

Acceptance (Hebrews 11)

Part 1

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[00:00:00] It is special to the Hebrews, chapter 11.

I want to read the first ten verses, and four other scriptures in connection with it. Now faith is the substance of things untaught, the evidence of things unseen, for by its gilders obtained a good report.

Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the Word of God, so that things which are seen were not made things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous. God testified to his gifts, and by it he meant dead, yet spake of them.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, [00:01:03] and was not bound, because God had translated him.

For before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

But without faith it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them, and that diligently seek him. By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house, by which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed. And he went out, not knowing where he went.

[00:02:01] By faith he sojourned in the land of Prometh, as in a strange country, dwelling in Tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.

If this will do the Ephesians, anyone read one verse in chapter 5, verse 2, Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice for God, for a sweet smelling savour. 14th chapter of John's Gospel, verse 21.

He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, [00:03:05] he that loveth me.

And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him, verse 23. And Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my

Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our oath with him. The last chapter of Peter's second epistle, verse 4.

And saying, where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were [00:04:03] abode, and the earth standing over the water and in the water, whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water perished.

But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word, are kept in store, reserved under fire against the day of judgment, and for the ears of ungodly men. Verse 10. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall cancel away the great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up, seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, for what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening [00:05:02] unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Finally, second of Colossians, chapter 14, the most wonderful chapter of the word of God. We'll commence reading in verse 6. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

But we have this treasure in earth and metals, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed. We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, cast down, but not destroyed, [00:06:05] always bearing about in the body the time of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we will live, always live unto death, for he who has saved, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

So then, death worketh in us, but life in you. We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken. We also believe, and therefore speak. Now let me betray the love of the Lord Jesus to raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound the glory of God. [00:07:04] For which cause? We think not. The door out of man is perished, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our life's affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us the found law exceeding, and eternal weight of glory while we look, not at the things which I have seen, but at the things which I have not seen. For the things which I have seen are temporal, but the things which I have seen are eternal.

I want to say a few words about the four men that one is read of in the 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, in the light of the four scriptures from the New Testament that one has read. [00:08:03] There is a divine sequence, obviously, in the order of presentation in the 11th chapter of Hebrews.

Firstly, and very simply, because of necessity, one would speak of Abel.

For without the truth that comes to us in the light of New Testament writing, there can be nothing for God, and nothing for us in the light of eternal blessing, unless the truth of the offering of Abel is apprehended by faith in the soul. I do not want to preach the gospel, but of necessity one must verify it.

By faith, Abel offered up as far a more excellent sacrifice [00:09:07] as it can.

It is well known that all the offerings to God in the book of Genesis are burnt offerings, not sin offerings.

And in the truth of the burnt offering, we have the highest presentation in Scripture, in sight, of the death of Jesus.

I might have read part of the fourth chapter of Genesis, but that's time for this. We read therein that Abel took up the first step of Islam, and the fact thereof, that he offered it to God.

[00:10:02] We read therein that God had respect unto his offering. And the literal meaning of the words is this, that Abel could lift up his face to God in favour and acceptance.

In this act of God, I am called to say that the truth of acceptance is the highest aspect of our blessing in the sight of God. I read that little verse just in connection with Abel from the fifth chapter of Ephesians. A little verse, almost out of keeping with the rest of that chapter, but I'll pass it to you. All the tears to the heart just really are in the words of Christ and of Joseph.

[00:11:01] Here we can plumb and dive into the depths of the unfathomable love of God.

The Christ that loved us, and has given himself for us a sacrifice, and an offering of a sweet and savoury meal to God.

And on the ground of that precious death in which God eternally glorified, he was glorifying his precious life. He allowed us to say in truth, I have glorified these on the earth. But he was glorified again at that death, and in perfect obedience, and unswerving devotion, [00:12:06] the Son of God moved onward in obedience to the will of God, and died on his precious life on the cross of Calvary.

And on the ground of that precious death, in which God has been eternally glorified, as to the matter of sin and my sins, I can bask in the fullness of the favour and the acceptance of God. We read in the first chapter of Ephesians that we have been taken into favour. As near, as he is near, as dear as he is dear, I could not be nearer to God, for in the person of his beloved Son, I am as near as him.

[00:13:01] This is the simple but profound truth that we see brought before us in Old Testament time, in the offering of Abel. And of necessity I say again, I must apprehend that truth in Christ as a soul, if I am in any measure to stand in acceptance before God.

The first movement of faith is this, I am brought into right relationships with God by faith on the finished work of Christ, to offer himself without a spot to God.

Lift unflamable, love divine, heal each soul over the soul, God give us grace that blunders, Christ has loved us.

The angels of eternity will echo with the song of the redeemed, [00:14:06] unto him that loveth us.

Here is the awakening of my approach to God, that has come down from heaven, here is the awakening of my approach to God, that has come down from heaven, down the avenue of the

boundless love of Christ, that led him to lay down his precious life in death, that I might be brought into acceptance before God. The faith goes on.

Faith will never move away from that truth, but faith can move on. Faith moves on.

If I have apprehended in any measure in the soul, the meaning of acceptance with God, be sure of this, [00:15:03] be sure of this, there will be a masterful and solemn answer to it, in my life here in the world. I wanted to guess that in Enoch, Noah and Abraham, we have perhaps in very simple crystallized form, some of the underlying principles that mark the ministry of John, Peter and Paul. I believe it was Mr. Sturney who said, that John's ministry with Enoch expanded. I think there is a measure of truth, in this little statement. I want just to emphasize, one or two little things about Enoch, we do not read very much of him, [00:16:02] in scripture, and what we read of him is profound. He pleased God, he pleased God.

We may look upon such a simple statement, with perhaps the thought that, there is something greater than this. But you know the essential of God very often, the simplest thoughts of the word of God, are the most profound. Think of it dear friends, the essential of God, these bodies of ours in which once, the wretched works of sin and misery, were manifestly expounded, in those very same persons, they can be manifested with which God is pleased. That's the work of faith, and the Holy Spirit of God. And it's a great truth, [00:17:02] we can live to the favour of God. You know I didn't intend to speak about Cain, but one feels, perhaps it is necessary, to mention by way of warning, something of this miserable murderer, and his way, Cain.

He stands out in stark contrast, to the way of faith.

They never coalesce, they never mix, in the way of Cain, in the way of faith, the essential of God. Let us not compromise these two truths, the way of Cain, and the way of faith, never mix.

Read the fourth chapter of Genesis, [00:18:01] and there he is simply denigrated, by the hand of the Spirit of God. The movement of Cain, when he went out from the presence of God, that's the first thing that marks him, after his murderous deed, he went out from the presence of God, and he set up a city and a system, that spoke in every way, of man and Cain, and nothing of God.

You remember he built the city, and called it after his son, Enoch, which means Jewish. You follow through with him, some measure of his descendants, and you find commerce, and mark him within the way of Cain, not the way of Abel, that these things commence. Commerce, arts and crafts, self-making pleasure, [00:19:03] they were commence, by the descendants of Cain, not of Abel.

We see them all around us. We see them, amongst the sons of God. They have no right to be there. Commerce, music, arts, everything that is pleasurable, to the first man that crucified Christ, and was put away in the death of Christ. They commence by their origin, in the city, and system, of which Cain was the originator, a man who went out from the presence of God. God gave us Christ, to keep away from.

[00:20:03] But there's a bright note at the end of the fourth chapter of Genesis, there is introduced a lie of faith, he's not mentioned in Hebrews, but we read it said. And the last quote of the fourth chapter of Genesis is this, then, men, began to call, on the name of the Lord. A simple lie of faith, which kept them completely aware, and had nothing to do with Cain. They sought not to revenge the death of

Abel. They sought not to interfere with the politics, in the way of Cain.

They went on in simple faith, which called upon God, and we might say, with which God was pleased. And of that line, comes Enoch. Of that line, comes Enoch. [00:21:03] By faith, Enoch was translated, and he should not sit there. And there was not found, which was God had translated him, or before his translation, he had this testimony, and he pleased God.

I want to turn away from Enoch, for a moment.

I want to talk about somebody else, who pleased God.

Who comes to mind, when you think of a person, who pleased God?

Jesus.

Or think of the majesty, or think of the depth, or the profundity of the statement, of one here, a perfect man, who could say, I do always those things, which please the Father. Pleasing God, the High Court, there is no bias in service. He pleased God.

I do always those things, [00:22:01] which please the Father. And where is pleasing the Father, or pleasing God?

By its source, its power. It is in communion.

In communion.

If one in any nature is to move onward through this world, pleasing to God, it is incumbent upon me to move in communion with God. It doesn't say so in Hebrews 11, but we read in Genesis, to walk with God.

Do I walk with God?

Do I move through this world daily, hourly, with a conscious sense in myself that God is there?

[00:23:07] Perhaps sometimes we do well to sit down simply and ponder motives, actions, service, in the presence of God. All that is true and right, according to the will of God, will lay upon these eyes of you, and nowhere else.

O dear saints of God, let us carry the presence of God in communion.

How often we read in Luke's Gospel of that holy dependent man that he was found in prayer.

Some have tried to count it up, I believe it's about 11 times. That holy dependent man is found in prayer in Luke's Gospel.

What need had he to pray in himself because of this person? None, he was called. [00:24:01] But as a holy dependent man, he found recourse to the presence of God in prayer.

And coming out of that august presence, he moved through this world in the power of communion.

Every step, every word, every motive.

And each motive, you know, very often, dear saints of God, in which we don't know where to turn.

Our motives are reformed in the presence of God.

Is that happened in this life of mine? Because of the fact that I am in right relations with God, that I am now here as a child of God moving on the principle of faith. Have I reformed first and foremost [00:25:02] this simple desire, I want to live here as a figure of God?

This should be paramount in our ambition.

There might be many other things.

I speak freely to my generation.

Let us see that our ambitions, our desires for this present life are formed in the presence of God.

Oh, this is vital.

Many of the pitfalls, the failures, the unhappiness, and the embarrassing situations that the devil would drop us into would be avoided if we knew more and more what it was to see in the presence of God. I read that in a verse in John's Gospel.

[00:26:01] There perhaps is no other writer in the New Testament who so real and livingly puts me in the presence of divine persons as John. There is an unmistakable mark of majesty in his presentation of the Gospel.

There is a warmth and a depth in his ministry. One cannot but re-read it and not be marked with a thought, I have to do with God, find him in the presence of God in the ministry of John.

Let all have pleasure out of the words that one read from the 14th chapter of his Gospel. Here is a text of my affection and love for Christ if we can speak of it in such a manner if a man loved me he would keep my word [00:27:06] if a man loved me he would keep my word are the words of the saints or the commandments of Jesus cherished in their flesh? Read them prayerfully calmly the signs of Jesus I don't want to be blinded to separationists I want to speak just about one statement of Jesus which he said in prayer to his Father concerning you and I they are not of the world they are not [00:28:02] the words of God Jesus Christ to attain to that high standard Do I love him?

Here is a text of my affection and love for Christ if a man loved me he would keep my stand he would keep my word but look, look at the reward all the rewards of affection for Jesus therefore that my Father loved me he said that looking upon his disciples the Father himself loved you why? because he had affection for me there can be no greater reward for love for Jesus than this [00:29:03] I am charmed with the blessedness of the love of the Father but here we have another reward if a man loved me he would keep my word and my Father would love him and make our world with him communion with divine persons all are consoled in all this power all are new born in the magnificent

look at this the Father and the Son coming like their hope in me here is communion here is the source of power in this world [00:30:01] here is where I tap divine sustenance for testimony in this world the presence of the Father and the Son here is the reward for pleasing God for charity in carrying out the sayings of Jesus God give us grace to put them paramount in our desires but may we know what it is first and foremost that by faith to walk here here in communion with God pleasing to God that's enough by faith know of being born of God of things not seen as yet known through the fear prepare now for the station of his host [00:31:06] as I have said here we have perhaps some of the weighty features of the ministry there is expression that I want to emphasize in regard to Noah's list he had a communication from God concerning the judgment of the dead world a very weighty matter the judgment of this world Noah believed God and he moved on the ground of that divine communication [00:32:02] and the remarkable thing is that it says he condemned the world he condemned it that's what Hebrew says of Noah God condemned the world God condemned the judgment of the world he called his servant Moses and he had this effect Noah condemned the world have you and I condemned this world? we have in the third chapter of the second epistle of Peter one of the most weighty and profound communications regarding the physical creation I think it would be right to say the most awe-inspiring communication concerning this present world is going to be burned up the world [00:33:01] is going to end with a great noise going to be exhaled the mind cannot envision a greater physical happening in the creation of God and it's God who will do it but God will know that his prophet has foretold of this coming event and in the third chapter of second Peter we read of it that Peter writes of it not that we might just collect mental knowledge of the workings of God which are yet to take place in this great sphere if that is the only way [00:34:01] that I approach the word of God I am losing that Peter one feels writes of the chapter of his second epistle that it might have a profound effect upon the heart, mind and life of those to whom he wrote when Noah received the communication which he believed by faith it had a remarkable effect upon him he condemned the world dear saints of God there are many many more reasons why you and I should condemn this world I'm speaking here first and foremost on this reason because God has condemned it and it's coming, Peter judge there is perhaps a reason far nearer to your affections and mine than this this world is the sphere where Christ is hated [00:35:01] don't wiggle down that expression dear saints of God this world hates Jesus that surely is good enough reason for you and I to come to this judgement of this world in the presence of God and from thence God give us to know the truth of looking upon this world as a barren place where Jesus died but it's coming Peter judge I see the time is going I don't want to lengthen out this Peter says in verse 11 see then that all these things shall be so what manner of persons in all holy conversation there is great rounds and a great need amongst the saints of God [00:36:07] youthfulness often is marked by naivety but if being brought to God being acceptable to God and being the recipient of divine communication there is an urgent need if one's life in this world to be marked by soulness holiness sanctification and truth these are simple practical necessities of the Christian life and that is spirit what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation the world watches us [00:37:01] God watches us the world hates us God loves us and will shortly take us over the sea to be with himself then this world will come into judgment in the meantime God give us grace in his presence and true conviction of heart and conscience to come to a true judgment of this world the said one's cause and one's life in relation to the things of God but what about Abraham I think it's quite simple to say that indeed the history of Abraham in the Old Testament one can see many of the fundamental truths of the ministry of the apostle Paul that's crystal clear justifications like those fundamental, necessary and clear the life of Abraham a man of faith [00:38:02] but righteous in the sight of God imputed unto him because of what he did in faith his interconnection with Abraham or in the little talk, I did read of it in the 11th of Hebrews that a remarkable thing is said of such for this reason God is not ashamed to be called their God that's peculiar language God is not ashamed to own me why? because of the works of Jesus? no not in the

11th of Hebrews God denies to own me because of the efficacy of that precious blood shed on Calvary but in the 11th of Hebrews God was not ashamed to be called the God of Abraham why? because he was a pilgrim and a stranger [00:39:02] chapter 2nd Corinthians it's a new testament a pilgrim and a stranger it's a most encouraging chapter it's a most profound chapter you've probably noticed that it commences and it ends with this little most necessary exhortation we thank God in the name of God are you thanking? what does it mean? being weakhearted there's no need to be weakhearted there's no need to be despondent this chapter opens and closes with Paul saying this we thank God here is a chapter that will formulate endurance in the soul here are truths that will quicken the footsteps heavenward you won't read a bit in Genesis [00:40:01] but you'll read a bit in Stephen's Apology as it is so called that the God of Glory appeared under Abraham when he called him out of Mesopotamia the God of Glory this is why they say there is a remarkable likeness between the history of Abraham and the ministry of the Apostle Paul it's a ministry that originates and connects men to the Glory of God oh is that not something worth going in for? is that not something worth having in the soul? some truth as to the Glory of God and where I find it now shining in the face of Jesus Christ it's been said before that that seventh chapter of Acts commences with the thought of the God of Glory and it ends with the blessed truth that there is a man in the God of Glory Peter it says of him that he looked upward the heavens were opened [00:41:02] and it says he saw the Glory of God something that no man would have seen before the brightest shining testimony on earth at that moment was found in Stephen he stood in the gain of a more excellent ministry he had more excellent knowledge and he manifested a more excellent power you have perhaps noticed in the New Testament the references to the word excellent they are incredible for it means the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord in this chapter 2nd Corinthians chapter 4 that the excellency of the power of God and not of us [00:42:04] 1st Corinthians chapter 12 behold I show unto you a more excellent way and what's chapter 13 he speaks of divine power and they are all seen in Stephen he had an excellency of knowledge he looked upward and saw the Glory of God and Jesus the glory of God in the New Testament the Glory of God and Jesus look at the effect that had on Stephen it transformed him no one ever claimed in that moment likeness to Jesus think of how that illustration fit in with this chapter the likeness of Jesus what were the words of Stephen with all the darkness to to them shall be [00:43:01] there is power there is divine power with the phenomenon of death that makes a man of the life on him to plead for their forgiveness that's power and it comes from the knowledge of the Glory of God and Jesus being there in the third Philippians it's very clear in this chapter Paul speaks of himself individually he says for this he has suffered the loss of all things that's friendship in this world there's a truth built in preparedness of heart which I know all have done compared with the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord it's not hard it's not difficult if one's soul in any measure had when in his body [00:44:01] faced the Glory of God shone in the face of Jesus Christ there would be a marked change in this life of mine the God of Glory had been unwavering and out he went the Glory of God had faded and out he went not knowing where he went why? because the God of Glory had agreed on forgiveness and he had answered to it in faith in his soul and he became a stranger and become a new testament of God's clear speech of God who commanded the light to shine and shine in the lower house what more to give the knowledge of the Glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ I say again there is no truth that scripture once gave so calculated to move my soul away from this world into a path which is pleasing to God preparedness of heart [00:45:02] that I know all have and the way my soul can apprehend the truth the Glory of God shines in the face of Jesus Christ how does he speak? oh think of the difficulties that he encountered think of the way he speaks and Beloved Saint I say again he had real power in the soul he was not a faithful one in mind that spoke these words in the 2nd Corinthians he was a mind that had power in the soul true conviction about his conscience and this is what is needed we have this treasure in earth and this is how it is and what a treasure it is the first mention of the treasure in the New Testament where the

treasure is there in the heart of the altar [00:46:02] it is perfectly obvious where Paul's heart and treasure was which at the right hand of God all bound up in the bust of Christ Jesus in law this is where his heart and treasure was but the excellency of the Father may be of God and not of us and then think of this little collation of circumstances to which he went I am not going to add to them I believe they are more explicit in the New Translation but I shall read them again we are troubled on every side we are not distressed we are not distressed we are perplexed but not in despair persecuted something we don't know much about Paul was persecuted Paul was persecuted [00:47:03] Paul and his followers amount to his persecution physical suffering but not forsaken in the sight of God and of the house of heaven so was Paul so were many an offering but not destroyed and then on this verse 10 here we have thanks for the secret the basis for the manifestation of the people of Christ in this world always being in my body the dying of Jesus a peculiar expression I understand the word here the dying of Christ it's a word from which we get our English word of course I say it briefly [00:48:04] Paul moved through this world and he literally as it were always in my body the dying of Jesus out of this world he carried it with him daily