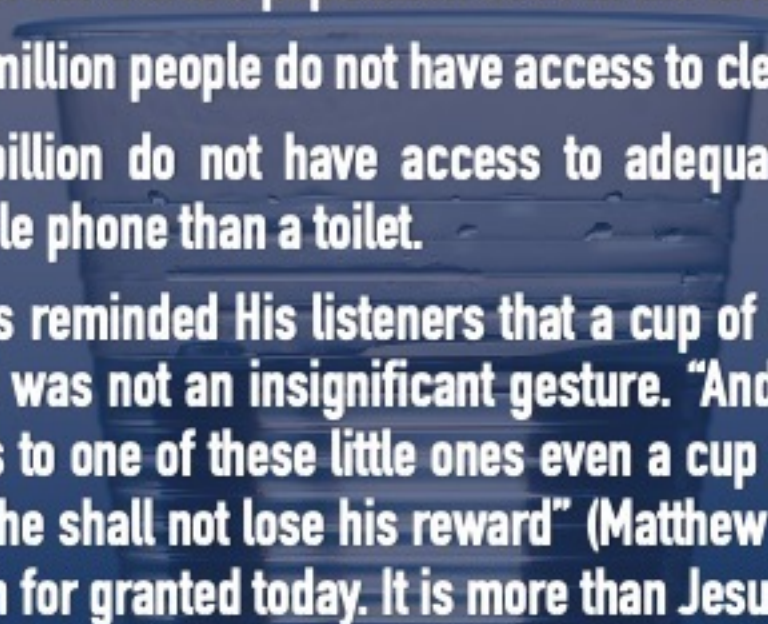


A clear plastic cup filled with water, showing condensation on the outside. The cup is set against a background that transitions from a light blue at the top to a darker blue at the bottom. The text 'LUCKIER THAN SOME' is overlaid on the right side of the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

**LUCKIER
THAN
SOME**

- 
- 85% of the world's population lives in the driest half of the planet.
 - 783 million people do not have access to clean water.
 - 2.5 billion do not have access to adequate sanitation. More people have a mobile phone than a toilet.
 - Jesus reminded His listeners that a cup of cold water to spare for someone in need was not an insignificant gesture. "And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you, he shall not lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42). This "small" blessing is still taken for granted today. It is more than Jesus had on the cross (John 19:28-29).

A DRINK OF COLD WATER


- Does it ever feel like you've won the "life lottery"? Like you should feel guilty about your various blessings, both spiritual and material? "How did I ever get so lucky? What did I do to deserve all of this?"
- Perhaps you find yourself on the other end of the equation, constantly struggling, ashamed to ask for more help or charity. Maybe it feels like you have nothing but bad luck follow you around and you look with envy at those who have more than you.
- Keep in mind that neither condition is permanent, and you might be experiencing one or the other as part of a greater purpose.



THE LIFE LOTTERY

FOR THE “LUCKY” ONES

- Be careful with the word “lucky”, since you never really know why or how certain conditions come about. Some things are time and chance (Ecclesiastes 9:11–12) and defy logic. Also, even things that seem “lucky” at first come with a price or a catch (Ecclesiastes 5:10–12).
- Rather than seeing health, wealth, or opportunity as mere luck or coincidence, take the approach that all things can and should be used to serve God. He is, after all, the One who makes all of our blessings possible. He is the source of both material and spiritual blessings (James 1:17–18) and deserves all the credit, even if those blessings are not a result of some direct action on His part.
- Having abundance is not necessarily a sign that God is pleased with you, since the opportunity for fortune is available to all (Matt. 5:45).

A clear plastic cup with horizontal ridges, partially filled with water. The upper portion of the cup is covered in condensation droplets. The cup is set against a background that transitions from a light orange at the top to a dark blue at the bottom. The text is overlaid on the right side of the cup.

**WHAT IF I
CAN'T HELP
BUT FEEL
GUILTY?**

EMPOWERED

- **Guilt over our blessings can actually come across as ingratitude to those who far less. While we are agonizing over a happy family life, clean water, air conditioning, and good mental and physical health, many millions can only dream! Not only that, but it shows ingratitude to God (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20, 6:1-2).**
- **The thing that makes enjoyment possible is a God-and-neighbor-focused approach to our wealth. It is not a sin to have a comfortable life or to be born in a time/place surrounded by blessings and opportunities. But how do you use them? How have your blessings been put into service? Remember 1 Timothy 6:17-19.**

It appeared that Esther only reached her lofty position by being incomparably attractive, yet Mordecai knew better, urging her to use her influence to save the Jews from Haman's plot. To be sure, Esther was beautiful and wealthy — but she was also obligated by her fortunate circumstances to help! Inactivity, by the way, was no guarantee of safety. If she had not acted, her fortunes would have turned even quicker than they came.



“FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS”

ABUNDANCE AND WANT

- God does not do our charity for us. His concern has always been our salvation, the restoration of a spiritual relationship with Him that was severed when sin came. Sin also brought about the present condition of suffering, sickness, hardship, and death (in a general sense, i.e. Gen. 3:16ff, Rom. 5:12, 6:23, Lk. 13:1-5).
- Even Jesus acknowledged that poverty would always exist, citing a principle from the Law (John 12:8, Deut. 15:7-11).
- So God asks us to practice charity, especially among brethren (Gal. 6:10) as an expression of our faith (James 1:27). Notice the way Paul explains it in 2 Corinthians 8, referring to the differences in material and spiritual wealth between the churches of Macedonia and the Corinthian church (8:12-15).

- If your marriage is strong, use it to guide younger couples or those experiencing challenges and tragedies.
- Use your physical strength to help others (Ex. 17:12, Gal. 6:2).
- Use your spiritual maturity as an example for the spiritually weak (Romans 15:1). A wealth of knowledge stored away is useless.
- Share your wealth, without expectation of repayment. The measure you use will be used to judge you (Luke 6:38).
- Learn to be okay with who you CAN help, rather than being discouraged by those you CANNOT. The good Samaritan helped the man who he found on the road – similarly, God will give us plenty of opportunities to help right in front of us. You cannot fix every problem in the world, but you might be able to help your neighbor!

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS