

# Backpack Blessing

By Pastor Steve Baney, M. Div.

## **Pastor -**

Summer break from school is quickly ending (and has already ended for some local school districts). Recognizing the importance of our schools and education, I've invited students, teachers, and school staff to join us today for a special time of prayer.

In 1 Kings 3, we read about the wisest man who ever lived, King Solomon. It says, "That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream, and God said, "What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!"

Solomon replied, "...O Lord my God, you have made me king... but I am like a little child who doesn't know his way around... Give me an understanding heart so that I can govern your people well and know the difference between right and wrong. For who by himself is able to govern this great people of yours?"

The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom. So God replied, "Because you have asked for wisdom in governing my people with justice and have not asked for a long life or wealth or the death of your enemies— I will give you what you asked for! I will give you a wise and understanding heart such as no one else has had or ever will have! And I will also give you what you did not ask for—riches and fame! No other king in all the world will be compared to you for the rest of your life!" (5-13).

At this time, I'd like to invite those who have volunteered to pray up front, along with our students and their mom or dad, and any current teachers and school staff who are together with us in worship today. Students, please bring your backpack if you have it and come stand here facing the congregation. Mom or

dad, please come stand here with your student. Those who will be leading our time of prayer, I'll ask you to stand in front of the students and parents where they can see you. (Those who pray are instructed to speak to the students; the congregation eaves drops).

### **Reader #1 (Nursery Coordinator) -**

My name is [\_NAME\_]. I'm a mother of two small children, one in preschool and another in first grade. I'm also the Nursery Coordinator for our congregation. In Luke 6, Jesus said, "Can one blind person lead another? Won't they both fall into a ditch? Students are not greater than their teacher. But the student who is fully trained will become like the teacher" (39-40). We want these students to avoid the pitfalls and to become like our great Teacher, Jesus Christ. Let's pray for **the safety** of the students as they attend school and school-sponsored events.

- Safety during travel
- Safety from bullies
- Safety during sports
- Safety from storms

### **Reader #2 (Elder) -**

My name is [\_NAME\_]. I'm a retired school bus driver and also an elder of our congregation. Deuteronomy 6 says, "Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up" (v 4-7). Let's pray together for **the students** that stand here with us.

- Pray that they would love and follow our Lord.
- Pray their minds would focus and learn
- Pray for their success on tests
- Pray for creativity and fun

### **Reader #3 (Children's Ministry Director) -**

My name is [\_NAME\_]. I'm a mom of two grown boys. And I currently serve as the Children's Ministry Director for our congregation. Deuteronomy 31 says, "You must read this Book of Instruction to all the people... when they assemble before the LORD your God at the place he chooses. Call them all together—men, women, children, and the foreigners living in your towns—so they may hear this Book of Instruction and learn to fear the LORD your God and carefully obey all the terms of these instructions. Do this so that your children who have not known these instructions will hear them and will learn to fear the LORD your God" (v 11-13). The Book of Instruction mentioned in Deuteronomy 31 was the most important curriculum they could teach. Pray with me now for **the teachers** of these students.

- Pray for the teachers to have wisdom
- Pray they would be effective communicators
- Pray they will be good examples
- Pray the instructions given will lead the students to truth

### **Reader #4 (Volunteer Teacher) –**

My name is [\_NAME\_]. I'm a member of this church, one of the teachers for the children's classes, a mom and a grandma. Proverbs 1 tells us that we're never finished learning. It says, "Let the wise listen to these proverbs and become even wiser. Let those with understanding receive guidance by exploring the meaning in these proverbs and parables, the words of the wise... Fear of the Lord is the foundation of true knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline" (v 5-7). The students won't be the only ones learning this school year. I invite you to pray with me for **the staff** of our local schools.

- Thank God for the work done by school staff
- Pray that their service will be helpful
- Pray that the staff will become even wiser by learning from the Lord

## **Pastor -**

Not all knowledge comes from the classroom. As important as our schools are, there is much to learn outside of textbooks and class lectures. John 7 says, “Jesus went up to the Temple and began to teach. The people were surprised when they heard him. ‘How does he know so much when he hasn’t been trained?’ they asked.” (v 14-16). He hadn’t learned what he was teaching from a book or from school. Jesus told them he was teaching them what he had learned from God. The most important truths are found in God’s Word. It is truth. And it teaches us to find life, joy, freedom, and hope in Jesus Christ.

- Pray that the students will learn what is most important
- Pray for a great school year
- Pray each student will learn to follow Christ

## **Gifts -**

Pass out gifts to each child, teacher, and staff person. Gift ideas include colorful pencils, fun notebooks, and gift cards.