

## God's Curse and God's Blessing

Numbers 6:22-27, Trinity Sunday

June 7, 2009

Beloved of the Lord..... As children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, we daily stand on earth in the Sonlight of God's grace. Through the merits of Christ, God's face is indeed continually shining upon us and is gracious unto us and we hear in the benediction when the Lord promises to bless and keep us. Only believers however receive this blessing from the Lord, unbelievers do not. For example, picture the Sonlight of God's grace shining upon the whole world of sinners. The Light of God's Son shines upon our face and we know the warmth of God's favor given to us through Jesus Christ. However, this same light through the Son shines upon all unbelievers as well, yet because they do not believe in the Son as their Savior, they essentially have put an umbrella over their own head. Though Christ has indeed died for the sins of the whole world so that the Light of the Father continually shines upon all sinners, those who despise the gift of God's Son can only fall under God's curse. To refuse the blessing is to remain under the curse. In our picture, the umbrella which each unbeliever holds represents their own unbelief, their stubborn refusal to receive Christ in the heart by faith. The shadow, the darkness is their own fault. While there might be many different colors of umbrellas, according to the hundreds of different religions and creeds in this world, it still comes down to this: those who trust in their good works to save them will at the same time despise and deny the Lord that bought them with His own blood. God's curse upon them is just, and unless they repent they shall perish. As for the believers, we know that it is only through the holy name of Christ that we are counted and declared holy! Thanks be to God we know that we daily stand in the Sonlight of God's grace! Through Christ God's benediction of love, peace, and gentle favor is continually upon us.

That is why this morning we confessed the Athanasian Creed. Our creed, our faith, is quite different from the creed and faith of this world. We confess there is only one True God, "we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity." Long ago God placed His holy and Triune name upon us when we were baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is when we received the holy name of Christ which made us holy. Knowing Christ by faith, we know well the Lord our God is quite different and unique from the many false gods of this world. For only the Lord our God left His heavenly throne and came down from heaven above to earth below as a Man, to live as a Man, to die as a Man in our stead and in our place, our sins being upon Him. Yet this Man was not just a Man, but He was and is and ever shall be God incarnate in the flesh. It was His holy blood that God shed as a Man, which redeemed all men from sin.

You see Jesus is the key to understanding the true identity of God. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jesus, along with the Father and the Spirit, is the True God and this True God says He alone is the only way to heaven. "We know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jn. 5:20

I. Without the blessing of Christ, God's curse alone is upon all mankind for their sins. Let us begin today then by understanding that through Christ God heaps abundant blessings upon us daily, but without Christ God's curse alone is upon all mankind. Let us now speak of God's curse of the law. What is this curse? Remember that the law itself is God's Ten Commandments which are good. Had Adam and Eve kept God's good commandments, they would've lived forever and not died. In His goodness God also straightly told Adam and Eve what would happen if they disobeyed, saying, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This was the curse of the law. It would only come into play if Adam and Eve broke God's law. Naturally Adam and Eve did not obey, hence they fell under the curse of God's law. They plunged themselves into spiritual darkness and they immediately became servants of the devil. Though God later restored them to faith through the Gospel promise, their children were nevertheless born sinners just like their parents. This is why all men are born under the curse of the law - for all are born in sin.

This is why the Bible says in Galatians 3:10, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." What does this mean? It means those who trust in their works to save them will continually be under God's curse! Whatever their religion might be, whatever the color of their umbrella, their trust of the heart is not in Christ, but it is in what they do and say. Their god, in their mind, can be appeased and satisfied by their obedience to the Ten Commandments.

When we consider God's good law then and sin we must understand God's law is one, not ten. If we break one commandment we have broken all ten. If we picture God's law then as a perfect and flawless diamond, and if we just chip off the tiniest and smallest piece of that diamond, we have wickedly shattered and broken the whole diamond into a million pieces. Carnal disobedience of a spiritual commandment uttered from God's holy mouth demands eternal and divine retribution. The True and holy God must punish everyone who sins. Don't let the devil fool you. When people say they can't believe in a god who would eternally damn a soul for a few sins, such believe in their own god whose name is the

devil. They just don't know it. But let us understand there is a far greater crime in the sight of God than sin itself, namely the greatest crime, the greatest offense to God is to in unbelief despise the Son of God who only came to save. Jesus died for all. More than anything God wants every man to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ so he can be saved. The Bible says the Lord "is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

II. Through Christ God's curse is forever removed, and in its place there is only His eternal blessing. When we consider then God's curse and God's blessing, we know that by nature we all fall under the curse of God's law. We are by nature the accursed children of Adam and Eve. Moreover try as we may, we cannot remove God's curse from us for a lifetime of good works cannot atone or make up for even one sin and the Bible says without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins! Thanks be to God the Bible says, when "the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Here is the beauty of the Lord our God! Here is our Beautiful Savior! All of the gods of this earth are ugly in comparison to Him! Being moved by an infinite love which surpasses all understanding, God the Father was moved to send and give God the Son as a payment, a ransom for sin. Moreover, Jesus of His own self was moved to give His life a ransom for many. Moreover, God the Spirit was moved to comfort our hearts with the glorious teaching that "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" and the Bible says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Your Savior, dear sinner, with love, even with joy, gave His life in ransom for your soul. He didn't want you to die. He didn't want you to be damned, but He took that curse from off your back and He made your curse His own. On the cross He drank the whole and entire bitter cup of God's wrath against our sin. When the price was paid, when it was finished, there was no more anger in the heart of God against our sin. How could there be? After the atonement, now in the heart of God there was only peace, love, and a gentle favor toward all men. This is why God the Father was pleased with God the Son, and this was why God the Son rose from the dead! In the glorious and triumphant resurrection of Christ, the dark clouds of Calvary finally broke, and it was truly the dawn of a new day, and eternal day of grace.

This grace is given to you dear believer, in the benediction. It is not only the promise of His grace, but it is His grace, the Sonlight of God's mercy. Therefore though it is just a minister who speaks the words, it is really the Lord who is doing the blessing. **The Lord**

**bless thee and keep thee.** Here, dear believer, is where God puts and places His name upon you. He first put His Triune name upon you when you were converted or baptized as a little baby. With His name comes His blessing, the holiness of Christ, and through Christ we receive our daily bread and all temporal blessings. When the Lord keeps you, He guards and protects you from all harm and danger. God never forgets you but He keeps you in mind always for you are precious to Him. Even when you sleep at night He is wide awake. Psalm 121 says "He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." He will keep and preserve you. **The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee.** It is not just the face of the Son that shines upon us, but also the face of the Father and the Spirit. When we are then afflicted we need to remember God's face is CONTINUALLY shining behind those dark clouds. We have God's promise that sorrow will turn to joy and our tears will turn to laughter. His shining face is a smiling face. The outward smile shows His inward attitude of favor toward us in His heart which has been reconciled. Therefore when we feel bad about our sins or we are ashamed of how we behaved this past week, we should hear that benediction in church on Sunday and remember that through Christ, God's favor and gentle mercy is still upon us. **The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.** Through Christ and His grace, He is not a stern Father without mercy ready to turn in anger upon you at the smallest transgression. Through Christ God's heart is fixed in your direction, your eternal favor. When times are bad then, let us not wrongly assume God has turned on us or disowned us. Rather let us flee in faith to our Savior for His continual mercy, for in His benediction every Sunday we receive just that, His continual mercy. He gives us true peace, a spiritual peace which surpasses all understanding.

In closing, let us treasure this glorious benediction the Lord has given to His people. Even if we are late for church, or so late that we miss the whole sermon, we should still come. For in the end there is still that glorious and final benediction wherein God through Christ gives us the sweet and blessed remission of sins. It is worth it. We can then go home and rejoice that that not only the name of Christ is upon us, but also God's full and complete blessing. "And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them." God has indeed put His blessing upon you are your children dear believer. Receive with believing hearts the benediction of our Lord. **The Lord bless thee and keep thee. Amen.**