

A mother looks down at her new born child in awesome wonder and joy, holding the precious life in her tender arms for the very first time. Likewise the Father while eager to hold his Son is pleased with abundant joy.

You who are parents know that feeling. We are blessed to know the joy of which God looks upon his very own beloved Son, born of the Virgin Mary. Pure and blameless is he who has been sent into this world.

Pure and blameless is he as a dove descends out of heaven at the day of his baptism declaring, "This is my son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased." God was well pleased with his only Son as Jesus endured the temptations of the devil, remaining faithful to the Father.

Among his walk of curing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, opening the ears of the deaf, casting out demons and raising the dead, God beheld his Son and was well pleased.

As Jesus taught on the countryside how to pray, as he taught on such issues as forgiveness, the proper use

of money, loving one's enemies, praying for those who would persecute you as well as describing the joy in the kingdom of God over one sinner who repents, God beheld his Son and was well pleased.

As Jesus stood on the mountaintop with Moses and Elijah on either side while the Peter, James and John stood in awe, God's voice thundered down from heaven "This is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

Yet for us and for our salvation, Christ took on the dirt, muck, and utter ugliness of our sin on the cross. There he was, beaten, bruised, bloodied, skin ripped apart from his body, exposed and empty before all to see.

This is what our sin has caused. There on the cross the blameless one bore the weight of our sin from that initial act of disobedience and for all the sins committed, in order to redeem us and purge our sinful nature.

In a wondrous exchange, Christ made us to be blameless before God. In Second Corinthians the Apostle Paul speaks about reconciliation and how Christ reconciled us to God. Here these words beginning at 2 Cor. 5:21 and following:

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. Working together with him, then, we appeal to you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For he says, ‘In a favorable time I listened to you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you.’ Behold, now is the favorable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.”

In Christ, we have been made blameless. We have been made clean by the precious life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we may hear God look upon us and say, “You are my child, with you I am well pleased.”

God can only say that because Christ made us worthy. We did not merit or earn that worthiness any more than we chose to be born. This is the Fatherly love of God that has been given to us.

Christ not only took the punishment of our sin upon himself, but in so doing destroyed death’s power. That happened when God raised his only begotten Son from the dead. Ascended into heaven Christ receives the worship due him with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

We are left with joy and gladness. Yes, even though our earthly circumstances can leave us feeling hurt there is forgiveness. In the midst of being helpless we are not without hope in the glory that is ours through Jesus.

The sick are made well knowing that no earthly illness no matter how minor or even terminal, will separate us from the love of God. No illness can strip away the righteousness bestowed upon us by Jesus. Thus it is in faith that we claim healing in the face of illness.

Christ, the blameless one has entered this world for you that each day of our life we may live in that promise of Christ. For we live in the truth, trusting in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.
AMEN.