the year, Valentine's Day. Stress may play into your skin health. When you are stressed oil glands go into overdrive, and so does inflammation. All these things play a role, and it shows in our skin. Take time out. Keep a journal and write everything you are grateful for. (See the Ad in Everyday Life) for one of the best gratitude journals for men or women. Remember that the biggest beauty thief is that of stress. It steals our peace, joy, and happiness. Determine you will not allow anything to steal your peace of mind. God tells us to keep our mind steadfast on Him for He cares for us. We don't have to worry when we trust in a God that holds our tomorrow.

Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer of  
Citro Cosmetics and Skin Care

**MAKEUP &  
SKIN CARE**





# Lips, Lips, Lips!

BY DR. TERESA ALLISSA CITRO

## **This Holiday Season it is all about the lips!**

My personal favorite winter must have be lipstick. It's all about the lips. Think about it. When you are talking people are watching your lips move. It's important to keep your lips hydrated and chap free. Start by using a lip moisturizer like vitamin C, by Citro Cosmetics and Skin Care. Then go ahead and choose a nice deep red lipstick.

I believe women should wear red lipstick. Remember, there are many shades of red. Meaning that there is one that is just perfect for you. Choose the one that best compliments your skin tone. Red lipstick can be worn with a beautiful holiday gown, or a pair of jeans and a T-shirt. It goes with just about everything. You can dress it up or dress it down. Red lips are a classic after all. Red lips make a statement all on its own.

The question becomes how do I know which red I should use? Let us try to help you with this. Here are a few tips. First don't be afraid to experiment. Go to a department store, and try their lipsticks. The make up consultants will be there to help you match your lip stick to your skin tone. It is free. You are under no obligation to make a purchase. Just go and play with the colors. Take a friend with you, and enjoy the

holiday season by doing something for yourself. It will lift your mood and spirit, too. A wonderful way to have some fun.

1. The most important thing is your undertones. This is how you match your best red lipstick to your skin tone. If you have a pink or cool undertone, your best red match would be a blue-based red. If your skin tone is a warmer undertone, look for a red lipstick with orange undertones. Here's a cool way to determine what undertone you are. You can find this information by looking at the inside of your wrist veins. If your veins are green, you have warm undertones. If your veins are blue, you have cool undertones. If you are one of those people that can't tell what color your veins are, most likely you have a neutral undertone. This is wonderful for you because you can then wear both orange and blue based reds. You are doubly blessed.

Once you figure out which undertone you are, it is easy to choose your red lipstick that is best for you.

2. Next you can choose what finish you prefer. Will it be that shimmery look? Shiny? Or Matte? It is up to you. Whatever makes you dazzle and whichever makes you feel

great, you will look beautiful wearing it. It's the holiday; maybe you will pick one or two. Sometimes putting on lipstick is a wonderful way to boost up your self-esteem.

Next is how to apply the lipstick properly. This is very important. Let's face it, we have seen women wearing lipstick on their teeth, smudged on the sides, and on their chin. Not very flattering. Here are tips on how to apply your red lipstick correctly. Most importantly, please pick lipsticks that aren't harmful for you. Read the ingredients very carefully. Lipsticks are sitting right there on our mouth. It is imperative you stay away from harmful ingredients. Be very wise of what is in it, and where it was manufactured. There is a list of dangerous ingredients that are used in women's cosmetics. Choose wisely.

1. Prep your lips. It is important to exfoliate the dead skin cell buildup from your lips. Use an exfoliate to get rid of the dead cell buildup from the surface of your lips. This is the most important thing you can do to keep healthy lips.

2. Prime your lips. This is a great way to fill your lips. Use an invisible lip liner. Fill your lips first, and then trace along your natural lip line. The reason you do this is to prevent bleeding. You don't want the lipstick to move from your lips. It also helps the lipstick stay put on your lips all day.
3. You are ready to apply your red lipstick. Just take your lip stick and put on your lips. It's this easy. One, Two, Three! Red lips make a statement!

This Holiday Season go ahead and make your own personal statement with a beautiful red lip stick!

Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer of  
Citro Cosmetics and Skin Care





# What Can You Do to Make Your Hair Grow Faster and Longer?

BY DR. TERESA ALLISSA CITRO

Everyday Life went on a quest to find how we can make our hair grow faster and longer. I cut my hair and hated it. We at Everyday Life, I wanted to learn what I could do to help me grow my hair back faster? After speaking with so many of the experts in the industry, we found the following information. We hope it is helpful to you!

Sadly, I learned we cannot grow long hair overnight. It takes time, and it means taking extra care of your hair needs. There are some do's and don'ts you will have to do to grow your hair back to your desired length.

First thing we learned was, hair grows a quarter inch- to a half an inch max per month. Even more, growing your hair is only possible by making sure it is super healthy and doesn't have lots of split ends. You can do this! You just have to treat your hair very delicately and carefully. With the help of a great hairstylists this can be done.

Second thing: here are some ways that might help you grow your hair and speed up the growing process to at least half an inch per month.

## **#1 Get trims.**

Discuss with your hairstylists to only trim one eighth of inch off, every 10-12 weeks. Last thing I wanted to learn was I needed to cut my hair. Getting regular trims will actually prevent more split ends from happening, making your hair look even longer, and thicker. Of course, sometimes the hair is so damaged you just have to cut all those dead ends off.

## **#2 Avoid over processing your hair.**

Going blond is not going to be a good idea when you are trying to grow your hair back. When the hair is bleached, it opens the cuticle of the hair strands. This means you will end up



**Hair grows a quarter inch to a half an inch max per month.**



with significant damage. So, hair that has been chemically treated will break off or split much more so. The way to prevent this is to stop dying your hair. Instead opt for other things you can do. Today, hairstylists can offer more less invasive and harsh coloring methods. Find one that is best for your hair, while you are trying to grow it.

### **#3 Choose A Shampoo That Is Sulfates Free.**

Sulfates strip away the natural oils that are necessary for long, and healthy hair. When you shampoo lather only your scalp, let the suds just slide down the hair to clean the rest of the hair. Be sure you don't use harsh shampoos and if possible don't wash your hair as often. Shampoos have harsh soaps. Choose shampoos that are less harsh. Stay away from products that have alcohol in them.

### **#4 Condition, Condition, Condition**

The best thing you can do is condition your hair. It is the conditioner that prevents split ends from happening. Never skip conditioning your hair. Conditioners helps to replace the proteins and lipids that are found inside the hair shaft. And it will seal the outer cuticle as well. I use conditioners at the ends of my hair every night before going to bed. I personally, found this to work well for my hair. Always check with your hair stylists before you do anything, or a dermatologist if you have medical issues.

### **#5 Stay Away From Hot Water.**

We know hot water causes our skin to dry up. Guess what? It does the same to the hair. Use lukewarm water, and after you finish washing your hair, rinse your hair in cold water. This is important because it prevents moisture loss. You just have to rinse your hair for a few seconds with the cold water. This is one of the most important things you can do.

### **#6 Stay Away From Heat.**

As hard as this is, while your trying to grow your hair using hots tools is going to interfere with growing your hair. I had to stop using my curling wands, and hair straighteners. But there are other things you will have to stop doing, too. Like chemical relaxers, or any other treatments. Be sure if you use anything because you have to use a heat protectant.

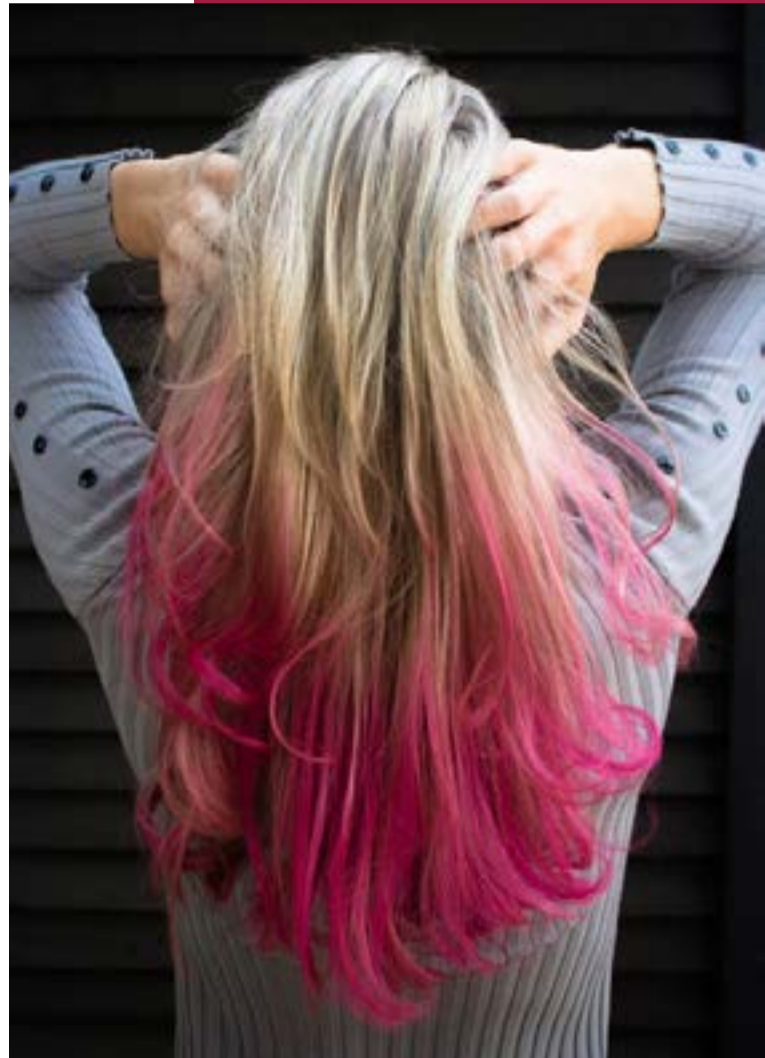


## #7 Use Hair Masks.

I made up my own hair mask by mixing a few different oils together. However, there are wonderful premade hair masks already for you. Your hairstylists can help you find the right one for you.

In conclusion, we found that the healthier your hair is, the longer and faster it will grow. I had to really baby my hair, and stop everything I was doing to nurse it back to health. I had a real heart to heart talk with my hairstylist and I listened to everything she suggested I do. It was difficult, but I did it. I have no regrets.

Dr. Teresa Allissa Citro  
Founder and Chief Executive Officer of  
Citro Cosmetics and Skin Care



\*Please note all the proceeds (100%) from Citro Cosmetics and Skin Care are dedicated to Thread of Hope, Inc., and its mission.



**A well-balanced diet is important for good health. For a real transformation, it starts from the inside out. Exercise is also important to control weight, build healthy bones, and tone muscles. There are so many exercise programs out there to try. Walking, swimming, jogging, body lifting and sculpting are just a few. Speak with your doctor which is best for you. It's important for our self-esteem, and after a workout, we're infused with energy. Enjoy the health benefits of eating organic, exercising, and replenishing your body with the right vitamins and what they can do for you.**





# Life's Better with Butter... Or Is It?

NOEL MATHUR

A guide to surviving the food trends and conflicting information.

If you are like most Americans trying to lose weight or at least stay ahead of the aging process, you are inundated with conflicting information and don't know what to believe. And with the holidays coming up, it doesn't make these decisions any easier

I'm going to try to answer a few questions that my clients often ask me regarding food choices and how it can impact our bodies.

**If I am trying to lose weight, why are you telling me to eat fats?**

**Not all calories are created equal.**

Our bodies are amazing machines and unless you have studied how our bodies break down nutrients, it makes sense that one would be confused about this issue.

Calories from food are made up of fats, proteins and carbohydrates and are digested by our bodies at a different rate. Carbohydrates are broken down into sugars which are stored as fat if not used. Proteins break down into amino acids and fats are broken down into fatty acids and are the most sustainable source of energy so it makes you feel full longer leading you to having less spikes in blood sugar and less cravings... so fat does not make you fat! What makes you

fat are the simple sugars that are stored as fat that are found in things like our favorite holiday desserts and convenient processed foods.

**If I am eating too many calories won't I gain weight?**

Not all calories are created equal. If you have 1000 calories of processed refined carbohydrates that your body quickly breaks down into sugars that create spikes in cortisol levels and blood sugar, it is not the same as having 1200 calories of high quality fats and protein that help with satiety (the feeling of fullness). Again, the way our bodies process and utilize the energy sources we put into it is very different. Try to not think about the numbers of calories in but the type of calories.

So, is life better with butter? The answer is YES! Real butter, not manmade high fructose corn syrup. And remember it's not a ticket to eating fat. The magic happens when you eat the right fats and eliminate processed foods and refined carbohydrates. Then your body can run efficiently, and you will look better and have more energy to do the things you were created to do.



# FEVER IN CHILDREN

BY GERALD ENTE.MD

Fever is a temporary elevation in the body's temperature usually due to the response to an infection. Typically, fever suddenly occurs in the middle of the night when the house is quiet, and everyone is asleep. The baby screams awake crying; mom, typically, hears this, gets up and runs to her baby. She notices that her baby feels hot, so she takes baby's temperature and it shows FEVER...It's very common for one to begin to Panic but it is not necessary. FEVER IS YOUR FRIEND. Yes, you read that correctly. At least low-grade fever is; which is fever under 102°. This actually shows you that the body's immune system is starting to fight the infection. The brain has ordered the immune system to turn on, to cause fever to come in to 'cook' the virus. It brings in white blood cells to seek and destroy the virus. (usually, but at time it maybe caused by a bacteria).

The average child successfully meets hundreds of viral illnesses before age 6 when he/she will need the antibodies in preparation for the onslaught of illnesses coming from the other children in school. The usual result of meeting a virus is 'catching' the infection. Luckily over 85% of the cases will result in an asymptomatic infection [which will have no symptoms]. Of the remaining 15% of cases, 85% will have only mild symptoms, while the remaining few may show serious symptoms. So, you see now that usually 'catching' a virus is not a big deal.

Fevers without other symptoms usually are of no major concern. We define fever as a temperature over 100.4°. Normal temps are 98.6° but there are variations related to age, time of day [earliest in morning], exercise, and after eating or drinking.

The times to call for help with a febrile child are:

- younger than 3 months with temp over 100.4°F rectally.
- a febrile infant with a bulging soft spot [fontanelle] on top of the head.
- between 3 + 6 months with temp up to 102°F and seems lethargic, irritable, persistent vomiting or temperature increases above 102°F.
- between 6 months + 2 years, with temp over 102°F for 1-2 days with no symptoms. If symptoms of
- a cold or sore throat seem serious enough call your doctor.

**FEVER IS  
YOUR FRIEND.  
Yes, you read  
that correctly.**

Other signs that require a call for help include the following:

- a fever that lasts for more than 3 days.
- if the child shows signs of unresponsiveness like losing good eye contact, good facial expressions or voice contact.
- if the child is not drinking adequately to keep wetting [average infant wets 4 diapers daily], has
- no tear when crying or if vomiting or diarrhea is persistent.
- severe headache, stomachache or ANY severe discomfort or inability to move.
- a fever after being in a locked car. [this is a crime]

Everyone has heard that fever may cause seizures and that surely is a major reason for concern. These usually occur between 6 months + 5 years of age. These are known as febrile seizures and usually do not cause any long-lasting effects although they really are scary to see. These seizures occur in 2-4% of children under age 5. They last only a short time although while happening it seems forever. This requires medical attention immediately. Several things can be done for safety:

- Turn the child on his/her side on the floor or ground. [a hard surface]
- Remove any sharp objects from the area.
- Loosen any tight clothing, especially around the face.
- Hold the baby loosely to prevent injury. Do not try to stop the movements.
- Do NOT put anything in the mouth.
- Do Not try to stop the seizure.
- Call for your medical help.

You are now an expert. No need to panic. Be prepared. Stay safe. Stay well.



**This section on education is important to us and is there to help encourage parents for better communication between home and school for a successful academic career.**



# Blessed- More than a hashtag #

REAL TALK: PARENTS AND YOUTH SERIES  
DR. THÉRÈSE FARMER

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## Cliché All Day

When you hear the word “Blessed”, what comes to your mind?

#Blessed

“Too blessed to be stressed”

“I’m not lucky, I’m blessed!”

“Stay blessed!”

Sounds familiar?

Being blessed is more than a hashtag, a lyric in the latest song or a post on social media. The world has taken the word “Blessed” and made it into something cliché and trendy. Let’s make this very clear: God is not a cliché! I think we should take a moment to look a little deeper into this heavenly word called BLESSED.

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**Bless·ed** /blest, 'blesid/ adjective (Oxford dictionary)

1. made holy; consecrated.
  - endowed with divine favor and protection.

Wow! Did you catch that? I think with such a deep definition, we should take a moment to dissect.

## Oh, That's Holy!

Blessed is a holy word. It says that being blessed you are made "holy", not trendy. Being blessed you are "consecrated" not given instant popularity. Having been made blessed means you are "endowed with divine favor and protection". With a definition like this, you have to wonder, who is doing all of this?... Who makes us blessed? Only the Lord God Almighty (Ephesians 1:3)! The word itself lets you know that we are not dealing with a word created by the world but by God. We are speaking a heavenly language when we speak the word blessed. If you didn't receive that definition, hey, you missed a blessing!

Now let me say this, before we get into even more nitty gritty details of blessings, there is a requirement for receiving this Godly word called Blessed: If you do not believe on The Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, I hate to tell ya but NONE of these blessings, those I am about to mention and those not mentioned, apply to you. Sorry. You can't receive blessings from someone you don't believe and have faith in (Hebrews 11:6). Here is where I insert the shrug emoji 🤷 .

## Get in on this!

Being a child of God has its privileges and one is that we are blessed. If you do not know The Lord Jesus, accept Him into your life. It's easy! Just repeat this prayer:

*Father God, I believe you sent your Son,  
Jesus (Yeshua, in Hebrew), to die for my sins.  
I believe that Jesus was born of a virgin, suffered and died,  
rose from the dead and is sitting at the right hand of the Father.  
Lord, I ask that You forgive me of my sins and that you cleanse me Lord.  
I receive your Son, Jesus, the Messiah,  
as my Lord and Savior and I ask that He comes into my life.  
Satan, I no longer belong to you! I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.  
I thank you Lord for forgiving me, receiving me and saving me. In Jesus Name, Amen.*

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If you said this prayer great! Onward and upward into the receiving blessings of The Lord. If not, I implore you to answer that knocking on your heart. You know, that feeling that you need help and need to be blessed, a blessing only a Savior can give. The Lord Jesus is all about relationships and as a friend of God I know personally how much He loves to bless His friends. Give Him a chance to love you and, in return, receive His blessings!

### Those some GOOD blessings!

Whenever we declare a blessing, we are doing something ordained by God. There are various types of blessing detailed in the Word that the Lord God Himself ordained. Now that I've given you the opportunity to actually be blessed, let's get into the blessings of God. Trust me, they are pretty amazing! Let's take a look:

#### Types of Godly Blessings

1. Blessing of Animals and Humans: In Genesis 1:22 and 28, The Lord blessed both animals and humans telling them to be "fruitful and multiply". This isn't just about having kids (see what I did there) it means in every aspect of life! What an amazing way to kick off a list of blessings!
  2. Blessing of the Sabbath Day: The Lord even blessed a special day! In Genesis 2:3, after creating all of the days of the week, The Lord gave a special blessing to the Sabbath. We as Believers celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday since it is the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) and the day when Jesus rose from the dead (Luke 24:1-8).
  3. Blessing after disaster: In Genesis 9:1, after the disastrous flood destroyed the world, not only did the Lord promise never to flood the earth again and used the rainbow as a sign of His covenant promise (Genesis 9:11-17), God blesses Noah and his family to be "fruitful and multiply". They received a blessing and a promise!
  4. Blessings from your enemies: In Numbers 22:12, 38 and 23:8, The Lord tells Balaam that He can't curse God's people. The only thing God allowed him to give was a blessing. Wow! The Lord won't even have your enemies curse you!
  5. Blessings for Obedience: In Deuteronomy 28:1-14, The Lord has a list of blessings for obeying Him and they are all awesome! Take some time and read them all but
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one of my favorites is verse 6, "You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.". This lets me know I am blessed continuously!

6. Blessed for believing and having faith: This is a beautiful blessing from our Lord Jesus. In John 20:29, Jesus gives this blessing right after Thomas doubts His appearance. He lets him know that we, that's you and me, are blessed for believing in Him even though we haven't seen Him. This blessing is so special because it is built on our faith in Christ!
7. Blessed are martyrs for Christ: I am so blessed to live out my faith freely but not everyone has that privilege. The Lord lets us know in Revelation 14:13 that is a special blessing for those who die for their faith. The Lord cares for us all, even those who suffer martyrdom.
8. Blessed for loving the Lord: In the Christian walk, we will have tests and trials (John 16:33). In James 1:12, we are told that we are blessed if we endure and persevere until the end. We do this through our love for the Lord. In the end, we receive a crown of life! How wonderful!

Those were some good blessings, right? There are so many more blessings but I am going to stop here because I want to share with you how The Lord blesses.

### How does He do it?

The Lord has a way of blessing us that at times we may not realize we are being blessed. I want to point out just a few ways The Lord blesses us on a daily, weekly and even monthly basis. The Lord blesses us through:

- ★ His Abundance (2 Corinthians 9:8): Whatever it is, He's got it!
  - ★ His Forgiveness (Psalms 32:1 | Romans 5:8) : If you know the song, sing-along: "...Everyone needs forgiveness, The kindness of a Savior...". Jesus has plenty of forgiveness for us ALL! (song credit: Hillsong Worship)
  - ★ Giving us a future (Jeremiah 29:11): The Lord has plans for us. These plans are full of hope and our future shine bright because of Him!
  - ★ His Restoration(Psalms 23:3 | Job 42:12): Need restoration? I have Jesus for that!
-

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- ★ Giving more blessings and cursing those who curse us(Genesis 12:1-3): The Lord has even more blessings to give but don't mess with His people. He is not a God to be mocked!
  - ★ His Strength (Philippians 3:13): The Lord's supernatural strength is unmatched! He gives us the strength to go on even when we want to give up.
  - ★ Living Hope(1 Peter 1:3): The Lord is our living hope and because of this, we don't have to be hopeless. We can live daily with an expectation!

There are so many more blessings I could detail but for time, and pages sake, I'll stop here. I just can't tell it all! So yeah...blessed, being blessed...it's a real thing! This isn't a trend for the people of God, it is The Lord Jesus pouring out His love on us everyday of our lives. With this daily outpour, let me share one last blessing that The Lord God Himself gave as a blessing to the people (receive this blessing over your life). It comes from Numbers 6: 24-26 and this blessing is also known as the Aaronic or Priestly blessing:

*24 The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:*

*25 the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:*

*26 the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.*

So the next time you hear the word "*Blessed*" being used as just a cliché, trendy word, remember this, he or she is speaking a heavenly word. Take the time to introduce them to the author of that heavenly word. Let's give the world a real reason to #blessed!

**About the Author:** Dr. Thérèse Farmer is a 14 year, professionally licensed Educator and School Counselor. Dr. Farmer is a member at the Refuge of Hope Disciple Center (DC), where she is a Minister and the Founder and Director of the L.I.F.E.<sup>3</sup> program © 2008 (lifeprogram.weebly.com) , a faith-based therapeutic program for young ladies.

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# #BeBlessed

DR. MARK TAYLOR, ED.D.

I was raised on the teaching that sometimes you are blessed and sometimes you are a blessing to others. I also learned that God makes sure you are prepared before being declared. You may not be aware of it. You may be in a tough situation and you are asking yourself "Why Me?" You might be in a season of preparation for something you are going to face later in life that would be difficult to others. Yet, it's exactly within your blessing to conquer.

I have friends from high school who enlisted in the military after graduation. I have had numerous conversations with them about military life. They all told me that when you're preparing to deploy, the military will send you one place to become certified before sending you to your place of your deployment. In some ways I believe God works in a similar fashion: preparing us in one place before sending us to our destination.

I hear plenty of people say that experience is the best teacher and I understand their perspective. I also understand simulating situations and practicing strategies beforehand. Have you ever faced a challenge and remembered a resource you had that could quickly fix a portion of the problem? You can thank preparation for that. Another way of looking at preparation is through availability heuristic; a mental shortcut that relies on immediate examples that come to a given person's mind when evaluating a specific topic, concept, method or decision (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973). Maybe you did not realize you were being prepared at the time, yet you quickly accessed and used one of those preparation strategies.

When I think of God preparing me, I refer to these conversations and teaching often. I wonder who I would be had I not endured the preparation from some of the storms in my life?

**“Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”**

**–1 Peter 4:10**

It is in these reference that I am reminded of James 1:12, "Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test, will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."

Do you know the saying, "be careful what you ask for"? In the church we say, "Be careful what you pray for." I recently saw a meme on social media that said, "You have been assigned to move this mountain to show others that it can be moved." I love this saying because some of us fear our own blessing. It is the foundation of the superhero story. Super heroes have gifts, talents, and training, yet they struggle to reach their maximum potential. Eventually they reach a point where all of their training has been exhausted and their blessing is fully discovered because they have developed the capacity to hold and manage it.

Still, fear can play tricks with your perception of reality and affects your body. Fear is real and I experience it. When I do, I am reminded of Psalms 23:4, "*Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me.*" That includes your preparation.

Do not always look for the firework blessings. Your blessing may have a large-scale impact on a small community or a single human being. I have witnessed friends spend nights in hospital with their kids who have rare forms of cancer, leukemia, sickle cell anemia, asthma, or some other illness. I look at those parents as a blessing to that human

child. Some of you saved your child's life. You were their blessing. I think of you as I read 1 Peter 4:10, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms".

A few weeks ago, I parked at my gym and when I got out of my car there were a few gym members standing outside looking up at the sky. I looked up as well and noticed a double rainbow. As I admired its beauty, I thought of how rainbows come after the rain. When it rains in your life, embrace the preparation season and let it build you. Blessing and being blessed alternate seasons throughout our lives. Remember, diamonds are created under pressure so stand strong and your blessing will shine when the time is right.

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Tversky, A., & Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability: A heuristic for judging frequency and probability. *Cognitive psychology*, 5(2), 207-232.

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# Ready to Make a Move?

NOEL MATHUR

## When is the right time to buy?

If you are like many Americans in today's high-priced housing market, you are most likely trying to find the right time to invest in your new home can present a challenge. Should I buy now? Should I try to time the real estate market and wait until the next housing market crash? Or, should I take advantage of the low interest rates? Some of us may not have an option to wait it all out because they need to buy now due to a work transfer or a sudden change in someone's life. No matter what, it is always important to educate yourself on the current market trends and find ways to try to save yourself money. Let's take a closer look, shall we?

## Buyer's Market vs Seller's Market

The best time to buy is in "buyer's market". That is when the inventory is overloaded, and people need to sell. The potential buyer has more bargaining power because there is so much inventory on the market that the buyer is

now in control of what they are willing to pay and they know if this property doesn't work out for them, there are dozens on the market to look at. Conversely, we have a "seller's market" in which prices are driven up because there are more buyers than homes on the market and it creates a feeding frenzy of multiple offers and sellers end up with higher than asking prices for the property (which is what we have been experiencing the last several years in the Massachusetts areas). So how can we time this?? Unfortunately, the real estate market trends are volatile, and even savvy investors sometimes get it wrong. However, if home prices are higher than local incomes in the area, it could be a sign that a real estate bubble is about to burst and if you can hold off, you may want to.

## Interest Rates Matter

Getting a good interest rate can save you thousands of dollars over the life of a loan. So, shopping when interest rates are very low can

offset the higher cost of a home in the long run. Be careful to only buy what you can afford even though rates are low, because the average cost of running a home is far more than the mortgage amount, so do not be fooled by the cheap cost to buy money! Stay reasonable and be smart and allow your investment to make you money over the years instead of buying over your budget because of low interest rates! (Not all real estate agents are created equal. Please do not let them over sell you. I am a Realtor yes, but my first love is investing and even though it's your home, and not an income property, if you play your cards right it will make you money!

### **Home Shopping Hot Months**

Lastly, just like wedding season, there is a spring market for a reason. The home buying and selling process takes time, and because of the fact, the most popular time to move is in the summer, markets are hot in the spring. Inventory generally goes up and so does pricing because it's a "comfortable" time to buy. Who really wants to pack and move in the winter months? But if you are looking for a bargain, bundle up! There are sellers that are motivated to sell, and you can take advantage of there not being so many buyers wanting to move in the colder months.

All in all, when you need to move, you need to move. Educate yourself on market trends, find a good realtor who can walk you through the process and help you enjoy home shopping! It's one of the biggest investments you will make, and it does pay off in the end!

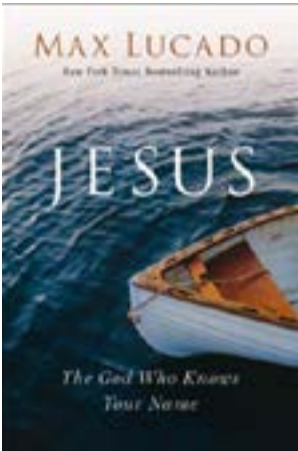
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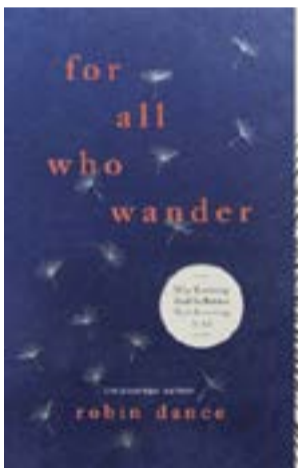
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## **FOR ALL WHO WANDER:**

### **WHY KNOWING GOD IS BETTER THAN KNOWING IT ALL**

BY: ROBIN DANCE      RELEASE: 1/14/20

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24) Her circumstances might not have been as dramatic as the father begging Jesus for a miracle, but Robin felt just as desperate in her faith. Feeling lost in a spiritual desert, this was the most honest prayer she could offer. Can you relate to struggling in your faith but longing to believe?

Faith is tidy and neat for some, never unwavering and always so sure. And maybe that's how you used to feel, but now your once-sure beliefs are less certain, the prescribed faith of your youth no longer enough.

Perhaps life isn't turning out like you thought it would. Heartbreak and challenges stir doubt. Sunday school answers fall short. God seems distant. Inviting you to find hope and healing in your own story within the pages of hers, in *For All Who Wander*, Robin Dance will help you:

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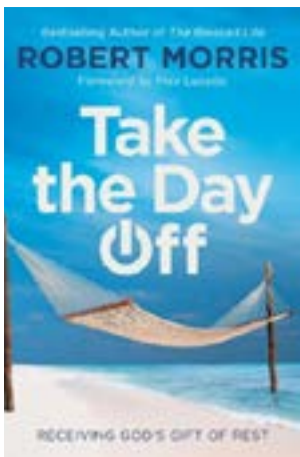
Broaden your understanding of God's grace and faithfulness.

Release hostage-holding lies to enable you to embrace your identity, hope, and value in Christ.

Reframe your view of difficulties and disappointments as you understand their redemptive and transformative value.

Trust that God is working in your wandering to restore and strengthen your faith.

As you walk through Robin's story with her, you'll find out for yourself that sometimes wandering is the path that leads you back to God"



### **TAKE THE DAY OFF: RECEIVING GOD'S GIFT OF REST**

BY: ROBERT MORRIS      RELEASE: 10/29/19

Is your busy life taking a toll on your physical, mental, and emotional well-being? Hit the reset button by keeping the Sabbath! Reminding you that taking a day off is one of the Ten Commandments, Morris helps you soak up the healthful benefits of downtime so that you'll have the energy to serve God and others.



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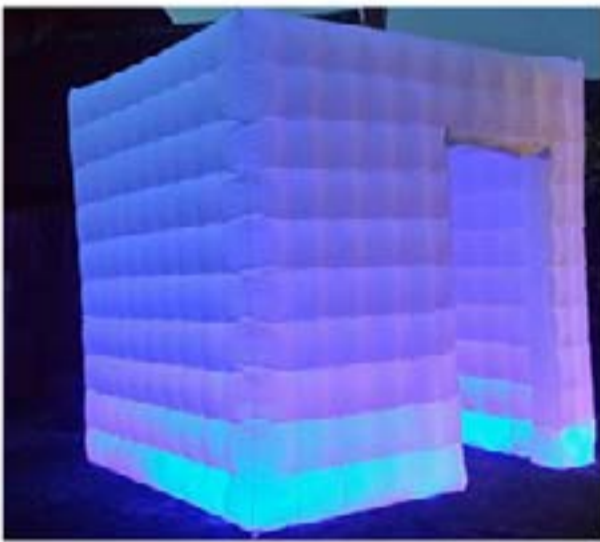
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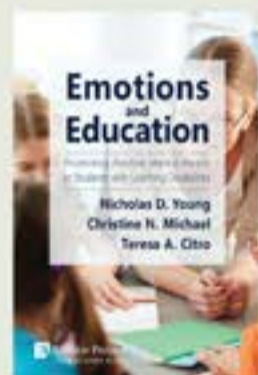
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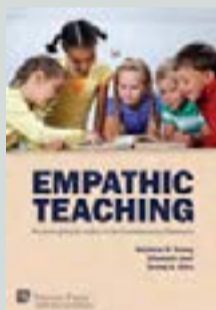


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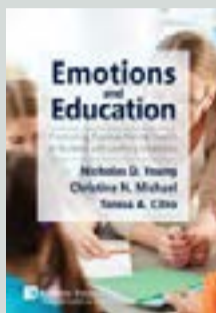
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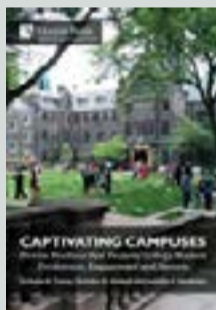


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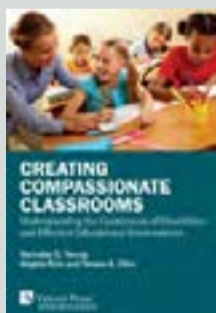


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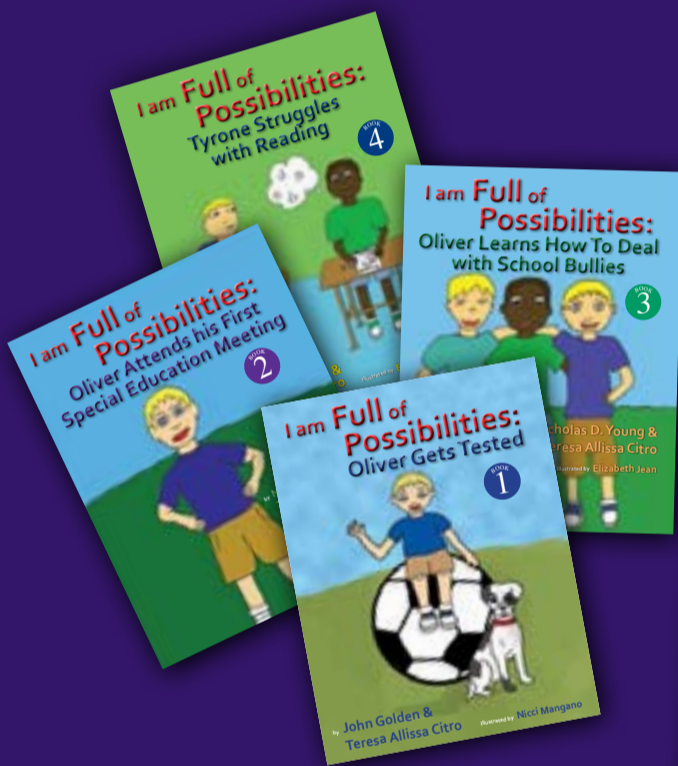


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