

- I. The Benediction as an Element of Worship (v 23).**
- A. Exposition of the Text**
- 1) This text is, indeed, a blessing upon the people of God.
  - 2) The authority of this blessing is from God Himself.
- B. Doctrines from the Text**
- 1) What is a Benediction?
    - a) William Plumer (1802-1880), 'A benediction is the ministerial and authoritative pronouncement of a blessing upon the people in the name of the Lord'. (2 Cor 13:14; Num 6:24-26)
    - b) In worship, we seek to bless the Lord (Psa 135:19-20)
    - c) God has all blessedness in Himself,
    - d) God thus has chosen to bless His people (Psa 115:12-13)
    - e) The Benediction is an element of public worship (Num 6:23; 2 Chr 30:27)
  - 2) How is the Benediction pronounced? (Lev 9:22; Lk 24:50; Num 6:23; Lk 24:51; 1 Pt 5:14b; Rev 22:21)
  - 3) Who are the recipients of God's blessing?
- C. Uses from the Text**
- 1) We are to confess that God's blessing is only by His grace.
  - 2) Do not be like the wicked who want blessing without obedience.
  - 3) Receive God's benediction by faith.
  - 4) Meditate upon God's benediction upon you throughout the week.
- II. The Content of God's Benediction upon His People (v 23, 28)**
- A. Exposition of the Text**
- 1) The blessing of sanctification (WSC 35)
  - 2) The blessing of preservation (Gen 2:7; Rom 4:2; Rom 9:20; Eph 1:7; Pr 25:2; Dt 29:29; Thes 4:3a; 1 Thes 5:18; Phil 3:16; Phil 4:8; Rom 12:2 Phil 1:6; Gen 3:7, 21)
  - 3) The comfort of glorification (1 Thes 4:16; Heb 12:23; 1 Cor 15:52)
  - 4) The confirmation of grace (Rom 5:1; Gal 3:3)

- B. Doctrines from the Text**
- 1) Sanctification is the Christian's pursuit throughout the whole of our life (Eph 2:10)
  - 2) The blessing of God is far greater than we could fathom on our own. (Psa 1:1-2; Jdg 1:15)
- C. Uses from the Text**
- 1) Self-Examination: Do you desire to grow in sanctification? How are you pursuing such growth in the grace and knowledge of the Lord? (Lk 2:52)
  - 2) We are to desire to know more of God (Mt 26:41, Mt 11:12).
  - 3) We are to desire to know and delight in more of God's blessing (Gen 32:24-26)
- III. The Grounds of God's Benediction upon His People (24, 28)**
- A. Exposition of the Text**
- 1) The sovereignty of God as God (Ex 3:14)
  - 2) God granting peace to His people (Jn 14:16-17)
  - 3) God is operative in the work of sanctification (Phil 2:13)
  - 4) The certainty of Christ's return (Titus 2:12-13)
  - 5) The faithfulness of God (Gen 1:3; Rom 10:13; Psa 37:25)
  - 6) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
  - 7) The confirmation of these things by the word 'Amen' (*Heidelberg Catechism 129*)
- B. Doctrines from the Text**
- 1) All that we have is of God's grace.
  - 2) Our faith and comfort is rooted in God's attributes and acts.
- C. Uses from the Text**
- 1) We are to have faith in Christ alone. (Mk 10:51-52; Rom 6:4).
  - 2) We should desire God's blessing, not the world's.
  - 3) We are to look forward with great hope and expectancy to our heavenly inheritance.
  - 4) Take great comfort from God's blessing and faithfulness (Ex 20:4-6)
  - 5) It is fitting that Christians should respond to God's benedictions, as well as our prayers, with the faith-filled declaration of *Amen*. (Neh 8:6)