

Do You Know the Benefits of Your Adoption?

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Ephesians 1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love

Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will

Ephesians 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.

In Love Divine Love, which we receive from the Holy Spirit as a Fruit of the Holy Spirit when we are empowered by the Holy Spirit by faith.

In Love He predestined us to adoption. Dear people, I am sorry but this whole passage is difficult because we have to pause to be sure we know what these words refer to. Like **He chose us**⇒doctrine of Election

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We have to understand what it means to be *holy and blameless before Him*. We have to understand the Love of God, what it means and what it does not mean. Then, we have to understand biblically, the doctrine of predestination.

And now we have the necessity for understanding what *adoption* means in this passage.

It is so important that people understand these New Testament doctrines that pertain to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior. Attorney Andrea Williams of Christian Concern in London says: “I think that what is hard for people in America to understand is that the people of Great Britain really have no notion of what Christianity is.” [https://www1.cbn.com/cbnnews/world/2020/march/europe-leaves-christianity-for-paganism-nbsp]. And people, this is happening here in America. And one reason people, even Christians do not understand what Christianity is, is because by and large pastors are no longer teaching the Word of God, verse by verse. They are no longer teaching the Word of God with Literal, Historical and Grammatical Accuracy, and teaching accurate theology. This takes time and concentration on the text, in original languages, if possible. But it is not totally the fault of the pastor-teacher. Not many Christians want this kind of teaching. They want their ears tickled, and emotions stimulated, but they do not want to go to church to have to ‘*think*.’ They want entertainment and music that emotes not music that worships God and Christ.

So, it has taken us some time to come to verse 5, and now the doctrine of ‘adoption.’ When many people, including pastors come to the word ‘adoption’ in the Bible they think of someone who was not in the family,

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but now adopted into the family, and this is not what this biblical word means.

What is interesting is the preposition translated “**to.**” In the King James this is translated **having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.** You might recall that we are predestinated in Christ where the Greek preposition was *en* which means we were predestinated in Christ, not we were predestinated unto or into Christ, as though the predestination took place outside of Christ and entered into Christ. Well, this is exactly what this verb means and says. **Adopted us into, or unto or entered into.** This was not the preposition used in predestination, as if we were predestined to be in Christ, into Christ, but we were Predestinated *in Christ*.

So here we have **unto** or **into adoption.** There is no definite article which the King James adds, and the NASV translates without the definite article. Now the Greek word for adoption is a compound word made up of the prefix which means ‘adult son’ plus the Greek word for ‘placing.’ “In the NT, figuratively meaning adoption, sonship, spoken of the state of those whom God through Christ adopts as His sons and thus made heirs.” [The Complete Word Study Dictionary] Historically, this is taken from a Roman custom, the recognition of maturity. Basically, adoption means to be recognized of maturity. This refers to everyone of you who have believed in Jesus Christ. So, you should be interested in what this means for you.

Doctrine of Adoption

The following is from a multitude of resources: The Complete Word Study Dictionary; The New Unger’s Bible Dictionary; Evangelical

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Dictionary of Theology; notes from R.B. Theme and notes from Dallas Theological Seminary.

- I. Start with a biblical definition of adoption. From Unger: “the ‘placing’ as a ‘son.’ The admission of a person to some or all of the privileges of natural kinship.” From the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology: “A relatively infrequent term in the Scriptures, adoption is of theological importance, for it relates how Israel and the Christian may be ‘children’ and ‘heirs’ of God although they are not uniquely or by nature so, as in the case of Christ.” Jesus Christ’s ‘adoption’ is uniquely declared in

Psalm 2:7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord: (this is a divine decree by God the Father of the adoption of Jesus Christ) He (God the Father) said to Me, (Jesus the Christ) ‘You are My Son, (declaration of adoption) Today I have begotten You.

Adoption in the New Testament (this definition is limited to the Church Age believer) means to be recognized by God as an adult son (whether male or female) positionally at salvation. This is one of the 34 blessings we receive at salvation. Many of the imputations we receive at faith in Jesus Christ for Salvation are made as part of the Spiritual ceremony of recognizing that we have a plan and purpose in this life and an eternal destiny. Being in Union with Christ (Baptism of the Holy Spirit) we are joint-heirs with Christ.

- II. In the New Testament the teaching on ‘adoption’ is strictly by Paul.

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To grasp correctly what the biblical teaching on Adoption is, we need to take a look at a principle of interpretation of Scripture called Isagogics, which is the introductory study of external history of the Bible. The isagogical principle here is that the Bible must be interpreted in the time in which it was written.

The noun, adoption, used here in Ephesians 1:5, refers to a well-established Roman custom in Paul's time. It was a custom that started in the Republic and continued through the Empire. Under this custom the son was placed under slaves and teachers during his minority. Through his minority he would be trained and taught studies and military. These slaves were well paid and respected for they taught the sons of Roman patricians, Roman senators, Roman aristocrats and high Roman military officials. Now, understand these young boys were the natural offspring of their parents. They were not 'adopted' in the sense of our modern English custom. By the time he reached the age of 14 he had graduated from a system of intensive training, teaching, and discipline from his teachers. Much more difficult than our young people get today. Between 14 and 16 the son graduated from this discipline and was now recognized as an adult member of the family.

The official ceremony was called by the same word we have here in Ephesians 1:5, called 'adoption.' Jewish custom still has a similar custom called a Bar Mitzvah for boys and Bat Mitzvah for girls after which they are accountable for their actions in the eyes of the Jewish community.

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The Roman custom for ‘adoption’ was quite extensive. But by this ‘adoption,’ the boy was now at the point where he could marry, manage an estate, enter politics. He was now recognized as an adult. The basic concept of the ceremony was freedom to function as an adult citizen in the Roman world.

This is part of what is hidden in such passages as

Galatians 5:13 For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love (spiritual love) serve one another.

III. To fully grasp and appreciate what happened to us when we were adopted by God we must relate isagogics, which we have just studied, to etymology. Etymology is the linguistic study of a word, tracing its development from its earliest occurrences. Paul did not originate this word, but it occurs only in the writings by Paul in the New Testament. Paul purposefully, and being led by the Holy Spirit, uses this Roman custom to convey a spiritual blessing from or by God to everyone who believes in Jesus. It has been used by Rome for some three hundred years before Paul. But Paul is the only one who picked up on it and used it in his writing of the New Testament. He wanted to convey the fullness of the grace and kindness of God to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ as Savior. Some Christians are satisfied knowing they are eternally saved. But I pray that you want to know more. You want to know about everything that God has given you. So, let’s look at this word, *uiothesia* which comes from the Greek word *uios* which means adult son, plus the verb

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tithemi which means to appoint or place. So, our word *uiothesia* means to be appointed an adult son as a member of the family. For us it refers to one of the great 34 blessings we received at the point of faith in Jesus Christ, and it has to do with your freedom in Christ. Freedom is a precious word to us here in America, political and religious freedom. But oh, people freedom is so vital to us as Christians. The moment we believe in Jesus Christ you are predestined in Christ and here in Ephesians 1:5, you are predestined to be considered adult children of God.

Adoption expresses our position, not relationship. Experientially, we are children spiritually, but positionally we are adult sons before God. So, by adoption, every believer, everyone of you who have believed in Jesus Christ, no matter how you may fail in this life, you are always an adult Son of God, in union with Christ.

- IV. While the ceremony observed in this Roman custom was quite elaborate, the mechanics of our adoption is supernatural. God the Holy Spirit takes every believer at the point of faith in Jesus Christ and ‘baptizes’ or enters that believer into union with Christ. Jesus Christ is an adult son and when we are ‘baptized’ into Christ we share His status as adult sons of God.
- V. When were you adopted? Time of adoption: The time of adoption is the point of faith in Jesus Christ.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

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**Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God
through faith in Christ Jesus**

Adoption is coterminous with 33 other grace blessings everyone who believes in Jesus receives.

- VI. Paul actually teaches the procedure of our Adoption in Galatians chapter 4 verses 1-3, where an heir is not recognized as a member of the family under Roman custom.

Galatians 4:1 Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, (this is based on the Roman custom)

Galatians 4:2 but he is under guardians and managers (teachers) until the date set by the father.

Galatians 4:3 So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world. (Mosaic Law. But then in verse 4 all this changes under the custom of adoption)

Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

Now look at the progress of the adoption.

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Galatians 4:5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as *adult* sons.

Galatians 4:6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

People, give thanks for adoption, for because of this blessing we have the privilege of praying to the Sovereign God...*our heavenly father*. We can say this because we are by adoption, adult sons to God. Add to this the power and leading of the Holy Spirit we have the right and privilege of prayer. Why some Christians do not want to pray to God the Father and pray to Jesus or even to the Holy Spirit is beyond me. I wonder if they know of the wonders of being adopted by God the Father. I wonder if they realize that Jesus came to earth and died and rose again for the purpose of bringing us to God, His and now our Father.

VII. Why did God the Father decide to Adopt all believers of the Church Age? Because of His Love:

Ephesians 1:4-5 ...in love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.

It is not because of any merit on the part of any believer. We are not adopted because we earn or deserve to be adopted, but because of God’s wonderful love. God’s love is so talked about today but few biblically understand Divine Love. To do so requires understanding

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His perfect Righteousness and John 3:16 and 1 John 4:19 and Ephesians 1:4-5. Biblically, understanding Divine Love, it will be easy to understand why there is an eternal lake of fire and an eternal heaven.

VIII. In the Roman custom of adoption, the son was given a ring and a beautiful robe. In our adoption by God we are given 34 things, among which is the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And because of adoption and the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit we can pray ‘Abba’ Father.

Romans 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (Only those who have believed in Jesus as savior have the gift of adoption of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit.)

Romans 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as adult sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

IX. A passage that is a problem to many is not that difficult:

Romans 8:23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

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This is an encouraging teaching on our adoption. We are adopted by God, the moment we believe in Jesus as our Savior or the redemption of our souls. But, we have a ‘hope’ or ‘confidence’ of the future, and that is the adoption of our *bodies, that is our resurrected bodies, minus the Inherited Sin Nature*. The future aspect of adoption is ‘ultimate sanctification.’ This is just another reason we do not fear death, and why we eagerly wait for the rapture of the Church when we shall receive our resurrected bodies and **in** our eternal resurrected bodies be eternally adopted. Therefore, adoption is something that we rejoice in that has already taken place, in the past, when we believed in Jesus Christ as our Savior. It is our status or our position now in time, in the **present**. We are adopted as adult sons by God and therefore we can live as adult sons in Christ by walking or living by faith in the Holy Spirit, who has been given us as part of our adoption. And it is our hope of the **future**, when in our resurrected bodies we are adopted.

- X. Adoption is so important to everyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior. Why? Because however you fail in this life, after believing in Jesus the Christ as your Savior, whatever your trend of sin may be; whatever bad decisions you may make in life; all this was set aside when you were adopted at Salvation. The Omniscience of God knew, what you were going to do in this life and yet He made the decision to adopt you in His royal family. It is so unfortunate that so many believers never enjoy the benefits of their adoption as heirs of adoption.

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XI. What is very important is that by our adoption we are different from believers of other dispensations. Our adoption is given to us by God so that by it we are in the Plan of God. Along with the blessing of the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit we are in full time Christian Service. We are to rely on the blessings of our adoption so that we may advance to spiritual maturity.

Ephesians 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, **to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.**

Hebrews 5:14 But solid food (advance teaching of sound doctrine) is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.

Hebrews 6:1 Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, (God the Son for Salvation and God the Holy Spirit for experiential sanctification or spirituality.)

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So, the Divine intent of our adoption is that we advance to maturity, glorify God in time and eternity.

Adoption in Church Age is for a purpose in life, responsibility and a planned life. Adoption means being given the rights, the power and authority of Jesus Christ to fulfill His glory on earth during His absence. Adoption is designed for blessings in time as in Romans 8:15 and blessings in eternity Romans 8:23. In this case the more you grasp and understand your adoption you have no fear of life on this earth and you have no fear of physical death and entering into eternal blessings of adoption.

Dear people, live each day as adopted into Christ, take hold of your spiritual blessings and live in anticipation of seeing and being with Jesus Christ for all eternity. You share His Adoption.