

## Sanctifying Jehovah in Worship (3) Blessing

Dear brothers and sisters,

I trust that you are being blessed by following the series in the Pastor's Voice on "Sanctifying Jehovah in Worship". This series is an exposition of the important elements of worship present in a Reformed Church when she gathers for worship every Lord's Day. So far, we have completed the Votum and the Salutation. Today, we will deal with the third element of worship, that is, "Blessing".

The "Blessing" is easily identifiable: it is when the minister after the votum and salutation, pronounces God's blessing upon the congregation, with these words, "Grace mercy and peace be granted unto you from God our Father, through Jesus Christ by the operation of the Holy Spirit".

### **Its Importance and Significance**

Such a pronouncing of blessing is biblical (Rom 1.7, I Cor. 1.3, II Cor. 1.3, Gal. 1.3, Eph. 1.2). It is obvious to us, that here; God speaks to us through his servant, the shepherd of the church. He promises us blessings of grace, mercy and peace upon His people. The significance of this is that already very early in the worship service, God shows and demonstrates His love for us. His design and plan is only good for us. This implies that we ought to come punctually to the house of God to hear God's promise of blessings upon us, His beloved people.

### **From whom does this blessing come?**

It comes from the Triune God. The source of the blessing comes from the God the Father, through Jesus Christ as the Mediator of the Covenant and applied by the Holy Spirit. Do take important note of the relationship of each person of the Godhead and do not confuse it. This is the way in which we understand all of the works of God. For example, in creation: God the Father spoke, and the Word came from His mouth, which is Christ and the creation of the world is executed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The same can be said about our own salvation: we are elected by God the Father and the elect is given to His Son who died for us and the salvation benefits applied to the elect by the Holy Spirit

### **What are the blessings?**

#### **Grace**

Grace is God's unmerited favour in Jesus Christ. When God's grace is given to us, at we experience this grace in our lives in the way of God's power in our daily lives, especially when we face the many trials and testings. And His grace is sufficient for us in our valley of tears. God also promises us His beauty consisting of the divine virtues in their right portion and proportion to one another.

#### **Mercy**

God's mercy is ours in Jesus Christ. Mercy is God reaching out to us in compassion and love. He shows us his mercy continually so that we can experience His mercy upon us through His condescending and forgiving love. And we are comforted as a result.

#### **Peace**

God grants us calmness and tranquillity in our souls through a right relationship with God. This comes about through Jesus Christ, who is our Saviour who died for our sins and reconciled us to God.

May God's three-fold blessing be ours: grace, mercy and peace. Amen

*Pastor Paul Goh*