**He Lifted up His Hands and Blessed Them**

**Luke 24:50-51**

**Luke 24:50-51 –** “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.”

This blessing was pronounced upon the Lord’s church before He ascended into Heaven to take His place upon His throne.

This blessing was similar in nature to the blessing ordered by our God to be pronounced upon His people.

**Numbers 6:23-27 –** “Speak unto Aaron and unto his sons, saying, **On this wise ye shall bless the children of Israel,** saying unto them, 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. And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”

**Question**: What is the nature of this blessing?

**Answer**: It consists of all God has reserved for His church!

**The blessing of divine election:**

**Psalm 65:4** – “**Blessed is the man whom thou choosest**, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple.”

Note: Divine election is not, as some teach, based upon God seeing you believe and therefore choosing you – electing you on that basis.

**Question**: What did God see when He looked down the corridors of time?

**Answer: Psalm 14:2-3** – “(2) The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. (3) They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

God saw everyone lost – none understanding – none seeking – all have gone aside – all filthy with sin!

In that situation, none would be saved from their sins. None could save themselves from their sins. None could save others from their sin.

If God’s heart of love would not have been moved with compassion to choose some – none would be saved.

Election is God, motivated by love for sinners, choosing to save some from their sins.

O’ what a blessing it is that God chose some to be saved!

**The blessings of forgiveness and eternal salvation:**

**Psalm 32:1-2** – “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.”

**Acts 3:26** – “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, **sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities**.”

**And with that** - the blessing of knowing God – **John 17:3** – “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

**The blessing of every spiritual blessing God has reserved for His children:**

**Psalm 5:12** – “For thou, LORD, **wilt bless the righteous**; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield.”

**Ephesians 1:3** – “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us **with all spiritual blessings** in heavenly places in Christ:”

**Blessings** which concern the good of the soul and spirit of His children **such as**: a place in the New Covenant, love, grace, mercy, justification, pardon, peace, redemption, reconciliation, adoption (a place in the family of God) , the sealing of the Holy Spirit, sanctification, safety, security, protection, preservation, and glorification (a place in heaven).

**The lifting up of his hands was typical of the work of the work of the high priest** -- as Aaron would lift up his hands towards the people of Israel, and blessed them, when he had offered the offerings for them:

**Leviticus 9:22-23** – “(22) And **Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people, and blessed them**, and came down from offering of the sin offering, and the burnt offering, and peace offerings. (23) And Moses and Aaron went into the tabernacle of the congregation, and came out, and **blessed the people**: and the glory of the LORD appeared unto all the people.”

Jesus Christ, as our great high priest, having offered Himself a sacrifice for the sins of His people, then lifted up His hands towards His church, and blessed them.

What are the blessing from the context of our text – **Luke 24:50-51**.

**First: He blessed them with a greater measure of the Spirit.**

They were to wait a few days longer for the extraordinary pouring out of the Spirit in power, yet, in the mean while they received, from the resurrected Lord, a greater measure of the Spirit of God.

**John 20:22** – “And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:”

**Romans 12:3** – “…according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith”

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

**Second: He blessed them with greater measures of grace, and with more spiritual light and understanding into the Scriptures.**

**Luke 24:44-48** – “And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. **Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures**, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.”

**Third: He blessed them with greater measure of inward peace of mind and heart.**

**John 14:27** – “**Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you**: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

**John 16:33** – “These things I have spoken unto you, **that in me ye might have peace.** In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; **I have overcome the world**.”

**John 20:19 and 21 and 26** – “Then **the same day at evening**, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, **Peace be unto you** … (21) Then said Jesus to them again, **Peace be unto you**: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you … (26) And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.”

**Psalms 29:11** – “The LORD will give strength unto his people; **the LORD will bless his people with peace**.”

**4. He blessed them with the fresh measures of forgiveness and a sense of His pardoning love.**

This was necessary, since their previous conduct toward Him was one of failure. After Judas betrayed Him, Peter had denied Him and the remaining ten had forsaken Him.

No doubt their hearts and minds lacked peacefulness. No doubt their minds were disturbed. No doubt they doubted His love and faithfulness – His grace and mercy.

He sent Mary Magdalene, one of his disciples, to them with a message:

**Matthew 28:10** – “Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: **go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me**.”

He gave command to His angels to tell them He would see them again. This message was particularly a blessing to Peter. He, who had denied the Lord, was specifically addressed as one who Jesus Christ would see.

**Mark 16:7** – “But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: **there shall ye see him**, as he said unto you.”

This was also necessary since He had commissioned His church to carry His gospel into the world. To do so, they needed a sense that they were His and He was theirs!

Every blessing is designed by our God to humble us and to give us a greater appreciation of His mercy and grace.

**Numbers 6:24-27 –** “(24) The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: (25) The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: (26) The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. (27) And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them.”