

THEME: "THE KEY WORDS OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE"

#6

"ADOPTION"

"PLENTY OF ROOM IN THE FAMILY"

GALATIANS 4:1-7

INTRODUCTION

ADOPTION IS NOT A SUBJECT WE TALK ABOUT VERY MUCH IN CHURCH.

ADOPTION IS NOT SOMETHING THAT WE OFTEN THINK ABOUT FROM A BIBLICAL POINT OF VIEW.

BUT AS I BEGIN THIS MESSAGE, I REALIZE THAT THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE INTIMATELY AQUAINTED WITH ADOPTION.

YOU MAY HAVE BEEN ADOPTED, OR YOU MAY HAVE ADOPTED A CHILD YOURSELF, OR PERHAPS YOU WERER RAISED IN A FAMILY THAT INCLUDED ADOPTED CHILDREN.

IF ANY OF THOSE THINGS ARE TRUE ABOUT YOU, YOU PROBABLY HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIBLICAL TEACHING THAN THOSE WHO HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED ADOPTION FIRST HAND.

(I). LET US FIRST LOOK AT "ADOPTION DEFINED."

(A). MANY CHRISTIANS DON'T REAKLIZE THAT ADOPTION IS A PROFOUNDLY BIBLICAL CONCEPT.

(1). IT IS ONE OF THE KEY WORDS THAT THE APOSTLE PAUL USED TO DESCRIBE OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD.

(B). LET US BEGIN WITH A SIMPLE DEFINITION.

“ADOPTION IS A LEGAL ACT OF PERMANENTLY PLACING A CHILD WITH A PARENT OR PARENTS OTHER THAN THE BIRTH PARENTS.

ADOPTION RESULTS IN THE SEVERING OF THE PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS OF THE BIOLOGICAL PARENTS AND THE PLACING OF THOSE RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS ONTO THE ADOPTIVE PARENTS.

AFTER THE FINALIZATION OF AN ADOPTION, THERE IS NO LEGAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BIOLOGICAL AND ADOPTED CHILDREN IN MOST JURISDICTIONS.”

(1). WE CAN SUMMARIZE THIS FURTHER IN THREE STATEMENTS:

(a). THERE IS A PERSON WHO IS NOT A MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY BY BIRTH.

(b). THERE IS A LEGAL PROCESS.

(c). THERE IS NOW A NEW MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY AS A RESULT.

(C). IN A NUMBER OF PLACES, THE NEW TESTAMENT USES THE WORD ADOPTION TO DESCRIBE HOW WE COME INTO GOD’S FAMILY.

(1). ROMANS 8:15, 23, 9:4; GALATIANS 4:5; AND EPHESIANS 1:5.

(2). HOWEVER, THE MEANING IS NOT EXACTLY THE SAME AS OUR COMMON ENGLISH USAGE.

(3). THE GREEK WORD FOR ADOPTION MEANS TO PLACE AS A SON WITHIN A FAMILY WITH FULL PRIVILEGES AS AN ADULT MEMBER OF THE FAMILY.

(D). THAT'S THE BACKGROUND OF PAUL'S THOUGHT
IN GALATIANS 4:1-7.

(1). VERSE ONE AND TWO DESCRIBE A COMMON
SITUATION IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

IMAGINE A SON WHOSE FATHER IS EXTREMELY WEALTHY.

ONE DAY THE SON WILL INHERIT THE ENTIRE ESTATE FOR
HIMSELF.

UNDER ROMAN LAW, BECAUSE HE IS A MINOR CHILD, BEING
RAISED AS A MINOR CHILD, HE IS TREATED NO DIFFERENTLY
THAN A SLAVE.

HE IS HEIR TO ALL HIS FATHER OWNS, BUT WHILE HE IS
GROWING UP, HE HAS NO MORE RIGHTS THAN A SLAVE DOES.

ALTHOUGH HE WILL ONE DAY INHERIT THE WHOLE ESTATE,
HE IS SUBJECT TO GUARDIANS, NANNIES, BABYSITTERS,
TUTORS, HELPERS, HIRED PEOPLE AND TRUSTEES WHO WATCH
OVER HIM UNTIL THE TIME SET BY HIS FATHER.

ALTHOUGH HE IS AN HEIR, HE IS TREATED AS A SLAVE UNTIL
THE TIME HIS FATHER DECIDES TO SET HIM FREE.

(2). IN VERSE FOUR, WE SEE WHAT GOD DID BY
SENDING HIS SON TO THE WORLD.

(a). GOD SENT HIM TO REDEEM THOSE
UNDER THE LAW.

(b). GOD SENT HIM THAT WE MIGHT
RECEIVE FULL RIGHTS AS SONS.

(E). WHEN WE COME TO CHRIST, GOD SENDS THE
HOLY SPIRIT INTO OUR HEART TO GIVE US NEW
LIFE AND THE ASSURANCE THAT WE ARE GOD'S
CHILDREN.

(1). THIS IS "THE STILL SMALL VOICE" OF GOD

THAT SPEAKS TO THE SOUL AND WHISPERS,
 “YOU ARE NOW A CHILD OF GOD.”

(2). THE SAME HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN US CRIES
 OUT “ABBA, FATHER.”

(a). THE WORD “ABBA” COMES FROM AN
 ARAMAIC WORD THAT LITTLE
 CHILDREN WOULD USE TO SPEAK TO
 THEIR FATHERS.

(b). IT IS AN INTIMATE, PERSONAL WORD
 OF ENDEARING AFFECTION.

(c). IN ENGLISH, YOU MIGHT SAY “DAD”
 OR “DADDY” OR “PAPA” OR “DEAR
 FATHER.”

(d). IT IS A VERY TENDER WAY OF
 TALKING TO OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

(f). NO LONGER IS HE SOME DISTANT GOD
 UP IN THE SKY. NOW HE IS OUR
 “HEAVENLY DADDY.”

EXPOSITION

IN ALL THE WORLD THERE WAS ONLY ONE PERSON I CALLED
 “DADDY.”

WHEN MY 10 SIBLINGS AND I SAID “DADDY,” OUR FATHER
 WOULD TURN AND LISTEN TO OUR VOICES.

THE PRIVILEGE OF CALLING HIM “DADDY” WAS GIVEN TO US
 AND US ONLY.

THE SAME IF TRUE OF MY CHILDREN. THEY ARE THE ONLY
 ONE IN THE WORLD WHO HAS THAT UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP
 WITH ME.

OTHER MAY CALL ME “DADDY,” BUT IT DOESN’T MEAN THE SAME THING.

MY CHILDREN HAVE A UNIQUE CLAIM ON ME THAT OTHER CHILDREN DON’T HAVE.

SO IT IS IN THE SPIRITUAL REALM. IF WE KNOW JESUS AS SAVIOR, GOD IS NOW OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND WE CAN COME TO HIM IN PRAYER ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, FOR ANY REASON, AND HE WILL NEVER TURN US AWAY.

WHEN WE ARE IN TROUBLE, WHEN THE WORLD HAS TURNED AGAINST US, WHEN WE ARE DISCOURAGED THAT WE FEEL LIKE GIVING UP, WHEN WE ARE CONFUSED ABOUT WHAT TO DO NEXT, THE HOLY SPIRIT WHISPERS, “TALK TO YOUR FATHER IN HEAVEN. HE’S WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU.”

THE SPIRIT WITHIN US BRINGS US BACK TO OUR FATHER AGAIN AND AGAIN AND TEACHES US TO SAY, “ABBA, FATHER.”

(F). HERE ARE SIX BLESSINGS PAUL MENTIONS IN GALATIANS 4:5-7 THAT FLOW TO US BECAUSE CHRIST CAME.

(1). WE ARE REDEEMED (5a).

(2). WE ARE ADOPTED (5b).

(3). THE HOLY SPIRIT NOW LIVES WITHIN US (6a).

(4). WE CALL GOD FATHER (6b).

(5). WE ARE NOW GOD’S CHILDREN (7a).

(6). WE ARE THE HEIRS OF GOD. (7b).

(G). VERSE 5 IS THE HEART OF THE MATTER. CHRIST CAME “TO REDEEM THOSE WHO WERE UNDER THE LAW, SO THAT WE MIGHT RECEIVE

ADOPTION AS WSONS.”

- (1). THE NIV USES THE PHRASE “FULL RIGHTS OF SONS” TO BRING OUT THE MEANING OF ADOPTION.
- (2). CHRIST CAME TO REDEEM US AND TO ADOPT US INTO GOD’S FAMILY.
- (3). TO REDEEM MEANS TO SET FREE FROM SLAVERY BY THE PAYMENT OF A PRICE.
- (4). YOU REDEEM A SLAVE BY PAYING THE PURCHASE PRICE AND THEN SETTING HIM FREE.

EXPOSITION

NOW SUPPOSE THAT IN ADDITION TO FREEING THAT SLAVE, YOU ALSO SAID TO HIM, “COME WITH ME TO MY HOUSE AND LIVE WITH ME. I WANT YOU TO LEGALLY JOIN MY FAMILY, TAKE MY NAME, AND TAKE AN EQUAL SHARE IN MY INHERITANCE.”

AS AMAZING AS IT SOUNDS, THAT’S WHAT GOD DID FOR US THE MOMENT WE TRUSTED CHRIST.

HE SET US FREE (REDEEMED US) FROM THE SLAVERY OF SINM WITH THE PURCHASED PRICE OF THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

THEN HE BROUGHT US INTO HIS FAMILY AND GAVE US “FULL RIGHTS” AS HIS OWN CHILDREN.

THE CONCEPT OF “FULL RIGHTS’ MEANS THAT NO MATTER HOW BADLY WE MAY HAVE SINNED BEFORE CONVERSION, THERE ARE NO SECOND-CLASS CHILDREN IN GOD’S FAMILY.

GOD HAS NO STEP-CHILDREN.

IN THE JEWISH CULTURE, YOUNG BOYS ARE CONSIDERED MEN BY GOING THROUGH A RITUAL CALLED A Bar Mitzvah.

YOU MIGHT SAY THAT WHEN WE COME TO CHRIST, WE ARE “BAR MITZVAHED” INTO GOD’S FAMILY.

WE COME IN AS FULL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY WITH RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES EQUAL TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THERE 40 OR 50 YEARS.

WE CAN PRAY AND CLAIM GOD’S PROMISES ON THE SAME BASIS AS EVERYONE ELSE.

EXPOSITION

LET’S SUPPOSE THAT ONE OF MY SONS DOES SOMETHING WRONG AND LATER FEELS BADLY ABOUT IT.

SO HE COMES TO ME AND SAYS, “DADDY, I’M SORRY FOR WHAT I DID AND I’M GOING TO TRY TO DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE. I’M GOING TO TRY TO BE MORE OF A SON TO YOU FROM NOW ON.

WHEN I HEAR THOSE WORDS, I’LL SAY SOMETHING LIKE THIS, “SON, I LOVE YOU AND I’M GLAD YOU FEEL BADLY ABOUT WHAT YOU DID, AND I KNOW YOU WANT TO DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE. BUT I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT NO MATTER WHAT YOU DO, YOU COULD NEVER BE MORE OF A SON TO ME THAN YOU ARE RIGHT NOW.

BEING MY SON HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH WHAT YOU DO OR DON’T DO. YOU ARE MY SON BY VIRTUE OF BEING A PART OF MY FAMILY. NOTHING YOU DO CAN EVER CHANGE THAT FACT.”

THINK ABOUT THAT FOR A MOMENT. IF ONE OF MY SONS SHOULD REBEL AGAINST ALL THAT I HAVE TAUGHT HIM, AND IF HE SHOULD MOVE TO SOME DISTANT PLACE AND CHANGE HIS NAME SO THAT NO ONE WILL KNOW HE IS MY SON, AND IF HE SHOULD ADOPT SOME OTHER WAY OF LIFE THAT IS FAR REMOVED FROM WHAT I BELIEVE IS RIGHT, I WILL BE BROKEN HEARTED AND PERHAPS I WILL BE ANGRY, BUT NO MATTER WHAT HE DOES, HE WILL ALWAYS BE MY SON AND I WILL ALWAYS LOVE HIM.

ONCE A SON, ALWAYS A SON. NOTHING MY SONS CAN DO CAN EVERY CHANGE THAT FACT.

(H). THE SAME IS TRUE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

- (1). OUR STANDING IS BASED ON OUR PERFORMANCE.
- (2). THAT'S GOOD NEWS BECAUSE WE ALL FAIL SOONER OR LATER.
- (3). OUR STANDING IS BASED ON GOD'S GRACE, WHICH MEANS IT DOESN'T DEPEND ON US.
- (4). ONCE A CHILD OF GOD, ALWAYS A CHILD OF GOD.
- (5). WE MAY DO THINGS THAT DISPLEASE OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.
- (6). IF WE PERSIST IN DISOBEDIENCE, WE WILL BE DISCIPLINED BY THE LORD.
- (7). BUT THAT DISCIPLINE, PAINFUL THOUGH IT MAY BE, COMES TO US BECAUSE WE ARE GOD'S CHILDRE.
- (8). IT IS A MARK OF OUR SALVATION.
- (9). WE ARE DISCIPLINED BECAUSE WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD, NOT IN ORDER TO STAY IN GOD'S FAMILY.
- (10). OUR STANDING IS SECURE BECAUSE IT IS NOT BASED ON OUR PERFORMANCE.

(II). NOW THAT WE HAVE LOOKED AT "ADOPTION DEFINED," LET US LOOK AT "ADOPTION EXPLAINED."

FROM WHERE DID PAUL GET HIS CONCEPT OF ADOPTION?

HE DID NOT GET IT FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT BECAUSE THERE IS NOT MUCH ABOUT ADOPTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

ACCORDING TO (BAKER'S EVANGELICAL DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL THEOLOGY) LEGAL ADOPTION WAS NOT PRESCRIBED IN JEWISH LAW OR PRACTICE BY THE ISRAELITES.

IN FACT, THE TERM "ADOPTION" DOES NOT OCCUR IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

WHILE THERE ARE SEVERAL POSSIBLE ALLUSIONS TO ADOPTION, SUCH AS MOSES (EXODUS 2:10), GENUBATH (I KINGS 11:20), AND ESTER (ESTER 2:7), THE INCIDENTS RECORDED TAKE PLACE IN FOREIGN SOCIETIES (EGYPTIANS AND PERSIAN) AND THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT LEAGL ADOPTIONS WERE ENACTED.

BUT THERE ARE THREE KEYS TO UNDERSTANDING ROMAN LAW REGARDING ADOPTION:

(A). THE ABSOLUTE RIGHT OF THE FATHER.

- (1). UNDER ROMAN LAW, FATHERS HAD ABSOLUTE RIGHT OVER THEIR ENTIRE ESTATE.
- (2). THEY HAD RIGHTS OVER ALL THAT THEY OWNED, AND THEIR CHILDREN WERE CONSIDERED TO BE THEIR PROPERTY.
- (3). IN FACT, A FATHER IN ANCIENT ROME HAD THE POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH OVER HIS CHILDREN.
- (4). IN THE EARLY DAYS OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, IF A FATHER WANTED TO PUT HIS CHILDREN TO DEATH, HE COULD LEGALLY DO IT AND NOBODY COULD SAY ANYTHING TO HIM ABOUT IT.
- (5). SO GREAT WAS THE POWER OF A FATHER

UNDER ROMAN LAW, THAT THE SON WOULD NEVER BE OUT FROM UNDERNEATH HIS FATHER'S AUTHORITY AS LONG AS THE FATHER WAS ALIVE.

- (6). A SON COULD BE 70 YEARS OLD AND THE FATHER COULD BE 73 YEARS OLD, AND UNDER ROMAN LAW, HE WAS STILL UNDER HIS FATHER'S AUTHORITY.

(B). THE RIGHTS OF THE ADOPTED SON.

- (1). IF A SON WAS ADOPTED INTO A FAMILY, HE WAS GUARANTEED RIGHTS TO HIS FATHER'S PROPERTY.
- (2). THAT'S ALWAYS ONE OF THE QUESTIONS IF YOU HAVE BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN AS WELL AS ADOPTED CHILDREN.
- (3). HOW WOULD IT ALL WORK IN TERMS OF FAMILY INHERITANCE?
- (4). ROMAN LAW MADE IT CLEAR THAT AN ADOPTED CHILD HAD EXACTLY THE SAME RIGHTS AS ALL OTHER CHILDREN AND NO ONE COULD COME BEFORE THE ADOPTED CHILD, NOT THE BIOLOGICAL CHILDREN NOR ANY OTHER ADOPTED CHILDREN.
- (5). HE GAINED FULL INHERITANCE RIGHTS WITH ALL THE OTHER CHILDREN OF THE FAMILY.

(C). THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE OLD LIFE.

- (1). ADOPTION NOT ONLY GAVE YOU A NEW NAME AND A NEW FAMILY, IT ALSO MEANS YOUR OLD LIFE WAS GONE FOREVER.
- (2). SO COMPLETE WAS THE TRANSFORMATION

THAT IF YOU WERE ADOPTED INTO A NEW FAMILY AND YOU HAD OLD DEBTS, AT THE MOMENT OF ADOPTION, ALL OLD DEBTS WERE CANCELED FOREVER.

- (3). THE ADOPTED SON IN ROME WAS REGARDED AS A NEW PERSON, ENTERING A BRAND-NEW LIFE.

WILLIAM BARCLAY SAID THAT IT IS PAUL'S PICTURE THAT WHEN A MAN BECAME A CHRISTIAN, HE ENTERED INTO THE VERY FAMILY OF GOD.

HE DOES NOTHING TO DESERVE IT. GOD, THE GREAT FATHER, IN HIS AMAZING LOVE AND MERCY, HAS TAKEN THE LOST, HELPLESS, POVERTY-STRICKEN, DEBT-LADENED SINNER AND ADOPTED HIM INTO HIS OWN FAMILY, SO THAT THE DEBTS ARE CANCELED AND THE GLORY INHERITED.

(III). NOW THAT WE HAVE LOOKED AT "ADOPTION DEFINED," AND "ADOPTION EXPLAINED," LET US LOOK AT "ADOPTION DISTINGUISHED."

- (A). TO SPEAK OF ADOPTION IN THESE TERMS LEADS TO A LOGICAL QUESTION. DOES NOT THE BIBLE SAY WE ARE BORN INTO GOD'S FAMILY.

(1). THE ANSWER IS YES.

(a). JESUS SAID IN ST. JOHN 3:3, "VERILY, VERILY I SAY UNTO THEE, EXCEPT A MAN BE BORN AGAIN, HE CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

(b). AND I PETER 1:3 SAYS, "BLESSED BE THE GOD AND FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHICH ACCORDING TO HIS ABUNDANT MERCY HATH BEGOTTEN US AGAIN UNTO A LIVELY HOPE BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST FROM THE DEAD."

(2). IF THAT IS TRUE, HOW CAN WE BE ADOPTED?

(3). ARE WE BORN AGAIN OR ARE WE ADOPTED?

(a). BOTH ARE CORRECT, WE ARE BOTH BORN AGAIN AND ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY.

(4). HERE IS THE DIFFERENCE:

(a). THE NEW BIRTH ESTABLISHES A NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.
(b). THAT'S WHY JESUS SAID TO NICODEMUS, "I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, NO ONE CAN SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD UNLESS HE IS BORN AGAIN."

(c). THE NEW BIRTH EMPHASIZES HOW WE COME INTO GOD'S FAMILY AS HELPLESS CHILDREN WHO ARE BORN AGAIN INTO THE FAMILY ONLY BY GOD'S SOVEREIGN GRACE.

(d). ST. JOHN 1:13, "WHICH WERE BORN, NOT OF BLOOD, NOR OF THE WILL OF THE FLESH, NOR OF THE WILL OF MAN, BUT OF GOD."

(5). AS THE GREEK WORD INDICATES, ADOPTION IS LITERALLY "PLACING AS A SON."

(a). REGENERATION HAS TO DO WITH OUR CHANGE IN NATURE;

(b). JUSTIFICATION, HAS TO DO WITH OUR CHANGE IN STANDING;

(c). SANCTIFICATION, HAS TO DO WITH OUR CHANGE IN CHARACTER.

(d). ADOPTION HAS TO DO WITH OUR
CHANGE IN POSITION.

(6). ACCORDING TO PAUL, THE CHIEF
ADVANTAGES OF SONSHIP ARE
DELIVERANCE FROM THE LAW, AND THE
POSSESSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE
SPIRIT OF ADOPTION AND SONSHIP.

(7). WE ARE BORN INTO GOD'S FAMILY
THROUGH THE NEW BIRTH AND THROUGH
ADOPTION, WE ARE IMMEDIATELY
ADVANCED TO A STATE OF FULL PRIVILEGE
AND RESPONSIBILITY.

(8). FROM THE MOMENT OF SALVATION, GOD
TREATS US AS FULL ADULTS, NOT AS LITTLE
CHILDREN.

(9). THE NEW BIRTH MEANS A NEW LIFE FROM
SPIRITUAL DEATH TO CHILDREN NEEDING
GROWTH.

(10). ADOPTION MEANS A NEW STANDING FROM
SLAVERY TO FULL RIGHTS AND
PRIVILEGES.

(B). WHEN YOU GRADUATE FROM A COLLEGE OR
UNIVERSITY, YOU RECEIVE A DEGREE THAT IS
CONFERRED WITH "ALL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES
PERTAINING THERETO."

(1). IT MEANS THAT WHEN YOU GRADUATE, YOU
GET ALL THE RIGHTS THAT GO WITH
HAVING THE DEGREE.

(C). WHEN YOU BECOME A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED
STATES, YOU BECOME A FULL CITIZEN.

(1). THERE IS NO SECOND CLASS CITIZENSHIP.

(2). IF YOU ARE A CITIZEN, YOU HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS ANY OTHER CITIZEN HAS.

(3). IF YOU BECOME A CITIZEN, IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER YOU WERE BORN IN THE UNITED STATES OR WHETHER YOU ARE A NATURALIZED CITIZEN, BY LAW THE SAME RIGHTS APPLY TO EVERYONE.

(D). IT WAS THE SAME WAY IN TERMS OF ADOPTION AND THE SPIRITUAL REALM.

(1). ADOPTION GUARANTEES SEVEN THINGS TO EVERY BELIEVER.

(a). YOU ARE A FULL MEMBER OF GOD'S FAMILY.

(b). YOU HAVE FULL RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES IN HEAVEN.

(c). YOU HAVE IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO GOD.

(d). YOU BELONG TO HIS FAMILY.

(e). YOU BEAR HIS NAME.

(f). YOU HAVE A FULL SHARE IN THE INHERITANCE HE PROMISES HIS CHILDREN.

(g). SATAN HAS NO CLAIM ON YOU BECAUSE YOU ARE NO LONGER A PART OF HIS FAMILY AND HE IS NO LONGER YOUR FATHER.

(IV). NOW THAT WE HAVE LOOKED AT "ADOPTION DEFINED", "ADOPTION EXPLAINED", AND "ADOPTION DISTINISHED," LET US LOOKED AT "ADOPTION APPLIED." "ADOPTION" MEANS THREE THINGS:

(A). ADOPTION MEANS THAT YOU HAVE A NEW FAMILY.

- (1). THE OLD FAMILY IS GONE FOREVER.
- (2). THE OLD MASTER IS GONE FOREVER.
- (3). THE OLD NAME IS GONE FOREVER.
- (4). GOD IS YOUR FATHER, THE LORD JESUS IS YOUR SAVIOR AND THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES WITHIN YOU.

(B). ADOPTION MEANS THAT YOU HAVE A NEW PRIVILEGE.

- (1). YOU HAVE THE SAME RIGHT AS THE OLDEST SAINTS OF GOD.
- (2). IN OUR WORLD, THERE ARE EXCLUSIVE CLUBS WITH MEMBERS DEPENDENT ON WHO YOU KNOW AND HOW MUCH MONEY YOU HAVE.
- (3). THERE IS A CHILDREN'S MEMBERSHIP, ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP, FAMILY MEMBERSHIP, BLUE-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP, GREEN-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP, SILVER-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP, AND FOR THE HOITY-TOITY PEOPLE ON THE TOP, THERE IS A GOLD-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP.
- (4). BUT GOD ONLY HAS ONE LEVEL OF MEMBERSHIP.
- (5). EVERYONE WHO COMES INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD, COMES IN THE SDAME WAY BECAUSE THE GROUND IS LEVEL AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS.

(6). GOD ONLY HAS ONE CLASS.

(7). EVERYONE IN GOD'S FAMILY HAS GOLD CARD STANDING.

(8). EVERYONE IS BORN AGAIN, EVERYONE HAS FULL RIGHTS.

(9). EVERYONE IS AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS.

(10). EVERYONE COMES IN AT THE BEST POSSIBLE LEVEL.

(C). ADOPTION MEANS YOU HAVE A NEW RESPONSIBILITY.

(1). WHAT GOD SAYS TO ANY BELIEVER, HE SAYS TO EVERY BELIEVER.

(2). THE SAME HOLY SPIRIT WHO IS GIVEN TO THE GRAY-HAIRED CHRISTIANS IS GIVEN TO THE NEW CHRISTIAN.

(3). NO ONE NEED FEEL LIKE A SECOND CLASS CITIZEN.

(a). NO BELIEVER CAN USE THAT AS AN EXCUSE.

(4). YOU CAN NEVER SAY, "WELL, I DON'T WANT TO READ MY BIBLE. I'M JUST A NEW CHRISTIAN."

(a). THAT WON'T WASH WITH GOD.

(5). NOBODY CAN SAY THEY CAN'T PRAY BECAUSE THEY ARE JUST A NEW CHRISTIAN.

(a). GOD WILL NOT ACCEPT THAT EXCUSE.

(6). YOU CAN'T SAY YOU WON'T TESTIFY FOR CHRIST BECAUSE YOU HAVE RECENTLY BEEN BORN AGAIN AND AREN'T AS GOOD AS THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN SAVED FOR A LONG TIME.

(a). THAT IS NOT A BIBLICAL THING TO SAY BECAUSE WHAT GOD SAYS TO ANY OF HIS CHILDREN, HE SAYS TO ALL OF HIS CHILDREN.

(b). THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT IS LAID ON ONE IS LAID ON ALL.

CONCLUSION

THERE ARE SOME GREAT ADVANTAGES TO BEING BORN AGAIN AT AN EARLY AGE.

(A). IF YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED FOR A LONG TIME, YOU OUGHT TO HAVE A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF GOD.

(1). YOU SHOULD BE MORE SKILLFUL IN WALKING BY GRACE.

(2). BUT GOD DOES NOT GIVE ANYTHING TO THE OLDEST SAINT THAT HE DOESN'T GIVE TO THE NEWEST CHRISTIAN.

(3). THE MOMENT YOU COME TO JESUS CHRIST, ALL THE RESOURCES OF HEAVEN ARE PUT AT YOUR DISPOSAL.

(B). WHAT DOES ALL OF THIS MEANS?

(1). YOU ARE RICH NOW, SO DON'T LIVE LIKE A PAUPER.

(2). YOU HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT, SO DON'T LIVE IN THE FLESH.

(3). YOU NOW HAVE ACCESS TO GOD, SO USE IT.

(4). YOU HAVE BROTHERS AND SISTERS, SO
LEAN ON THEM.

(5). YOU NOW HAVE SPIRITUAL GIFTS, PUT
THEM TO WORK FOR CHRIST.

(6). YOU HAVE BEEN SET FREE FROM SATAN'S
POWER, SO DON'T MESS AROUND WITH THE
DEVIL ANYMORE.

(C). EARTHLY ADOPTION OFFERS A WONDERFUL
PICTURE OF GOD'S GIFT TO US BECAUSE FOR
ADOPTION TO HAPPEN, THE PARENTS MUST BE
WILLING AND ABLE TO DO IT.

(1). THEY MUST CHOOSE TO DO IT.

(2). TO THOSE OF YOU WHO ARE ADOPTED, GOD
BLESS YOU.

(3). TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE ADOPTED
CHILDREN, GOD BLESS YOU.

(4). THANK YOU FOR MODELING FOR US WHAT
GOD'S GREAT LOVE REALLY LOOKS LIKE.

(D). IF THEY UNDERSTAND THIS TRUTH, ADOPTED
CHILDREN CAN SAY, "SOMEONE MUST HAVE
LOVED ME VERY MUCH."

(1). ADOPTION NEVER JUST HAPPENS.

(2). THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN
ACCIDENTAL ADOPTION.

(3). IT TAKES TROUBLE, TIME, EXPENSE,
EFFORT, SWEAT, HEARTACHE AND TEARS.

(4). SOMEBODY HAS TO OPEN THEIR HEART AND THEIR HOME FOR CHILDREN TO BE ADOPTED.

(E). IN THE VERY SAME WAY, BIBLICAL ADOPTION IS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE GOD IS WILLING TO ADD MORE CHILDREN TO HIS FAMILY.

(1). THIS IS ONE OF THE SWEETEST THOUGHTS I HAVE EVER COME ACROSS.

(2). WHEN GOD ADOPTED US HE GAVE US A NEW NAME, A NEW HOME, A NEW HISTORY, A NEW ADDRESS, AND A NEW DESTINY.

(F). MY BROTHERS AND MY SISTERS, GOD IS OUR TRUE HEAVENLY FATHER BECAUSE HE CHOSE TO ADD US TO HIS FAMILY.

(1). BECAUSE OF ADOPTION, WHEN WE GO TO HIM, HE ALWAYS OPENS THE DOOR AND SAYS, "WELCOME, MY CHILD. THIS IS YOUR HOME FOREVER."