

Luke 11:27-28; Dt. 28:1-6; Who is Truly Blessed? I. The Woman's Statement II. Jesus' Response
 Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is truly blessed? Where do true blessings come from and how do we attain them? Receiving the blessings from God is a central theme of Scripture. Not only do we have Jacob who tried to steal the blessing of God- we know that many of the patriarchs were given blessings from God. In fact- the Bible starts with a blessing as God blessed Adam and Eve telling them to be fruitful and increase in number. And the Bible ends with blessing- as Jesus said in Rev. 22- blessed are those who keep the words of his book. So today we are going to find out who is truly blessed as we look at this theme: Jesus Christ reveals that the true source of blessing is found in receiving His word!

I. The Woman's Statement

We start by considering the woman's statement given in v. 27. After Jesus had been teaching the crowds- teaching with power and authority- a woman cries out and says- blessed is your mother. Now the word- blessed- is a very loaded word. The word- Makarious- means blessing, happiness and increase. But in the context of Biblical promises- to be blessed by God was to be the recipient of God's favor! More than the empty phrase we hear from our political leaders- God bless America- to be blessed by God is to receive the covenantal blessing. That divine shower of goodness which is received from His hand! To have the land flowing with milk and honey- to have a filled womb and an overflowing storehouse. To be blessed is the opposite of the curse! Earlier we read a part of the blessing given in Dt. 28- and to the OT believer- a sign of the blessing of God was made evident in the fruit of your womb. There was a generational and biological blessing that was part of their identity and understanding- within the context of the OT covenant they needed children to fill the land and carry on their name- until the promised Messiah would come forth from the line of the Jews. But Jesus is going to change their focus- as we will see in a moment. We still see many with this thinking in our world today. Where children or the family become the central point of life. The perfect family- or perfect kids! For the sake of their own pride, refusing to acknowledge the rebellion of their offspring. Or where homes and

earthly heritage become the pride of life! Even today many seek the blessing of this world- seeking to be rich in their worldly pursuit while remaining poor towards God!

So this woman walks up to Jesus and says- your mother is blessed. Blessed to have you as a son! Think of it- who wouldn't enjoy having Jesus as a child! Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a child who was perfect- a son who never disobeyed and never talked back! Never rebelled and never argued! That would be a wonderful blessing- to have Jesus as your own son. Indeed- as we are introduced to Mary in Luke 1:42- Elizabeth cries out- blessed are you, Mary, among women. Blessed is she who believe that there would be fulfillment to the promises of God. Or as Mary said of herself in Luke 1- from now on all generation will call me blessed! So yes- we agree with this woman- Mary was a blessed maiden. But there was also a thorn on this rose. As Simeon pronounced in Luke 2:35- Mary, a sword will pierce your soul. Being the mother of Jesus was not always easy. It was difficult at times- troubling as she did not understand. For even Jesus said in Luke 8- who is my mother and who is my brother? Those who do the will of my Father in heaven- these are my mother and brothers. Mary was a simple maiden- blessed by God to be sure- but not a holy, blessed fountain of life. Mary was not a dispenser of grace nor is she the source of salvation. She is not a co-redeemer; and her being blessed as a mother pales in comparison to the true blessing that Jesus now speaks of!

II. Jesus' Response

So Jesus responds to this woman in v. 28- blessed rather are those who hear God's Word. The word used by Jesus focusses on the contrast. We could translate this like this- yes- but better still! Yes, it is true, but actually there is a greater blessing! Although it is true that having children is a blessing from God- that being a parent is a gift of God's favor! Yes- even the Jews had a privilege that the Gentiles did not have! Yes- but a greater blessing has come! A deeper, richer benevolence that is accessible to all and freely received! The fact is true, eternal blessings are not found in the normal manner of life!

Consider that Jesus is arguing from the lesser to greater! Yes, the OT had its blessings! Land, freedom from Egypt, and even children! But the NT blessings are so much better! Jesus is challenging this woman's- and our expectation! Consider what Jesus taught in Luke 6 with the Beatitudes. Blessed are the poor; blessed are the meek; blessed are those who weep; who hunger and thirst. Blessed are you when people despise you. Now this does not sound right to us! But Jesus is altering our view of what it means to be blessed- and where we expect blessings to come from! Kingdom blessings are no found in the manner of man! It is not the physical, biological connection to Jesus that conveys blessings! Nor are the earthly, material things the greatest blessing to be sought! In many way- we are more blessed than any OT Jew! A NT, never married lady who is all alone physically- has access to a richer blessing than an OT mother who had 12 kids! What makes a man truly blessed? Well, as Psalm 1 said- Blessed is the man who forsakes iniquity and does what is right and good! So your family is a blessing from God- a greater blessing is reserved for those who hear the Word of God and keep it! Blessed are those who hear. To hear God's Word is to be in the context of the means of grace! For faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of God. You are blessed if you hear the preaching- when the gospel is proclaimed in your midst. As Jesus said to His disciples in Mt. 13- blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear! And what do we hear that makes us blessed? Well, we hear the word of God- the Logos of Theos! We hear the good news- when the gospel is proclaimed to us as we saw last week- it is then that we are truly blessed! But more than that- as Jesus concludes in v. 28. Those who hear and keep this word! The word- keep- in the Greek is Phyllasso- meaning that the word is guarded, kept and protected. It is like the good seed in the parable of the sower- the good ground keeps the seed- embraces the seed and thus produces a harvest! It would do no good to have that seed snatched away! No- you are only truly blessed if you hear and hold onto that Word! James 1 says that if we look at ourselves in a mirror and then forget what we look like- we are like those who hear the word and do not do it! Keeping that word- hiding that word in your heart- implies obedience! To have the word dwell in

you is to have that word change you- as you respond to it and obey! Jesus uses this same word for keep in John 12- whoever hates his life in this world will keep it- same word used- will keep his life in the world to come. So the way in which we find true blessing is in our connection to Christ and the reception of His word! Forsake this world- and embrace the Son! When we are united to Christ in faith we are made children of God- adopted in grace! How are you blessed? Not in earthly families but in a heavenly one! And the blessing that we are given are much better/ greater than a few trinkets and toys. Not in homes and wealth, but in life and crowns and glory for all eternity! If you now hear and embrace God's Word- you are truly blessed!

To conclude, knowing where blessings come from helps us know where to look! Jesus Christ reveals that the true source of blessing is found in receiving His word! We can have a greater privilege and blessing than being Jesus earthly family- we can be His eternal bride! God's Word is the pearl of great price- the hidden treasure that is has such worth that it would be better to sell everything we have just to get it! Dt. 28 says that if you obey God's voice and are careful to obey His commands- than you will be blessed when you come out and when you go in! Like the Aaronic blessing- the Lord bless you and keep you both now and forevermore! That is the blessing that we have when we receive, believe and obey God's word!