

**I. REVIEW – THE SMILE OF GOD'S FACE**

**24 “The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.” Num. 6:24-26**

- A. God gave this blessing for the priesthood to speak over the people. In two phrases, God shows the priesthood that a primary contributor to the peace and wellbeing of the people was God's face shining on their lives.
- B. Paul tells us in two verses in 2Corinthians that the secret to life transformation is what you lovingly gaze upon, and that when you see the “glory of the Lord” (the smile of God) it will transform your life.

**18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2Cor. 3:18**

**6 For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. 2Cor. 4:6**

- C. In Ephesians 1, Paul reveals the eternal purposes of God, the spiritual identity, destiny and inheritance both in his son Jesus and humankind. This great gift is given by grace, God's mercy and power enabling us to receive these benefits.
- D. If Ephesians 1 is “what” God has provided in ‘the shining smile of his face’, then Ephesians 2 is “how” he legitimately made this happen.
- E. In all that God does there is complete and perfect love coupled to justice – true legitimacy forged from his nature and character.

**Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; Mercy and truth go before Your face. Ps. 89:14**

**II. THE LEGITIMACY OF GOD'S SHINING SMILE – EPHESIANS 2**

**4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus...13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ [the currency of our salvation]. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. Eph. 2:13-18**

- A. It is God's sovereign choice to offer us legitimacy in what I will call our *posture* and *position*.

B. Paul tells us in Ephesians 1-2 that we have been given legitimate access to a new position and posture in Christ. This is a direct result of God's mercy and love, and Jesus' cross.

1. **Position** – We are now members of God's household, his children. Adopted into a family with a great inheritance provided for us. This is the foundation of our identity.

*<sup>5</sup> having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...Eph. 1:5*

- a. This new position was made available to us even while we were dead in our trespasses and sins. Therefore it is not based on our good works but our faith that this truth is active now, and God's grace that enables us to receive these truths.
- b. This new position as sons/daughters invests in us personal authority in Christ. We are to stand in this personal authority in Christ.

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins...<sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)...Eph. 2:1, 5*

2. **Posture** – We have been seated with Christ in heavenly places. We have been given access to the Godhead.

*6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus...Eph. 2: 6-7*

- a. **Raised up** – The power of death as it worked its way in our sin nature has been broken, taken into the grave and left there. As believers we have been raised up from the dead. Lifted up.
- b. **Seated ...with Christ** – We are at the right hand of God in Christ. God the Father sees us as covered, wrapped in Christ, and seated in victory in Christ.

*<sup>4</sup> Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. Rev. 4:4*

- (1) Seated in a place of personal authority in Christ.
- (2) We have been robed in the righteousness of Christ.
- (3) We bear crowns of gold, rewards of overcoming victory in Christ.

C. As the Father sees us in a new position and posture settled at the cross and forged in love, his shining smile is upon our lives.

D. As a good Father, he may not always agree or approve of our choices since they may not always reflect his nature and character. Yet, he never stops loving us and setting his smile upon us.

