

“Accepted in the Beloved”

Are you accepted by the Lord?

“I don’t know; I wish I did.”

Why do you not know?

“Oh, I am so unworthy, so insignificant, so sinful, that I can’t believe that He really accepts me, although I try to think that He does.”

Well, now, do not try to make yourself think anything of the kind. That which cannot be believed without an effort, is not worth believing. You cannot manufacture faith; it comes by hearing the Word of God; and that Word is so straightforward, so true, that when we really hear it we cannot help believing.

“Tell me, then, how I may believe and know.”

That’s right, to begin with. I’m glad to hear you say, “believe and know,” for faith must always precede knowledge, or, rather, faith is itself the perfection of knowledge. Now “read, and you’ll know.” God has already “blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; 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; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein *He hath made us accepted* in the Beloved.” Eph. 1:3-6. Isn’t that plain enough?

“Yes; it seems all right, but what have I done, that I should receive such favour?”

Nothing whatever. “We also were aforetime foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Saviour, and His love toward man appeared, not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He poured out on us richly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” Titus 3:3-6. “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Eph. 2:8-10. Do you need any better assurance than that?

“I really don’t see what more could be said.”

And yet the Bible is full of just such assurances. In fact, it was written for no other purpose than to show us the love of God to fallen humanity, and how freely He accepts us and our service.

“What! do you mean to say that God will accept work that I do, as well as myself?”

Most certainly. Do you not see that one includes the other? “Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?” Rom. 6:14. The Lord has bought you and your service, and has paid the price in full. Therefore as soon as you say, “O Lord, truly I am Thy servant; I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid; Thou hast loosed my bonds” (Ps. 116:16), you are indeed the Lord’s servant; and since the Lord accepts you as His servant, it follows as a matter of course that He accepts your service.

Let us have a little more testimony on this case. Here is one of the most encouraging things in God’s Word: “Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God hath already accepted thy works.” Eccl. 9:7, R.V. It might with perfect literalness be rendered, “God hath already graciously accepted thy works,” or, “God hath already taken pleasure in thy works.” Wonderful, isn’t it? It does indeed seem almost too good to be true; but nothing can be too good for God.

What did the voice from heaven say to Christ? — “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Now we are made “accepted in the Beloved,” and so, although we yield ourselves to Him with no higher thought than possibly to be accepted as a servant, “thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son then an heir of God through Christ.” We are not bondservants, but freeborn sons, who serve as sons in their own house. So, having accepted us in the beloved Son, the Father of all is pleased with us, even as with Him.

“It doesn’t seem possible!”

All things are possible with God, even love that passeth knowledge. I dare say you have often seen illustrations on a small scale, of what we are talking about. You have seen a little child’s awkward and clumsy attempts to do some work that it has seen the father or mother do. It wanted to “do something for mamma.” And you have seen the fond parents exhibit that botched work with the utmost joy and pride; nothing could have pleased them more. Why? Because it was so well done? No, but because it was a labour of love. Even so the heart of God, who is love itself, delights in even the thought of service which His children devote to Him, and He accepts it in advance.

Christ is the Living Stone, “chosen of God and precious,” and coming to Him we also are made living atones, and “are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” Let us then rejoice, not in the contemplation of what we have done, but of what God hath wrought for us and put into us His dearly beloved children.

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