

Sunday, January 13, 2013—The Things Freely Given Us of God—Accepted in the Beloved

### **Introduction/Review**

- I Corinthians 2:9-12—lately we have been looking at the things freely given us of God. Remember that we cannot know these things apart from the Holy Spirit and God’s written word.
- Last week we studied three related subjects that stem from the fact that believers have been justified.
  - Romans 5:1—those who have been justified enjoy peace with God. Remember that *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* defined peace as harmony; concord; a state of reconciliation between parties at variance (Rom. 5:10).
  - Ephesians 1:4—we are without blame in the eyes of God almighty. There is no charge, fault, or accusation that can be level against a believer in the eyes of God almighty.
  - Romans 8:1, 34--there is no condemnation or damnatory sentence that can be conferred upon believers because we have peace with God and are holy and without blame before him in love.
- When I was in college I took a couple psychology classes. One of the topics that we discussed was Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs. At the top of pyramid, under the title of self-actualization was the idea of being accepted and having a meaning or purpose in life.
- Ephesians 1:6—this morning we want to consider that we have been accepted in the beloved. This morning I want to challenge you to realize that the deepest need and longing of your soul for acceptance and meaning can only be and has already been met for you in Jesus Christ.

### **Accepted in the Beloved**

- Ephesians 1:3—Paul begins to list the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ. These are not physical blessings by spiritual ones.
- Ephesians 1:6—one of the spiritual blessings that we possess is being accepted in the beloved.
- The first thing I want you to notice about this verse is the tense of the statement, “wherein he hath made us accepted.” It is past tense, we have already been accepted. In other words, this is a state that the believer enjoys now.
- The Greek word translated “accepted” carries the following meanings according to *Strong’s Concordance* 1) to make graceful, charming, lovely, agreeable, 2) to peruse with grace, compass with favour, 3) to honour with blessings.

- The Greek word only occurs three times in two verses in you King James Bible.
  - Ephesians 1:6—“he hath made” and “accepted”
  - Luke 1:28—“highly favored”
- To have been made accepted carries the idea of being highly favored. The same attitude the Godhead had toward Mary in choosing her bring Jesus into the world is the same attitude the Godhead possess about us in Jesus Christ.
- Consider for the moment the meanings of the following English words:
  - Accept— 1) to take or receive what is offered, with a consenting mind; to receive with approbation or favor. 2) To regard with partiality; to value or esteem.
  - Accepted—kindly received; regarded; agreed to; understood; received as a bill of exchange.
  - Acceptable— 1) that may be received with pleasure; hence pleasing to a receiver; gratifying; as an acceptable present.
- As believers we have already been accepted. We are already valued and esteemed because we are in Jesus Christ.
- Ephesians 1:6—notice where we have been accepted, “in the beloved.” Who or what is the “beloved?”
  - Matthew 3:17
  - Matthew 12:18
  - Matthew 17:5
  - Luke 20:13
  - II Peter 1:17
- Jesus Christ is God’s beloved. We are accepted in the beloved i.e., we are accepted in Jesus Christ. The view that God the Father has taken towards his Son is the same view he has towards you and I.
- Colossians 3:3—our life is hid with Christ in God.

### **Practical Application**

- We need to understand that deepest longings of the human soul for unconditional love and acceptance have already been met in Jesus Christ.

- Working in a public high school I see on a daily basis the lengths young people will go to just to find someone who will love and accept them. When you strip everything else away all they want is to feel loved and accepted. To feel like they matter to someone.
- As adults we are more sophisticated about masking our true feelings, wishes, and desires. People tell themselves the following lies:
  - I will be happy when I get married.
  - I will be happy when I have kids.
  - I will be happy when I get the right job or career.
  - I will be happy when I lose enough weight or look like so and so.
- Let's take marriage as an example. Perhaps you have recently thought the following about your marriage:
  - I got married so that all my problems would be taken care of,
  - I got married so that I would have unconditional love and acceptance,
  - I expect my spouse to . . .
  - This was not what I signed up for, I am so unfulfilled, My spouse is a loser that doesn't meet any of my needs.
- There are people in this room right now who are disillusioned with their marriage, children, job, you name it because of unrealistic expectations and misplaced dependences.
- *Unrealistic Expectations*
  - Unrealistic—inappropriate to reality or fact
  - Expectation—the act or state of expecting, anticipation
- An unrealistic expectation is anticipating that someone is going to do something for you that is above and beyond what they are realistically able to do.
- *Misplaced Dependences*
  - Misplace—to put in a wrong or inappropriate place, set on the wrong object or eventuality
  - Dependence—the quality or state of being influenced or determined by or subject to another
- Misplaced Dependences are relying on someone or something that cannot provide what one desires.

- If you are seeking to have your deepest emotional needs met by another human being you will always end up disappointed because you are asking them to do the impossible. We need to understand that all these needs have been met in Jesus Christ.
- Colossians 2:9-10, 3:2—we are complete in Jesus Christ. We need to look to Christ to meet these needs not other human beings. Because when we ask our spouse to meet these needs for us we are setting them up for failure and therefore our disillusionment with their inability to measure up.
- Understanding these realities frees you up to serve your spouse in love knowing that all the needs of your soul are met in Jesus Christ and therefore not expecting your spouse to do something they are not capable of.
- Ephesians 1:6—we have already been accepted in the beloved. We need to rest in that reality.