

## Tuesday's Touch

...from Pastor Ed ...March 10, 2009

### *Accepted in the Beloved*

*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, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; ... Ephesians 1:5-7*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God ... 1 Peter 1:3-5*

*You... have loved them as you have loved me. John 17:23*

**J**onathan Edwards, in a sermon on the merits of the atonement, points out that Christ's sacrifice of himself not only satisfies God's wrath toward the believer's sin, but is in itself a sweet smelling sacrifice "infinitely lovely in the eyes of the father." In being obedient, even unto the death of the cross, Jesus accrues boundless merit in the estimation of the Father, and is therefore exalted above all things, and given a name above all names (Phil.2:8-11).

But the entire impetus for the incarnation and total obedience of Christ was his love for the Church. (Eph. 5:25) In him, his people are crucified, risen, and seated in the heavenlies (Eph.2:4-7), being fully accepted (*εχαριτωσεν*) in the Beloved. The believer is not only cleansed from sin, but is a joint-heir with Christ to an inheritance that has already been received.

This has enormous implications for the child of God. The Father looks upon the redeemed with the same satisfaction and love He has for the Son (John 17:23). In Christ, His love is perfect, unconditional, and eternal. He is well-pleased with His children and rejoices over them with delight (Isaiah 62:5). While it is certainly biblical to speak of our striving to please Him in all things, we must keep our concept of 'striving' rooted in the victory of the cross. Our desire to please Him must never be distorted into trying to earn or maintain His acceptance. Could Christ's merit be added to or diminished, then so might our standing before the Father. It is out of this love perfected, with the Spirit of adoption within crying, "Abba, Father," already seated in the with Christ in the heavens, that we go forth to the praise of His glory--humbly, on our knees, our victory all the cross.

*Even when we sin, His Spirit is deeply grieved precisely because of His infinite love toward us. Therefore, at times, He visits us with the loving hand of his fatherly displeasure to correct us, but never with the hand of wrath to punish us.*

*Friends, if we have been made accepted upon the merits of Christ alone, then we are also kept upon the merits of Christ alone. Upon this foundation of unmerited grace, we must live in the security and hope of the Father's good pleasure.*

*A title by the world so loathed-  
"O wretched worm," I gladly own;  
For as a worm to Christ I fled,  
And into glory He hath led.  
No shred of merit of my own,  
Tis Christ, my Christ, and Christ alone.*

*Blessed Holy Spirit,*

*Press to the heart of every true child, the boundless delight of the Father's love toward his children. Grant that we may rejoice in Him, as He rejoices over us. May love, joy and peace be always at the core of our devotion and service to the praise of His glory.*

*In the glorious provisions of Christ alone,  
Amen*

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