

# “Acceptance With God”

By B. W. Newton

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READER, hast thou ever thought of the purity of Heaven, of the holiness of the living God? Heaven is a happy place; for joy, and light, and love, and peace are, in all perfectness there. It is a happy place, but it is also a *holy place*, too holy for us as men.

Is it not wonderful that any should hear of the holiness of God and imagine that they are fit to meet God or that they are able to make themselves fit? Unless we have kept God's holy Law always and in everything--in thought, and word, and deed, from childhood to the grave we are manifestly unfit for God. And God tells us that we are unfit. He says, “There is none righteous, no, not one.” (Rom. 3:10). Shall we say that we are righteous when God says that we are not? Shall we be hypocrites and say that we have in everything loved, and honoured, and served God perfectly when we know that we have not?

Yet there has been one Righteous, one Holy One in the earth. It was JESUS, IMMANUEL, GOD manifest in the flesh. *He* did love, and honour, and serve God perfectly. *He* did keep every jot and tittle of God's holy Law. He was light and not darkness, heavenly in all His thoughts, and words and ways, as unlike other men in holiness as Heaven is unlike to earth. He honoured and glorified God's Law by perfect obedience to it, in life and in death. He honoured it by bearing the curse that it had pronounced against sin.

What then, if God, desiring to magnify the riches of His grace and to honour the name and work of JESUS, should be willing to accept sinners such as we in the value of that holy name? What if He should propose to us that we should be allowed to stand under the shelter and under the preciousness of all that Jesus has accomplished on behalf of sinners? What if He should be willing to extinguish, as it were, the worthlessness of our names and to substitute for that worthlessness the worthiness and preciousness of the name of JESUS?

This, God *is* willing to do. This is what He proposeth to us in the Gospel of His grace. He speaks to us of the death of Jesus under wrath on the accursed Tree and says that He is willing to receive us under the redeeming power of those sufferings and that death. He speaks to us of the excellency and preciousness of the Person and character and service of JESUS and says that He is willing to impute to us that excellency and to accept us in it just as if it were our own.

Shall we then despise this proposal of God? Are we *too* proud, too self-righteous, too careless to cast ourselves on the grace thus proposed to us through the work of JESUS? Shall we be numbered among those of whom it is said, “Behold, ye DESPISERS, and wonder, and perish,” or shall we cast ourselves on God according to this grace, and become “ACCEPTED in the Beloved”?

Every man upon earth, as regards the future, either leans upon nothing or leans upon something.

If he leans upon nothing, he is lost; if he leans upon something he is lost, unless that something be that which the God of Truth and Holiness proposeth, to wit, the sufferings and merits of JESUS crucified.

Such leaning, such reliance is faith, justifying faith. He who thus relies (though it may be feebly) believes, and “he that believeth shall never be confounded.” A covenant God hath said so, and He cannot lie. Is He not able to preserve, through JESUS, those whom He has accepted in JESUS? He hath said that He will preserve such even to the end. “Preserved in Christ Jesus” are words which the Scripture teaches us to use. The Holy Spirit “dwells in” and forsakes not those who have fled to the blood of Jesus as their refuge. Christ is the Shepherd and Bishop of His believing people and, as such, watches the counsels of their hearts and the way of their steps. And soon, when Jesus shall return, they shall, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed, in body, soul and spirit, into His heavenly likeness, and then they shall not only be perfected as regards acceptance (*that* they are now, the moment they believe on the Lamb of God) but they then shall be perfected absolutely. Indwelling sin that now lusteth against the Spirit shall then no longer be found in them. They shall be *like*, as well as *with*, their Lord and shall love and serve and glorify Him worthily forever.