

Deservedly cursed, to being undeservedly blessed

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by Matt Peery

Are you cursed? I am serious. For most of us the word “cursed” brings to mind spells and fairy tales, not our real life experience. Well, the book of Galatians has convinced me that we cannot understand the Bible without understanding that apart from Christ every person is cursed.

According to the Bible being cursed by God is the opposite of being blessed by God. To be blessed is to be in God’s favor, for God to be happy with you and God’s face shine upon you. To be cursed means to be under God’s disfavor, for God to be against you and turn his face from you. The Bible repeatedly pairs together and contrasts God’s blessing and cursing. Deuteronomy 30:19-20 states: “I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him.” This passage presents a choice. If Israel chose to love and obey God, then they would be blessed by God. If they did not, then they would be cursed by God.

Paul applies this truth to all people. He applies it to you and me. He says in Galatians 3:10, “For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them.’” Paul says any person who does not obey God in every way, and in every moment, is cursed. That is all of us. We are cursed! We are cursed because in of ourselves we are not holy. We are not perfect. We are not righteous but unrighteous. This is very bad news. God’s standard is his own perfect holiness that none of us are capable of meeting. This is particularly bad news when we consider that God is not only holy but also just. God being the holy judge means he must execute judgment on all who are not holy. This is more than bad news. This is our death sentence. Romans 6:23 says, “The wages of sin is death.”

Praise God this is not the end of the story. Paul goes on in Galatians 3 and says in verse 13, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree.’” God’s justice is upheld, and God rescues us from our deserved death sentence by Christ dying in our place. 1 Peter 3:18 says, “Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God.”

That is the good news Christians call the gospel. In Christ we go from being deservedly cursed, to being undeservedly blessed. We are blessed by God not because of what we’ve done, but because of what Christ did on our behalf. Make sure you belong to Christ through your faith in Him, so that God’s face may shine upon you.