

Verse by Verse: Ephesians 1: 1-6

By Lloyd Anderson

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We do want to speak to you today for just a few minutes out of a Ephesians One and verse 6. Now, as you know, the Book of Ephesians is a tremendous book of the New Testament. And from your own personal study of this missive, in God's word. I am sure that you, together with the rest of us, have recognized that the Apostle Paul had written this book from the city of Rome and about the year A.D. 65.

As you know, it is one of the first of the great prison epistles. And certainly here you have the wonderful truth of the New Testament Body of Christ, which is the church. And so if you have your Bibles open, we're going to read just the first six verses of Ephesians chapter one. I trust that many of you people. And I say it while you're getting your Bibles open. We'll continue to pray much that God's blessing may rest upon the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. We pray as we share with you when radio land from day to day, during the absence of Dr. Talbot and Bible conference work up in the Northwest, that you will pray that the message sent out over the air will prove to be a blessing to countless numbers of hearts. This is Dr. Lloyd Anderson of Bethany Baptist in West Covina. And we wanted so much that your heart would be blessed this morning as we speak to you from the pages of God's holy word.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord

Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 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. Now, I am sure that you recognize with me today that it is very profitable to note that this passage, which lifts us to the highest possible expression of God's grace, is found in this epistle called the Ephesian letter. Now, this does not mean that the text we are considering is more inspired than other portions of the Bible for certainly according to Second Timothy 3:16. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, but it does give added weight to the glory of it, because in the book of Ephesians, the Holy Spirit unfolds, as in no other section of divine revelation, the eternal purposes of God through Jesus Christ. The message of Ephesians leads us into a oneness with Jesus Christ barely touched upon anywhere else. It is here that the Holy Spirit is making known truth, which has been hidden in God in other ages, and kept secret until divulged through the Apostle Paul.

Now this truth, this revelation, has become known as the mystery. And you remember, it is Rotherham's translation of the New Testament that uses for the word mystery, the expression sacred secret. God is showing how Jew and Gentile alike are one in Christ and are members of his body, which is called the New Testament Church. Now so intimate as this relationship between Jesus Christ and all his born again ones that is members of the body of Christ. We are said to be of his flesh and definitely of his bones. Now, in the four gospels of the New Testament, we behold the Redeemer, and then we also catch a glimpse of the great historic facts

of his work of human redemption. In the Book of the Acts we see, the Holy Spirit is the baptizer busily engaged as the builder of a spiritual temple we call the church. And when we come to the church epistles of the New Testament and especially the wonderful book of Ephesians into which we've gone and our broadcast today, it is to contemplate the matchless truth of the body of Christ, composed of all men and women and boys and girls, out of all strata's of society, out of all colors and nationalities and speech who have believed in Christ and who have been baptized by the spirit of the living God into one body which is called the church.

In First Corinthians 12:13. We read this word for by one spirit. Are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free and have been all made to drink into one spirit. Now, some people have spoken of Ephesians as a basket of precious fruit. And I remember one of our own ministers, Dr. Biehl of Arizona, using that expression. And others have used the expression that here we have an infinite ocean of God's grace. And some have even suggested the title for the Book of Ephesians that the book is the Alps of the New Testament. Now, if this is true and we believe it is, the text which we are seeking to expound is the highest peak of this wonderful range we call a spiritual Alps. It is glorious to stargaze by faith upon the oneness of the risen Christ and concerning his own believing people. The first chapter of the Book of Ephesians opens in a remarkable manner. It consists of but three sentences, though there are 23 verses within its bounds.

One of these sentences is the longest to be found in all the realm of literature, my friend, and contains 264 words in itself. And while it is an involved statement from the grammarian's point of view, it is filled with the wonders of grace, as no other sentence in the word of God can be

filled. This chapter in which the text of our message in Ephesians 1 and 6 is to be found is presents the love of the father and the grace of the son and the work of the Holy Spirit, thus revealing the involvement of the Trinity in the subject of eternal salvation. Now, as we study the passage we have before us, I think we need to remember that. First of all, my friend, it has to do with the tremendous heights of the riches we find in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the third verse of Ephesians chapter one, the Apostle points out that as Christian people, we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings and heavenly places in Christ. There are three words in the statement which call for special consideration, and when they definitely are understood, they will enable us to comprehend better our acceptance in the Lord Jesus Christ. The little word that I use, first of all, is the word *hath*.

Now it seems very difficult for many people to lay hold of the full sweep of the tense suggested by it. We imagine we're going to be blessed with all spiritual blessings when we get to heaven. But my friend does say that we are now blessed with spiritual blessings and heavenly places, and Christ becomes a definite challenge to your faith and mine. Nevertheless, the words signify as a finished transaction, and it signifies a present possession. And only too often we push into the future what belongs to us now so that we fail to possess to the full our spiritual possessions. Now the second word is the little word *all*, and what a sweeping word. This is as applied to God's goodness and relationship to his own people. Within the bounds of these three letters is everything that God has for his own with nothing held back. Is it any wonder that Paul should write to the Colossians and say, and thee are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power? You see, the circle of grace in this wonderful chapter begins with the word chosen and ends with the words sealed. And then the third word that I'd like to use here out

of this wonderful, wonderful passage, before us, is the little word heavenly, or as it ought to be more correctly, given heavenlies, which indicate that God, in his own reckoning, sees us in the heavenly places right now. Therefore, in this blessed Epistle, we look not at the things which are seen, but we look at the unseen.

We are here engaged not with the temple and the tangible, but with the spiritual and with the eternal. In view of such a wonderful revelation, we need to draw near with a true heart. A heart that is filled with a full assurance of faith are literally in the full sail of faith. As you have it in Hebrews ten and twenty two. And the thought is that a bearing right on with a wind. All of our canvasses up in the light of Ephesian truth, there should be a real gale of faith filling our soul and causing praise to ascend unto God for his wonderful grace. Now. Another thing we'd like to call to your attention out of Ephesians 1 and 6 is the fact that all of our riches are centering on the Lord Jesus Christ because you see the verse tells us that the believer is accepted in the beloved. Now, this was the golden name, which the ancient church and her most joyous moments used to give to Jesus Christ as the savior. It is a title which expresses the utter and absolute devotion which the early Christian people accorded the Lord. He was their best beloved, indeed the most precious object of their deepest spiritual affection.

Those who are familiar with the Song of Solomon way back in the Old Testament will recall how the young bride referred to her shepherd lover as the beloved one. She sustained herself and the hour of testing and trial by constantly bearing witness to the one to whom she was betrothed. You remember, she says, in that book, in chapter two and verse 16, my beloved is mine, and I am his the voice of my beloved. Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, says chapter two of

the Song of Solomon and verse eight. And then in chapter four and verse 16. Let my beloved come into his garden and eat his pleasant fruits. In answer to the questions of the daughters of Jerusalem concerning him, the Shulamite woman said, my beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand. He is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend. Oh daughters of Jerusalem. You see, the daughters of Jerusalem were so charmed with her testimony concerning her beloved that they, too, began to cry out. Whither is thy beloved gone? Oh thou fairest among women? Whither is thy beloved turned aside? That we may seek him with thee one of the greatest mistakes. I think that we as Christian people are making is to put someone in the place of the Lord Jesus Christ doctrines and types and creeds, and even the church all have their place in the economy of God. But the divine purpose of the Lord, my friend, is that.

All of these should simply point to the Lord Jesus Christ. No church is an end in itself. No creed is an end in itself. No doctrine is an end in itself. No typical. Truth is an end in itself unless it is pointing as a finger to the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing apart from the person of the Savior will ever please our Heavenly Father. God intends that everything shall center in his own son. Now to know Christ as you have it, in Philippians 3:10 is the longing of the heart of Paul should be the constant longing of every human heart. Satan strives his utmost to keep us occupied with anything and everything, rather than with Christ the beloved one. The clearer our view of the risen savior, the more our hearts will be filled with him, and the less we will speak about that which does not magnify the Lamb of God. Unless we can see the Lord Jesus Christ in baptism and in the communion service. They simply become ordinances without any meaning and without any significance whatsoever. You know, I believe one reason why Christians do not get

along with one another better than they do is that they do not permit their gaze to be fixed upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Their eyes are centered upon their own individual interests and their own problems and the things that they feel other people have done against them. And they do not keep their eyes upon the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the business of the church is to magnify the savior and to proclaim his exaltation when the church competes with the world in what it has to offer. It can only miserably fail, my friend. Yes, we need to remember that were certainly the words that we certainly can understand is a word of this kind.

I think some time ago of a minister who distributed cards to get an expression as to how the services could be improved in this particular church. And among the suggestions that came from a little boy was this that he wanted more sugar put in the lemonade because the only evening service that church had was a service of lemonade and fun and social action. How foolish can we get my friend? Here is a foolish minister who does not realize that the world is able to put more sugar in its lemonade than he can or the church can. That preaching, which God honors, my friend, is the kind of preaching that sets before the people the love of Jesus Christ, who is the beloved one. And surely the world is dying for a little bit of love.

A third truth that I think is suggested by this wonderful scripture in Ephesians one and 6 is the fact that we are inseparably linked to the Lord Jesus Christ. You see, the little preposition in is the vital word to be found at this particular point. The believer is accepted in the beloved or in Christ now, as small as the little word in might be. It is certainly weighted down with the riches of God's grace, as our few other words. The phrase in the beloved or in Christ is the key expression of this wonderful letter to the believers in the city of Ephesus. It is the assertion of the

believers absolutely union with Christ to be in the beloved means to possess all that Christ is, and all that Christ has to be accepted in the beloved then is the supreme manifestation of the grace of God. Now, I need to point out to you, I think as you listen to me today, that all of the experiences of the Lord Jesus Christ are reckoned by our Heavenly Father to the account of the believer. Each one of the child, children of God, is completely identified with his crucifixion, with his burial, with his resurrection and his ascension. And you and I in the Book of Ephesians are said to be seated with Christ in heavenly places.

Such is the scope of the phrase in the beloved. Now, you and I. Daily, my friend, need to appropriate in faith. The glory and power of Christ risen life in describing the inheritance of the children of Israel. God had this to say. For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year. Deuteronomy eleven verses ten and twelve. Now when God referred to the watering the land by foot. It was an allusion to the drudgery and the hard work of irrigating the crops in the land of Egypt, in contrast with the promised land, which drank freely of the rain and bore plentiful crops under the blessings of the Lord to turn the small water wheels by foot in the land of Egypt was a tedious and the toilsome process and how sad it is today, spiritually speaking.

To see many Christian people going down to Egypt, where they have to water by foot instead of staying in the land of Canaan where the first and the latter rain cometh and due season. Yes. In

the beloved is the promised land of God's grace, A land which the Lord thy God careth for: And as the branches are to the vine, as the body to the head, as the walls to the corner. So is the believer related to Jesus Christ. We are said to be one in him, accepted in and mark that little preposition in the beloved. And then I think as you examine the sixth verse of Ephesians chapter one, it is to realize that we have here also a portrayal of the assurance and security of the believer in Christ. When we are told by the Holy Spirit that we are accepted in the beloved one, as it ought to be in the margin, it indicates how we stand before the Lord. We are not accepted before God on the basis of our own merits, but on the basis of Christ's merits, you see, and therefore so long as Christ as acceptable to God. And we are accepted in the beloved. We are as secure as the beloved himself. This is the basis of our peace and our spiritual assurance.

You see, it is interesting to observe that there are no conditions, my friend, attached to this wonderful revelation of God's grace. It does not say that we are accepted in the beloved so long as we walk uprightly and obey all of his commandments. There is no recorded circumstance in the word of God, which indicates a possible change of statement to read. Not now accepted in the beloved. My friend listened to me today. If sin can cause us to lose our position in the beloved one Christ, then no Christian ever will be saved. For there is not a just man upon the earth that doith good and sineth. God never begins anything. He cannot bring to a climax and finish his calculations are never poor and God is always free from all limitations which might produce embarrassment. God understands the necessity of the finishing touch, and he delights in its completion. He is the author and the he is the finisher of our faith. The psalmist knew of the truth of this when he wrote The Lord will finish that, which concerns me in Psalm 138 and the

eighth verse, the perfection of the work of the Lord is seen in the security which belongs to all of his people, and that they are accepted in the beloved.

Now, if I was accepted in you, and you were accepted in me, then, my friend, we might have some fear about our assurance of faith, but were accepted in him. What more could he say and what more could he do? We have reached the summit of divine revelation. There is no higher ground, my friend. In view of all that God has done for us in the beloved, that is, we are accepted by God in the person of his own son is what is meant by the expression accepted in the beloved, and then the light of Christian gratitude and responsibility. We now should take a look at the practical side of this whole truth. And I think we're practical when we say that this wonderful heavenly places truth and this wonderful truth of being accepted in the beloved ought to elicit from you and me a righteous and a godly life. You see, acceptance in the Lord Jesus Christ is one thing, and living acceptably before him is still another. Because we are accepted, we should live acceptably. This is the force of Paul's argument as he presented the practical side of the message of the Roman Book of the New Testament in Romans Twelve and Verse 1. I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. Now it's very apparent that the position which the believer holds through grace involves definite responsibilities and demands a worthy and a God pleasing practical Christian walk. I'm not accepted in the beloved to live acceptably to myself. If you and I are going to reveal our gratitude for the Supreme Act of God's grace, then we must learn to deny self rather than to please self. You see, certainly that's previous precious acceptance which is ours through faith suggest a very willing and already acceptability. And this acceptability is in accordance with our willingness to obey and our yieldness for

Christian service. Now acceptance in the beloved is a present, finished and a settled fact for every child of God. Why living acceptably is to be a continuous, earnest and honest endeavor on his part.

One involves our standing and the other involves our state. Our standing is to be accepted in the beloved. Our state is to walk in Christian living before the world and before him. Now Paul brings this out. You'll remember in Second Corinthians 5:9, wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. The burden of his heart was acceptability in his daily walk. He had joined the same truth upon young Timothy when he said study to show thyself approved unto God. He was working for God's approval in his life. This young man, who was to make acceptability a matter of careful consideration, was truly one who previously had been accepted in the beloved. It is said that the Christian worker a number of years ago asked an Indian if he had ever been saved, and in his broken English he said, you betcha. I'm a Christian. I'm a Christian. From the bottom to the top. Here was a fellow who stood on firm foundation of acceptance in the beloved, and then he went on from there to become a completely acceptable in his daily life, as expressed in his crude verbal way from the bottom to the top.

You know, we've often used that Indian's expression only sometimes in reverse form. From the top to the bottom, it is a good statement. If we mean by it that our knowledge of the truth has gone down into our hearts to bring about an acceptability before God and our walk, it has gone to our pocketbooks to cause us to be giving Christians and thence to our feet to the very bottom. Make us missionary Christians. Now, I think, you know, do you not as a Christian this morning that the day is coming when you and I are going to be judged by Christ, when our acceptability is

going to be tested, approved or disapproved, rewarded or even rejected, not our salvation.

Because if we were not saved, we wouldn't even stand before this judgment of the believer in First Corinthians 3 verses 14 and 15. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. He's talking here about the Christian. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. And though his works are burned because of his failure to live acceptably before the Lord, yet he himself shall be saved because he has been accepted in the beloved one. And this acceptance stands eternal, irrespective of his acceptability. We need to keep in mind constantly that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he has done. Whether it be good or bad, yes. Here is God's grace. Nothing could be higher. Nothing could be greater to the praise of the glory of his grace, says Paul, wherein he has made us accepted in the beloved one. Do you know Christ this morning? Have you ever accepted him to be your own personal lord and savior? Oh, you can be accepted in the beloved, my friend, if you'll only turn to Jesus Christ.

We praise thee our father as we come now to prayer for thy gracious manifestation in our hearts and lives. Bless. We asked oh God the homes from which we come and the children in our homes be with our neighbors and friends. Help us to bear a worthy testimony of thee for Jesus sake. Amen.

Announcer:

This Friday night at the beautiful new campus auditorium, Biola will present the concluding film program in the first annual festival of films featured tomorrow evening. Is the recent release of

World Vision Incorporated entitled A Cry in the Night in a premiere showing a Cry in the night is a 52 minute production in color and sound depicting these spiritual needs of Asia and the work of dedicated Christian missionaries throughout that vast area? The program begins sharply at 7:00 p.m. That's in the Biola campus auditorium tomorrow, Friday night on Biola Avenue between Rosecrans and Imperial in La Mirada. This is K.G.E. R. Long Beach, California. Any decent neighborhood in the city. Yours included, can turn into tomorrow's slum. Once shabbiness begins to show itself on a street. It takes watchful eyes to guard against blight. First, you must keep your own house in order. Then to protect the value of your property. You have to fight blight beyond your own backyard. And the best way to do this is to get together with the neighborhood improvement group in your community to get things done. Together you can get the facts on what needs to be done and set the goals you want to accomplish. Work on the basis that better neighborhoods make better neighbors to find out how successful others have been in their group. Fight against housing blight, write Action. The American Council to improve our neighborhoods Action will help you with advice on specific problems. Do right. Action Box 90. Radio City Station. New York 20. New York. That's Action Box 90. Radio City Station. New York. 20. New York.