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God Bless You

The phrase "God bless you" has become one of the most common expressions of blasphemy or irreverence today. The nominal Christians are responsible for making a cult out of this expression. You heard it everywhere from almost everyone around you. Christians who are avid students of Bible doctrines will not use this phrase needlessly for several reasons: First, it is a divine prerogative to bless or not to bless. God blesses people on the merit and basis of His divine essence, His perfect standard, unaffected by what a man does or not (Genesis 49:25). The Old Testament verb "to bless" is barak (use over 330 times) and where God or His representatives is the subject. Barak and its Hebrew noun "berakah" (use 71 times) are dominantly used in the five books of Moses. Both barak and berakah are use 21 times in other books of the Old Testament. God blessed Abram (Genesis 12:2-3), or Abraham (Genesis 22:17), his wife Sarah (Genesis 17:16), his son Ishmael (17:20) and Isaac (Genesis 26:3) without anybody demanding or compelling God to bless them.

It is plain that the initiative in blessing rests with God and in most cases the ignorant of divine essence (who and what God is) simply wishes in futility. Jacob forced the angel of the Lord to bless him (Gen. 32:26) and Pharaoh demanded blessing from Moses (Exodus 12:32). The Moabites bribed Balaam to curse the Israelites which turned into the blessing of Israel (Num. 22:6, 20, 23:20, 24:1). The nation of Israel was chosen, called and elected by God to be His own people and assigned them the place of blessedness which they refused.

God assigned blessings for Israel on the basis of His Covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:2). God established His Covenant with Israel in His own initiative. (Deut. 28:1-14), and disobedience resulted to terrible curse (qelalah) or divine discipline (Deut. 27:12-26, 28:15-68). God made Covenant with Abraham to bless Israel and Israel to become a channel of blessing for other nations. Isaac, Jacob and David pronounced blessings to their sons on the basis of that Covenant. The blessings were on the condition, that they have to live by the Covenant (Deut. 28:1-14). Moses pronounced blessing for Israel but the blessing was possible only if they live by the Covenant. When expressed by men of ancient Israel, a "blessing" was a wish or prayer for a blessing that is to come in the future as promised by God to Abraham (Genesis 28:4). This refers to a "blessing" that the patriarchs customarily extended upon their children before they died. Jacob's "blessings" on the tribes (Genesis 49) and Moses' "blessing"

(Deuteronomy 33.) are other familiar examples of this. The Old Testament Israel saw nothing deeper than their material blessings, in the same way the majority of Church Age believers sees it. Selfish people are like Jacob and Pharaoh who are forcing and demanding God to bless them with material prosperity being ignorant of fabulous spiritual blessings.

All believers of the Church Age are included in God's plan of grace. God's plan of grace is a plan of blessings and good welfare. Every believer is the recipient of logistical grace blessings. Logistical grace is the divine provision of material and spiritual needs necessary for the believer's existence while in the cosmos diabolicus, regardless of the spiritual status of the believers.

All believers by position in Christ are already blessed and are recipient of great and fabulous blessings. But more tremendous blessings await those who will reach spiritual maturity in time. God is blessing the believers based on the divine righteousness He imputed at the moment of salvation. It is ridiculous for believers to keep asking God for something He has already provided.

We are deluded by our old sin nature to pronounce blessing on another person. Blessing is a divine prerogative beyond human ability and capacity to oblige or demand God to give in to our request. Our pronouncement of blessings stems from insincerity and arrogance. Some will insist that their motive is sincere and honest, but nevertheless their act of pronouncing blessing is nothing but a show. They wanted to be recognized as *holy people* of God. They advertise their pseudo-holiness by repetition of meaningless words of *God bless you* or *God bless*. Such exhibition is self-righteousness that stems from approbation lusts that is the desire to be recognized, accepted, and approved. This is evil, since God alone has the prerogative to bless, and He alone knows if the person must receive blessing or curse.

God can bless a person only if he is inside the plan, purpose and will of God (or the divine dynasphere). The divine dynasphere is God's system for blessing every believer. God is blessing the believer because of his momentum and life inside the divine system of protocol, by living and applying the Word of God.

God cannot bless the believer living in the cosmic system. The believer must adjust to the justice of God by rebound to reenter the divine system of blessing and will receive tremendous blessing under spiritual maturity adjustment. To ask God to bless a believer living outside the divine system is like asking the president to pardon a prisoner executed by lethal injection.

To receive divine blessings (James 1:17) man must adjust to the justice of God. There are three adjustments to the justice of God. For unbelievers: the adjustment to the justice of God in salvation. Salvation is in Christ alone by faith alone. Salvation is the only blessing that God can give to every unbeliever. Salvation is the only concern of our prayer for all unbelievers including our government officials (1 Timothy 2:2).

For carnal believers: the adjustment to the justice of God through the grace provision of rebound. The carnal believers are outside the boundary line of blessings. It is ridiculous to request or pronounce God's blessing on a believer subject for divine discipline.

For growing believers: the adjustment of spiritual advancement toward maturity by continuous intake of Bible doctrine. God blesses the positive volition believer so that they can glorify God in time and eternity (Psalm 16:7, 34:8, 145:1, 21). Spiritual maturity determine by the maximum Bible doctrine stored and resident in the souls of the believers. Spiritual maturity is the stage where the believer receives the greater grace blessings (James 4:6, John 10:10b).

We are carried by our emotionalism and sentimentalism to pronounce blessing or to ask God to bless another person. The pronouncement of *God bless you* is not for unbelievers since they are still outside the plan of God. It is not for carnal believers living outside the plan, purpose and will of God. The people of Israel during the time of Jeremiah asked God for blessings while living against His will and plan (Jeremiah 18:8-12).

Man has no power or authority to ask God to bless anybody no matter how *spiritual* he is. If indeed, he is really, spiritual on the basis of Bible doctrine in his soul, he will never do such thing because he knows that blessing is a divine prerogative. Some believers and especially preachers are using their tongue to bless and curse (Psalm 62:4, James 3:8-9). For them to bless God is just verbal or written expression of magical religious words such as *praise the Lord*, *amen*, *hallelujah* or *bless you*. To bless God is to live inside the will, plan, purpose, and system of God while moving toward the goal of spiritual maturity. The phrase *I will bless the Lord* (Psalms 16:7, 26:1, 34:1, 63:4) does not refers to verbal expression apart from living the truth of Bible doctrine in daily basis.

The only command to bless another person is attributed for those who persecutes the believers (Romans 12:14, 1 Corinthians 4:12). To bless our persecutors does not imply to verbally pronounce *God bless you* before their faces but to silently pray for their salvation. The practice of pronouncing blessing on others is no longer legitimate and applicable.