The Holy Trinity | Numbers 6:22-27
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We Are So Blessed by Our Triune Gd!
I. Blessed with the Father's blessing and protection.
II. Blessed with the Son's grace.
III. Blessed with the Spirit's peace.

Dear Christian friends,

Today is a much-needed reminder of some VERY BIG LESSONS. **#1)**There s ONLY ONE real God – the **triune** God. God faces STIFF COMPETITION from **all kinds** of very popular false gods but He is the ONLY **real** God. The government must treat all religions/gods as EQUAL but as Christians we know that the triune God is the **only real** God – that biblical Christianity is the **only true** religion.

#2) God reveals in the Bible that He is TRIUNE – three separate and **distinct** Persons but still only one God. You won't find the **words** triune or trinity in the Bible but the Bible clearly teaches that truth. I hope you read the **Athanasian Creed** as the bulletin suggested. IF NOT, in your devotions this week **get out** your hymnal and read it. The Athanasian Creed is a beautiful confession of the Holy Trinity but it never tries to EXPLAIN HOW that can be.

That leads to **#3)**there is JUST SO MUCH about God – who He is – what and why He is **doing whatever** – that we JUST CAN'T **explain**. That shouldn't surprise us – HE'S GOD and **we're not**. God bluntly tells us, ***"My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."*** Paul simply exclaims, ***"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how untraceable His ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His adviser?'"***

Now we turn to these **familiar words** of the Benediction. The God who is SO BEYOND our **understanding** speaks to us in words we **can understand**! There is SO MUCH about God that we just can't understand but there is ONE THING **God wants** us to clearly understand and be totally convinced of – He LOVES us! Oh, yes – WE ARE SO BLESSED BY OUR TRIUNE GOD! We **are blessed** 1)with God the Father's blessing and **protection**, 2)with God the Son's grace and 3)with God the Holy Spirit's peace.

I. Blessed with God the Father's blessing and protection.

Before going any farther let's be clear about something. The **benediction** is not a prayer or a wish. It's **not**, "MAY the Lord bless…" but ***"the LORD bless you"*** – or even better – "the LORD IS blessing – the LORD continues to bless you." God's blessings are NOT IFFY or **debatable** – they're facts. We ARE blessed and CONTINUE to **be blessed** by our **triune God**.

You can't tell it in our **modern English** but the ***"you – the LORD bless YOU"*** – that you is singular. God's blessings are not BLANKET blessings – one size fits all. SOME of God's blessings are for all people – but God also blesses **each one** of us INDIVIDUALLY. Some blessings might be GOOD FOR YOU but **not for me** or vice-versa. **Some blessings** might be good for you/me LATER ON but not right now. There's NO NEED to be jealous or to resent how God blesses someone **with whatever** but not us. God blesses us AS HE KNOWS is best for us – best for now and **for eternity**.

"The LORD bless you and keep you." So God HAS and continues to do so! We shouldn't count God's blessings **just at Thanksgiving**. EVERY DAY – "richly and daily" the catechism says – God provides us with our ***"daily bread"*** and FAR, FAR MORE than just that.

But let's also be careful. ***"Bless"*** doesn't mean to **make us** HAPPY – HEALTHY – WEALTHY. ***"Bless"*** doesn't mean that everything goes **just great** for us – that we won't have any problems. **In fact**, right here we see a very SPECIAL and COMFORTING blessing from God. God promises to ***"work all things"*** for our eternal good. We may not see a **sickness** – **setback** etc. – AS A BLESSING but God promises to USE IT to **bless us** somehow or other. We have many examples of that in the lives of Abraham, Jacob, David, Job, Paul, etc. Problems don't mean God ISN'T blessing us – He's just blessing us in a DIFFERENT KIND of way. **We** may not like it but GOD KNOWS it's what's best for us **at the time**. So instead of getting all **worked up** and **worried** TRUST your heavenly Father to bless you.

"The LORD bless and KEEP you." The Hebrew word for ***"keep"*** means to pay careful attention to – to guard. It's the PICTURE of God keeping His eye on us NOT as a **nosey intruder** in our lives but FOR OUR GOOD. Or **think** of Psalm 46 – ***"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."***

The benediction doesn't prove that God **is triune** but in its three parts we CATCH A GLIMPSE of each Person. We are blessed with God the Father's blessing and **protection** and…

II. Blessed with God the Son's grace.

"The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you." Hear those words NOT JUST **as a blessing** but as God's absolution – God NOT HOLDING our sins against us but graciously forgiving us. That forgiveness is found ONLY IN and because of **God the Son**, our Lord Jesus.

The opposite of God's ***"face shining on us"*** is God SCOWLING at us with utter disgust – God FROWNING at us in disapproval. **For the past year** the Israelites had been camped at the base of Mt. Sinai. On their trip to Mt. Sinai and while camped there the Israelites had GRUMBLED and **complained** about HOW God was taking care of them. ***"If only we had died in Egypt,"*** they said – slavery in Egypt was SO MUCH BETTER than what they had now. There was also that incident with the ***"golden calf."*** When the Israelites finally left Mt. Sinai and headed off to the Promised Land of Canaan things didn't get any better. Read through the OT – ***"stiff-necked and stubborn"*** sure describes the Israelites. **Read through** the OT and see the Israelites' REPEATED **rebellion** and **unfaithfulness** AND ALSO SEE God's faithfulness and graciousness. SEE GOD ***"making His face shine on them."***

Read through the OT and we can see A LOT of ourselves in those Israelites – us doubting God's **promises** – us questioning God's **love** and **ways** – yes, us even outright defying and **disobeying** God. How often **like the Israelites** don't we think WE KNOW BETTER than God – that we don't have to listen to God – that God better bless us but **otherwise** He shouldn't interfere in our lives. That God ISN'T SCOWLING at us **in utter disgust** and marching us off to hell's eternal punishment – that INSTEAD ***"God's face is shining on us"*** – that's the grace of our Lord Jesus!

We are blessed to have God's own SON as our **personal** and **perfect** Savior. What grace – **what a blessing!** – Jesus takes care of everything to save us. Jesus perfectly obeyed every commandment His **whole life** and He gives us all the credit for it. **What grace** – what a blessing! – the sinless Son of God WILLINGLY TOOK the blame and burden for the sins of the whole world and was punished in our place. The ***"beloved Son"*** of God is also that innocent ***"Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world"*** with His own sacrificial death on the cross. **What grace** – what a blessing! – Jesus rose triumphant from the dead and He shares His victory with us.

What grace – what a blessing! – TRUSTING in Jesus we are forgiven – we are the redeemed children of God – we are going straight to heaven when we die. Remember – this is NOT A WISH – "MAY God ***'make His face shine'*** on us – MAY God ***'be gracious'*** to us." This is a statement of FACT – God's face IS ***"shining on us"*** – God IS ***"gracious to us."*** Every day we STILL SIN in so many ways – God

SHOULD BE so fed up and **disgusted** with us – yet SEE the blessing – God's face continues to ***"shine on us"*** – God continues to be ***"gracious to us."*** We ARE blessed with God the **Son's grace** and…

III. Blessed with the Holy Spirit's peace.

"The LORD look on you with favor" (literally, ***"lift up His face upon you"***) ***"and give you peace."*** There's another beautiful picture. **Instead** of God turning HIS BACK on us and giving up on us God ***"lifts His face upon us"*** – God looks straight at us BEAMING WITH LOVE and **joy**. God sees NOT REBELLIOUS **brats** but His beloved children. THAT'S WHO we are through faith in Jesus – a **faith** God the Holy Spirit worked in our hearts through the gospel.

Through the **gospel** – through that faith – that TRUST – in Jesus God the **Holy Spirit** BLESSES us and fills us with His **peace**. JUST AS God ***"blessing"*** us doesn't mean God **makes us happy**, healthy and wealthy SO ALSO God's ***"peace"*** doesn't mean everything is NOW PERFECT in this **world** and in **our lives**. We're still sinners living in a **sin-cursed** world with all its **trials** and **tribulations**. But BLESSED by God the **Holy Spirit** we can now live with GOD BEAMING at us and WITH THE PEACE that our **triune God** loves us – forgives us – is with us and taking care of us – working **all** things for our eternal good – and He will soon take us to heaven's **eternal** and **perfect peace**.

"And give you peace." Just listen to these passages. Jesus says, ***"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*** Paul wrote in the epistle reading, ***"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, …and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God."*** And there's his familiar words, ***"The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."***

"The LORD told Moses to speak to Aaron and to his sons and to tell them to bless the Israelites with these words. In this way they will put My name on the Israelites, and I will bless them." In Holy Baptism the triune God put His name on us and claimed us as His own. There is indeed so much about our **triune God** that we just can't understand or **explain**. But we can be absolutely sure of this – WE ARE BLESSED by our **triune God**! Amen.

APOSTLES' CREED