

THE BLESS-ONLY PRINCIPLE

Blessing as a Kingdom Principle

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THE BLESS-ONLY PRINCIPLE

Introduction

I believe the Father's kingdom of life is essentially a kingdom of blessing. In Jesus, we see the Blessing, and how we are to bless consistent with the principles of the kingdom. The blesser is himself blessed; blessing multiplies because it has the nature of the Father. The cursing one is cursed because he comes against the Father's kingdom, and God will protect those whom He makes a "blessing," as He promised Abraham. Genesis 12:2, 3.

It is a dynamic kingdom filled with the activity of God, and the decision not to bless puts one in open-faced disagreement with the Father. To see blessing done to perfection in Jesus and to decline to participate in the blessing is to be excluded from the Father's kingdom.

The first words God spoke to Abraham were to tell him that His was a kingdom of blessing. Genesis 12:2, 3. In an extended study of healing scriptures, I began to see a connection in healing and the Abrahamic covenant: Isaiah 58:8, 14 ("thine health shall spring forth speedily... (as part of) the heritage of Jacob thy father"; Luke 13:16 ("and ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"); and Acts 1:4, 5, 2:33, 3:6, 13, 25 (Jesus received the promise of the Holy Spirit, then in addressing the crowd that marveled at the healing of the man at the gate called Beautiful, Peter alludes to the "covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3, 22:18).

Fulfilling the covenant "in thy seed" means Christ and those "in Christ" as the spiritual seed of Abraham (Galatians 3, especially verses 16 and 29), who are called "the Israel of God." Galatians 6:16. The fleshly circumcision that was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant (Genesis 17:10, John 7:22, Acts 7:8) was replaced by the circumcision of the "heart, in the spirit..." Romans 2:29. "For in Christ Jesus (the true realization of the Abrahamic promise) neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Galatians 6:15. Jesus said, "But if I cast out devils (and so heal the blind, dumb man) by the Spirit of God (the Spirit of the Father, Matthew 10:20), then the kingdom of God is come unto you." Matthew 12:28. The Holy Spirit by Whom Jesus healed and continues to heal was and is the Spirit of promise. Luke 24:49, John 14:26, Acts 1:4, 5, 2:33, Galatians 3:7-14, 26-29, Ephesians 1:13. The scripture tells us the Holy Spirit is the promise made to Abraham: "(Jesus was made a curse for us) That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ: that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:14.

The Abrahamic covenant is an "everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:7), as is the New Covenant. Hebrews 13:20. "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before ("in advance," NIV translation, "beforehand," Wuest translation) the gospel (the "everlasting gospel," Revelation 14:6) unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Galatians 3:8 referring to Genesis 12:2, 3.

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee (in Christ who "took on him the seed of Abraham," Hebrews 2:16) shall all families of the earth be blessed." Genesis 12:2, 3.

I came to see these scriptures which were the first God gave to Abraham as not just historical but preceding and surviving the law that waxed old with the coming of the new covenant. Galatians 3, Hebrews 8. The Abrahamic covenant was to be "everlasting" despite the passing of the outward sign of circumcision, and in these scriptures God described essentially how His kingdom and Christ's kingdom (which are one kingdom, Ephesians 5:5, 1 Corinthians 15:24) would operate, and the principle was one of blessing. "I will bless," God said, which is a statement of grace because God starts the process of blessing, "commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalm 133:3. Grace is often defined as "unmerited favor" but I see it more as God's activity that works (blesses) in the object of His favor. Luke 2:40 (the grace of God was upon the child Jesus).

There is a hint of the new birth in the statement "thou shalt be a blessing," taking on the nature of the Blessor Himself. It was a matter of gradual revelation that the blessing would spread to all the families of the earth "in thee," meaning Christ the seed of Abraham and the family of spiritual seed by faith. There is a blessing-for-a-blessing principle ("I will bless them that bless thee," meaning the entire family of faith) and a protective curse-for-a-curse principle ("I will...curse him that curseth thee), all of which we can see in Jesus' teachings and the later New Testament writings, such as 1 Peter 3:9, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

Blessing has to do with our speech (Ephesians 4:29, James 3:8, 9, 4:11) but also our works and even our attitudes; one can bless with the mouth yet "curse inwardly." Psalm 62:4. And while I don't profess to bless with perfection or anywhere near it, I have come to realize that our job as Christians is precisely and simply to bless, and that revelation and attitude can literally change your life as it has mine. The utter simplicity of it is one of its nicest features, and the more I grow in understanding

of the Lord, the more I am convinced that His singlemindedness is what is most baffling to us, because we are so unlike Him in that way. Blessing is very serious business in the Father's kingdom because it is His work and He will not be prevented from blessing, as we see with the story of Jonah who begrudged God preaching His blessing to Israel's enemies. There is also the very serious curse-for-a-curse principle alongside the bless-only principle of the Father's kingdom, which I believe we see in the judgment that came on in Corinthian church, born-again believers, who failed to discern the Lord's body, meaning at least in part that they failed to discern that the Lord's death was for the whole church. God help us to bless as Jesus' taught us, and to walk in the "fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Romans 15:29

The Nature of Blessing

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace (as Jesus, the Blessed, Matthew 21:9, John 12:13, Who is the source of our joy, John 16:20-25, 17:13, received His joy from the countenance of the Father, Acts 2:28, Psalm 16:11, Hebrews 1:9). And they (the priests, which we are, Revelation 1:6) shall put my name upon the children of Israel (spiritual Israel, Galatians 3, 6:16); and I will bless them." Numbers 6:24-27.

"The blessing of the Lord be upon you: we bless you in the name of the Lord." Psalm 129:8

"(T)he Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore " Psalm 133:3

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Romans 8:2

I believe the nature of blessing is in the nature of God and His life, and therefore has power resident in it. Pastor Clayton Gollither of Hope for Homeless Youth, Hollywood, speaks of the "power of blessing" as "transmitting God's life from one to another."

According to Strong's dictionary, the Hebrew word translated "blessing" in Psalms 129 and 133 comes from the word translated "bless" in Numbers 6 above, which has a root meaning "to kneel." The "less (even the unlovely, the non-blessor) is blessed of the better" (Hebrews 7:7), and so to reach us with eternal life, both the Father and Son had to descend and serve, bringing the

provision only They had.

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself. John 5:26

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God (the Father, John 17:1), and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life (Jesus); For the life was manifested, and we have seen it and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;...and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ... continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." 1 John 1:1-3, 2:24, 25. (Eternal life is in God's promise of the Holy Spirit to Abraham, Galatians 3:14, Jesus' prayer of John 17, and pre-dates the world. Titus 1.2.)

The story of Christianity is that of the God of all provision Who stoops and serves, eliminating the need for the unqualified to say "I will ascend." Isaiah 14:13, 14. Sin is unnecessary. As the God of provision, He eliminates the need to be miserly with His blessings for fear they will run out.

"Jesus (blessing from a source of strength) knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a (servant's) towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." John 13:3-5. Compare Psalm 93:1.

Jesus said He could only do what He saw the Father do (John 5:19), and so we also see here the heart of the Father, the Servant-in-Charge, in service to His creation, giving His children an example, and so showing us blessing is a process, a family matter in which we are to participate.

The Philippians letter also cites the mind of Christ in emptying Himself of His heavenly glory to take the form of a servant and the likeness of a man, humbling Himself even to the death of the cross, as our example to "esteem other better than themselves" and "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." Philippians 2:3-8, which continues to say that "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." The one who stoops to bless is

not diminished, but blessed because he or she brings what is of God that multiplies as the loaves and fishes which Jesus brake, gave thanks and blessed. Mark 6:38-44. He blesses because He has first received of the Lord, materially, as Jesus acknowledged in His thanksgiving to the Father, and spiritually, as with Jesus to Whom the Father "giveth not the Spirit by measure..." John 3:34

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" Ephesians 1:3. See also Acts 1:4, 5, 2:22, 33, 3:6-13, 4:10

As bringing the things of the Lord, blessing does not bring envy, lust, worry, unbelief, etc. In the bringing, it does more than wish well. One brings by grace because one has received of the Lord, and brings more as one grows, and one grows in blessing because the blesser is blessed moreso. Genesis 12:2, 3. One seeks more of the Lord to have more with which to bless.

"(F)orasmuch as ye are zealous of spiritual gifts, seek that ye may excel to the edifying of the church." 1 Corinthians 14:12

Blessing is a process, as we shall see, and by nature, it manages to splash all around even as it leaks on the feet of the Lord's pail-carrier.

"And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Romans 15:29

Blessing and the Beatitudes

The blessed may not yet have the full blessing in hand, but they are at least on their way to the fullness of the blessing of God. For this reason, one can be "poor in spirit", yet blessed because "theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 5:3. Similarly, those who mourn with the things of the kingdom whose charter reads the law of sin and death (Romans 8:2) are blessed because they seek another kingdom wherein they will be comforted. Matthew 5:4.

The meek who humble themselves to bless like the blessing Father will inherit His earth. Matthew 5:5.

Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness will be filled because the Father will give abundantly of that which blesses. Matthew 5:5. The merciful (blessers) will obtain mercy (blessing). Matthew 5:6.

Those who bless with peace, and as priests of God say, "The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Numbers 6:26), will be called sons of God because they represent the Son Who traveled and brought with Him peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you..." John 14:27. Peace comes in the Son because He reconciled things to Himself. "And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself..." Colossians 1:20

How can it be that ones are blessed because they are "persecuted for righteousness' sake" and persecuted and reviled for Jesus' sake? Matthew 5:10-12. The reward is great in heaven the scripture says, and there is no alternative but to hold up Jesus accurately if others are to be blessed, because "this is life eternal, that they might know thee (the Father, Whom we see in Jesus, John 14:9) the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3

The Lord upholds the blesser with the ability to withstand the railings of the non-blesser, the contrary. Acts 20:22, 23, Romans 15:1, 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, Galatians 5:22, Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 1:11, 3:12-14. Any that don't bring the doctrine of Christ are not to be received or "bidden God speed" because in doing so, that one partakes of the evil in not lifting up the only Source of blessing. Romans 15:29, 2 John 9-11. Jesus taught that the wheat and tares are to grow up together. Matthew 13:29. However, Jesus did not bless but rather rebuked Satan, the demonic and sickness (Matthew 4:1-11, Mark 1:25, 8:33, Luke 4:39, Jude 9), so not all things are to be blessed, or even tolerated. Judgment, God's minus sign to evil and harm, attends His kingdom of blessing as protector, as does His judgment in measure, His corrections, that convert and change the neophyte in blessing (all of us). Blessing is a higher concept than tolerance, and it will either convert or perfect the judgment of those who reject the blessing and the Blesser.

Blessing and Judgment

"That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth..." Isaiah 65:16

"(T)he nations shall bless themselves in him (God), and in him shall they glory." Jeremiah 4:2

"But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 2 Corinthians 1:17

"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the

Son to have life in himself." John 5:26

Given that God and His Son are the source of blessing, eternal life, and given that God has set a time limit on the current state of affairs which is an admixture of blessing and cursing, it follows that those who reject the Lord, the Blessing, will eventually have no part in His kingdom of blessing. In a sense, the dividing mechanism God uses for this separation from His kingdom is acceptance or rejection of perfect blessing, Jesus, the Savior, who also said, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see (the needy who see Jesus are blessed); and that they which see might be made blind (the Blessing seen and rejected produces blindness)." John 9:39. See also Luke 13:35, John 3:19, Jeremiah 9:24, 33:15. The Lord is sun and shield, giver of grace and glory (Psalm 84:11), and it seems as if the Sun of righteousness (Malachi 4:2) seen without receiving the shield of grace does produce blindness.

"If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." John 15:24

Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8), but the Blessing love brings is not always received, and therein is also judgment.

"Recompense to no man evil for evil... Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." Romans 12:17, 20

One may debate whether this scripture means that blessing extended yields repentance or judgment, but I believe both interpretations are true. It is the goodness of the Lord that leads us to repentance. Romans 2:4. "We love him, because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19. He blesses in turning away from iniquities, but there must be a turning to enter by way of the door (John 10:9) to the kingdom of blessing. Acts 3:26. Blessing rejected leaves one no place in a kingdom whose very nature is blessing and life, "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you (the faithful and charitable)." 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 6

Jesus answered those angry at his blessing, his healing work, "My Father has worked (even) until now.--He has never ceased working, He is still working--and I too must be at (divine) work." John 5:17, Amplified translation. Until the resolution of rebellion against blessing in the latter chapters of Revelation, our sins affect the restless, blessing Father and His Christ (Genesis 20:6, Judges 10:16, Isaiah 43:24, Hosea 7:13, John 3:16, 17, Acts 9:4), and if one rejects the Blessing, the wrath of God abides on

him. John 3:36. It's as if one falls out of the kingdom of blessing and life back into the kingdom of the law of sin and its death (Romans 8:2) that knows not wisdom (Job 28:12, 22), the kingdom one "falls into" by choosing not to leave it.

Blessing and Judgmentalism

In a sense, one can see the story of Joseph and his brothers as one of jealousy over a blessing, starting with a coat. "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours." Genesis 37:3. The story is the familiar one of the brothers going with an empty bag to Egypt, having to ask a blessing from the brother they sinned against, so typifying our trek to Jesus, who broke the cycle of cursing with blessing, as did Joseph, the forgiving brother.

Unforgiveness basically forgets we need mercy ourselves, says "stay away" to the work of the cross. To compare ourselves with one another is to dishonor God's measure. 2 Corinthians 10:12, 13, 17, 18. Judge not, lest you be judged, lest you subject yourself to your own law system. John 7:24, Matthew 7:1-5, Romans 14:10-13, 1 Corinthians 4:1-5, Galatians 5. Unforgiveness wants the wrong to stay with the doer of the wrong, basically refuses to let the blessing do its work of separating sin and sinner, and God won't let us get away with that because Jesus died to bless.

"But Jesus stooped down (a position from which much blessing is done), and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not (the accusers of woman taken in adultery)." John 8:6

We're not to judge, just carry the Lord's blessing, which is a wonderful assignment once we get used to the idea, and it is the one idea; singlemindedness is required!

We can't carry judgment and blessing in the same hand, so the judgmental, non-blessing attitude has to be put down, whether it harbors malice or just clings to the conclusion the sinner will cling to his sin out of stubbornness. To judge that another just won't make it is still to judge and doesn't carry the Blessing. "But let your communication be, Yea, yea (as to the blessing) ; Nay, nay (as to the cursing): for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil." Matthew 5:37. Also Colossians 3:8, "put off all...filthy communication out of your mouth," and Ephesians 4:29, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying (blessing), that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

To judge one unworthy of the things of the Lord, and so bring

them envy, lust, worry, unbelief, etc. is in some sense to judge them, and when we don't carry His blessings to those for whom He died, we transgress against Him.

The Father Blesses Through Jesus and His Cross

There is a sense in which the cross can be understood as in the nature of blessing. Jesus blessed, and so was entitled to blessings, and His blessings are deflected our way on account of mercy. The mercy, the gift, the blessings are those of both the Father and Son.

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Ephesians 4:7

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23, also John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son..."

The Father's role is preeminent in such scriptures as Abraham's statement that "God will provide himself a lamb..." (Genesis 22:8, also Isaiah 53:7, John 1:29, Acts 8:26-39, 1 Corinthians 5:7), and Isaiah's Suffering Servant prophecies; "Behold my servant, whom I uphold..." Isaiah 42:1, also 52:13, 53:11. See also Isaiah 63:16. The work of the cross was according to the Father's will, His predetermined counsel. John 10:18, 18:11, Acts 2:22-24. So we know the Father is deadly serious and permits, even rewards, suffering in bringing the blessing of eternal life, in this case sending His Son Who "resisted unto blood, striving against sin." Hebrews 12:4

The blessing is by the "measure of the gift of Christ" (Ephesians 4:7) Who receives and flows through blessings our way, without losing His blessing - a bride, joy, and other gifts of the Father to His Bridegroom.

"And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever. Even the Spirit of truth (the promise received by Jesus of the Father, Acts 2:33, Galatians 3:14)...I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you...because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you (circle of blessing)." John 14:16-20

"(T)hat he (Jesus) by the grace of God should taste death for every man (the Blessing Father staying in the kingdom of life; tasting death is not attributed to the Father). For it became

him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings." Hebrews 2:9, 10

The gift is "in Christ Jesus...who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (in accordance with God's commandment of the blessing of eternal life, Psalm 133:3)." 2 Timothy 1:9, 10. True blessing that carries with it eternal life is "in Christ Jesus," and such work is "not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58.

There is nothing of debt in God's work of salvation. It is "by grace...through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man (innately unskilled in blessing) should boast (and understate the blessing)." Ephesians 2:8, 9. This is generally the tenor of God's discussion with Job in chapters 38-42 in which He explains it is His universe and only He is capable of running it, specifically 41:11, "Who has first given to Me, that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heavens is Mine." Amplified translation, which adds parenthetically, "Therefore, who can have a claim against God...?" Also Romans 11:35. So we must come to the Father not as debt collectors but as family members coming to the Source of blessing.

There is much to empty-handedness in receiving blessing of the Father, which I believe we see in such stories as the healing of the man blind from birth. John 9. "(O)ne thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." John 9:25. When we go to the Father in prayer with the attitude that we are trying to wrestle mercy from Him, we forget that He is the Source of blessing. The "less is blessed of the better" (Hebrews 7:7), and all we can bring Him is the truth of His blessing. When we, the lesser, bless God, all that we can bring is what He gave us, which is why we approach Him in the name of His Son.

Yet God blesses and reliably so, and Jesus "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame..." Hebrews 12:2. It was "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14), and in abandoning Himself to death, relying on the Father to raise Him from the dead, Jesus in deed speaks more than volumes on the reliability of the Father to bless those about the Father's business of blessing. Jesus spoke of the Father continuing with Him to the time of the cross in John 16:32, and an angel came and strengthened Him in the garden. Luke 22:43.

The writer of Hebrews seemingly speaks of the work of the Trinity in the sacrifice in speaking of the "blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God..." Hebrews 9:14. Yet, there was a time in which Jesus was very much alone and shouted, "God, my God (the repetition may refer to the Father and Holy Spirit), why hast thou forsaken me?" Mark 15:34.

See also Hebrews 1:3. Yet, "his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption." Acts 2:31, also Psalm 16:10. Galatians 1:1 speaks of "God the Father, who raised him (Jesus) from the dead," it being necessary that the Father stay in the kingdom of life. See also John 14:28, Acts 2:24-27, 32, 3:15, 5:30, 10:40, 17:30, 31, Romans 6:4, 10:9, 1 Corinthians 15:15, 2 Corinthians 4:14, Ephesians 1:17, 20, Hebrews 5:5-7, 13:20, 1 Peter 3:18, Revelation 1:5; compare John 2:19, 10:18.

Jesus understood the prophecies of His resurrection, implicit in Isaiah 53:10-12 that speak of the Suffering Servant yielding seed, dividing the spoil, etc. It is part of the intercessor's reward to have new family.

"I will declare thy name unto my brethren..." Psalm 22:22, also Hebrews 2:12.

"Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me..." Isaiah 8:18, also Hebrews 2:13.

The resurrected Christ spoke of his disciples as brethren (Matthew 28:10) and said, "go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father; and to my God and your God." John 20:17. At the Son's Coronation celebration, the Father says to the Son, "O God" ("the Word was God." John 1:1), yet in speaking to the Son refers to Himself as "thy God." Hebrews 1:8, 9. Jesus was resurrected to receive His blessing, and to bless the Father. His resurrection proves His authority to bless as One sent of the Father. John 2:18-22. On His all-important resurrection hung our blessing.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." 1 Peter 1:3, also Romans 8:29, Hebrews 12:23

"(B)ecause I live, ye shall live also." John 14:19

"And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." John 17:13, also Romans 5:11

The Father made Jesus "full of joy with (His) countenance" (Acts 2:28, Psalm 16:11) and "anointed (Him) with the oil of gladness above (His) fellows." Hebrews 1:9

Yet there is another aspect to the story that deserves careful meditation, namely that it appears to have been the Father's role (Who else would have the authority?) to confess the sins of the world on His head, and so purchase the mercy, our blessing, out of judgment borne by Jesus."

"(A)nd the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all... Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed (new, born again, family of God), he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession (to the Father) for the transgressors." Isaiah 53:6, 10-12. See also Genesis 22:8, Leviticus 16, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:13 ("Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us...")

Jesus "committed himself to him that judgeth righteously" (1 Peter 2:23) and arose as the Suffering Servant of the Father to bless the Father, so putting to rest forever Satan's taunt that the suffering will curse and not bless God. Job 1:11, 2:5. One has to see the righteous judgment of the Father borne by Jesus to fully partake of His blessings.

After Jesus' ascension, "they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen." Luke 24:52, 53. Just before His ascension, Jesus had been explaining, even demonstrating this business of blessing which is the activity of the Father's kingdom (His grace).

"And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven." Luke 24:50, 51.

See also Numbers 6:24-27, the blessing of the priests on the people of God, and Jesus' High Priestly prayer of John 17.

Jesus is now "over all, God blessed for ever: Amen." Romans 9:5, which reads "God eulogized forever," in the Wuest translation. Also Psalm 45:2. There are many scriptures that describe Jesus in the sense of blessed, a recipient of blessings from the Father. For example, see Isaiah 11:2-5, Luke 1:42, 2:40, 4:18, John 3:34, 35, 5:18-21, 26, 30, 6:57, 8:26, 38, 10:29, 12:13,

14:10, 28, 17:2-5, Acts 2:28, 33, 36, 1 Corinthians 15:27, 28, Colossians 1:18, 19, Hebrews 1:2-5, 8, 9, 5:5, Revelation 2:26, 27. And so it should be since "Blessings are upon the head of the just..." (Proverb 10:6), and Jesus the Just (Acts 3:14, Rev. 15:3) is head of the man (1 Corinthians 11:3), the church (Ephesians 4:15, 5:23, Colossians 2:19) and all principality and power. Colossians 2:10, Ephesians 6:10-18. Jesus is "appointed heir of all things" (Hebrews 1:2) by the Father, an inheritance which includes believers as His bride. John 3:29-34, Romans 7:4, Revelation 19:9, 22:17.

"The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ...is blessed for evermore..." 2 Corinthians 11:31; this reads "who is the Eulogized One forever," in the Wuest translation. Jesus is the head of the body, the church, but the Father is Jesus' head, and so Head of the family. 1 Corinthians 11:3. The work of the cross was to establish the family of God and provide the door (John 10:9), the way (John 14:6) back into the Father's kingdom of life.

While it is true that "God (the Father, as well as Jesus) so loved the world..." (John 3:16), there is also an aspect to the story of the cross that simply shows Jesus blessing the Father with the work. Jesus was and is the "faithful witness" (Revelation 1:5) "come...to do thy will, O God" (Hebrews 10:7) and glorify the Father on the earth. Jesus taught that we are to let our light shine and men see our good works, and so glorify the Father. Matthew 5:16. His works were in the name of the Father. John 5:43, 10:25, 17:26. He did nothing without directions and authority from the Father. Luke 22:42, John 5:17-21, 30, 36, 43, 8:26-29, 10:18, 25, 32, 37, 38, 12:44-50, 13:3, 14:10, 11, 24, 31, 15:10, 15, 24, 16:23-28, 17:8, 1 Corinthians 15:27. He even said that to see Him is to see the Father. John 12:45, 14:9-11, Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3. See also John 15:21, 16:2, 3, 1 John 2:23.

His High Priestly prayer of John 17 is one of a blessing of the Father, yet based on a process of blessing, that included Himself and the family of believers.

"I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." John 17:4, which even speaks of Jesus' works as a gift of the Father, reminiscent of such scriptures as Ephesians 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." The Son was "Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you..." Acts 2:22

Jesus said He had glorified the Father, but prayed that this would continue after His resurrection in a way that involved Him and His bride, the church.

"Father, ...glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee..." John 17:1. See also John 8:47-58, 12:26-28, 16:13-15, Romans 15:5-7, 16:27, Philippians 2:5-11

"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." John 17:10. See also John 12:26, 14:12-14, 15:7, 8, Philippians 2:12-16, 2 Thessalonians 1:10

An example of the Blessing Christ being glorified "in them" after His resurrection is the healing of the man at the gate called Beautiful. Peter explained as follows:

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus... And his name through faith in his name (faith works, brings the blessing, by love, Galatians 5:6) hath made this man strong... (T)hat by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, ...whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole." Acts 3:13, 16, 4:10

God is still in the healing (blessing) business through Christ. Matthew 8:17, Mark 16:17, 18, 1 Peter 2:24, also James 5:15, "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up..."

Who blessed first? Was it the Father in commanding the blessing (Psalm 133:3), or in that Jesus and the Father are one (John 17:11, 22), is the foot race (the foot-washing race of a servant, John 13:3-5) to bless first always a tie in heaven? In any event, the story of the cross tells us of a stream of blessing between the Father and Son and the Holy Spirit, and it is in that stream we are to participate, as blessed and blesser.

"Worthy is the Lamb (crowned with glory and honour, Hebrews 2:9) that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory and blessing...Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Revelation 5:12

The Abrahamic Covenant and the Bless-Only Principle

The Abrahamic covenant is an "everlasting covenant" (Genesis 17:19) that pre-dated the law and its curse from which Christ redeemed us. Galatians 3. As discussed in the introduction, I believe the Abrahamic covenant continues to operate under what may be called the "bless-only principle."

"And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."
Genesis 12:2, 3

In this statement to Father Abraham, I believe God described the essential principles of the working of His kingdom.

These foundational scriptures about the Father's kingdom of blessing tell us that it is the Father (or Trinity) who starts the blessing process. "I will bless," He says more than once, and other scriptures confirm that the agreement is that God will bless and not curse Jesus and the rest of Abraham's family. Genesis 22:17, Psalm 72:17, Romans 8:34-39, Romans 9:5-8, 33, Hebrews 6:13-15. God is the source of blessing: "That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the God of truth..." Isaiah 65:16: "(T)he nations shall bless themselves in him, and in him shall they glory." Jeremiah 4:2

As children of Abraham (spiritual children, Galatians 3:7-16, 19, 29) who are to be a "blessing" according to Genesis 12:2, we are not to look to man to recompense, else we are not operating under this principle of grace, not believing the Lord will bless. However, the Lord works through His creation (saint and sinner alike; He can even make His enemies prophesy truth as in the case of Caiaphas. John 11:49-53), and promises that man will "give into your bosom." Luke 6:38. The servant is to be obedient to a master, "in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;...Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord..." Ephesians 6:5-8. See also Colossians 3:23, 24, 4:1. Jesus told the Pharisees that they missed the blessing because they invited to their feasts those who could not recompense. They should have invited the poor, the lame, etc., "And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense..." Luke 14:14. See also Matthew 6:5, 6, 7:11, 23:34-36.

However, God uses (makes) people who will bless like Him, and so blessing is a process (stream) that involves the family member as both blessed and blessing, Jesus being the perfect (and perfected, Hebrews 2:10) example. The Abrahamic covenant foretold that the blessed would also be made a blessing; thou shalt be a blessing...and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." It was the New Covenant wherein God would write the law of love in the hearts and minds (Hebrews 8:10-12 and 10:16, 17), resulting in the "new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17) "renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him" (Colossians 3:10), being "conformed to the image of His Son." Romans 8:29. We can love like God being born of God. 1 Peter 1:22, 23.

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Corinthians 12:12, 13. See also Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27

This "new creature" is ultimately the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, "and thou shalt be a blessing." It was "in thee" that the families of the earth are to be blessed, meaning specifically Jesus the seed of Abraham and those "in Christ" who are also the seed of Abraham by faith and recipients of the promise to Abraham and Jesus, the Holy Spirit. Genesis 17:7, 22:18, Matthew 1:1, Luke 1:72, 73, 24:49, Acts 2:33 3:25, 26, Romans 2:28, 29, 4:16-21, 9:6-8, Galatians 3:7-16, 19, 29, 6:15, 16, Hebrews 2:16.

The Holy Spirit is, like Jesus, under the authority of the Father Who commands the blessing (Psalm 133:3). John 14:16, 26, 15:26, 16:13, Acts 10:38, Romans 8:27, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, also James 4:5 which according to the New International Version and Wuest translations depict the Holy Spirit as being caused to dwell or live in the believer. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of power to bless.

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil; for God was with him." Acts 10:38

The Blessing-For-A-Blessing Principle

The Abrahamic covenant tells us we are to bless Abraham to yield God's blessing; "And I will bless them that bless thee." Genesis 12:3. Once we see that Abraham's family is truly the entire family of faith, we can see this promise in such scriptures as the following:

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matthew 25:40, see also Isaiah 58.

"Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me." Mark 9:37, also Matthew 9:5. See also Mark 9:38-41

There are many scriptures in the Old and New Testaments that

speak of being blessed for blessing.

"The liberal soul (literally, soul of blessing) shall be made fat; and he that watereth (blesses) shall be watered (blessed) also himself. Proverb 11:25

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; For he giveth of his bread to the poor." Proverb 22:9

"For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield." Psalm 5:12

"Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy." Matthew 5:7, also Psalm 18:25

"If any man desire to be first (most blessed) the same shall be last of all and servant of all (one who blesses the most). Mark 9:35, a principle that puts Jesus at the head of the line, both the line of giving and receiving blessing.

"Give and it shall be given unto you (although there is more blessing in the giving than in receiving, Acts 20:35); good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Luke 6:38, also see verses 31-37

"And (God) Who provides seed for the sower and bread for eating will also provide and multiply your (resources for) sowing, and increase the fruits of your righteousness (which manifests itself in active goodness, kindness, and charity)." 2 Corinthians 9:10, Amplified translation.

"Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 Peter 3:9

We see the blessing-for-a-blessing principle at the exaltation of Jesus (the Blessed, Luke 1:42, John 12:13), Who said "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again." John 10:17. Jesus "for the joy that was set before him endured the cross...and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Hebrews 12:2. Jesus was prophesied to divide the spoil with the strong (Isaiah 53:12), was "anointed with the oil of gladness above (His) fellows" (Hebrews 1:9), was

"crowned with glory and honour" (Hebrews 2:9), was made known "the ways of life" and made "full of joy with thy (the Father's) countenance" (Acts 2:28), and is coming back for the church, the bride that the Father gave Him. The resurrected Christ told his disciples, "...as my Father hath sent me (to bless), even so send I you." John 20:21

Even Father Abraham whom God promised to make a blessing (Genesis 12:2) was blessed for blessing, for giving that which he loved most in sacrifice to God.

"By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son (Isaac), That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." Genesis 22:16-18

We see it also in the manifold blessing on Solomon who prayed for wisdom in running, blessing, his kingdom (1 Kings 3 and 4), and Moses the deliverer who appeared as blessed on the Mount of Transfiguration. Matthew 17:3. Moses esteemed "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward." Hebrews 11:26.

I believe we see the blessing-for-a-blessing principle at work in the thanksgiving and praise of the grateful leper who is made whole (Luke 17:11-19), and the Shunammite woman who is blessed with a child because of her hospitality to God's prophet. 2 Kings 4:8-37, 8:1-6. See also 1 Samuel 1 and 2:21, 1 Kings 17:7-24. Also, Job was healed when he prayed for (blessed) his friends who berated him. Job 42:4-10. We are told to bless one another with prayers of healing and asking the Father for another's forgiveness. Mark 16:18, James 5:14-18, 1 John 5:16. It is not so easily seen, but I believe we see the blessing-for-a-blessing principle at work even in the story of the Syrophenician woman who progressed to the point of blessing in making simple, truthful declarations about Jesus. Matthew 15:21-28, Mark 7:24-30. Jesus told her it was "not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it unto the dogs (pet or household dogs according to the Wuest translation and numerous commentators)." Mark 7:27. Jesus broke down this wall between Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:11-22, Colossians 3:11), yet the wall existed then which was acknowledged by this distraught mother. Yet Jesus' statement started her in the way of truth, namely that she was at least in the household. She blessed back in acknowledging that the Lord is a good Master Who takes care of his entire household, even pets. She also spoke highly of His power in saying the least little crumb from the Master's table was enough to heal her daughter. Jesus said, "O woman, great is

thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Matthew 15:28. She had blessed the Lord and Jesus spoke of her faith, and I believe the two, blessing and faith, are closely related; faith "worketh by love." Galatians 5:6.

The Curse-For-A-Curse Principle

The promise to "curse those who curse you (Abraham) "Genesis 12:3) is seen in the physical malady that struck the entire household of Abimelech when he took Sarah into his harem. Genesis 20. Abraham and his wife Sarah were family, and God told Abimelech a sin against them is a sin "against me." Genesis 20:6.

Similarly, Jesus asked Paul on the road to Damascus, "why persecutest thou me?" To persecute His church is to persecute Him, Jesus said, and I believe Paul passed this lesson on to the Corinthian church who in their irreverence and mistreatment of one another were mistreating Christ, as we discuss below. While Jesus taught that to receive children in His name was to receive Him, he also warned that "whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged around his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Matthew 18:6. See also Matthews 25:31-46. I don't believe such stern warnings can be lessened by an explanation that Jesus operated "under the law." I believe He also spoke of a basic principle of His Father's kingdom expressed in the Abrahamic covenant, a curse-for-a-curse principle that still persists.

Clearly the born-again believer is still capable of cursing. Romans 12:14. For example, James warns against using the mouth to bless God the Father, then curse "men, made after the similitude of God." James 3:9. He also told them, "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath shewed no mercy; for mercy rejoiceth against (prevails against) judgment." James 2:13.

Paul taught that "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons." Colossians 3:25. See also Galatians 6:7-9. Paul told the Corinthian church, born-again believers, that they were dying prematurely and were sick because they failed to discern the Lord's body. 1 Corinthians 11:29-34. The context is not only one of a lack of reverence but "divisions" and mistreatment of the poor members of the church. 1 Corinthians 1:10, 11, 17, 18, 21, 22, 33. The Lord's Supper is to show forth his death until He comes (1 Corinthians 11:26). His death was once for all (Hebrews 9 and 10), and to discern His body is to show forth the death for the entire body of believers. Romans 12:4, 5, 1 Corinthians 10:17, 12:13, 25-27, Ephesians 1:23, 4:1-6, 25, 5:23, 30, Colossians 1:18, 24, 2.19, 3:15. One has to beware of cursing any member of the body in the very same manner as cursing

Jesus. I believe not discerning the body of believers may account for much of the sickness in the church, whether the particulars of the rock throwing are intra- or inter-denominational.

"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"

For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. 1 Corinthians 1:16, 17

Blessing Back As a Responsibility

Jesus taught that the Sabbath rest did not mean that one does not bless and heal on the Sabbath. John 5. He taught in the parable of the talents that there simply is no alternative but to bless and increase. Matthew 25:27-29. Similarly, in the parable of the unfaithful servant, Jesus taught that the servant found doing the Lord's work is blessed (Luke 12:43), and "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Luke 12:48. Similarly, "the kingdom of God shall be taken from you (blessed vineyard keepers who did not yield fruit to the Father, Matthew 21:34-39), and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (such as love, joy, peace... Galatians 5:22). Matthew 21:43.

Blessings of the Lord have to do with His life, and blessings left undone are serious business in the Father's kingdom.

"If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he render to every man according to his works?" Proverb 24:11, 12. See also Proverb 3:27, 28, Matthew 23:23

James 4:17 tells us, "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James also acknowledged no alternative but to be a "doer of the word." James 1:22.

The Abrahamic covenant we've discussed (Genesis 12:2, 3) also acknowledges only blessing and cursing.

The scriptural teaching is that except for some brief respites in ignorance, with the gift, the blessing, comes the responsibility to do something with it, the bless-back principle. For example, comfort in tribulation is to be passed on as comfort to others.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7. Blessing is to yield a response, and given the ability by God, there is a "response-ability." There basically is no acceptable "blessing level zero," only blessing and cursing.

"But I never knowingly hurt anyone," some say, but God would say, "But I made (or can make) you a blessing, as I promised Abraham." Genesis 12:2. We are to do unto others, nicely and first, there being no alternative given a God Who blesses and demands participation if one is to enter into His kingdom of blessing.

"(B)ut thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord (Who blesses)." Leviticus 19:18, also Matthew 22:39.

"And as ye would that men should do to you (bless), do ye also unto them likewise (bless)." Luke 6:31

Learning to Bless the Hard Way

Jonah learned the bless-only principle of the Father's kingdom from the belly of the whale, saying "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy. But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving." Jonah 2:8, 9.

Thanksgiving is very much a part of the bless-only principle, and I believe we see it at work in the grateful leper made whole when he returned to give thanks. Luke 17:11-19. To forget the forgiveness and mercies extended by God is to commit the sin of ingratitude. "Our fathers... remembered not the multitude of thy mercies; but provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea." Psalm 106:7. We "should shew forth the praises of him who hath called (us) out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

Jonah was catching onto one of the first principles of blessing when he mentioned that they must not "forsake their own mercy." Those who need mercy, and that's all of us, must believe in mercy, even love mercy. Micah sums it up saying one should do right, love mercy and walk humbly with God. Micah 6:6

Yet even after blessing the Ninevites such that they turned to God, Jonah complained to God of His mercy, and so God taught Jonah, gently but firmly, about mercy. He did it by means of a simple gourd for shade that blessed one day and was taken away the next. Jonah 4. The result was too much sun. The Lord is our sun and shield (Psalm 84:11), but here the shade was withdrawn for a brief time. There was too little protection and a brief medical problem, a fainting spell. This was the "lab" portion of God's lesson of blessing, which He followed up with a

lecture: "should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six-score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand (children); and also much cattle? Jonah 4:11.

If the Father wants to bless someone through us, He shouldn't have to go around us, knock us down or tuck us away in the "belly of hell" (Jonah 2:8) until we learn mercy (blessing) really is a good thing, something we all need.

Blessing in All Directions

I once wrote a short novel, Saint Shorty, where a lady jail chaplain has the following plaque.

Repentance, or Grace is a Lady

"Can I see Grace?," asked the prisoner?
"Grace is a lady," said the receptionist.
"Do you have an appointment?"
"How do you make an appointment with Grace?"
"All you have to do is cancel your other appointments," was the reply.
"I'm a prisoner. I have no other appointments," he said.
"I'll call Grace," said the receptionist.

If we make an appointment with Grace and accept the salvation offered us in Christ, the question becomes how we're to act, and I think a fair summary might be that we're to "bless in all directions" as evidence of our freedom.

I recall a movie, "Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner," in which a prison inmate refused to finish a small but seemingly important race because he was afraid his warden would look good. Somehow he feared that would make him look bad for volunteering something good. He could have helped himself, but he didn't because he was afraid to bless the warden. This is truly a prisoner, the existential hero who exalts his own will to his own harm and the harm of others, yet not untypical of attitudes at the workplace and elsewhere. One looks all around and fears to bless for fear of comparisons, but looking in the single direction of the Blessing, it's not a problem to bless all around, in all directions.

Jesus clearly laid out blessing in all directions as the child's main concern in order that he or she be like the Father in heaven.

"Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you (Jesus even healed his enemies, Luke 22:51) and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you, That

ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh the sun to rise on (blesses) the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on (blesses) the just and the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye?...Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Matthew 5:44-48. See also Acts 14:17, Romans 12:14, 1 Corinthians 4:12, James 1:20

By analogy to Jesus' charge that family is to bless like the Father's light and rain, the child should bless in all directions, all the time, as best he or she can, like the Father Who makes us a blessing in Christ, according to His promise to Abraham: "thou shalt be a blessing." Genesis 12:2

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour (your blessing) is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Corinthians 15:58

The Father Blessing "All in All"

The heart of the Father and Son in blessing is clearly seen in the following scripture.

"At the very hour (of the healings by the seventy) He (Jesus) rejoiced exceedingly, this rejoicing being energized by the Holy Spirit, and said, I give praise to you, openly and from the heart, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you hid these (blessing) things from the wise and the learned, and uncovered them to the untaught (whom You can teach to bless as You bless)." Luke 10:21, Wuest translation but parenthetical inserts are the author's.

Who will separate us from the blessing? Certainly not the Father or Son.

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 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...Neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the (blessing and) love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 8:32-34, 39

"Behold, I stand at the door (with a blessing), and knock..."

Revelation 3:20

The end is One of perfect blessing in the New Jerusalem in which there is no curse. Revelation 22:3

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie (a motley crew of non-blessers who rather chose the way of the curse)...And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the (blessing of) the water of life freely." Revelation 22:14, 15, 17

"And when all things (that curse) shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be (blessing) all in all." 1 Corinthians 15:28