

ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED

It is not so much an apology as a fact. Those who base their lives on the principles of the scriptures and the Kingdom of God are going to seem a bit peculiar to the rest of society. They will not fit in or really be accepted.

We hate to break the news to you, but there are some clubs we will never be able to get into. We weren't born into the right family. We don't make or spend enough money. We may even be the wrong color. For whatever reason, they are exclusive. Mind you, some folks are welcomed with open arms. Their presence is desired. Their needs are seen to. In that particular group, they fit in, and the group is part of their identity. If they go often enough, they don't even bother with identification. Nor do they worry about acceptance. They are members. We'll not get in though. Unless we come by invitation of one of the members. While we are with them, we will be accepted.

The throne room of God is the most elite of clubs. The smallest stain that is visible precludes you from admission. The train of the King fills the entire room. The King himself is radiant with power and glory. Incense rises continually and the sound of worship is always heard. The needs of supplicants are brought before Him by the one seated on His right hand. Getting near the throne requires you to get past the twenty-four elders and the beasts. But even in the outer part of the court, you can hobnob with the likes of Michael and Gabriel. Chat with a seraphim or two to pass the time. It's a rarified atmosphere. To enter it you have to be holy, or come in as a guest of someone who is.

Family is accepted of course. Princes have no problem getting in to talk with their fathers. They are loved. Witness Jesus being baptized of John in the river of Jordan. Hear the voice coming out of the throne room. "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased". Beloved son? We can't imagine He has any trouble getting into the throne room. Wonder if He takes guests in with Him?

Actually, the best access to the throne room is not with Jesus but inside of Him. Didn't you know that we are the body of Christ? Entering into that body through grace is entering into son-ship with God by adoption. Jesus was not baptized because of sin. He was baptized out of obedience to the will of His Father in order to begin His ministry. When the Holy Spirit also descends like a dove upon us, we know that we are also beloved. When the fire falls from heaven, we know that our living sacrifice has been accepted.

The fire always falls. When the priests would enter the Holy of Holies, they wore bells and pomegranates around the hem of their robes. Although Jewish scholars disagree, tradition says that they also had a rope tied to their ankles. If they entered the presence of God with sin in their lives, the fire would fall on them. When the sound of the bells ceased, the rope could be used to drag their bodies out. In the ninth chapter of Leviticus, Moses and Aaron came out, the glory of the Lord was upon the people, and fire fell from heaven on their offerings. The fire always falls. On us, or on the acceptable sacrifice.

There is nothing now to fear though. The fire has already fallen. In fact, it is the fire in our lives that keeps the roaring lion away. We can enter the presence of God and not die because we are accepted in the beloved. Jesus was accepted and He has become our high priest, to present our offerings of praise to God. Jesus was beloved and we have become a part of His body. Jesus ascended into heaven, but fell upon the acceptable sacrifices gathered in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. He also came in the form of fire. His blood is the only acceptable garment to wear into the presence of God because it alone is holy and without blemish.

Come on into the throne room. It's okay. You can leave your guilt and your fear in the coat room. Put on the garment of the blood of Christ and bring your sacrifice of praise on in with you. Because Christ is holy, you are holy. Because He is without spot or blemish, so are you. Most importantly, because He is loved, you are also, accepted in the beloved.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. If someone is pursuing entirely different goals and serving an entirely different master, how easy is it for them to blend in with our current society and remain unnoticed?
2. Does the idea of clichés or clubs that you can not become a part of bother you?
3. Although many have desired to, and would have traded everything they owned to do so, have you ever considered how few people in the history of mankind have ever stood in the presence of a living God and known that they did not worship in vain?
4. Do you feel you have done anything to really be worthy of that honor?
5. Have you ever wondered what it means to be a part of the body of Christ? To be members that do the will of Christ, the head?
6. Can you imagine living in a dispensation where coming into the presence of God with the smallest of sins in your life would cause you to die? Do you enjoy being able to come before Him without fear?
7. Why is praise considered to be a sacrifice?
8. Is it possible to come into the presence of God without first being covered by the blood through repentance?
9. Have you ever experienced being in the glory of God? How clean or righteous did you feel after God revealed Himself to you in that aspect? Were you afraid?