

# Adoption as the Sons of God

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God.  
I John 3:1

## Introduction:

1. If I announced today you had won a \$10 million government grant, you would listen with incredible focus and excitement.
2. To the shame of our souls, if the amount were reduced to \$1,000, you would probably pay great attention to that as well.
3. Instead I gladly tell you the most glorious drama of design, affection, effort, and reward in the entire universe (I Peter 1:12).

## I. WHAT IS ADOPTION?

- A. **Adopt.** To take as one's own child, conferring all the rights and privileges of childship.
- B. It is not unusual for men to consider adopting a deprived child to give affection and privileges, and it is usually such children due to their poor circumstances who are available for adoption.
- C. In Scripture Pharaoh's daughter adopted Moses and Mordecai adopted Esther (Ex 2:10; Es 2:7).
- D. Adoption is a process with steps that should be thoroughly understood naturally and spiritually.
  1. It begins when a father considers his situation, weighs his intentions, and plans to adopt.
  2. He hires lawyers to complete an official transfer making the adoption legal and binding.
  3. When the legal transfer is complete, the adopted child is given a new name and home.
  4. As the child grows he learns more and more of his adoption, privileges, and duties.
  5. When his new father dies, he inherits his estate and the full realization of his adoption.

## II. THE NECESSITY OF ADOPTION

- A. We were born Adam's sons by natural generation and thereby rejected and condemned by God.
- B. In the beginning God created Adam and Eve, but they rejected and defied Him for damnation.
  1. God wisely allowed sin to enter the race through Satan and Adam (Ps 115:3; I Pet 1:20).
  2. God imputed Adam's sin and death to the entire race of men (Gen 2:17; Rom 5:12-18).
  3. Men by natural generation bring forth children of Satan and Adam (John 3:6; Rom 8:8).
  4. Men as soon as they are born manifest their sonship by sinning immediately (Ps 58:5).
  5. At the last day, sinful men shall receive the same reward as their father (Rev 20:10,15).
- C. Due to our first birth, we are hated (Ps 5:5; 7:11; 11:5) and condemned (John 3:18; Rom 3:19).
- D. If you could have influenced your birth, you should have stopped it to save yourself such a fate.
- E. By our natural first birth, we were children of disobedience and wrath (Eph 2:1-3; 5:6; Col 3:6).
- F. We were under Satan's influence and control as his own children (John 8:41-48; Acts 13:6-12).
- G. When God surveyed the objects of adoption, he found only filth (Psalm 14:2-3; Rom 3:9-18).
- H. There was not a single child in Adam's race who desired Him or cared (Ps 53:1-3; Titus 3:3).

## III. THE BLESSING OF ADOPTION

- A. God sent Christ to be the propitiation for our sins, but that does not make Him our Father.
- B. Redemption describes the purchase price from God's justice, but it does not make us His sons.
- C. Pardon for crimes committed is a glorious deliverance, but it does not make us God's children.
- D. Justification clears us of our guilt and condemnation, but it does not make us God's children.
- E. Sanctification as a holy object without sin is wonderful, but it does not make us God's children.
- F. We must say with John, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us."

## IV. THE PLAN OF ADOPTION

- A. God purposed to adopt a chosen people from sinful mankind for the glory of His loving grace.
- B. God created the universe to display His glorious grace and kindness in His adopted children and horrible wrath and justice in rejected children (Rom 9:22-24; Pr 16:4; Eph 2:7; I Pet 1:12).
- C. God purposed this act of adoption in His eternal counsel as He does all His works (Acts 15:18).

- D. The spiritual blessing of adoption was given us in Christ before the world began (Eph 1:3-4).
- E. God's saving purpose and grace in adoption was given us before the world began (II Tim 1:9).
- F. Jesus Christ, Who paid the legal price for adoption, was assigned to it in eternity (I Peter 1:20).
- G. God gave us to Christ to adopt in eternity (Matt 1:21 cp Eph 1:4; Heb 2:13 cp John 6:39; 17:2).
- H. God's adoption of sinners as His children was predestinated from eternity (Rom 8:29; Eph 1:5).
  - 1. **Predestination.** The ordaining or determination of events before they come to pass.
  - 2. Our adoption includes an eternal inheritance, which was predestinated for us (Eph 1:11).
  - 3. We were predestinated to be Christ's brethren, so we must be God's sons (Rom 8:29).

#### V. THE PURCHASE OF ADOPTION

- A. To adopt sinners, God's absolute and eternal justice and wrath had to be paid and satisfied.
- B. It is an error to think of Christ's sacrifice as a payment to purchase us from Satan, for He offered His infinite sacrifice to God (Hebrews 9:12-14; Galatians 3:13; Romans 3:25).
- C. This holy God cannot clear or acquit the guilty from their sins (Exodus 34:7; Nahum 1:3).
- D. God's holy and absolute justice demanded eternal condemnation (Ezek 18:4; Rom 5:18; 6:23).
- E. Jesus Christ took on human nature to pay the legal price necessary for adoption (Heb 2:9-17).
- F. The law of God, which demanded our eternal death, was paid by Jesus Christ (Galatians 4:4-5).
- G. Jesus by His death gathered together in one all the children of God (John 11:49-52; Eph 1:10).

#### VI. THE PREPARATION OF ADOPTION

- A. Adoption to be God's children required a gracious gift of a new nature like His own for heaven.
- B. In natural adoptions, sometimes the adopted child, retaining their biological nature from usually perverse parents, despise their loving and kind new parents. And we cannot change this fact.
- C. Though legally His children, our wicked and depraved and deceitful natures must be rejected.
- D. God's quickening power, as in Christ's resurrection, changes our wicked nature (Eph 2:1-19).
- E. This operation of grace makes us His children by nature through His Spirit (Romans 8:14-16).
- F. We are born again His sons by absolute sovereign and unconditional power (John 1:12-13).
- G. By this second birth through the Spirit, we are made spiritual sons fit for heaven (John 3:6-8).
- H. We are regenerated (born again) as the generation and people of God (Titus 3:5; I Pet 2:9-10).
- I. Our second birth creates a nature like His for intimate personal fellowship (II Pet 1:4; Ep 4:24).
- J. Prior to this drastic transformation, we are the children of the devil (John 8:41-47; Eph 2:1-3).

#### VII. THE PLEASURE OF ADOPTION

- A. As God's children learn of their adoption and obey their Father, they obtain joy and fellowship.
- B. It is a normal event for adopted children to learn of their adoption and review their deliverance.
- C. So the gospel informs us of the eternal affection of God through Jesus Christ in our adoption.
- D. As we obey our new Father's rules, we receive a comforting Spirit (Gal 4:6-7; Rom 8:15-16).
  - 1. We receive this Spirit in regeneration, but we realize His comforting ministry by faith.
  - 2. The Spirit is sent into our hearts because we are sons, not to become sons (Gal 4:6).
  - 3. The Holy Spirit in our hearts is the earnest of our eternal inheritance (Eph 1:12-13).
  - 4. **Abba, Father.** An untranslated and translated expression of affection to our Father.
- E. Though sons by plan, purchase, and preparation, the pleasure begins with Fatherly fellowship.
  - 1. The prodigal son pictures a legally living son but dead to fellowship (Luke 15:11-32).
  - 2. The practical benefits of sonship are reflected in fellowship and joy (I John 1:3-4).
  - 3. The word of God and gospel preaching tell us of adoption (II Tim 1:10; Rom 1:15-16).
  - 4. We manifest and display our sonship by working out the new nature within (I Jn 3:10).
  - 5. Faith and baptism reveal our sonship to others (Gal 3:26-27; Hebrews 3:6; I John 5:1).
  - 6. We show it further by our works (Matthew 5:45; Luke 6:35; II Cor 6:18; Phil 2:15).
- F. The chastening that we often consider grievous is proof of Fatherly love (Hebrews 12:5-13).

- G. Because we acquire knowledge of our adoption, we approach God boldly (Matt 6:9; Heb 4:16).
- H. No longer is God only Divine Justice and Holy Fire, He is our loving Heavenly Abba Father.

### VIII. THE PROSPERITY OF ADOPTION

- A. We obtain the full riches of adoption when glorified in heaven with our eternal inheritance.
- B. The final display of our adoption to the universe is the grand finale yet coming (Rom 8:17-25).
  - 1. The whole creation (8:22) is under God's curse due to sin, but will be one day liberated.
  - 2. The whole creation is awaiting public manifestation or display of God's sons (8:19-23).
  - 3. We still await an aspect of our adoption – the redemption of our physical bodies (8:23).
  - 4. And there shall be no more curse (Rev 22:3). Sin shall be eradicated from the universe.
  - 5. And God shall make all things new (Rev 21:5) from the corruption of Adam's sin.
  - 6. We will then have the immortal bodies like His body, which we now lack (I John 3:2).
  - 7. Then will come to pass the glorious descriptions of our great change (I Cor 15:35-58).
- C. We have an incorruptible and undefiled inheritance reserved in heaven for us (I Peter 1:3-9).
- D. This inheritance of all things and public announcement is to promote faithfulness (Rev 21:7).
- E. Glorification, the end of the adoption process, is as sure as the predestination (Rom 8:29-30).

### IX. THE GLORY OF ADOPTION

- A. We shall receive a new, personal, and intimate name only God and we shall know (Rev 2:17).
- B. Angels desire to know about it, which is beyond their blessings and knowledge (I Peter 1:12).
- C. There are numerous and great differences between a human adoption and God's adoption of us.
  - 1. Men adopt for joy and comfort of children, but God was infinitely happy (Job 35:5-8).
  - 2. Men adopt because they may have no children, but God already had many (Jobs 38:7).
  - 3. Men adopt because they see something desirable in the adopted, but God saw only filth.
  - 4. Men adopt never knowing for sure their future disposition, but God gave us His nature.
  - 5. Men adopt children of age who agree to the adoption, but we were God's enemies.
  - 6. Men may adopt children and then later rescind the adoption, but God cannot repent.
  - 7. Men may adopt a child who dies before receiving his inheritance, but God preserves us.
  - 8. Men adopt children who receive the inheritance only when they die, but God cannot die.
- D. Should not our prayers take on a greater confidence in our Heavenly Father (Matt 6:9; 7:11).
- E. And cannot we pray with greater joy and pleasure knowing He already knows (Matthew 6:32).
- F. By Christ's sanctifying death, we are part of the great family of God (Eph 3:14-19; Heb 2:11).
- G. The angel told Joseph that Jesus Christ would save His people – or kin (Matt 1:21; Luke 1:68).
- H. Is there a picture of this Divine adoption more touching and convicting than Ezekiel 16:1-22?
- I. Do you sometimes feel less worthy than others? Rejoice and see your adoption (I Cor 1:26-31).
- J. The "fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man" is only true naturally (Gen 3:20; Luke 3:38).
- K. Jesus comforted His disciples in their self-denial with a kind Fatherly blessing (Luke 12:32).
- L. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom . . ." will be heard by each (Matt 25:34).
- M. Jesus graciously told His disciples, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father" (John 20:17).
- N. Our adoption has made us heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ in one family (Rom 8:17).
- O. Can we not take great comfort in the fact that our Heavenly Father knows us (Psalm 103:13).

### X. THE APPLICATION OF ADOPTION

- A. It is not enough to talk of being God's children (John 8:43-47; Rom 9:1-8; Matthew 7:21-23).
- B. Do you wish to know your sonship for sure (Rom 8:12-14; II Pet 1:5-12; II Cor 7:1; I Jn 3:10)?
- C. The purpose of the ministry and the church is for us to live as the sons of God (Phil 2:14-16).
- D. There are things we can do to manifest our godly nature here before men (Matthew 5:43-45).
- E. The Lord Almighty will receive us as His children, if we will live separated lives (II Cor 6:18).
- F. The hope of the glorious day of our future public adoption should purify our lives (I John 3:3).