

1 John 3:1-3 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

INTRO: Q. 38. What is adoption?

- **A.** Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. (1 John 3:1; John 1:12; Rom. 8:16,17)
- **BOSTON** Adoption is not a real change of the sinner's nature; but, as justification a relative change of his state. By nature we are in a state of condemnation, but out of that we are brought in justification; and out of the state of alienation from God, by adoption. So that we are no more aliens and foreigners to the family of heaven, but domestics of it; no more the children of Satan, but of God, Eph. ii. 19. Our names are enrolled among those of the family; and though a new nature accompanies it, yet adoption itself is a new name, not a new nature, Rev. ii. 17- though it is not an empty title, but has vast privileges attending it.
- **In regeneration:** the believer is given life from the dead.
- **In justification:** the believer is legally declared righteous in Christ.
- **In adoption:** the believer is legally declared a child of God, with all of the accompanying privileges that belong to His heirs.

CONTENT:

1. Adoption displays the depths of God's love.
 - (3:1a) See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God;
2. Believer's enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God now.
 - (3:1b) and so we are.
 1. Objection 1: Does not my suffering in this world evidence that I am no child of God?
 - (3:1c) The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.
 2. Objection 2: Does not the sin which rages within me evidence that I am no child of God?
 - (3:2a) Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared;
3. Believer's will enjoy an even greater measure of liberties and privileges in the future.
 1. We shall be like Him.
 - (3:2b) but we know that when he appears we shall be like him,
 2. We shall see Him as He is.
 - (3:2c) because we shall see him as he is.
4. Believer's yearn to live up to what they are.
 1. The children identified: Those who thus hope in Him
 - (3:3a) And everyone who thus hopes in him
 2. The action of the children: They purify self
 - (3:3b) purifies himself as he is pure.

DOCTRINE: Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

I. ADOPTION IS AN ACT OF GOD'S FREE GRACE

Adoption is an act of the Triune God, wherein He lavishes a great blessing on His ill-deserving enemies.

I. THE FATHER PREDESTINED A PEOPLE FOR ADOPTION

- **Ephesians 1:5** he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

II. THE SON REDEEMED A PEOPLE FOR ADOPTION

- **Galatians 4:4-7** But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

III. THE SPIRIT INDWELLED A PEOPLE FOR ADOPTION

- **Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!"

II. ADOPTION SECURES THE BELIEVER INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD

I. ADOPTION IS IRREVOCABLE

- **John 8:35** The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever.

II. ADOPTION IS A HIGH PRIVILEGE

- **Ephesians 2:19** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,
- Justification is great. Adoption is more. The judge puts down his gavel...

III. ADOPTION ENTITLES THE BELIEVER TO MANY PRIVILEGES

I. CHILDREN HAVE BOLD ACCESS TO THEIR FATHER

- **Hebrews 4:16** Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

II. CHILDREN ARE PITIED BY THEIR FATHER

- **Psalm 103:13** As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him.

III. CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED BY THEIR FATHER

- **Proverbs 14:26** In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

IV. CHILDREN ARE PROVIDED FOR BY THEIR FATHER

- **Matthew 7:9** Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone?

V. CHILDREN ARE DISCIPLINED BY THEIR FATHER

- **Hebrews 12:6** For the Lord disciplines the one he loves

VI. CHILDREN RECEIVE AN INHERITANCE FROM THEIR FATHER

- **1 Peter 1:4-5** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

DOCTRINE: Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.

IV. USES

1. **Examine yourself.** Those who live in discontentment at worse have no such privileges, and at best trample them under foot.
2. **Marvel and magnify God's free grace.** All this is yours by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.
3. **Remember how precious God's children are to Him.**
4. **Learn to treasure the privileges bestowed upon you by adoption.**
 1. When your vocation is difficult, rejoice, for you have bold access to your Father.
 2. When the consequences of past sins come back to haunt you, rejoice, for your Father in heaven pities you.
 3. When evil befalls you, rejoice, for your Father will protect you.
 4. When your employment is uncertain, rejoice, for your Father in heaven will provide for you.
 5. When you are disciplined, rejoice, for your Father in heaven will never cast you off.
 6. When your earthly rewards are uncertain, rejoice, for your Father in heaven keeps safe a glorious inheritance for you.

All those that are justified, God conferred, in and for the sake of his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption,¹ by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God,² have his name put on them,³ receive the spirit of adoption,⁴ have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry Abba, Father,⁵ are pitied,⁶ protected,⁷ provided for,⁸ and chastened by him as by a Father,⁹ yet never cast off,¹⁰ but sealed to the day of redemption,¹¹ and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.¹²

1 Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4–5

2 John 1:12; Rom. 8:17

3 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 3:12

4 Rom. 8:15

5 Gal. 4:6; Eph. 2:18

6 Ps. 103:13

7 Prov. 14:26; 1 Pet. 5:7

8 Heb. 12:6

9 Isa. 54:8–9

10 Lam. 3:31

11 Eph. 4:30

12 Heb. 1:14, 6:12

John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

Romans 8:17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

2 Corinthians 6:18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.”

Revelation 3:12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

1 Peter 5:7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Isaiah 54:8–9 In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you,” says the LORD, your Redeemer. | “This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you.

Lamentations 3:31 For the Lord will not cast off forever,

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?

Hebrews 6:12 so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.