
Grace Fellowship Church

*Delighting in God's Sovereign Saving Grace,
to the Glory of God!*

The Doctrine of Adoption

Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family. (Wayne Grudem)

Adoption: What and When?

What is Adoption?

Adoption is that blessing of saving grace, whereby we, who are estranged sinners, having forfeited any title to the Fatherhood of God, are now – by virtue of the work of Jesus Christ – received as members of His family and incorporated into the very household of God. (Roger R. Nicole)

In regeneration, God gives new spiritual life within (enabled to relate to God in prayer and worship and through the Word). In *justification*, God gives a right legal standing before Him (removal of guilt, forgiveness of sin and declared righteous by God). In *adoption*, God makes us a part of His family!

Biblical support: "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12); AND "I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. 6:18).

Those who do not believe in Christ are not children of God or adopted into his family, but are "children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3) and "sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2; 5:6). (Wayne Grudem)

WARNING: Do not be confused - Adoption is different than election and predestination: "he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will" (Eph. 1:5).

The example of Mephibosheth shines light on the doctrine of adoption (2 Sam 9).

When Does Adoption Take Place?

Adoption takes place at conversion (John 1:12). It is the outcome of saving faith: "for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith" (Gal 3:26).

Privileges of Adoption

Adoption Results in a Change in the Way God Relates to Us

Now God thinks of us as sons and Himself as our Father: "So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God" (Gal. 4:7); AND "Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name" (Mt. 6:9).

Now God loves us: "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are" (1 Jn 3:1).

Now God takes care of us: “. . . do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all" (Mt. 6:31-32); AND "If you, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will you Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!" (Mt. 7:11).

Now God disciplines us for our good: "And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him. For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives" (Heb. 12:5-6)

Adoption Results in a Change in the Way We Understand and Live Life

Now we have an inheritance in heaven with Jesus: "[A]nd if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him" (Rom. 8:17).

Now we are led by the Holy Spirit: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

Now we gain assurance of salvation: "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him" (Rom. 8:14-17); AND Galatians 4:4-7.

Adoption Should Result in a Change in the Way We Relate to Each Other

"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh to live according to the flesh" (Rom. 8:12); AND "Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father. Treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity" (1 Tim. 5:1-2)

Adoption Should Result in a Change in the Way We Live in the World

"Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God" (Eph. 5:1-2); AND "Do all things without grumbling or questioning, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world" (Phil. 2:14-15)

Contemplating the Doctrine of Adoption

1. What good thing will God withhold from those for whom he gave His Son, to whom He gives Himself?
2. What is the inheritance of heaven? [And what makes heaven good? cf. Ps. 73:25]
3. Before you became a child of God, whose child were you? (cf. 1 Jn. 3:10 and Jn. 8:42-44)

Application QUIZ!

1. In trials and difficulty, how does the doctrine of adoption comfort our souls?
2. When we are inclined toward being discontent, how does thinking about adoption make us content?
3. If you are an adopted child of God, and thus, an heir of Christ's kingdom, how then shall you live?
4. How can we improve our *family relations* among each other (referring to Christians at GFC)?
5. How can we improve our *family relations* among Christians within different denominations?