

Blessed to Bless

Psalm 67:1-7

Halifax: July 24, 2011

Introduction:

What a blessing it is to be a Christian!

- God has shown us His glory through the face of Jesus Christ.
- He has opened our eyes to delight in His excellent excellence...
 - If you are His, He has restored you to life with Him as your Father.
 - You are forgiven and filled with grace to live in His family.
 - You have an eternal hope of glory.

Just think how glorious it was for Jesus' disciples when they realised just what He had done for them!

- The cross was so confusing to them—it wrecked all their hopes.
 - But how their hearts burned within them when they finally realised that Jesus Himself was the sacrifice that God had appointed to take away their sins!
 - They had been so confused, but now they were totally elated—bursting with the news of sins forgiven, of God reconciled, of eternal life,
 - through the blood of the precious Lamb, their dear Jesus, who takes away the sin of the world!
- We are getting ready to study the Book of Acts.
 - In Acts, we are shown how the gospel and the Spirit transformed God's covenant people—the disciples—the remnant who received it...
 - and He sent them forth as the witnesses to the nations, bursting to tell the good news!

If you have been reconciled to Him, you yearn for the whole world to know about Him!

- You love Him because you see how much He has loved you!
- The more He pours out His grace on you, the more you love Him...
- And the more you love Him, the more you want the world to love Him too.

If you are a Christian, down to the very core of your soul there is an ardent yearning that He would be praised by the whole world!

- You want that for the world's sake—so that they will not miss out on the blessing of knowing Him...
 - And you want it for the Lord's sake—that He would have more praise.
 - It is only right that it be so!
 - Nothing else will do!

- No doubt,
 - this yearning is often weakened by misunderstanding, guilt, impatience, confusion, distraction, and the pressures of this world...
 - But if you are a believer, that yearning is always there, just as it was for those first disciples, as recorded in the book of Acts.
 - They were alive by His grace!

So as we begin a study of this most excellent book, I want to present to you a Psalm of Focus to go along with our study.

- It is a Psalm that gives full expression to this longing for the nations to praise God...
 - It is Psalm 67!
 - We will sing this Psalm each week for the next few weeks and we begin our study of Acts...
- Jesus Christ, the glorified, risen, Head of the Church, is the One who leads the church in singing the psalms before the Father.
 - He prays for us and sends His Spirit to us to show us His glory and to cause us to burn within in make Him known.
 - God's Spirit works in us to stir up these longings in all who are born again.
 - Though we do not yet possess these desires nearly as purely and perfectly as we should,
 - yet, the Lord uses this Psalm (and all other psalms) to bring our minds into conformity to Christ who has these longings to perfection.

So today, I present this Psalm to you with the goal of giving expression to these longings and of stirring up these longings in you.

- I pray that the Holy Spirit will blow upon whatever spark of desire is within you and make it grow into a fire...
 - that He will stir up ardent praise and ardent prayer in your soul...
 - that He will purify those mixed desires that are there now and make them holy and pleasing to God.

So come now, and line up your heart and soul with Psalm 67.

I. First, I want you to see how universal praise is the central passion of this Psalm—that the whole church would come alive with His praise!

A. Right in the very middle of this Psalm you have the request that the nations would praise God!

1. Look at verses 3-5!

- **Ps. 67:3-5: Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth. Let the peoples praise You, O God; Let all the peoples praise You.**
2. As the Head of the Church, the Lord Jesus sings these words before the Father with ardent desire...
 - And He wants the whole church to join Him.
 - He wants us to sing these same words with the same fervent desire that He has!
- B. Just look at what is being asked for here.
1. Did you notice the repetition?
 - a. Verse 3 repeats the request two times...
 - **“Let the peoples praise you, let all the peoples praise you.”**
 - b. And if that were not enough, verse 5 comes along and repeats the same double request again!
 - **“Let the peoples praise you, let all the peoples praise you.”**
 - c. Something is definitely being emphasised here!
 - There is a very fervent desire that the peoples would praise the Lord!
 2. But what does this mean... “Let the peoples praise you?”
 - What is being asked for here?
 - a. When it says “**peoples**” it is talking about those who are yet outside the covenant...
 - In the Bible, when it says “**people**” (singular) it usually refers to God’s people or the people of a particular nation (such as the people of Philistia).
 - But when it says “**peoples**” as it does here—in the plural—
 - It is not talking about just one nation or family;
 - It is talking about the people from every tribe and tongue and nation and kindred and family.
 - b. And notice also how the word **all** is added when the request is repeated:
 - **“Let the peoples praise you, O God, Let all the peoples praise you!”**
 - This puts a strong emphasis on the word **all** than it would have if it had been stated the first time...
 - **“Let the peoples praise you, O God, Let all the peoples praise you!”**

- And all is emphasised even more in the original by placing it at the very end of the verse—
 - It literally says,
 - **“Let the peoples praise you, O God, let the peoples praise you, all of them”**
 - It is a request for nothing less than universal praise.
3. The word **praise** that is used here is that wonderful Hebrew word **“yada”** that we run into frequently in the Psalms.
- a. It is a word that properly means “to confess”—
- 1) It is used for example, of confessing sin.
 - When you confess your sin, you say the truth about your sin—
 - You admit what you did, and you admit the wrong of what you did.
 - 2) But here (and in many other places) **“yada”** is used of confessing God!
 - When you confess God, you say the truth about God...
 - You acknowledge who He is in truth...
 - But there is something unique about confessing the truth about God.
 - When you confess the truth about yourself, you often have to own up to things that are wrong about you...
 - But when you confess the truth about God, you always end up praising Him!
 - Anyone who confesses the truth about who God is always praises Him...
 - You can say nothing that is true about God that is not most excellent, most holy, most pure, most wonderful and praiseworthy.
 - Nothing true about Him is ignoble or unworthy—
 - That is why **yada**, when it is used with reference to God,
 - is often translated by the English word **praise**—
 - or sometimes by the word **thank**...
 - “Let all the peoples thank Him”
 - These are very appropriate translations.
- b. So you see what is being requested here so vehemently!
- It is that all the peoples of the earth would confess God,
 - that everyone would acknowledge what is true about Him...
 - that everyone would praise Him and thank Him for what He has done.

4. And I want you to see further that this confession is a joyful confession of praise!
 - a. There will be people on the day of judgement that will confess God in a very miserable way—
 - They will see His glory and they will be constrained to confess Him...
 - But it will be a confession in abject horror and trepidation!
 - They will bow before Him and confess that He is holy and mighty and righteous and pure,
 - but with the full realisation that all these glorious attributes are marshalled against them because of their rebellion.
 - They will confess Him, but in a most miserable way.

TRANS> But that is not the kind of confession that is being sought in Psalm 67.

- b. The confession of praise of Psalm 67 is a confession of joy and delight.
 - 1) v. 4 makes that very clear.
 - **v. 4: Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth.**
 - 2) This is a picture of the peoples delighting to be under God's rule!
 - a) The nations are glad and singing with joy because God is reigning over them!
 - They take great delight that He has come to judge them righteously or with equity!
 - b) The word "judge," as is often the case in the Old Testament,
 - does not refer here to sentencing them with punishment here...
 - It speaks of Him coming to be their ruler who guides them into true and right ways...
 - like the judges in the Book of Judges who came to bring the people back to live before the Lord.
 - There was an aspect of judgement, but only to lead them out of their misery into the fullness of life with God.
 - You can tell that this is what judge means here by the parallelism... you know, the rhyming meaning that is so common in Hebrew poetry.
 - Look at verse 4...
 - **"You shall judge the peoples righteously,"**
 - is parallel with
 - **"and govern the nations on earth."**
 - The *judging* here is the same as *governing*...

- So the idea is that the Lord Himself comes to rule over them as their judge!
 - And when He does, He makes everything right so that those under His care are richly blessed!
 - He delivers them from all that is wrong, all that is corrupted, all that is ruined and miserable!
 - They flourish and become lovely under His rule.
 - Clearly, this speaks of the gracious reign of Jesus Christ,
 - The one of whom Isaiah says:
 - **Isa 9:6-7: For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.**
- c) Everyone who willingly comes under this government is filled with joyful delight!
- How could it not be so for the peoples of the earth?
 - For so long they lived without God and without hope in this world!
 - They lived under the twisted rule of Satan...
 - But now they are brought into the joyful ways of the Lord, beholding His glory and living before Him as His people!
 - **“Let the nations be glad and sing for joy! Let all the peoples praise Him!”**

C. What an ambitious request this is!

1. This Psalm puts the prayer in your mouth that all the peoples of the earth would live joyfully in the Lord!
 - It is a request that the day would come when the whole earth joyfully confesses His glorious name and lives under His rule!
 - Jesus Christ is gathering people into His kingdom every day until that happens.
2. This is His great desire and the prayer that He prays...
 - But it is also the prayer He gives you to pray with Him!
 - **“Let the peoples praise you let all the peoples praise you. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For you shall judge the people righteously and**

govern the nations on earth. Let the people praise you let all the peoples praise you.”

3. How Jesus yearns for this!
 - a. He was so earnest about it that He went to the cross to make it happen!
 - The pain and sorrow and suffering of the cross could not stop Him because of this hope.
 - It was for the joy of seeing the world happily established in God’s kingdom that He kept going!
 - He paid for the sin of the nations that the nations might be glad in God and confess His name in joyful exuberant praise!
 - b. Do you desire to see His desire fulfilled?
 - Do you yearn to see the nations praising Him?
 - He gives you these words to sing to Him from the heart!
 - Isn’t it wonderful to think of people coming and joining with us in praising God for what He has done for us through Jesus?

TRANS> But surely it is very easy to despair when you look around and you do not see the people’s praising Him.

1. Just look at our world!
 - You could hardly call it a world that is filled with the praise of God!
 - Oh yes, there are people from all over the world that are praising Him,
 - but most are not!
2. We live in a society that is often called a post-Christian society.
 - a. Perhaps it is more scriptural to call it a covenant breaking society...
 - Many of our forefathers truly knew the glory of God and worshipped Him.
 - They knew the gospel and trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.
 - They rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God and were full of praises.
 - b. But today we see their children turning away from the living God!
 - We see them trading in their gold for sawdust.
 - We talk to them and we see bitterness toward God.
 - We see false hopes and dreams in the passing pleasures of this world.
 - We see them blind and terribly distracted from the things that really matter.
 - We watch them and we see them in bondage to sinful desires and pleasures.

- c. Their lives are empty and meaningless,
 - yet they want nothing to do with our God!
 - You go to them with the glorious gospel and they brush it off and want nothing to do with it.
 - They may even mock and sneer or at least think you to be a bit silly.
3. It is very easy to despair!
- a. It is easy to say, “What’s the use?”
 - “Why should I continue to pray that the people around me would praise God when I see so many of them die without Christ?”
 - “Why should I continue to invite them to church when they never come?”
 - “Why should I seek the reform of the church when it continues to decline and falsehood abounds?”
 - b. Jesus prepared His disciples for disappointment when He sent them out to preach the Kingdom in Matthew 10.
 - You can imagine that when He first sent them out with the glorious news that the Kingdom had come,
 - they would surely have expected that everyone would be thrilled!
 - But Jesus told them that instead they would experience rejection and opposition.
 - c. What is it that kept them going in the face of this rejection?
 - What is that kept them going when they were arrested and told not to speak in the name of Jesus any more?
 - What is it that kept Paul praying so ardently for his fellow Israelites when he said that as a whole, they had rejected the gospel?
 - What is it that kept Daniel praying for the deliverance of Israel from captivity when he saw by prophetic vision that their deliverance would not be a very complete one?
 - What is it that have kept the Christian martyrs going in all of their persecutions—even to this very day?

TRANS> What is it that kept them from despair?

- What is there to keep *you* from despair?
- Is it not the assurance that the whole world **will** praise God?
 - If you knew that God would bring the world to praise Him,
 - would you not be much more motivated to pray and not faint?
 - to pray the core of this psalm?
 - **“Let all the peoples praise You, O God, Let all the peoples praise you.”**

- Surely you would!
- And I tell you...

II. The assurance that the whole world will praise God is given to you in this Psalm.

- Not only are you taught to pray and *long* that all the nations will praise God,
 - You are also taught to *believe* that all the nations will praise God!
 - You are given this assurance in two ways:
- A. First of all, you are given this assurance by the simple fact that such a request is made in this Psalm.
1. The Psalms are not merely the prayers of men, but they are songs and prayers that are inspired by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. This is not a song that Fanny Crosby or Isaac Watts wrote!
 - The Psalms are words given to us by the Holy Spirit of God.
 - You can disagree with something in a song written by Watts, but if you disagree with the Psalms, you are wrong.
 - b. And you can be sure that the Holy Spirit would not give us words to sing and pray to God that are not firmly rooted in the promises of God!
 - We may not know exactly how the Lord will bring the nations to this place, but we know that He will do it!
 - We know that it will involve purging out the wicked and casting the tares into the fire,
 - but it also seems that it will involve bringing the whole world to Himself—
 - not so that there are no tares—
 - but so that the tares at least **look** like wheat.
 - In other words, the scriptures seem to envision a time when there will only be a few who are still in rebellion...
 - And they will be ashamed to openly rebel and will at least pretend outwardly to worship the Lord.
 - It will be a time when all the world will be serving Christ, and for the great majority, it will be a time for tremendous joy.
 - The nations will be glad and sing for joy.

TRANS> The Holy Spirit would not give us these words to sing before God if God was not determined to bring about such a day.

2. We can strengthen the argument that God will answer all the prayers given to us in the psalms by considering that Jesus prays all these prayers as the head of the church...
 - a. Jesus, the Head of the church, who offered Himself to God and was accepted by Him prays that
 - “all peoples will praise God and that the nations would be glad under His rule!”
 - b. When Jesus was on earth, He sang all 150 psalms in worship before God...
 - And you can be sure that Jesus did not sing one prayer in vain!
 - He did not sing them in a cold detached way without meaning what He said...
 - Do you remember what Jesus said about His prayers when He stood by the grave of Lazarus to raise him from the dead?
 - He said,
 - **John 11:41-42: “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me.”**
 - c. Do you see the point?
 - If Jesus sang all the psalms before as Father and as Head of the church,
 - and if it is true that the Father always hears Him,
 - Then we can be sure that the Father heard Him when He sang Psalm 67 and asked God to cause all the peoples of the earth to praise Him!
 - It was a prayer based on the Father’s promise that if He came to this world and went to the cross, He would give Him the nations as His inheritance.
3. And so Christian,
 - You see that you do not need to despair!
 - If the Lord has given you this Psalm to sing and it contains a prayer that all the peoples of the earth will praise Him—they will praise Him!
 - It doesn’t matter what it might look like to you now!
 - God is going to do it or He would not lead us to pray for it with His Son!
 - Pray in faith, not by sight.

TRANS> But there is even *more* assurance given to you in this Psalm...

- even more assurance that all the peoples will praise God!

B. Verse 7 expressly states that it *will* be so—

- It says:
 - v. 7: **“God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**
- 1. The **“ends of the earth”** are the places that are the farthest from the centre.
 - The most out of the way place, the most backward place, the most remote place.
 - Even these places will fear the Lord!
 - No place will be excepted!
 - God’s praise will extend to the extremities of the earth
 - **“All the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**
- 2. And of course **“fear,”** as it is used here, refers to being a worshipper of God...
 - This ties in very much with what I showed you before about the nations praising or confessing God.
 - To fear God, as it is used here, means to own Him as your God, to be his worshipping disciple...
 - It is the kind of fear that is spoken about in Deuteronomy 6:13:
 - **Deut 6:13: You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name.**
 - It is the recognition of who He is in such a way that pleasing Him becomes more important than anything else.
 - You know Him for who He is,
 - and because you do,
 - you take your place under Him as a trusting disciple and live before Him as your watchful Master before whom you keep your vows and promises.

TRANS> So you see that this Psalm not only teaches you to long for all the peoples of the earth to praise God,

- but it also supports that longing by assuring you that they **will** praise God.
- You may not see these prayers answered in our generation...
 - It is unlikely that you will.
 - But knowing that they **will** be answered in time is a huge encouragement to keep you going!
 - This is what kept Paul going,
 - this is what kept Daniel going,
 - this is what kept Jesus going even in His hour of greatest rejection when all the disciples forsook Him.
 - He knew that God would truly give Him the nations as His inheritance!

- So take heart Christian!
 - You need to know what God has promised to do so that you will yearn for Him to do it.
 - When Israel came out of Egypt, they failed to go into the land of Canaan at first because they did not believe that God would deliver the Canaanites into their hands.
 - They looked at the might and power of Canaan and they said,
 - “It is impossible—it will never happen...”
 - and so they did not pray,
 - nor did not attempt to take the land.
 - So it is that if you do not believe that God will bring the nations to praise Him,
 - you will neither pray for it nor labour for it.
 - You will say, “It is impossible, it is too much.”
- My friends, such an attitude needs to change!
 - There is a very real sense in which God will not bring His blessing to the world until He has first changed us!
 - He will not have the world to worship Him until we are worshipping Him and trusting Him and praying that He will do it.
 - When Jesus came, He gathered a remnant at Jerusalem *first* and restored them... *then* He began to gather the nations.
 - Jesus tells His disciples to begin at Jerusalem, then go into Judea, then to Samaria, and then to uttermost parts of the earth.
 - He begins by restoring His people—at least some of them—and *then* He brings in the nations.
- And this brings us to the third thing I want you to see in Psalm 67...

III. God will not bring the world to praise Him until He has first worked in His people, the church.

A. God has an order about the way that He builds His kingdom...

1. And that order is that He always begins with those who are already His people...
 - He blesses them first,
 - and then the blessing they have received spills over into the nations!
 - a. That is what we will see in Acts 1—

- Jesus tells the disciples that they must wait until the Holy Spirit comes upon them—the promise of the Father...
 - Then they must go to Jerusalem, then to Judea, then to Samaria, and then to the uttermost parts of the earth.
 - And that is exactly what happens as Acts unfolds...
- b. In Matthew 10, Jesus actually forbade His disciples to go to the nations or even to Samaria.
- He tells them that they must first go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
 - He first must gather a remnant of the people.
 - The kingdom of God always spreads from the people who already know Him to those who don't.
 - God never goes directly to a new nation—but always uses those who are already His people to carry the message for Him.
 - The word spreads from faith (those who believe) to faith (those who come to believe).
- c. In the incident of the golden calf, we are taught that God has bound Himself to this pattern.
- You know what happened in Exodus 32.
 - The people erected and worshipped the golden calf while Moses was gone on the mount...
 - The LORD threatened to destroy them and raise up another nation.
 - But Moses knew what God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob!
 - That through their seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed.
 - God could not utterly destroy His people.
 - They must be the ones to bring blessing to the nations.
 - So Moses prayed fervently and God heard Him and did not destroy them.

TRANS> It wasn't that God had really forgotten His promise!

- The whole event was rather His way of highlighting His promise—
 - And of showing how unshakable it was in spite of His people's sins!
- d. So you see the modus operandi of God when it comes to the advance of His kingdom.
- He begins with His covenant people—

- He blesses them first—
 - and then through them He blesses the nations.
2. Psalm 67 refers to this same order in what it declares in verse 7:
- **Ps 67:7: “God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**
- a. We just looked at the second promise of this verse... that the nations will fear God...
- but now I want you to notice that this promise is the result of **another** promise...
 - That God will bless **us**—
 - Those who are already His people!
 - It is the consequence of God first blessing His people!
 - **“God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**
 - You see?
 - It starts with God’s people—it starts with **“us,”**
 - **us...** the people who are singing this song!
 - **“God shall bless us,”**—
 - It is only then that the “ends of the earth shall fear Him.”
- b. There is a very real sense in which this has already been fulfilled...
- 1) God did not send the gospel out to the nations until after He had first blessed His people.
 - For centuries, the Gentiles were
 - “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise”
 - They were, “without God and without hope in the world.”
 - 2) There was a sense in which Israel had nothing to give to the world at that time because although God had promised to bless them,
 - He had not yet done it.
 - Of course I don’t mean He had not blessed them at all, but I mean that He had not sent Jesus to save them from their sins...
 - They had much because they had Jesus promised, and by faith in Jesus promised, their sins were forgiven...
 - But if Jesus had not actually come and died for them,
 - they would have had nothing!

- Without Jesus, all the promises to them would have been nullified!
 - There would have been no eternal life, no paradise.
- 3) But in the fullness of time, God did bless His people by sending Jesus,
- and Jesus did offer Himself as a sacrifice for their sins...
 - and God did accept His sacrifice for them and pronounce that their sins were forgiven.
 - You see, it was only after **that** was done that they had something to offer to the world.
 - God blessed them first with salvation...
 - Then they were called to take this salvation to the ends of the earth...
 - And then the ends of the earth could rejoice in that blessing of salvation!
 - Jesus told them:
 - **Matthew 28:18-20: And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age.” Amen.**

TRANS> Truly, God did not bless the nations until He had first blessed His covenant people, the descendants of Abraham.

- The Spirit was poured out on them first...
- And now all those who believe have become just as much a part of Israel as Abraham.
- You who believe are truly God’s covenant people.

B. You need to recognise how the *modus operandi* of God, as it is presented in Psalm 67, applies to you **today**.

1. Look around you.

- Would you say that all the peoples are praising God and that the nations are glad and singing for joy because Jesus is their king?
 - Of course not...
 - But do you want them to do this?
 - Of course you do—if you a Christian!

- You want them to come into the full joy of the Lord.
 - You want them to praise Him!
2. But what needs to happen first—
- What needs to happen first according to the principle by which God works?
- a. We who believe must first be blessed!
- God is working today through the remnant of His people,
 - and He is working mightily all around the world...
 - But before He brings the fullness of His promised blessing to the world...
 - He will first bless those who already know Him!
 - And on a smaller scale,
 - If we want to be a blessing in our city—we must look to God to bless us first!
 - Until He does, we have nothing to offer the world!
 - Until you have come to delight in God, how can you lead others to delight in Him?
 - Let Him begin His work in us!
- b. This is exactly what Psalm 67 teaches us to pray for at the very start!
- 1) Look at verse 1-2 and you will see it!
- **Psalm 67:1-2: God be merciful to us and bless us, *And* cause His face to shine upon us. That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations.**
 - Do you see it?
 - The central passion of this Psalm is that the whole world would praise God...
 - But we begin by asking God to bless **us**—
 - To bless us in order that His saving work may be known among the nations.
 - If that blessing is not seen in His people,
 - How can it be known among the nations?
 - If we are not visibly transformed in the sight of the nations as God's people,
 - why would the nations come to God to share in our blessing?
 - Why would they come to receive a blessing that we don't seem to have?

- 2) This request in verse 1 that God would **“be merciful to us and bless us and cause His face to shine upon us,”**
- is a reflection of the benediction given in Numbers 6.
 - In Numbers 6, the LORD said:
 - **Num 6:23-27: Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, “This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: ‘The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.’ So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”**
 - a) By putting His name on the people,
 - the LORD meant that He was established with them as their God...
 - established with them so that He was revealed to the world through His dealings with them.
 - By blessing them and keeping them,
 - He would show forth His grace to all the world!
 - They had become His vessels of mercy where His mercy would be displayed to all.
 - b) And when He says that He will make His face shine on them—
 - this speaks of Christ!
 - The glory of God is seen in Christ, the Logos, the Word, in whom all the fullness of the divine nature is seen!
 - God’s face shines upon His people when Christ is made known to them as their salvation!
 - What matchless beauty—
 - Christ the power of God!
 - Christ the wisdom of God!
 - Christ the righteousness of God!
 - Oh that God would make Him known to us afresh!
 - Oh that He would show us His glory in the face of Jesus Christ that we might be transformed—just by seeing His beauty!
 - Oh LORD! Open our eyes!!!
 - Bless your people!
 - Make the glory of Christ shine on us!
 - **“that your way may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations.”**

3. Brothers and sisters,

- Do you want God to be praised among the nations?
- Then begin by praying that He would bless us, His people!

Conclusion

- The Lord Jesus is praying Psalm 67 for His church and for all the peoples of the world right this very moment.
 - He has given us these words.
 - Let us join Him in praying for these things as we begin our study Acts, and then we can say with all assurance:
 - **“God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him.”**

In the weeks to come, we shall see the glorious beginning of this great work of God in the history of the early church.

- Acts comes after the revelation of Jesus to His people!
 - The people who have seen His glory go out to the nations with His power and grace, and the nations turn to God.
 - Oh Lord, May the work continue through us!
 - Bless us that we might be a blessing!