

THE BLESSINGS OF THE TRIUNE GOD, NTCM, 24/10/96.  
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## ***NO. 1. THE BLESSED TRINITY***

### **INTRO. THE BLESSINGS OF THE TRIUNE GOD**

**Eph. 1:3, 1 Pet. 1:3.** In Christ we have the fullness of God's blessing, and speak well of the God who is himself blessed.

What does it mean to bless or to be blessed? *Every blessing for your marriage. God bless you.* Children who seek the blessing of parents on their marriage. Approval, well being, prosperity, assistance etc. What's the difference with *Have a good day!*

The basis of blessing is relational. God blesses with a benefit on the basis of the relationship he has. The blessing makes known the positive the relationship, and. the good will between parties. Example Pa.

God's blessing is the action of his own grace and generosity. His Word coming to us charged with power causing the effect to come upon those whom he relates to. It is the giving of God himself to us

God is the blessed one. Eph. 1:3; Lev. 25:211 will command my blessing upon you. The fountain of all blessing. *Come thou fount of every blessing. This leads to*

### **THE BLESSED TRINITY**

The relational community of the Godhead. Not an abstract doctrine but a society of being where each person relates to the other in the community of love and life. The Trinitarian union of three persons is one of covenant friendship in which there are no secrets but permanent interpenetration and eternal self-surrender of each person to the others. Each person is other person centred

The Father is first of all the Father of the Son and could not be Father apart from the Son. The Father has always given all things to the Son. The Son could not be the Son apart from the Father for he is eternally generated from the Father. The Holy Spirit is in the midst of the Father Son relation and he could not be the Spirit apart from the Father and the Son just as the Father and the Son would have no being apart from the Spirit. This is the communion of love. Within this beautiful harmony there is true communication. Here is the Fountain of life, the Blessed God who in himself is blessed.

Note the ways we try to find communication skills apart from communion.

## **THE ETERNAL DECISION OF GOD**

By nature of his eternal being God will not keep himself to himself. An decision has been made. It was made before the creation and before the fall. Eph. 1:3-6

The decision is to reconcile man; for man to participate in communion within the Godhead. This is the sole basis of our existence. The decision is made in the Godhead. God chose that he would unite himself in the person of Jesus Christ with rebellious man. As all time is present to God, then in Jesus Christ God and man meet. The origin and form of all other historical events has its origin in this decisive act. This decision was not dependant upon sin. It does not need to be justified by sin.

## **THE BLESSING OF THE TRUINE GOD IS COMMUNION**

See I John 1: 1-4, Heb. 12: 10, 11 Pet. 1: 2-4b. This is the goal of creation; uninterrupted fellowship with God.

We are not receptacles of blessing eg. the church pharmacy. The empty vessel waiting to be filled. Pushed back upon ourselves

Blessing is participation, I Cor. 10: 16. In Christ God has entered our world to give himself for man so that as a man, man might live in him and for him. The blessing is a given- We don't have to stage manage it or set it up. But participate in it.

## ***NO. 2. THE BLESSING OF CREATION***

### **BLESSING AND COVENANT**

Recall that the One God in the communion of three persons is the way God is. This is God's life. God *lives* as the God who chooses. The relationship of the three persons is not based on a compact but is a perfect entering into one another's life. It is a life of divine harmony and friendship. The Father does not think or will what the Son and the Holy Spirit do not think or will. It is the life of perfect love in which the Three persons eternally find each other. Compact or contract does not fit this relationship. In this communion God is most blessed and is the fountain of blessing. The blessing of the Godhead is the life of covenant. The covenant is the life of God himself.

From this we are to see the blessing of creation, and to see that this blessing is that of God's covenant with creation. God does not keep his blessing or his covenant to himself.

### **CREATION IS THE EXTERNAL BASIS OF COVENANT**

We have said that God is not solitary. He not only has communion, but is communion, quite apart from his communion with creatures. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit practice the love and freedom which God is. God's works are but an overflow of this eternal animation of God. Eph. 1:3ff tell us that God's choice of us was a choice which he made in eternity in Jesus Christ. In passages like John 17 Jesus, the elect Son, is saying that the decision that we should participate in the communion of the Godhead was a decision made in the eternal Godhead. In the eternal bosom of God a decision was made. The decision was that in the person of Jesus Christ God and man would meet in an eternal event.

This means that our reason for existence is not within ourselves, however rich or poor, godless or believing we may be. God wants us to be his creatures for what he wants to do with us. We are created for the act of love which God wishes to perform on us. We are the presupposition of the covenant of love which God intends us to enter. God's eternal will is his positive will to sacrifice himself in the incarnation of his Son for the benefit of man whom he created and who fell away from him. God chose to lose in order to gain. God chose blessing and fellowship with himself within the richness of his own life, life which is the mirror of his own blessedness. This choice is God's life. What for God is real in eternity will be real in time. In Christ man the sinner is not only blessed from all eternity, but the event in which he is blessed precedes his temporal existence.

### **GOD'S COVENANT WITH MAN IS REVEALED IN THE SABBATH**

See Genesis 7:1-3. God finished his work of creation by resting. On the seventh day God stood openly relaxed (Ex. 31:7) celebrating joyfully and freely as the One who was from eternity and through himself will be in eternity. Now he will lead creation to the goal for which he created it. That goal is the final rest. The goal of creation is not only rest at the beginning of creation but also at the ultimate end.

We see then that God's rest is not inactivity. It was the act in which he exercised his eternal divine being. This is the event within the history of the creature. It is the foundation of covenant history, and of that event which God and his creature share. From this point on salvation unrolls and the decision that- God shall be God and man together with each other has been made.. The founding event of the covenant is the crowning event of the creation.

### **CREATION, THEN, IS BLESSED FOR GOD'S COVENANT PURPOSE**

Gen. 1:22 is the blessing of the sea creatures and the birds which is linked with the mandate of fruitfulness. Not only does this counter the idea of the survival of the fittest but the creatures are blessed in accord with God's covenant with the creation for the ultimate goal. Gen. 6:16; 9:9-16; Jer. 33:19-26; Isa. 24: 4-6.

Gen. 1:27-28 is the- blessing of man to be fruitful in marriage in order to participate in the covenant purpose of God. Matt. 19:4-6. NB. God's blessing on marriage remains despite all of the attacks that have been made on it.

The blessings of the Triune God on the creation are part of the *everlasting covenant*. The historical continuity of creational blessing is not that of development but covenant. In creating us God chose to give us life rather than no life, he chose light rather than darkness, he chose to make himself one with rebels through his decision to come to us in the man Jesus Christ. All is mercy and grace.

When it comes to the covenants made with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David we see these as a reiteration of the eternal or everlasting covenant. They are developments of an already existing relationship. The blessing of the Triune God which is the blessing of covenant, the blessing of creation, the blessing of man has been encapsulated in the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ. The blessing is nothing less than God himself. Heb. 13: 10; Gal. 3:13-14.

## ***NO. 3. THE IRREVOCABLE BLESSING***

**Within the fellowship** of his Triune being God chose that we should enter the blessedness of his own life. Blessedness presupposes covenant. The blessing of God on creation and man is in order that man will come into union with God through the incarnate self giving of Jesus Christ. The blessing is given freely God so **that creation and man** will come to the fulfilment of God's covenant purpose - participate in the divine nature.

### **THE IRREVOCABLE BLESSING**

**Romans 11:29** has it that the Divine charismata and call of God into his purpose is not repented of by God. God's blessing stands. It is not withdrawn, or modified.

The people of God can easily be discouraged. Where there have been illusions about ourselves and our plans disillusionment may turn us upon ourselves and ask are we really the benefactors of God's blessing. Most frequently we become discouraged because we find some sin in ourselves which causes us to consider if God could have withdrawn his love from us. We are then often tempted to ask if we are called or chosen by God. We then may run a check on themselves to try and find evidences of our election.

The context of Romans 11:29 shows that Israel's election comes from the sheer mercy of God, and therefore no claim can be made by God's people upon God as if God were in debt to them. Even Israel's disobedient triumphalism is not merely a matter of disobedience but a divine hardening is involved which again results in the demonstration of God's mercy. The contrasting in verse 28 is not to be seen as an equal balancing out, for though Israel knows God's wrath, his wrath is in fact the action of his covenant faithfulness and mercy. Isa. 54:7-8; Mal. 3:6-7; Exod. 3:14; Psa. 102:25-27; James 1: 17; Heb. 6:18; 13:8.

It would be wrong to abstract these verses from the living God for an immobile God would be a petrified God. God actively relates to us in our perversity. He is actively involved so that his retraction at that point can be terrifying. But God never repents of the one who he is. *Even when the Lord relents of his help, he is still Israel's helper.*

When it comes to ourselves there is no foolproof test we can run to show we are God's elect and the object of his blessing. Our assurance is in God's elect One, Jesus Christ.

Hence, those whom God has adopted as sons, he is said to have elected, not in themselves, but in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:4); because he could love them only in him, and only as previously made partakers with him, honour them with the inheritance of his kingdom. But if we owe elected in him, we cannot find the certainty of our election in ourselves; and not even in God the Father, if we look at him apart from the Son. Christ, then is the mirror in which we ought, and in which, without deception, we may contemplate our election. (Calvin, Insti. Vol. 2, p. 244. Underlining mine)

## **CAN'T CURSE WHAT GOD HAS BLESSED**

- ❑ See Numbers 22
- ❑ King Balak panics at the licking he might get from Israel Vs. 4. He joins forces with Midian
- ❑ The maverick prophet Balaam is thought to be one who could make blessings and cursing stick. Vs. 6. Balaam is forbidden by God to curse his people. Vs. 12
- ❑ Balak has another go at employing Balaam
- ❑ Balaam now asks for what he should not ask. Because Balaam's relationship with God is now perverse God tells Balaam to go with Balak's men. But now God faces Balaam as a menace.

Balaam's ass can see what Balaam can't see for the Word of God never originates in the brain of a human being.

Now Balaam has learned to say what God has told him to say. Num. 23:8; 19-20; 23 Balak's response is that Balaam say nothing at all if he can't curse. Num. 24: 10. We cannot undo what God has blessed. We cannot make it void or reverse it. We cannot turn God's blessing to our own ends even where we have Ought against 4.

Example; The Horse and his Boy.

## ***No. 4 THE AARONIC BLESSING***

Numbers 6: 22-27

### **THE BLESSING IS FOR THOSE ALREADY BLESSED**

As God's covenant people Israel they have been freed and claimed by Yahweh to be the recipients of his blessing. Deut 2:7. God was in their midst and promised all that his people needed to worship him.

But this blessing is commanded. Vs. 22 c/f Deut. 10:8; 21:5.

We may ask why should Israel of old or the new Israel need to be blessed when they are already blessed? Eph. 1:3; 6:23. The same could be asked of the necessity of assuring God's people of forgiveness when in Christ they are already forgiven of all the sins for ever? I John 1: 5-10; 2: 1-2, 12.

God's people face new attacks every day. We are prone to discouragement and need to be alert to presumption. We need the Word of blessing.

### **THE BLESSING IS FOR PERSEVERANCE**

Verse 24 the blessing is the goodness of God in action as he participates in the life of his people to preserve them. It is the blessing of God the Creator and Redeemer before whose face all Other gods are not gods at all. I Cor. 8:4-6.

The blessing is for provision of all we need to live, to make our way, and to serve the world with the Gospel. It is also for protection from the enemies the false gods and the seduction of false blessings.

Example: New Age "blessing" to cleanse our energy centres, give energy elevation, give stress management and give self understanding. See Jude 24-25.

### **IT IS THE BLESSING OF GOD'S GRACE**

Verse 25. For God to be gracious is for him to favour his people by turning to them in his unconditional love and as Sovereign enter into a relationship with them. This is the shining of God's Ewe upon us like the rising of the sun after darkness diffuses fight and warmth and lifts its face upon the world. Psa. 27: 1; 36:9. Contrast when person turns their face away from us.

When God gives his Word to us he causes his face to shine joyfully upon our consciences and minds. This is the God who deals with the stress of unresolved guilt, and the memory of an unresolved, lingering past. Lev. 9:22-24; Psa. 32:1ff.

The glory of God's face is seen in the cross of Christ. Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:19f

In hearing the blessing God keeps telling and imparting to us what is so. Gal. 1:3 etc.

## **THE BLESSING IS FOR FINAL VICTORY**

Verse 26. The lifting up of the countenance is a continuation of the previous aspect but with the added idea that God continues to look at his people favourably, keeping his eye on them till they come to the consummation. This gives us the peace, and the wholeness of consolation, for overcoming death, the Devil, the world, and the gates of hell.. Final victory is assured. This is a great cure for stress, saving us from the compulsion to Ex things ourselves through some frenetic activity. Heb. 13:20-2 1.

## **IN HIS BLESSING GOD PUTS HIS NAME UPON US.**

Verse 27. For us this is the Triune Name of God. The whole fullness of the blessing of the Divine being is communicated to God's people by his Word as he dwells with his people. II Cor. 13:13.

The blessing is to be given and it is to be received. It is complete in Christ, the incarnate Son. We need no other mediator, and there is none. The blessing is received by hearing the Word of Christ. True hearing makes it so for you now at this time.

## ***NO. 5. THE FULLNESS OF BLESSING***

EPHESIANS 1:3-15

### **EPH. 1:3. THE SUM OF ALL THAT'S CALLED BLESSING**

Recall that God's blessing is an event of his Word wherein God actively gives himself to his creatures to enable them to fulfil his purpose for creation.

The blessing is a perfect whole, and not to be thought of as a composite of parts. *Every spiritual blessing. All spiritual blessings. Every kind of spiritual blessing.* **THE FULL SPIRITUAL BLESSING.**

This means that there is nothing lacking. Rom. 8:32; II Pet. 1:2-3; Prov. 10:22. Therefore not to be making up for what is missing, reaching out for more blessing, or even possessing our blessings. Example: New Car

*Man is a vessel destined to be filled by God, and as he is filled, so he expands, and as he expands so he is filled. (F. Godet)*

We are only authentically human when we are filled.

### **THE FULLNESS OF BLESSING IS CHRIST HIMSELF**

The fullness of blessing is in Christ. The incarnate Son is filled with the fullness of God. Col. 1: 19; 2:9. In Christ we have come to fullness of life. Col. 2: 10.

Every spiritual blessing A the heavenly places means that the blessing is from the Holy Spirit and is affected upon people of flesh and blood. It also means that in Christ we participate in those blessings in the heavenly places where Christ is in the presence of the Father. In Christ we have this access to the Father. Upon us is the creational covenant blessing. In Christ's priestly service we have the Aaronic blessing, the blessing of the Name of the Triune God. It is called the blessing of the Spirit, so that in Christ's humanity we participate in the fullness of God. Col. 1:15f; Eph. 1:22; Rom. 5:1-2; Gal. 3:22, 29; Heb. 9:24; Eph. 3:18-19.

### **PARTICIPATION IN THE FULLNESS**

In Romans 15:29 Paul knows that he has the full measure of the Gospel of Christ. He knows this not because he has simply appropriated certain facts, or because these facts could be externally verified. He knows that the fullness of blessing was ontologically true because of the interaction and the indwelling of the knower and the known. It come from participation in the life of the Godhead. II Pet. 1:3-4. This means that we don't have to realise ourselves, advance ourselves, or create our own reality. The fullness of blessing is realised in the community of the Body of Christ where the reason for our being lies outside our doors and beyond our own blessedness. This makes the Church *Ek-* static.

In the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ we go to those who are filled with things which claim reality but which in fact cannot deliver.

Ephesians 1:3-14 is a prayer of jubilation which blesses, praises and honours the Father. This is our response in worship within the life of the Godhead.