

Title: **“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED”**

Text: Ephesians 1:6

Reading: *Ephesians 1:1-23*

Subject: *The Union of God’s Elect with Christ*

Date: Tuesday Evening – August 7, 2007

Tape # Z-33b

Introduction:

I want you to turn with me to one of my favorite passages of Scripture — Ephesians 1. I want to talk to you about one of the most delightful, assuring, comforting, glorious thing revealed in the whole Book of God. This great chapter is all about Christ our Savior and the grace that is ours by him and in him.

“Grace!” — What a great word that is! **Phillip Doddridge** wrote, “Grace! ‘tis a charming sound, harmonious to the ear.” And to those who have tasted the bitterness of their own sin and come to know and feel their own depravity, grace is indeed a charming sound, harmonious to the ear. **But that is not the case with everyone.** I had a brief conversation, a very brief conversation, last Sunday with a man who informed me that he despises grace. He did so by stating his adoration of his imaginary free-will. And all will-worshipping idolaters hold God’s free, saving grace in Christ in utter contempt! There are many, like that man, to whose taste the word and the doctrine of the grace of God are bitter and to their ears are terribly unpleasant. But every saved

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sinner, every heaven born soul adores, extols and delights in grace. **Pastor Tim James** wrote...

“Grace is such a singular and absolute thing that it will countenance no rival and tolerate no adornment. It stands alone. No words can do it justice. No song can encompass its true melody. No sermon or theological treatise can expound the depths or heights of its glory. Every redeemed sinner rests in it and is motivated by it. Grace is the source of comfort and conviction, of joy and tears, of desire and fulfillment, of meekness and boldness; and those who have experienced the wonder of it are forever enamored by it. Those who have experienced the beauty and the power of it find their minds and hearts consumed by it. Grace is mystery and revelation. Our language is salted with it. Our relationships are monitored and measured by it. Our souls are permeated with it. God’s grace is his glory (Exodus 33:19).”

God’s grace is his glory; and God’s grace is our joy. Let’s a little bit read about it.

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy

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and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

Here, the apostle Paul, writing by divine inspiration, tells us that God almighty has from all eternity, chosen, predestinated, adopted and blessed us in Christ — *“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”* — **“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.”**

Proposition: With those words the Holy Spirit reveals and declares to us one of the most comforting and delightful truths of Holy Scripture, and that is the fact that there is an everlasting, indissolvable, immutable union between the Lord Jesus Christ and his people.

Please notice at the very outset that our acceptance in Christ is spoken of as something accomplished by the Lord God himself from eternity. It is not something accomplished by us in time. Because it is something done by God and done by God from eternity, it cannot in any way be dependent upon us (Eccles. 3:14).

(Ecclesiastes 3:14) “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it,

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nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth *it*, that *men* should fear before him.”

Let men hoot and holler all they want to about man’s part in salvation, man’s will, man’s work, and man’s contribution, our text declares, “**He**,” God the Father, “**hath made**,” from all eternity, before the foundation of the world, “**us**,” you and me, vile, base, hell-bent, hell-deserving sinners by nature, but chosen, redeemed, and called by his grace, “**accepted**,” highly favored, honored, pleasing, and delightful to God himself, “**in the Beloved**,” the Lord Jesus Christ, his dear Son, our Savior.

‘Twixt Jesus and the chosen race
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne’er dissolve nor rend in vain

Hail! sacred union, firm and strong,
How great the grace, how sweet the song,
That worms of earth should ever be
One with incarnate Deity!

One in the tomb, one when He rose,
One when He triumphed o’er His foes,
One when in heaven He took His seat,
While seraphs sang all hell’s defeat.

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This sacred tie forbids *our* fears,
For all He is or has is *ours*;
With *Christ, our* Head, *we* stand or fall,
Our life, *our* surety, and *our* all.”
John Kent

Give me your careful attention. Listen closely. May God the Holy Spirit teach these lips to preach, as he taught David’s hands to war and enable me to minister to your very hearts’ comfort and joy and your souls’ edification in the knowledge of Christ, as we plunge into this deep sea: — “*He hath made us accepted in the beloved.*”

Divisions: My message has four divisions. Our text talks reveals...

1. A Beloved Person,
2. An Everlasting Union,
3. A Glorious Position, *and*
4. A Divine Operation.

A BELOVED PERSON

The first thing I want to talk to about is a beloved Person, our great Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He is revealed here as, “*The Beloved.*” **I cannot imagine a title, or name more appropriate for our Redeemer.** This sweet, golden name is the one name that suits our Savior in all his relationships with the

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triune God, the angels of heaven, and his people in heaven and upon the earth.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Beloved of the Father’s heart (Matthew 3:17; 17:5). None of us can imagine how dear and beloved the Son of God is to the Father. Who can enter into the relationships of the three divine Persons in the eternal Trinity? We cannot imagine the kind of love the Father has for his Son; but we have abundant evidence of it and many illustrations of it in the Scriptures.

- **God the Son was one with the Father and beloved by him, as our Surety in the counsels of grace in eternity** (Pro. 8:22-31).

(Proverbs 8:22-31) “The LORD possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. (23) I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. (24) When *there were* no depths, I was brought forth; when *there were* no fountains abounding with water. (25) Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: (26) While as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. (27) When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth: (28) When he established the clouds above: when he strengthened the fountains

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of the deep: (29) When he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment: when he appointed the foundations of the earth: (30) Then I was by him, *as* one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him; (31) Rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights *were* with the sons of men.”

- **In the covenant of grace, all the blessing of grace were bestowed upon chosen sinners only in the Beloved** (v. 3; 2 Tim. 1:9).

(Ephesians 1:3) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:”

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:”

- **When the Lord God stooped to create all things out of nothing, the Father called to the Son and said, “Let us make man in our image and after our**

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likeness” (Gen. 1:26). — “*For without him was not anything made that was made*” (John 1:1-3).

Everything that God the Father has done and decreed to be done has been done to glorify the Son, “*that in all things he might have the preeminence*” (Col. 1:18). And God the Son lived upon the earth as a man, died as our Substitute, and lives again as our exalted King and Priest in heaven that he might glorify the Father. He is the Father’s Beloved!

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Beloved of the blessed Holy Spirit. — It is the office work and good pleasure of God the Holy Spirit, in all his gracious operations and influences, to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ (John 16:13-14).

(John 16:13-14) “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. (14) He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.”

I heard **Bro. Todd Nibert** say, “Where the Holy Spirit is emphasized the Holy Spirit is absent.” He was exactly right. The Holy Spirit never draws attention to himself. He has come to glorify Christ. When he is present, when

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he is working, Christ is preached, Christ is worshipped, and Christ is exalted.

The Lord Jesus is the Beloved of all the heavenly angels. — I am not stretching the Scriptures when I assert that the heavenly angels, those heavenly spirits who wait constantly before his throne, look upon the Lord Jesus Christ as the Beloved. It is before his throne that they bow. It is his praise that they sing. It is his will they wait to perform (Isaiah 6:1-3).

Without question, the Lord Jesus Christ is the beloved of all his people. — Saved sinners everywhere, in heaven above and scattered throughout all the earth, look upon the Son of God as their Beloved (Song of Solomon 1:14, 16; 2:3, 8-10, 16-17; 5:2, 4, 9-16; 6:2-3; 7:10; Isaiah 5:1).

(Song of Songs 1:14) “My beloved *is* unto me *as* a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.”

(Song of Songs 1:16) “**Behold, thou art fair, my beloved,** yea, pleasant: also our bed *is* green.”

(Song of Songs 2:3) “**As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.** I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit *was* sweet to my taste.”

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(Song of Songs 2:8-10) “The voice of my beloved! behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills. (9) My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice. (10) My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.”

(Song of Songs 2:16-17) “**My beloved is mine, and I am his**: he feedeth among the lilies. (17) Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountains of Bether.”

(Song of Songs 5:2) “I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.”

(Song of Songs 5:4) “My beloved put in his hand by the hole *of the door*, and my bowels were moved for him.”

(Song of Songs 5:9-16) “What *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, O thou fairest among women? what *is* thy beloved more than *another* beloved, that thou dost so charge us? (10) My

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beloved *is* white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. (11) His head *is as* the most fine gold, his locks *are* bushy, *and* black as a raven. (12) His eyes *are* as *the eyes* of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, *and* fitly set. (13) His cheeks *are* as a bed of spices, *as* sweet flowers: his lips *like* lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. (14) His hands *are as* gold rings set with the beryl: his belly *is as* bright ivory overlaid *with* sapphires. (15) His legs *are as* pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance *is* as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. (16) His mouth *is* most sweet: yea, he *is* altogether lovely. This *is* my beloved, and this *is* my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”

(Song of Songs 6:2-3) “My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies. (3) I *am* my beloved’s, and my beloved *is* mine: he feedeth among the lilies.”

(Song of Songs 7:10) “I *am* my beloved’s, and his desire *is* toward me.”

(Isaiah 5:1) “**Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved** touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:”

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Never was the term “beloved” so full of meaning, so well deserved, and yet so incapable of expressing all that is meant by it, as when it is applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Beloved. *“We love him because he first loved us”* (1 John 4:19). We do not love him as we should. We do not love him as we would. And we do not love him as we soon shall. But we do truly love him! How our hearts rejoice to look up to heaven upon the Son of God and call him *“Beloved!”* The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. His love for us has kindled in our hearts a flame of undying love for him that neither life nor death can quench. The Lord Jesus Christ is the Beloved of our souls because he is our Savior (1 Corinthians 16:22; 1 Peter 2:7).

Blessed is that person who can, with a heart of gratitude, faith, and love, lift his eyes to heaven and say, “Christ is my Beloved. *I am my Beloved’s and my Beloved is mine!*” Do you know this beloved Person? Do you know the Son of God? Is Jesus Christ your Beloved? If he is, I want you to see, know, and rejoice in the next thing revealed in our text...

AN EVERLASTING UNION

In recent years I have spent a good bit of time studying and meditating upon the believer’s everlasting union with Christ. I cannot think of a theme more delightful to my soul. I purposefully think of it and meditate upon it

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daily. **Our everlasting union with Christ is the source and spring of all the blessings and benefits of grace which we enjoy in this world and hope to enjoy in the world to come.**

Did you notice, when we read it, that in the first chapter of Ephesians the Holy Spirit very specifically states that **everything is in Christ?** I have called your attention to the fact that in the first fourteen verses of this chapter he uses the words “*in Christ,*” or their equivalent, fourteen times, many times. The Spirit of God means for us to understand that all the blessings and benefits of God’s covenant grace are ours only by virtue of our union with Christ.

Our everlasting union with the Son of God is the basis of our safety and security, too. God’s elect are as safe and secure as Christ himself, for we are “*accepted in the beloved.*”

Now, let me show you what the Scriptures clearly teach about this everlasting union. The subject is too big for me to comprehend it with my peanut brain. Therefore, I know I cannot expound it. But I can show you that which is obviously revealed. **No doctrine is sound that does not recognize the everlasting union of God’s elect with Christ.** Yet, whenever I even mention this glorious subject, as I often do, I feel that it is a subject that needs an angel’s tongue to proclaim it. Still,

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it is my privilege and responsibility to preach it. So I will do the best I can.

I am not talking to you about our manifest union with Christ. That is a blessed theme. When a sinner believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, he begins to enjoy a personal, manifest union with Christ. But **our union with Christ began long before we believed on him.** Our faith in Christ is not the cause of our union with him, but the manifestation of it (2 Tim. 1:9-10).

(2 Timothy 1:9-10) “Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, (10) But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

The subject of Ephesians 1:6 is not our manifest union with Christ in time, but our everlasting union with him from eternity. **Our everlasting union with Christ is a fivefold union.** When Paul writes that we are “*in the beloved,*” he means that we who now believe, all who have believed, and all who shall believe are in Christ from everlasting in these five ways.

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Our everlasting union with Christ is **AN ELECTION UNION**. We were chosen in him before the foundation of the world. This election union is the basis of all God’s gracious operations toward and in his people (Eph. 1:4-6).

(Ephesians 1:3-6) “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: (4) According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (6) To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

Salvation must begin with someone’s choice. Religion says it begins with your choice. But the Bible declares that it begins with God’s choice. God’s choice of sinners unto salvation is what the Bible calls “*the election of grace.*” (Rom. 11:5). Election is the basis and first part of God’s salvation. Without election no one would ever be saved. Though election is personal and distinguishing, we were not chosen separately and distinctly as individuals, alone and apart. We were chosen in Christ. There is no election of grace apart from Christ. And there is no union with Christ apart from the election of

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grace. — Christ was chosen to be the Redeemer (Isa. 42:1-4). And we were chosen to be the redeemed (2 Thess. 2:13-14).

“Christ be my first Elect, He said,
Then chose our souls in Christ our Head.”

Isaac Watts

Here is the blessedness of the doctrine of election: It guarantees our eternal security. **Our election and our Savior’s election stand or fall together.** The Lamb’s Book of Life, which begins with the inscription of his name, is the same register that holds our names. Until the pen of hell can scratch out his name, it cannot scratch out our names!

Our everlasting union with Christ is also **A LEGAL, SURETYSHIP UNION.** — As the surety and the debtor represented by him are one before the law, so the Lord Jesus Christ and his people are one before God in a legal sense. He became our Surety in the covenant of grace before the worlds were made or ever the earth was (Heb. 7:22).

(Hebrews 7:22) “By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament.”

As the Surety of the covenant, he drew near to the Father in the name of his elect, made himself our Substitute,

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laid himself under obligation to God to pay our debts, satisfy all the demands of God’s law, justice, and righteousness for us, and procure on the grounds of strict justice all the blessings of grace and glory for us, to the praise of the glory of his grace. — **John Gill** wrote, “Christ and his people being one, in a law sense, their sins become his, and his righteousness becomes theirs.”

- When Christ became our Surety, our Sponsor before God, he **became totally responsible** to God for us, to pay our debts, fulfill our obligations, and bring us to glory (John 10:15-16).
- When Christ became our Surety, **God ceased to look for satisfaction from us.**
- When Christ became our Surety, **our salvation was finished**, in so far as the Lord our God is concerned (Rom. 8:28-30; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rev. 13:8).
- When Christ became our Surety, **our everlasting salvation and security became a matter of absolute certainty.**

The Lord Jesus Christ, our Covenant Surety, is our Legal Head and Federal Representative before God.

As Adam was the federal head of all men, so Christ is the federal head of all the elect (Rom. 5:12-19; 1 Cor. 15:21-22).

(Romans 5:12) “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so

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death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

(Romans 5:18-19) “Therefore as by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. (19) For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

(1 Corinthians 15:21-22) “For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. (22) For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”

Everything that Adam did in the Garden, he did not as a private individual, but as the federal representative of all the human race. All his acts were representative acts. Had Adam been obedient to God, all the descendants of that original man would have been partakers of all the benefits of his obedience to God. But Adam was not obedient. He sinned. He fell. He died. And we all sinned, fell, and died in him representatively.

In exactly the same way, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Federal Head and Representative of God’s elect. **He was our Federal Head from eternity. He is our Federal Head now. And he shall be our Federal Head forever.**

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I hope you can get hold of this. It will bless your soul as nothing else can.

- **Christ was our Federal Head and Representative in the covenant of grace before the world began.** — He was given for a covenant to the people. He is the Mediator, Messenger, and Surety of that covenant. It was made with him, not as a single or private Person, but as the Head and Representative of God’s elect, who were given to him as a people to save. What he promised in the covenant, he promised for us. What he received in the covenant, he received for us. Thus, we were blessed in him and saved in him before the world was made (Eph. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:9).
- **When the Lord Jesus Christ obeyed the law of God and made it honorable, we were in him, obeying the law and making it honorable.**
- **When Christ suffered and died under the wrath of God, we suffered and died in him.** — *“Crucified with Christ.”*

“Justice looks upon the chosen as though they themselves had suffered all that Christ suffered, as though they had drunk the wormwood and the gall and had descended into the lowest depths. “

C.H. Spurgeon

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- **When Christ was buried in the earth, we were buried with him.**
- **When the Son of God arose from the dead, we arose with him, triumphant and victorious.**
- **When he ascended into heaven and took his place at the right hand of the Majesty on high, we ascended with him, and sat down with him in his Father’s throne, as the rightful possessors of heaven and glory with him, our Federal Head and Representative.**

Illustration: *The Symbolism of Baptism*

We see not yet all things put under the feet of man, but we see it as a matter of certainty that all things shall be put in subjection to him in the new creation, for “*we see Jesus*” seated upon yonder glorious throne, from henceforth expecting until his enemies shall be made his footstool (Psalm 8:1-9; Hebrews 2:9).

Our everlasting union with Christ is, third, **A MYSTICAL UNION**. — I do not know a better way to express this aspect of our union with our Savior than by using the word “mystical.” We are one with him in the sense that we are members of his body, not in a physical way, but in a spiritual sense (Eph. 5:30; Heb. 2:11-14).

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(Ephesians 5:30) “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.”

(Hebrews 2:11-14) “For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified *are* all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, (12) Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. (13) And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me. (14) Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

I am in deep waters that rise far above my head. I cannot begin to explain this mystery. The fact is I do not understand all that I know about it. But this I do know, God’s elect have a greater union with Christ than the members of our physical bodies have with our heads.

We are one with Christ...

- As the Head is One with the Body.
- As the Father and the Son are One (John 17:21).
- In His Glory as the God-man (John 17:22).
- As the Objects of the Father’s Love (John 17:23-24).

(John 17:23-24) “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the

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world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (24) Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

Once chosen sinners are born of God, once we are given life and faith in him, once we are manifestly in Christ, our everlasting union with Christ is **A WILLING, MARRIAGE UNION**. — The Son of God chose us, and espoused us to himself from eternity. Now, he has won our hearts! Conquered by his love, we love him!

Let me show you this fifth thing, too: Our everlasting union with Christ is **A VITAL UNION**. — **It is vital both to him and to us**. Our union with the Lord Jesus Christ is so essential and vital that without it we could never be saved and Christ could never be complete as our Mediator and Head (John 15:5-6; Eph. 1:23).

(John 15:5-6) “I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (6) If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.”

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(Ephesians 1:23) “(THE CHURCH) is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

I cannot talk about it more than a minute or two; but I must say at least a little about the third thing revealed in our text. It is...

A GLORIOUS POSITION

The Holy Spirit tells us that we have been made “*accepted in the beloved.*” The word translated “*accepted*” in our text is a much stronger word than our English word “*accepted.*” **This word means, “highly favored, laudable, praiseworthy.”** Now we are not and never could be “*accepted*” before and by the holy Lord God, except in Christ the Beloved. But in him, in the Beloved, every believer, every sinner chosen, redeemed, and called by grace, is so completely and totally accepted of God that, even in the eyes of the holy, omniscient Lord God, we are highly favored, laudable, and praiseworthy! Let me show you three things.

First, our acceptance with God is thorough, complete, total, and absolute. To be “*accepted in the beloved*” is to be...

- Justified from all things.
- Freed from all sin.
- The objects of divine complacency and delight. “*Well done!*”

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- Worthy of our heavenly inheritance (Col. 1:12).

(Colossians 1:12) “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.”

Second, our acceptance with God is only “in the Beloved.” God the Father is well pleased with his Son. And he is well pleased with us in his Son. — (Matthew 17:5 — “*In whom,*” not with whom “*I am well pleased.*”)

(1 Peter 2:5) “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”

Third, our acceptance with God in Christ is everlasting and therefore immutable. — Bless God, our acceptance does not depend upon us. It did not begin with us. It is not maintained by us. And it cannot not be altered by us. Though we fell in our father Adam, yet were we “*accepted in the beloved.*” Though we came forth from our mother’s wombs speaking lies, we were still “*accepted in the beloved.*” Though we spent our days, from our youth up, in wanton rebellion against God and in league with hell, we were still “*accepted in the beloved.*” And though after the Lord God has saved us by his wondrous grace, we sin and fall a thousand

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times a day, as we all do, yet it stands in the Scripture that we are “*accepted in the beloved.*” What a glorious position this is. You and I who believe are “*accepted in the beloved*” (Malachi 1:6; Romans 4:8; Psalm 89:19-37).

(Psalms 89:19-37) “Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon *one that is* mighty; I have exalted *one* chosen out of the people. (20) I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: (21) With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him. (22) The enemy shall not exact upon him; nor the son of wickedness afflict him. (23) And I will beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. (24) But my faithfulness and my mercy *shall be* with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted. (25) I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers. (26) He shall cry unto me, Thou *art* my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation. (27) Also I will make him *my* firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth. (28) My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my covenant shall stand fast with him. (29) His seed also will I make *to endure* for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. (30) If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; (31) If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; (32) Then will I visit their

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transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. (33) Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. (34) My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. (35) Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. (36) His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me. (37) It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.”

“Unchangeable His will,
Though dark may be my frame;
His loving heart is still
Eternally the same:
My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows.”

Our text reveals a beloved Person, the Lord Jesus Christ, an everlasting union, “*in the beloved,*” a glorious position, “*accepted in the beloved,*” and fourth...

A DIVINE OPERATION

Look at the text one more time. “*He hath made us accepted in the beloved.*” Grace is stamped upon the whole thing. From beginning to end, the work of our acceptance is God’s operation. Our text declares, “*Salvation is of the Lord!*” Our being in Christ and

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accepted in Christ must be the work of God alone because no one else existed when it was done. It is a work finished from eternity!

- God the Father put us in the Beloved by his sovereign decree because of his everlasting love for us.
- God the Son made us acceptable and accepted.
- God the Holy Spirit made our acceptance manifest to us (2 Tim. 1:10). — By Divine Regeneration. — By Giving us Faith in Christ.

Application: If this day you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord God has made you **“ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.”**

1. Your faith in Christ is the gift of his grace, the fruit of being *“accepted in the beloved.”*
2. Your faith in him is the evidence of your being *“accepted in the beloved.”*
3. Your faith in Christ is the assurance of your being *“accepted in the beloved.”*
4. He who has begun his good work of grace in us, making us *“accepted in the beloved,”* will complete his work and make us perfect in and with the Beloved.
 - Philippians 1:6
 - John 13:1
 - Mark 16:7

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(Mark 16:7) “But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.”

5. Let us give all praise, honor, and glory to our great God alone.

*“Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise Him all creatures here below.
Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts.
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!”*

Amen!

¹ Sermon # 1221 — Danville (AM-02/08/96) Misc. Sermon #1430 – Danville (AM 10/22/00) – Misc. Sermon #1485 – First Presbyterian Church, Pottstown, Illinois (11/09/01).