

ACCEPTANCE BEFORE GOD

Ephesians 1:3-8

Introduction: By nature, everyone is born alienated from God, dead in sins and don't belong to the family of God. All of us are as Adam and Eve after their sinning and were removed from the Garden of Eden.

- No one will ever see God's face by his/her own nature or merits.
- Sin has separated everyone from God and alienated us.
- However, one can become a child of God by adoption, by being born "again."
- *John 1:11-12* - describes how adoption by God happens.

I. ADOPTION (1:5)

1. According to the laws of adoption, one adopted cannot be disinherited. The law protects the one adopted.
 - The same principle applies to being adopted by God. The teaching/doctrine of being saved and then unsaved is not found in God's Word - anywhere.
 - If one has been born again, that person has a new heart, a new life, a new love and is forever adopted into God's Family.
2. God purpose for mankind (us) is to be joint heirs with Jesus Christ.
 - All of God's riches belong to those adopted.
 - Not because the adopted are worthy, but because that's how God wants it to be.
 - YOU were born into the family, into the nation/country you were born into because that's how God wanted it to be for YOU.
3. Nobody will have any reason to brag about being in heaven for every human being there will have gotten there the same way - by being adopted by God.

II. REDEEMED (1:7)

1. Adoption is the theme of the entire Bible. The life of Jesus Christ, the Old Testament, the New Testament, it is all about Jesus Christ coming to die for mankind.
 - All the Old Testament rituals, prophecies, sacrifices point to Jesus Christ.
 - All the parables, Epistles, illustrate and preach Jesus Christ.
 - The whole theme of the Bible is Jesus Christ coming to die.
 - From the shedding of innocent blood in the Garden of Eden to the cleansing blood of Revelation, the theme and story is that of Jesus Christ dying for the sins of humanity and being raised again for mankind's justification and all according to scripture.
2. How does the cross save? One is redeemed through Jesus Christ's blood, but how does His blood do away with our sins?
 - It is far beyond man's understanding and we can only see the results.
 - It is as freedom was to the slaves.
 - It is like the anger of God turned to favor.
 - It is like an excluded worshipper being allowed to worship again.

- It is like one who has been separated and is now reunited, etc.
- Whatever it is, we will never understand it and all we can do is to observe it and benefit from it.
- Take a look at your own life and see the effects of the Gospel. You can see it, but you can never explain it.

III. FORGIVEN (1:7)

1. Then there is forgiveness.

- There is personal forgiveness. God is a person, you are a person. You feel, love, get angry, etc. All of these feelings you (we) received from God and God also has these feelings, all the feelings we feel, God feels.
 - Remember the Prodigal Son? How the father could have reacted, like the older brother, but he didn't. Jesus was showing how God cares for us and forgives and always rejoices and accepts us back, forgiving as He does.
- There is ethical forgiveness. We sing the hymn "At the Cross" and we sing about "the burden of our sins rolled away..."
 - This is ethical forgiveness. God takes away the burden of the guilt of our sins when we are forgiven.
 - As the burden on the pilgrim's back (Pilgrim Progress) fell off at the cross and rolled down the hill, carrying his guilt and sin.
- There is legal forgiveness. Because we sin and wrong God, we deserve judgment, but God blots it out.
 - All our sins are covered as the floods covered the mountains, valleys and plains in Noah's day, that's what God has done for our sins.
 - "Atonement" means to cover and Jesus paid for our sins. We, therefore, are not condemned for Jesus Christ died in our place.

CONCLUSION:

1. All has been done by God to enable anyone to be adopted into God's Family.
2. Every person must make his/her own decision to believe in Jesus Christ and when he/she does, his/her sins are then covered by the blood of Jesus Christ and that person will be adopted into God's family.
3. All that awaits us now as believers, as God's adopted children, is that great day when we close our eyes to this world and open them in Glory.
4. Have you been adopted into God's family? If not, you can be and God wants you to become one of His Children.