

Order of Salvation – All of Grace

Adoption

Introduction

Family bonds are special and the sense of belonging is a great blessing in life. To be alone, without family support and family love is sad.

“Adoption is an act of God’s free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.” (Shorter Catechism, QA 34). It is a legal transaction by which one unrelated by blood becomes a member of a new family.

Adoption involves that old family ties are broken, a new family is joined with new responsibilities and privileges.

The choice in adoption

When our children are born to us, we have no choice whether to receive them as family or not. But when a couple decides to adopt, a choice is made. That is how it is with adoption into God’s family (Eph. 1:4-6). God has predestined unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. When? Why?

The cost of adoption

Often, adoption is an expensive process. There are many costs associated with adoption. It speaks to the sincere and earnest desire of the parents to do whatever is necessary to make the child their own. Adoption into the family of God was also purchased at a great expense (1 Pet. 1:18-19; Gal. 4:4-7).

The goal of adoption

The aim is holiness (Eph 1:4): “that we should be _____ and without _____ before him in love” (Phil. 2:15). Paul will spell that out what this looks like in various places, including Ephesians 4-6, and at the heart of it is: “Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children” (Eph. 5:1). Paul’s argument in His letters is: Since God is your Father, then you should live a life that matches His children. What could be more natural than a child imitating his father?

The experience of adoption

The aim of the adoption process is for the child to know he is loved and cared for by his new parents. Being adopted into the family of God is not just something objectively completed, but also subjectively realized (Rom. 8:14-17). To that end, the Father gives His Holy Spirit. He convicts, and comforts. He also teaches you to call Him Father.

The privileges of adoption

1. Access to the Father (Rom. 5:1-2)
2. Care of the Father (Matt. 6:26; Lord's Day 9)
3. Rule of the Father (2 Tim. 3:16; Ps. 119:11)
4. Discipline of the Father (Heb. 12:5-13)
5. Inheritance of the Father (1 Pet. 1:3-4; Rom. 8:17; Gal. 4:7).

Discussion Questions

- 1) Where should we start to know this grace of adoption?
- 2) This knowledge of adoption is essential for growth in grace. How come? What are a number of practical implications of the knowledge of this grace to the people of God?
- 3) What family traits of the children of God does the Bible highlight? And what does adoption mean for fellowship in the family of God?