

Chapter 37: Adoption (Membership in God's Family)

What are benefits of being a member of God's family?

- I. Definition: *Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.*
- II. Explanation & Scriptural Basis
 - A. Scriptural Evidences for Adoption
 1. Several New Testament passages talk about our adoption as God's children (John 1:12; Eph. 2:1-3)
 2. The status of adoption as God's children was not fully realized in the old covenant (Gal. 3:23-26)
 3. The Holy Spirit bears witness in our hearts that we are God's children (Gal. 4:4-7; Romans 8:14-17)
 4. There is a sense in which our adoption is still future (Romans 8:23)
 - B. Adoption Follows Conversion and is an Outcome of Saving Faith
 1. New Testament evidence (John 1:12; Gal. 3:25-26)
 2. Objection: (Gal. 4:6)
 - a. Gal. 4:6 does not refer to the giving of the Holy Spirit in regeneration
 - b. Holy Spirit begins to bear witness and to assure us that we are members of God's family
 - C. Adoption is Distinct From Regeneration and Justification
 1. Adoption is distinct from regeneration.
 - a. Regeneration: being made spiritually alive to God
 - b. Angels are spiritually alive to God without having the status of being God's children
 2. Adoption is distinct from justification
 - a. Justification – our right standing before God's law.
 - b. Adoption – our relationship with God as our Father
 - D. The Privileges of Adoption
 1. Being able to speak to God and relate to him as a good and loving Father
 - a. He loves us (1 John 3:1)
 - b. He understands us (Ps. 103:13-14)
 - c. He takes care of our needs (Matt. 6:32)
 - d. He gives us many good gifts, especially the Spirit (Luke 11:13)
 - e. He gives us a great inheritance in heaven (Gal. 4:7)
 - f. He forgives our sins (Matt. 6:9-12)
 2. We are led by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14)
 3. God disciplines us as his children (Heb. 12:5-6)
 4. The privilege of sharing both in Jesus' sufferings and in his subsequent glory (Rom. 8:16-17)
 5. We relate to other believers as members of one family (1 Tim. 5:1-2)
 6. We imitate and honor our Father in heaven (Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-15)
- III. Questions for Personal Application