

Put My Name Upon The People
Number 6:22-27

Grace, mercy, and peace be yours from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

What is your name? Names have meaning. They identify who you are. Your family name isn't yours to choose, but it is a name that gives your lineage and background. How would you feel if your family name were Hitler? Would you feel different if it were Hershey? How about if it were Nitschke?

I was kind of disappointed to learn that the name Jerabek does not have a crest, and after an internet search, I could not find any significant meaning to it. It was really cool though to be in Virginia Beach once and find a restaurant called The Monastery owned by Jerabeks. On the other hand, Pauline's maiden name, Palmreuter, means rider in the palms, they have crest of a mounted knight in the palms. Pretty cool!

You have a name too, a family name. Did you know that you and I share a family name? It is not a name that is yours because of your parentage. This name does not come to you because it was passed on to you by your father. I believe you are probably wondering how this could be, right about now. Think about it for a couple seconds. (pause for a second)

The family name that you and I share is the name Christian. It is not a name you are born to according to your flesh. But, it is a name you are born into – through the waters of baptism. It is your name by blood – for you are baptized into Christ's death. It is your name for life – for as you were baptized into Christ's death, you are also baptized into His resurrection, that you might live a new life.

So, how do you bear that name? Have you done honor and brought glory to the name of Christ,(?) the name He has given you,(?) the name and that you share with all believers? I know you pray, hallowed be Thy name. You do not pray those words asking God to keep His name holy; His name is already holy. But you do pray this petition asking that God would keep His name holy in you.

How is God's name kept holy in you? God's name is kept holy when God's Word is taught and believed in truth and purity. And, we keep God's name holy, when you and I would lead holy lives according to His Word and name.

So, have you brought honor to the name of Christ? Have you given glory to God's name through your words and life? If your name were to be mentioned, would the first thing people think of is, "He's a Christian, a believer is Christ?"

If not, there's a problem. If not, then you have not kept God's name holy.

In our text, God gave the command to put His name upon the people of Israel. Were they worthy of bearing God's name and being His children? Did they give glory to God's name in their words and life? Hardly! They rebelled against God and grumbled at every turn. They were fickle and

disobedient. They were sinners of the worst degree. And yet, God commands Moses, "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,
The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.
"So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

God commanded, "put my name upon the people, and I will bless them."

God blessed the people Israel by putting His name upon them. God blesses you, the new Israel, by putting His name upon you. How does He bless you? How does He put His name upon you? With these words He commanded to be spoken over you by His ministers. The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

"The Lord bless you and keep you." It is the creative work of God that you are in existence. All that you have, and are, comes from His gracious Fatherly divine goodness and from the Father's loving hand. He keeps you in all ways, all that you have is from His hand, and blessing upon you to keep you.

"The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you." Where is God's face? It is only in the person of Jesus Christ, true God, that the face of God shines upon you, even as the star led the magi to the infant Jesus. God's grace is given as Christ takes your sins upon the cross, and He delivers the forgiveness He purchased there, to you. His grace comes to you in the means He appoints; Word and Sacrament.

"The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." It is the Spirit who opens your spiritually blind eyes by faith that you might see God's gracious face in Christ Jesus. It is He who builds faith within you, trusting that the forgiveness Christ purchased is your own, and that in Him there are no more terrors for this life or the life to come. God's wrath against your sins I appeased in Christ. In other words, it is God who gives you true peace.

God's name has been the means by which He has blessed you. He gave His name to you when He called you by name out of the world through the miracle of Baptism. In that bath, He removed sin and death, and gave you the blessings of His name - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Every time we gather together, beginning our service with God's name in the invocation and ending it in the words of our text, what we call the Aaronic benediction - God blesses us. Wherever His name is spoken over us, He blesses us.

When the absolution is spoken, you are forgiven in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. God's name is spoken over you and God Himself blesses you with sins forgiven, eternal life, salvation, and the strengthening of your faith.

Christ is present in the bread you eat and the wine you drink at His table. Where Christ's body and blood are present, there is His name. His name is placed upon your tongue and poured into

your mouth and all the blessings of God are given to you in Christ Jesus.

Dear beloved of God, brothers and sisters in Christ, God desires to put His name upon you. Sorry, that is wrong. He has *commanded* His name to be put upon you. He does so because it is not your perfection that brings glory to His name, but His blessing of you with His love, mercy and grace in the forgiveness of your sins which gives glory to His name.

Again and again, God puts His name upon you, because He desires to bless you, now and forever more. Amen.