

Doctrinal Studies

Adoption

Introduction: Regeneration begins the new life in the soul. Justification deals with the new attitude of God toward that soul—and the soul toward God. Adoption admits man into the family of God.

Regeneration has to do with our change in nature. Justification, with our change in standing. Sanctification, with our change in character. Adoption, with our change in position.

In regeneration, the believer becomes a child of God. (John 1:12, 13)

In adoption, the believer receives a place as an adult son.

Galatians 4:1-7 ¹“Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant through he be lord of all;

²“But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.

³“Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

⁴“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law,

⁵“To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

⁶“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father.

⁷“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

1. History of Adoption: In Paul’s day, it was a Roman custom that a child was placed under slaves and teachers during childhood. At the age of 14, the child graduated from a period of discipline and was recognized as an adult member of the family. The ceremony for this recognition was called “*υιοθεσία*”, which we find in Ephesians 1:5. At this ceremony, the father came in with a robe over his arm and a ring on his hand. The robe was called a Toga Vorilis. The father would say, “I, your father, now recognize you as an adult member of this family.” He would shake his hand (arm) and then put the robe upon him. He was then free to function as an adult citizen in the Roman world. Paul takes this custom and describes spiritual adoption in Galatians 4.
2. The Meaning of Adoption:
 - a. Adoption means the placing of a son.
It is a legal metaphor as regeneration is a physical one.
It is a Roman work—hardly used among Jews.
 - b. Adoption means the taking by one man of the son of another to be his son, so that that son has the same position and all the advantages of the son by birth.
 - c. Adoption is a Pauline work. Galatians 4:5; Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Ephesians 1:5
3. The How of Adoption:
Ephesians 1:4 & 5 gives us the “How”. The baptism of the Holy Spirit takes place at the moment of salvation, at which time the child of God is free to operate as an adult heavenly citizen. John 3:3; John 3:7, Galatians 3:26; Titus 3:5
In a certain sense, adoption is eternal in its nature. Ephesians 1:4, 5.

The incarnation was foreordained, and it took place in time.

The Lamb was slain from the foundation of the world—but actually only on Calvary.

Why mention this eternal aspect of adoption? TO EXCLUDE WORKS!! Salvation had its origin solely in the GRACE OF GOD. Romans 9:4-11

4. The When of Adoption:

It takes place the moment one believes in Jesus Christ. I John 3:2; Galatians 3:26. John 1:12

Our sonship will be completed at the resurrection and coming again of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 8:23

5. The Results of Adoption:

Galatians 4:5 and Romans 8:15 tell us that we are free to serve God by taking advantage of all His provisions. Before salvation, we are on the outside of the prison house of sin with Jesus Christ, the One free man who saved us. This freedom makes possible a relationship with Christ, which results in a victorious and fruitful life.

6. The Blessings of Adoption:

- a. We are objects of God's peculiar love. John 17:23
- b. We are objects of His Fatherly care. Luke 12:27-33
- c. We have the family name. I John 3:1; Eph. 3:14,15
- d. We have the family likeness. Romans 3:29
- e. We have the family love. John 13:35; I John 3:14
- f. We have Fatherly chastisement. Hebrews 12:5-11
- g. We have Fatherly comfort. Isaiah 66:13; II Cor. 1:4
- h. We have an inheritance. I Peter 1:3-5

7. Some Evidences of Sonship (Adoption):

- a. Led by the Spirit. Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:18
- b. Have a childlike confidence in God. Galatians 4:5,6
- c. Have liberty of access. Ephesians 3:12
- d. Have love for the brethren. I John 2:9-11
- e. Are obedient. I John 5: 1-3

8. Future of Adoption:

Because we have been adopted into the family of God, we are heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:17 "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

We are assured of ultimate sanctification, a resurrection body, a time when we will not have a sinful nature and an eternity with Jesus Christ.

TO KNOW JESUS IS TO HAVE ALL HE HAS PROVIDED.