

This week, Dr. Randall Pannell begins a series called Caring for Humanity. The first message is titled "The Bedrock of Caring - Your Family." The message here is that in caring for your family you are learning how to care for humanity. By caring for those closest to yourself you develop a greater understanding of people's needs and how you can help meet those needs. God has a purpose for His people: to be blessed in order to bless others. Just as God blessed Abram, Abram was in turn able to be a blessing to all the families of the world (Gen. 12: 1-4).

In the book *The Blessing*, Gary Smalley and John Trent say that the blessings you give and receive within your family can have a huge impact on someone's life. When Jacob received the blessing from his father intended for Esau, this created enmity between the brothers and set their lives on divergent paths. Similarly, when Jacob favored Joseph over his brothers, the 11 brothers hated Joseph and later betrayed him. So how we choose to bless our loved ones can have lasting impact for generations to come. An important aspect of blessing someone is that by blessing someone you are placing high value on them. By blessing that person you are elevating that person and demonstrating the importance you place on that person in your life. Just as Jacob held Joseph in high value, so you are called to value those closest to you.

There are some important strategies for expressing high value. First, you express high value through spoken words. By telling others how important they are to you, you affirm their special place in your life. Next, by meaningful touch you show your affection for people. As Jesus touched and healed the man with leprosy, your touch can have a healing effect on someone else. Thirdly, by having a picture in mind of a special future for that person you show that you want and expect the best for them. Additionally, Randall recommends that you find out what people dream about, and ask who in the Bible they would most like to be like. Finally, you become the blessing to humanity that God intends for you to be by doing the following:

- 1) Show acceptance and respect for others
- 2) Speak out your blessings
- 3) Convey to others their worth or value to you
- 4) Believe in their purpose
- 5) Actively commit yourself to this special future for others

Through investing in someone through TIME, PRESENCE, and RELATIONSHIP, you can actively and powerfully bless others and help them in turn be a blessing to others. How will you invest yourself in the life of someone you know this week?