

# “YOU ARE ACCEPTED”

**Text:** Ephesians 1:1-14

**Subject:** The Root Cause Of A Grateful Spirit

## Introduction

**Question:** Pastor, why walk us through the book of Ephesians?

**Answer:** Because Ephesians has been called “**The Queen Of The Epistles**”.

- ◆ It is like a sermon that holds a person spellbound,
- ◆ It is like praying that draws a person into the very presence of God.
- ◆ It is like a great doxology that leaves a person with a deep sense of worship.

### **(In Plain Vanilla)**

◆ Ephesians does two things:

- #1. It reveals **the purpose of God** for His creation, His Son, His church and your life **(And)**
- #2. It teaches us how to **walk in the Spirit**, or walk worthy of being called a Christian.

**Question:** Who wrote Ephesians?

**Answer:** God inspired it and Paul wrote the book from a Roman prison about A.D. 61.

**Question:** Who did Paul write to?

**Answer:** The believers in Ephesus along the coast of Asia Minor.

1. The church in Ephesus had a small beginning.
2. When Paul visited Ephesus he found only twelve believers in the city.
3. Apollos had won them to the Lord.
4. Paul taught them for three months but the Jews refused to believe the gospel.
5. Paul then moved the church into the school of a philosopher, Tyrannus.
6. There, Paul preached Jesus for two whole years.
7. As the Word was preached, the church grew mightily in a most unusual place.

- ◆ Ephesus was a commercial city in a strategic location.
- ◆ The temple of Diana was the worship attraction.
- ◆ Diana was the sex goddess that promoted prostitution and sensual behavior.
- ◆ The people were corrupted and lost their will to practice a commendable trade.
- ◆ Ephesus, flat out became pagan (and God saw fit to plant a church in the middle of sin city).

**Question:** What happened in Ephesus?

**Answer:** People started getting saved!

- ◆ Miracles began to happen,
- ◆ Lives were dramatically changed.
- ◆ God worked supernaturally in a hot bed of oriental magic and superstition.

### **(So Much So That)**

◆ New believers built a great bonfire and set aflame all of their pagan and magical literature.

### **(The Question Is:)**

- ◆ What did Paul say to the believers in Ephesus?
- ◆ What’s the Word of the Lord that God used to change the human heart?
- ◆ What’s the message to you and me that brings incredible transformation (Wherever God finds you today)?

### **(Diamonds From Ephesus)**

**Question:** What are the diamonds from Ephesus?

◆ **In chapter 1 – you are “Accepted”**

(V. 6), “To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us *accepted* in the beloved”

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- ◆ **In chapter 2 – you are “Quickened”**  
(V. 1), “And you hath He *quickened* who were dead in trespasses and sins”
- ◆ **In chapter 3 – you are “Strengthened”**  
(V. 16), “To be *strengthened* with might by His Spirit in the inner man”.
- ◆ **In chapter 4 – you are “Renewed”**  
(V. 24), “And be *renewed* in the Spirit of your mind”
- ◆ **In chapter 5 – you are “Empowered”**  
(V. 18), “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be *filled* with the Spirit”
- ◆ **In chapter 6 – you are “Standing”**  
(V. 13), “Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, *to stand*”

**(Today – Diamond #1)**

**Question:** How does Paul begin his letter to the Ephesians?

**Answer:** Following his greeting in Verses 1 & 2, Paul breaks forth in praise and adoration:

**(In Verse 3:)**

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus”.

**Question:** What is Paul saying from prison?

**Answer:** The word “**Blessed**” is from the Greek word (EULOGEO) where we get our English word “eulogy”.

- ◆ The word eulogy means 3 things:  
#1. To **praise** someone, #2. To **commend** someone, #3. To declare a person’s **goodness**.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Paul is expressing heartfelt gratitude to God.
- ◆ Paul says that God is our supreme eulogy and praise.
- ◆ Paul wants all believers to bless God for His goodness.

**(The Question Is)**

- ◆ What causes us to express gratitude to God?
- ◆ What provokes us to praise the Lord wholeheartedly?
- ◆ What is it that produces a healthy spirit, a non-complaining disposition, an attitude that cries out with Paul “**Blessed be our God and Father**”?

**(In Plain Vanilla)**

- ◆ How can Paul (from prison) overcome the temptation to get sour, bitter, angry and stew in his own juice (over injustices)?
- ◆ How can you (wherever God finds you) overcome the temptation to focus on what you don’t have (instead of enjoying what you do have)?

**(In Other Words Pastor)**

- ◆ What’s the revelation to us that causes us to say with Paul “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us”?

**(We have 3 Eulogy Producers)  
(What are they?)**

**I. You Have “Adoption” (vs. 4,5)**

(V. 4), “According as God has chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love”

(V. 5), “Having predestined us into the *adoption* of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will”.

(Pg. 2 of 4)

**Question:** When did God plan your adoption?

**Answer:** “Before the foundation of the world” (v. 4)

**Question:** Why did God plan your adoption?

**Answer:** (V. 5) “To the good pleasure of His will”

**Question:** What results from your adoption?

**Answer:** (V. 4), “We stand holy and without blemish before God”.

- ◆ The word “Holy” (HAGIOUS) means “Set apart to God”
- ◆ The word “Blameless” (AMOMOUS) means “Free of sin, reproach and defilement”.

**Question:** What does it mean, for you to be adopted, in verse 5?

**Answer:** Adoption means: That by and act of God, God has given you an adult standing in His family. **(In Other Words)**

- ◆ God has adopted you because you have trusted in His Son.
- ◆ God has adopted you because you have received His Son’s righteousness. **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ This was an act of Divine Grace!
- ◆ This was an act of Divine Love!
- ◆ This was an act of Divine Mercy! **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ All of us have sinned in Adam!
- ◆ None of us deserve God’s grace!
- ◆ No one here can merit God’s favor!
- ◆ We couldn’t adopt ourselves into God’s family.

**(But “Blessed Be God Our Father” – Why?)**

- ◆ Because we have received what we did not deserve.
- ◆ Because we have received what we could not earn.
- ◆ Because we have received what only God in grace could give us!

**(#1 – You Have Adoption)**

## II. **You Have “Acceptance” (V. 6)**

“To the praise of the glory of His grace wherein He hath made us *accepted* in the beloved”

**Question:** How many of you know this - that we cannot make ourselves acceptable to God?

**Question:** How many of you would agree – that God is Holy (and all of us have sinned)?

**Question:** Then pastor, how can I bless the Lord in the midst of pain, struggle, trial, opposition, adversity, or whatever?

**Answer:** You and I can praise God for His grace because you and I have been “*Accepted In the beloved*”

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Because of Adam’s sin we were born in sin,
- ◆ Because of sin we incurred the wrath of God,
- ◆ Because of the wrath of God, we were destined to be lost for eternity.

**(But Thanks Be To God)**

We are not rejected or at odds with God any longer. **(Why Not?)**

(Verse 6), Because you and I have been accepted fully by God because of the work of His Son.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ The unworthy have been declared worthy.
- ◆ The unrighteous have been declared righteous.
- ◆ The undeserving have been declared accepted.
- ◆ The unholy have been declared spotless.
- ◆ The sinner has been declared saint.
- ◆ The far off have been declared near to God. **(In Other Words)**

- ◆ Christ's position is our position.
- ◆ Christ's resources are our resources.
- ◆ Christ's privilege is our privilege. **(In Other Words)**
- ◆ The way the Father has accepted His Son, is the same way the Father has accepted us.

#1. You have adoption into God's family.

#2. You have acceptance because of God's grace.

### III. You Have "Assurance"

**Question:** Pastor, what assurance has God given me?

#### #1. You have assurance of Forgiveness

(V. 7), "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins"

- ◆ The word "redeem" means: "To free by the paying of a price"

- ◆ The word "forgive" means: "To carry away"

**Question:** Why is Paul so excited in prison to praise and magnify the Lord?

**Answer:** Because:

#1. You have been redeemed (or set free) from the power of sin and the power of the second death.

#2. You have been forgiven of every sin, and no accusation stands against you because Jesus carried your sins to Calvary.

#### #2. You have assurance of God's Faithfulness

(V. 11), "Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will"

**(What Does It Mean?)**

- ◆ It means, all things are under His control.
- ◆ It means, what seems arbitrary to you, God will use to work out His will in your life.
- ◆ It means, God is so perfect in wisdom, that you can rest well today.
- ◆ It means, God is working all things together for good right now – for those who love Him supremely.

#### #3. You have assurance of a glorious Future

(V. 13), "You were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise"

(V. 14), "Which is the earnest of our inheritance to come"

**(What Does It Mean?)**

- ◆ It means, the Holy Spirit at work in every believer – is God's guarantee that He will eventually bring you to glory.

**(In Other Words)**

- ◆ (v. 14), "The redemption of your purchased possession" (Means:)

#1. Jesus is really going to return, (and)

#2. When He returns, you are really going to receive a glorified body and become like Jesus!!!

#### Conclusion

- ◆ Do you know that you've been "adopted" into God's family?
- ◆ Do you know that you've been "accepted" in the beloved?
- ◆ Do you know that you have the "assurance" that God is working all things after the counsel of His own will?

Altar call

**AMEN!**

Bill Kirk, Pastor