



Foundation of the Christian Faith

Course: Salvation

Lesson Nine

Title: Adoption

Text: Galatians 4:5 'To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.'

Introduction: Difference between the usual understanding of Adoption and the New Testament understanding of Adoption.

- 1) Meaning of Adoption. Adoption is the Greek word '*huiothesia*', which comes from two Greek words '*huios*' son and '*thesis*' placing' and means to be placed in the position of a son.

Usual understanding of Adoption.

- a) Adoption is defined as being taken into a family as a relation usually to be a son or daughter with legal guardianship.
 - b) Being adopted as a son or a daughter refers to someone who was not born a child of a particular family but he or she has now been placed into this position.
 - c) Although the child is adopted it is impossible to ever become a son or daughter by birth.
- 2) The New Testament understanding of Adoption.
 - a) We are born outside of the family of God
 - b) We have been adopted into the family of God through the new birth.
 - c) We are both adopted and born into the family of God

The usual understanding of Adoption and the New Testament understanding are incompatible. It is impossible for a person to be born into the family after being born into a different family. A person is either born a child of the family or adopted into it, but not both.

Question: An adopted child is not born into the family. How does this relate to adoption into God's family?

Natural adoption is a legal agreement. Spiritual adoption is more than an agreement it is a new birth. It provides the means to be born into the family of God through new life in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Introductory Testimony: Born into the family of God.

When I came to Christ my life was radically changed. My life was suddenly turned around from drunkenness to Christ. People outside the church knew what I was really like. The people in the church meeting did not know. When I was at the meeting the thought came into my head, 'you are not like them, leave this place'. But I couldn't leave because I was a part of the family of God. It was true that I knew little about the Bible and I had been 'a crazy drunk', and I was not like them in that way. But something had happened to me and I had been brought into the family of God. The same life, the life of Christ that was in them was now in me, and that life began to be manifest through me.

Main Points:

1. We are adopted to become partakers of His glory. 1 Peter 5:1 'The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed'. His glory is His life and His presence. It is the life of Christ in us.
 - a) We are adopted to be like the Lord Jesus Christ. We are being changed from glory to glory. 2 Corinthians 3:18 'But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.'
 - b) Adoption is the life of Christ in the believer. Colossians 1:27 'To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:' The hope of glory means being glorified with Christ at His coming but also being changed from glory to glory in our daily lives.
 - (1) Adoption begins when we receive the life of Christ by being born again into the family of God through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (2) Adoption continues through life as we are being changed into His likeness from glory to glory.
 - (3) Adoption will be completed when our body will be raised at His coming.

2. We are adopted to be heirs of God and joint heirs with 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 have been chosen to be His children. Ephesians 1:5, Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,
 - a) An inheritance comes through the death of the testator to the descendants of the testator. Hebrews 9:15-16 'And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.'
 - b) The inheritance belongs to the children of the testator. We are heirs because we are born into the family of God. We have received the Spirit of adoption so that we can call God our Father. Romans 8:15 For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. We can cry out to God in prayer as children. This gives us great boldness to approach God.
 - c) We are assured that God will not withhold anything from us. The love of God is seen in that He gave His only Son (John 3:16). If He was willing to do this then there is nothing that God will not do for His people. Romans 8:32 'He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?'

Example: Contrast between Communism and Christ

The Right of Inheritance - Marx's Communist Manifesto (1848), which sought to institute a political system devoid of class, had as one of its required measures the Abolition of all right of inheritance. Right of inheritance gives privilege to the children of the wealthy. The Communist Manifesto stands in dark contrast to the scriptures. Marx sought to take away the right of inheritance but God gives the right of inheritance to all those who will call upon Him for salvation with no regard to the persons social standing.

3. Adoption will be complete when the Lord Jesus returns.
 - a) The sons of God will be revealed when the body is changed into His likeness. Adoption will be complete when the Lord Jesus returns. Romans 8:23, 'And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.'

Adoption is associated with the redemption of the body. John writes that we are the sons of God but it will not be seen who we are until the coming of the Lord. 1 John 3:2, 'Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.'
- b) The hope of the believer - the glory that will come. Romans 8:18 'For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.' Nothing can compare with the glory that will be revealed in us when the Lord Jesus comes.

Summary:

Adoption means being placed a son in the family of God through new life in Christ Jesus. Adoption makes us

- 1) Inheritors of the promise. We are made joint heirs with Christ.
- 2) Become more like Him. We are being changed from glory to glory.
- 3) The sons of God who will be revealed outwardly at His coming.

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