

CHATS OF CHEER #4: ACCEPTANCE IS ARRANGED, Ephesians 1:6

Glenn Armstrong

INTRODUCTION: Chats of Cheer is a series of Bible messages designed to encourage believers in their Christian life with the Lord. Everyone needs help living with the daily stresses of this world system that is in opposition to both the Lord and His followers. In addition, the advantages of divine assistance are missed by those who have not yet trusted Christ as Savior. This series will also encourage the unbeliever by demonstrating some great doctrinal truths that will accompany their redemption.

The first three studies include: Be of Good Cheer, Forgiveness is Free, and Salvation is Simple. The following studies will include: Grace is Greater, Pardon is Possible, Heaven is Hopeful, Destiny is Determined, Prayer is Permissible, Rejection is Rejected, and Direction is Determined. The notes are published weekly, and the whole set of notes will available in a package when the series is finished.

ACCEPTANCE IS ARRANGED, EPHESIANS 1:6

I. THE BLESSING OF BEING ACCEPTED 1:3

Acceptance is the major need of nature.

- A. Many things happen when one becomes a believer in Christ. Often these are not earthly. When a believer is "blessed" on earth as well as in heaven, this is grace upon grace. It is not necessarily a result of being super spiritual, anointed by some religious leader, or sending money to purchase additional grace. The more a believer is blessed, the more God expects the person to be thankful.
- B. Dispensationally, Israel was promised earthly blessing based on obedience. The church, however, is not promised earthly blessing; our blessings are reserved in heaven.
- C. All believers are blessed equally in position, but they are not all blessed equally in possessions.
- D. Blessing implies "benefits" which are spiritual and heavenly rather than financial and earthly. The blessings are given by the Holy Spirit of God and not earned in part or in whole. They are not received as a prize, or paid as a wage. They are graciously given by God in eternity past.
- E. God is to be "blessed" (to speak well of) by those who receive His blessings.

II. THE BEGINNING OF BEING ACCEPTED 1:4

Acceptance of sinful people fits only in the eternal mind of the Almighty.

- A. The introduction to the Book of Ephesians is one of the most difficult passages in the Bible. It is often used to teach the error of double predestination - God picks some to go to heaven and some to go to hell.
- B. What is important for our purpose in this study is that the names of all people were entered into a book before there was ever a time/space/matter/man universe. (See notes: FOUR BOOKS OF GOD for details.)
- C. Acceptance of sinners is a matter settled in the mind of God before there was the first man or the first sin. The details of being accepted by God are eternally established.

D. The difficulty of the text is, "How can a sinful person be blameless before an infinitely Holy God?"

E. The only possible way to be a sinner/holy person is to have the holiness of another accredited to us. This action of God is because of His love, not our lovability, John 3:16; Romans 5:1.

F. Election (action of God) and free will (action of man) are two seemingly parallel lines that meet only in the eternal mind of God. Yet they work together in a divine/human cooperative when one believes God. God can always be trusted to do His part when a sinner repents and believes in the sacrifice of His Son on Calvary as the sole payment for sin.

III. THE BASE OF BEING ACCEPTED 1:5

Both the pleasure and purpose of redemption are totally within the heart of God.

A. It is predetermined by God that any believer will be "adopted" as a child into a family relationship with God Himself.

B. The experience of adoption is used in the text for the precise purpose of showing that a natural birth cannot produce spiritual life. What is needed is to be "born again" in a spiritual manner, John 3: 5.

C. The reason for redemption is because God is pleased to forgive sin. In ways we cannot fully understand, God is happy to save anyone who will come to Him through faith for salvation.

IV. THE BELOVED OF BEING ACCEPTED 1:6

Being accepted is not based on what we are, but where we are.

A. God and His grace are to be a major subject of life. Grace is defined as unmerited and unwarranted favor received from God.

B. The end result of grace is to make it possible for sinners to be accepted by God rather than being rejected.

C. The single most valuable and stabilizing experience for anyone is to know that God, the only one who really counts, accepts them!

D. The need to be accepted is created by God, and the way to be accepted is also provided fully by God.

V. THE BLOOD OF BEING ACCEPTED 1:7

Acceptance is not without a price to be paid and a redeemer to pay the price.

A. Redemption (deliverance from sin) is said to be solely through the payment of Christ's blood being shed as sufficient payment to forgive sin.

B. Forgiveness is the gracious action of God whereby He both pardons and cancels the penalty of sin.

C. The result of forgiveness is that God removes any and all just ill feelings He may have toward those who receive Him.

D. Grace alone is sufficient for forgiveness.

Application: Everyone needs and actually wants to be accepted. This is a basic drive of being human. Many sell their souls to be accepted by people who have no eternal value system to offer. In fact, instead of being accepted, they may really simply be being used. Nothing is as important as to be accepted by God, the one who eternally counts. This is never more helpful than when one is rejected by others and discovers they are still accepted by God by being in Christ.