



How to Be Richly Blessed In the New Year Episode #201

It's a New Year, I'm recording this on January 1, 2016, on New Year's Day. Yes, I'm working on New Year's Day. Why? Because I enjoy it. Because I was excited to get in the studio and record this episode for you and explain to you some new things that are happening around the offices of Ray Edwards Int'l Inc.

It's a new year, we have a new publishing schedule here. It's an experiment like everything we do we're experimenting. Here's the experiment, the new schedule will go like this.

On Monday's each week, we'll publish the Ray Edwards classic podcast show. Those are not reruns, but it's a classic format of the show, me and my son, Sean, will do those shows together just as we have been. That's been successful and many folks have enjoyed Sean being a part of the show, I know I certainly have.

Then, each Wednesday, we've been experimenting with having a deep dive interview segment, because that gives me a chance to go deeper as I interview people that I have the privilege of being able to talk with and I have lots of questions I want to ask them, for me, I want to know the answers. It helps me if I have more time I can dig deeper and unearth more gold, both for me and for you. So we both benefit.

Recently we've had John Lee Dumas on with an in-depth interview. We have Chris Ducker coming up and Pat Flynn a couple of weeks after that, so I have some great Wednesday interviews lined up in the New Year.

Then, on Friday's we're going to have something called Faith Friday or maybe I'll continue calling it Spiritual Foundations, but that's what this episode is about.

This is an episode of the Ray Edwards Show that's devoted completely to spirituality and in particular, for followers of Jesus or those interested in knowing what followers of Jesus are up to or thinking about. That's what you'll find on today's episode.

Now, if you're not into that then I'll tell you, if you don't want to hear a lot of God talk you probably want to skip this episode and come back to listen on Monday to the regular show where we talk mostly about marketing, business and how to grow your online business, because today will be a full episode of Spiritual Foundation material.

Spiritual Foundations

So the title of this very first full on episode of spiritual foundations, episode 201 of the Ray Edwards Show is about how to be richly blessed in the New Year. There's a lot of folks who have made resolutions and set goals, maybe you're one of those people who have set goals for the coming year. Maybe you have been thinking New Year new me, New Year new life, New Year new levels of success.

Well, how do you make it so you're richly blessed in the New Year? Blessed, if you look in the Bible where it talks about being blessed, like in the beatitudes, blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall inherit the earth. Well, that word blessed actually means something like crazy happy, overflowing with joy, but blessed sounds more holy. Blessed are those, instead of crazy happy are those, but how can you be crazy joyfully blessed and favored in this New Year 2016?

Let's go to Scripture first of all, in the book of Ephesians 5:1-2 it says... Therefore, be imitators of God. Copy Him and follow His example, as well beloved children imitate their father and walk in love.

Recently, I was watching some video that I happened to be in. It wasn't a marketing video just a home video and I watched myself stunned, because I noticed that I was moving and I had the same posture and same gestures as my father. This is remarkable to me because for a large portion of my life growing up I was not around my biological father, I've been blessed to have two great fathers. I had a biological father and then he and my mother were divorced and then mom remarried and I got a great stepfather, who adopted us. So, I look at it as having two dads, so I'm blessed in that way.

I hadn't been around my biological dad as a kid so I didn't get to absorb his habits. So you might think you walk and gesture and act like your dad because you learned it as you were growing up, but in this situation that wasn't the case. So it was eerie to me to see how genetics had to play a role in that because we have a great relationship now. We spend time together and talk often and it's been that way for a long time, so I have a great relationship with both my dads.

I was amazed at the role genetics played in forming my unconscious behavior that I don't think about like the way I stand and move my arms when I gesture and even the way I walk. This made me start paying attention to my wife and I noticed that she has gestures and mannerisms that I can see that come directly from her mother, who has gone on to be with the Lord now and also from her father, who is still with us.

Her dad has this distinctive little move he makes when he gets in a car to drive. He takes his thumb and runs it under the seatbelt on the driver's side and flips it onto his chest. He's already buckled it but he smooths it out and flips it on his chest. I noticed my wife does that same thing. Not only that but there are mannerisms she has that remind me of him, but even more predominant with my wife, I can see her mother in her and I think that's a beautiful thing because I loved her mother dearly. She was like a second mom to me.

So it's neat to see the genetic characteristics that were passed on, and I say all this to illustrate that our DNA determines our characteristics in many cases. Yes, eye color, hair color, body type, etc., but I think sometimes we aren't conscious just how much of our behavior, mannerisms and predisposition actually comes through our DNA. The characteristics that are passed on in the code that our mother and father used to create us.

This episode's premise is that, as children of God, we also have His DNA in us. Think about that, you have the DNA of your Creator, your Father in Heaven. You have the DNA of God in your body, in your make-up. If you think about that, I know that we think theologically in big terms that we're made in God's image, so of course we have His DNA. That's true and great, but it's very theological and vague and ephemeral. I'm talking about something much more concrete.

I believe that embedded within our genetic coding are the characteristics of God and when we accept Him into our life, when we make the free choice to

have Him be part of our life we accept Him as our Father, Jesus as our Savior and Lord. When we make that transition that many people refer to as becoming saved, then we are made into new creations, completely made over with God's DNA, fully inserted into our being.

That's why when people come into a relationship with God they change. We've seen it often where people's behavior sometimes changes overnight. The drug addict is no longer addicted. The spouse abuser becomes loving, kind and never abuses again. The mean spirited person becomes gracious and forgiving. Then there are cases where people do accept the Lord and I believe they are saved, that God does come into their life, they are walking with Jesus, His spirit lives within them and yet they don't change completely.

Maybe you have experienced some of that in your own life, I know I certainly have. I have my own flaws that I'm acutely aware of. So I look at my Father in Heaven and I want to be like Him.

- I want to have the same gestures.
- I want to have the same natural response to situations.
- I want to have the same tendencies emotionally and spiritual in how I deal with people.

I want those characteristics of my Father in Heaven to start showing up without me thinking about it unconsciously, because it's simply embedded in my being.

How do we do that? I believe it's a process. The Apostle Paul writes that we should not be conformed to the pattern of this world. In other words, don't be like things have been up until now in the natural world, Romans Chapter 12, but rather be transformed by the renewing of your mind. In some translations it says, proving the will of God.

So, in other words, be transformed by renewing the way you think, changing the way you think and proving what the will of God is, demonstrating it in your life, in other words. So we become more like Him by renewing our mind, by intentionally imitating Him.

We're told in the Scripture from Ephesians- Therefore, be imitators of God. Copy Him and follow His example, as well beloved children imitate their father and walk in love.

So we become more like Him by intentionally imitating Him. Let's think about that, what is He like? Well, the Bible tells us that God is love. I know that it's possible that you may have a different idea. You may have been taught that He was wrathful, that you are a sinner in the hands of an angry God, to quote the title of a sermon of one of my distant ancestors. But God has already been paid the price of your sin by the sacrifice that Jesus made on the cross. So you no longer owe Him. You're no longer in the hands of a wrathful God.

God's wrath is not for you. It says elsewhere in Scripture that we are not made for wrath. God is love. Jesus says, 'If you've seen me you've seen the Father, He is the perfect image of the Father', it says. So anything that you think about God that you don't see demonstrated in Jesus than you're seeing something wrong. So God is love. In fact, for people who want you to behave in certain ways, they want to give you a code of behavior, like they want you to follow the 10 Commandments.

I think the 10 Commandments are marvelous and perfect as they stand. I also think that it's not by following the 10 Commandments that we get God's favor today. We're under a new covenant, which was made by the Lord Jesus, who gave Himself in our place, who paid the price of our sin so we could live in a right, open, clean relationship with God the Father, perfectly righteous in His sight. The Bible says we are the righteousness of God.

So following the 10 Commandments does not make us clean and holy. Because we are righteous and because we're being transformed into more sanctified or more set apart beings, we will become more holy over time and we will find our behavior flowing naturally and we will naturally be following the commandments, and actually exceeding them. Jesus talked about this. He said, 'you've heard it said thou shalt not commit adultery.' Where did they hear that, when Jesus spoke those words? They automatically knew He was referring to the 10 Commandments.

You've heard it said in the 10 Commandments, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' But I say that if you look at a woman and you lust on her, you've already committed adultery in your heart. That's a much higher standard than the written law. As through the grace that pours into us through our relationship with God through Jesus, that we are empowered to no longer have those inclinations, to no longer lust in our hearts. We may be tempted but we can resist the temptation.

It's grace that transforms us and lets us do that. It's been said that the law requires but grace empowers. So we become more like God by imitating him, not by following the 10 Commandments. That will come to us naturally. In fact, sometimes when people are talking about the 10 Commandments or following the Commandments of God, you have to keep all these rules, they're negating the fact that Jesus already paid the price for any violation of rules. It doesn't mean you're going to go out and murder people because wee, I can get away with it now. That's not the way it works. Your nature has changed you don't want to do those things.

Sometimes people will point to where Jesus says, if you love me you'll keep my Commandment. And they'll say see you have to keep the Commandments, but what they neglect to share with you in that same passage He goes on to say and here is my Commandment. That's important, we should probably pay attention to what that says. Love one another. He said his prayer was that we would love one another as He loved us. He told his disciples before He went to be in Heaven with His Father, to be glorified at the right hand of the Father. He said, this is how people will know you're my disciples, by your love for one another.

So what's my point? In this verse that I started with from Ephesians, Chapter 5 versus 1 and 2, let me read it one more time. Therefore, be imitators of God. Copy Him and follow His example, as well beloved children imitate their father and walk in love.

I just shared with you that Jesus said, this is how people will you are my disciples, by your love for one another. Now most people assume that means believers loving other believers and I think that's true, but I also think it's true in general. We're supposed to love our neighbor, which means if our neighbor is an atheist we should love them. If they are a Muslim or a Jew or of a different political party or if they like to decorate their house differently or play their music too loud, we should love them. People will know that we are the Lord's disciples by our love for one another. If this isn't coming naturally for you yet, imitate your father. Be an imitator of God. Copy Him and follow His example and walk in love.

It's inside you. It's in your DNA now as a follower of Jesus, as someone who's believed in Jesus, you are now His. You now have His DNA and you're part of His family. As you tune in to God's DNA inside you, you will

begin to automatically notice yourself behaving more and more like your Father in Heaven.

Now, I can anticipate your next question. Ray, you titled this episode how to be richly blessed in the New Year and so far you've told me how to be more like God, which is pretty awesome, but how does that make me richly blessed in the New Year? Were you not talking about actual physical blessing or were you just talking about spiritual blessing? I'm actually talking about both. I'm talking about spiritually being changed and blessed, because you love like your father in Heaven loves.

By the way, when you do that you'll be more at peace, you'll have less anger, less bitterness and unforgiveness in your life. You'll have less stress, anxiety and less depression. It's good for what ails you, but there's more than just that because Jesus said he came so that we could have life and have it abundantly and that means, I believe, that as you tune in to God's DNA inside you you'll automatically begin to find yourself more and more, having coincidental good luck, good fortune, synchronicity will happen in your personal life, your family life and in your business. You'll just have great coincidences that happen and blessings and favor will fall on you.

You'll wonder why and you'll remember, yeah, it's because I'm a son/daughter of God. I have His DNA, so naturally things are going to work out for me. These good things that are happening are coming from my Father in Heaven. It doesn't mean we won't have challenges come up in our life, we do, we have challenges. It means the general trend in our life is to be blessed and by the way about coincidences I would like to say this. I don't believe there is such a thing as a coincidence. Nothing happens accidentally.

I have a couple stories to share with you before we wrap up that illustrate all of this. The first is that it has to do with coincidence. I was at a marketing conference several years ago and this was a conference about nuts and bolts marketing. It had nothing to do with personal development or self-improvement or anything approaching something spiritual. This was about, here's how you do a marketing process. Here are the specifics of how you do it, we'll walk through it and you'll build your marketing system while you're here. That's the type of conference it was.

It turns out that just before I went to this conference I had bought a book on diet, because there was a diet that I wanted to try that I'd heard a lot about that was very popular at this time. It was called 'The Daniel Fast'. Perhaps

you've heard of this book. If you look it up on Amazon you'll see it's written by Susan Gregory and it turns out that she was sitting behind me at this conference. We were doing some group exercises and were working together and as I got to know more about her I realized, you're the lady that wrote the Daniel Fast.

We had breakfast together the second morning of the conference and I was talking about how coincidental it was that I had just bought and read this book and then ran into her at this conference, having no idea that she would be there. Susan said to me, 'You know what's interesting is the ancient Hebrew people didn't have a word for coincidence, because they didn't have a concept for that.' I thought it was interesting and at that time that was the extent of my thoughts on it.

So we finished breakfast and went back to the conference and on the next day of the conference I ran into someone I hadn't seen until the third day and the only way I knew this person was from a church in California where we had met. I don't live in California and hadn't seen this person for a long time and here they were at this conference. He said hello and said I'm here with some other ministry people and they were part of a global ministry, you would know who they are if I mentioned their name.

He said, I'm here with two other people would you like to have lunch together and I said absolutely. So we gathered for lunch. We sat down getting ready to eat and I said, you know, I'm amazed at the coincidence that I would run into you here because I haven't seen you after all this time and then you'd be with these guys. One of the men said, did you know that the ancient Hebrew people did not have a word for coincidence because they didn't have a concept for that? I immediately said, do you know Susan Gregory? They didn't.

What a coincidence aye? That's when I stopped believing in coincidence. If you look up the Yiddish word for coincidence you'll find that it exists, but in the ancient language there's no evidence there was a word for that concept. I looked it up.

That was the first story. Secondly, illustrating God's favor on your life because you carry His DNA, in the next story, we were in Fresno, California helping my son move into an apartment. He was there working with the mayor's office. It was late at night and we had an appliance we needed to get into the apartment and it was too heavy for us to carry up the stairs. We

had it on the back of a trailer, it was dark and we were in downtown and there were a handful of us there helping out.

We stood there with our hands on our hips looking at this and wondering how we were going to do this. How are we going to even move this thing over and have any prayer of getting it up to his apartment? I said out loud, what we really need is a dolly/hand cart and someone else said yeah that'd be good. In the darkness from down the street we hear this constant squeaking noise. It was like a scene from a movie, because we all turned and looked down the street and here came a homeless man who appeared to be riding a bicycle with a basket that held all his worldly possessions. He was towing a hand cart behind him. Come on! You know that's not a coincidence that is God's favor acting in your life.

We flagged him down and convinced him we weren't some weirdos out to mug him, he let us use the hand cart. We talked. We were able to bless him and pray for him and sent him on his way with his hand cart, the one that God arranged for us to use.

Final story. I take a risk in telling this story because some people will think this is nuts, some will think it's made up and some will abuse it. They'll try it, it won't work and they'll be upset with me. So I'm telling you this isn't a formula. I don't believe this works every time. I don't believe this is the purpose of a relationship with God. God is neither a vending machine nor a slot machine.

My wife and I heard a story from some friends of ours who were just learning about God's favor. They were learning this new idea that God is not angry with us, that He loves us and wants us to have a good life. He wants us to be with Him in the afterlife. Our friends told us that they had prayed to God, would you just send us some money, because we need some money. They were going on a trip, so could you send us a check just because you love us? They went about their business and while they were on their trip they got news that in the mail that day they had received a big unexpected check.

When I heard that story my immediate reaction was, I will take that, let's do that. So, Lynn and I prayed the same prayer that God would send us a big check we'd done nothing to earn. I didn't anticipate a check coming, but just because He loved us. Lo and behold, I believe it was the next day but at any rate within a couple days we received a check for \$1000, that I had no idea was coming. What had happened was someone had bought a product from

another marketing instructor and I happened to be an affiliate of that person, and the person who purchased the product advised they wanted to make sure I got the commission from it. So \$1000 showed up in my PayPal account just because.

Don't think that's a formula. I think that God, as it says in Scripture does what He pleases when He wants to, for reasons that we often don't understand. But I know that He's real, that He moves in our lives and He interacts with us and intervenes on our behalf. So if we imitate and copy Him, follow His example and walk in love, we become more in tune with God's DNA inside of us and we will automatically find ourselves having coincidental luck, favor and yes, being richly blessed in this New Year.

So, how do you walk this out? I would recommend you do this. Make a conscious effort to ask, how is God showing up in my life right now in this moment? How is the God part of me wanting to respond in this moment? Become more aware of that, maybe even put an alarm on your cell phone that you can name, what is God doing in my life right now to remind you and have it go off a couple times a day every day.

As you become more conscious of His presence in your life and more conscious of that part of Him that lives in you, you will become more and more like your Father and you'll be able to live a blessed life in this New Year.

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A man with an experience is never at the mercy of a man with an argument. So for those who would say, Ray, those stories you told sound made up. They are true they happened to me and I'm a man with an experience, so I'm not at the mercy of anybody who just has an argument.

May God bless you and continue to do more for you than you can ask or even possibly imagine. See you next time on the Ray Edwards Classic of this podcast.

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