

In life, and certainly in Christian life, the mark of real maturity is to escape the prison of self-absorption. Matt Fuller

### GADSBY'S CATECHISM

By William Gadsby, about 1800

*(Presented here as originally published – this does not constitute a full endorsement of the Riverside Baptist Church)*

Question LXXI. What blessings are connected with faith in Christ Jesus?

Answer. The blessings connected with faith in Christ Jesus are, a freedom from the bondage of sin, Satan, the world, death and the law, with free access to the Father, and a hearty welcome to all the glory of the gospel and the blessings of God's house.

Jn. 3.14-17; Rom. 5.2 & 6.14 & 8.1-4; Eph. 2.18-22; I Jn. 2.12-14 & 5.4-5.

Question LXXII. Since a believer is made free from the law, is it any part of his freedom to be at liberty to sin?

Answer. No; for he is called to holiness; and though he is dead to, and free from, the law of works, he is not now, nor does he wish to be, without law to God but is under the law of Christ. Luke 6.46; Rom. 6.1-2,6-7,11-19 & 7.1-6; 1 Cor. 9.21; Gal. 5.1,13-25; Col. 2.6-7; 2 Tim. 2.19; Tit. 3.8.

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WXTH-LP 101.7 FM— In Richwood

#### Services:

Sunday Morning Bible Study -- 10:00 AM

Sunday Morning Worship -- 11:00 AM

Prayer and Bible Study Wednesday Evening 6:30 PM

WCWV 92.9 FM – 8:00 AM Sunday Morning

# THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST REPORT

## THE RIVERSIDE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Pillar and ground of the Truth” -- 1 Timothy 3:15

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### AARON’S BLESSING

*The Lord Bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious to thee:  
The Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and give thee peace. Numbers 6:24-26.*

Often when separating from someone I say, “May the Lord bless you.” This may be to friends and relatives, the cashier at Walmart, or my congregation at the conclusion of a message. I would like to think that I am always lifting this thought or prayer up before the Lord and directing it with genuine interest of the person(s) addressed. My fear is that it becomes a habit and may mean no more than “have a nice day.” We do well to consider our words and “say what we mean and mean what we say.” This presents me with the question, what do I desire for that person and what do I want the Lord to do for them. To explore the depths of the “riches of His grace in His kindness toward us” is not within the abilities of our feeble minds, but the knowledge that they exist is. And we can sense our own state of blessedness in being a child of God in Christ. To desire that encompasses much in the way of desired blessedness for others.

The Old Testament priests were given a distinct form of pronouncing the divine blessing upon the children of Israel. We must believe that more than a mere formality was intended. This declaration is inherently beautiful in its form and substance. It is rhythmic, poetic and easily remembered. But there is depth of meaning that goes far beyond simple well-wishing. This may be sensed by the emphatic use of the name Jehovah at the beginning of each declaration.

That there are three things stated here

suggests Trinitarian involvement. In Deuteronomy 6:4 Moses wrote: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.” But implications of the Trinity are elsewhere indicated. This may be just such an instance. Commentators differ somewhat on the manner of application designed here. Some see each of the members of the Godhead in all three statements. Others see the Father in the first, the Son in the second, and the Holy Spirit in the third. All agree on the divine intent for this blessedness and its communication to the people. Matthew Henry observed that, “Our Blessing God is only speaking well of Him; His blessing us is Him doing well for us; those He blesses are blessed indeed.” The intent in such a pronouncement is that the effects of the mercy and grace of God be realized and experienced.

John Gill saw the involvement of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in each component of the blessing. He wrote: “Jehovah the Father blesses with all spiritual blessings, with electing, adopting, justifying, and pardoning grace, with regenerating and calling, and persevering grace, and with eternal life: Jehovah the Son blesses particularly with redeeming grace, and has a concern in all the other blessings; the saints are blessed with them in him, they are all in his hands, they are procured by him, come through him, and are the gifts of his grace: and Jehovah the Spirit blesses as a spirit of regeneration and sanctification, as the spirit of faith, as a comforter, as the spirit of adoption, and as the

earnest and sealer of the saints unto the day of redemption..." It is evident that true blessedness coming from God has its beginnings in eternity and reaches to the depth of spirituality. In Ephesians 1:3-4 Paul tells us that we are blessed in Christ with all spiritual blessings and that according to being chosen in Him. Gill would furthermore see all the Godhead involved in keeping us from the power, prevalence, and dominance of evil and Satan in particular.

He saw in the second part of the blessing the Lord appearing to those blessed as the "sun of righteousness" shining unto them. He spoke of "spiritual light and heat" as being because of the Lord's sensed presence with them, giving them the evidence of His love for them and increased light and knowledge of the Gospel. Added to this was the prayer to be gracious in granting more grace to function more effectually in the reign of grace.

In the third petition for blessing, there is seen by all the revelation of the manifest interest of God in seeing their salvation through to the end. Gill saw this lifting up of His countenance on thee as to "...Show his face and favour, look cheerfully on his people, declare himself well pleased with them in Christ, and appear as smiling upon them through him, indulging them with visits of love, restoring to them the joys of his salvation, and upholding them with his free Spirit; and so causing them to walk pleasantly and comfortably in the ways of God, expecting eternal life and happiness, as God's free gift through Christ.." From such realizations come the "peace which passes understanding" and the hope of eternal peace in

Christ Jesus our Lord.

Robert Hawker saw these things as proceeding from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in succession. He wrote: "...The LORD bless thee, and keep thee. The blessing and keeping of GOD'S heritage, is in a very peculiar and express manner ascribed to GOD the FATHER. ...So again, when it is said; the LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. Is not this the peculiar blessing of GOD our Saviour? when the light of the knowledge of the glory of GOD is given to us in the face of JESUS CHRIST? See 2Co 4:6. And is it not through the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS, that we find mercy from GOD even the FATHER? Rom 5:11; Col 1:20. And is not the peculiar office of GOD the HOLY GHOST, very strikingly adverted to in this expression; the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. Among the special offices of GOD the SPIRIT, that of comforting his people with the light of his countenance, is very eminently striking; and of making peace in the soul, by the application of all the sweet graces and blessings of the LORD JESUS?"

We may see a connection to this pronouncement in Paul writing to the Corinthians, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen." It would seem that all that is included in our text is implied in this as well. In any event it follows that when we say "may the Lord bless you" that all of it should be invoked. May the Lord Bless you all is my prayer. *bhs*

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#### KEIL & DELITZSCH ON NUMBERS 6:24-26 (Quoting Martin Luther)

(Note: See the admirable elaboration of these points in Luther's exposition of the blessing. Luther refers the first blessing to "bodily life and good." The blessing, he says, desired for the people "that God would give them prosperity and every good, and also guard and preserve them." This is carried out still further, in a manner corresponding to his exposition of the first article. The second blessing he refers to "the spiritual

nature and the soul,” and observes, “Just as the sun, when it rises and diffuses its rich glory and soft light over all the world, merely lifts up its face upon all the world;...so when God gives His word, He causes His face to shine clearly and joyously upon all minds, and makes them joyful and light, and as it were new hearts and new men. For it brings forgiveness of sins, and shows God as a gracious and merciful Father, who pities and sympathizes with our grief and sorrow. The third also relates to the spiritual nature and the soul, and is a desire for consolation and final victory over the cross, death, the devil, and all the gates of hell, together with the world and the evil desires of the flesh. The desire of this blessing is, that the Lord God will lift up the light of His word upon us, and so keep it over us, that it may shine in our hearts with strength enough to overcome all the opposition of the devil, death, and sin, and all adversity, terror, or despair.”

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William Perkins and prayer (two quotes)

As Paul asks and then answers, “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us” (Rom. 8:33–34). Here, Paul mentions four inseparable works: (1) Christ’s crucifixion: it is He who died. In so doing, He paid the penalty for our sin. (2) Christ’s resurrection: it is He who was raised. This testifies to God’s acceptance of Christ’s substitutionary sacrifice. (3) Christ’s ascension: it is He who is “at the right hand of God.” He has entered God’s presence on our behalf. (4) Christ’s intercession: it is He who “is interceding for us.” His presence in heaven guarantees the application of all He accomplished by His death, burial, and resurrection. In short, it guarantees the forgiveness of our sins.

Christ ends the Lord’s Prayer as follows: “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen” (Matt. 6:13). In Perkins’s opinion, “These words contain the reason of the former six petitions...to persuade the child of God that prayeth thus, that God will grant his requests.” We pray in faith because the kingdom belongs to God forever. We approach Him who freely disposes all things for the good of His people. We pray in faith because the power belongs to God forever. “By power,” said Perkins, “is meant an ability in God whereby he can do whatsoever he will, and more than he will do.”[60] We pray in faith because the glory belongs to God forever. “By glory,” said Perkins, “is meant excellency and majesty.”

Joel Beeke and Brian Najapfour,  
*Taking Hold of God: Reformed and Puritan Perspectives on Prayer*

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**AS J. I. PACKER HAS WRITTEN, “LIVING BECOMES AN AWESOME BUSINESS WHEN YOU REALIZE THAT YOU SPEND EVERY MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE IN THE SIGHT AND COMPANY OF AN OMNISCIENT, OMNIPRESENT CREATOR.” –JERRY BRIDGES**