

Dear Lord God, our Father, we thank you for the Lord's Day. We thank you for your mercies to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. We're overwhelmed with all the benefits of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ. And we ask that you would open our eyes just to see a glimpse of the beauties and the privileges and the graces you bestow on us in Him. Lord, draw our hearts out in affection to Christ. And Lord, we ask that you would give us resolute wills to seek your glory in Jesus' name. Amen. Today we're on chapter 12 in the Westminster Confession. If you look on page 855 in your hymn book, we're on adoption.

As you know, we just finished justification last week, and all of these are a result of effectual calling. In this chapter, we're taught that those who are affectionately called and justified by God's free grace also have the grace of adoption conferred on them. So what is adoption? Shorter Catechism tells us that adoption is an act of God's free grace whereby we're received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. That act is a result of effectual calling. We said effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills, we receive and rest upon Jesus Christ as He's offered in the Gospel. Well, as a result of justification, I mean of effectual calling, encapsulated in effectual calling is the new birth, regeneration.

We're talking about the *ordo salutis*. And then you have conversion, faith, and repentance. And those things happen like... And then we say justification is an act. It's a once and for all act. It's when God stamps you. He pardons your sins, all of them, past, present, future. He pardons all your sins and He bestows upon you a righteousness that's not yours, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. It's a legal declaration before God, righteous, because you don't just need your sins forgiven. To go to heaven, you've got to be righteous. So you have to be justified. You have to be... God is just. He never quits being just. He will always punish sin. He does not sweep it under the rug.

As we said, He either punishes you or He punishes Christ for you. Those are your two options. That's life or death. Okay, as a result of justification, immediately, it's an act, but it is a distinct act. is adoption. And that's what we're talking about today. Adoption is too rich, really, for me to talk about because I'm just a babble, I think.

But I'll read what it says here in the Westminster Confession. Today, I utilized Williamson, utilized Chad Van Dixon's commentary on the Confession. But the bulk of it, probably over half of this lesson is coming from J.I. Packer. And J.I. Packer wrote a book called *Knowing God*, which I think we did in this room.

The session just finished rereading it. We tried to read a book together and that was when we just, we're back on going back to the old books and interspersing with new books. But I was talking to my dad, I don't know, it's been two months ago, that chapter, he goes, you know that chapter that Packer wrote on adoption?

It's also the longest chapter in that book, if you get it. It's about 25 pages long. But he was just, I mean, I think when you think on that, as you get, particularly us, in our group, the idea that God adopted me as his child. should overwhelm us. It is an overwhelming thought. And I went back and reread that at least two or three times this last week or so and just thinking about that chapter and his application of adoption to us. We're going to talk

about the doctrine, what it is, all of that, but we're going to talk more about how it should, what it should mean to us. And of course, as you see, it's the shortest chapter in the confession. And we'll talk about why that is too. But I'll read this chapter 12 really quickly if you want to read along. I said it's on page 855 in your hymn book.

All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth in and for His only Son, Jesus Christ. to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have His name put upon them, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry, Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a father. yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation. In spite of that one little paragraph there, that's it for this chapter. It's so pregnant that we're gonna, I won't probably get all of it. So let's just, we'll start. Like I said, we're taught that in this chapter that we have the grace of adoption conferred on us.

You know, If you look over page 871 in your hymn book, it talks about the benefits of them that are affectionately called. What are the benefits of those that are affectionately called? So you've received the call of grace. You've been regenerated. You've been given faith and repentance. Those that are affectionately called in this life right now, if you are affectionately called, partake of justification, adoption, sanctification, and the several benefits which in this life do either flow from them or accompany them, either accompany or flow from them. Adoption flows from effectual calling. If you haven't been effectual calling, we talked about do not pass go, we need to go back and know Christ. But one of the benefits of knowing Christ is adoption.

So, This is distinct from justification, even though some in the history of the church have put it together. But God makes it very clear there is a distinct adoptive process that goes on. People that are justified have been regenerated, and they are also children of the living God. In Ephesians 1, 5, we had two sermons last week on Ephesians 1.

I might refer to some of those. but He predestined us to adoption as sons in Christ Jesus. Okay, so our adoption was also part of His eternal decree. It was also part of His eternal decree. And it was also directly tied to the mediatorial work of Christ. How are you adopted as sons? In Christ. In Christ. Chad said that over and over and over.

And Galatians 4.4, which we may It's going to sound like we're in John for a long time here, too.

Galatians 4.4. So, through Jesus Christ, through His mediatorial work, we receive adoptions as sons. A couple of more remarks here in this introductory restatement.

Number one is the brevity of this. And this is Van Dixon. As we said, he's written a book on the 10-year period that it was written. He's done the minutes and edited the minutes of those members. Why is this one so short when it's so rich, so pregnant? A couple of reasons. Number one, there was a limited pool of theological

research and reflection done at the time of this topic, on this topic when the assembly was, that they could draw on. And so they were taken straight out of the word.

It was very simple. And then connected to that, they could do a really crisp statement of adoption because there weren't any controversies. If you'll notice back in justification, half of that chapter is answering wrong views. Okay, most people didn't have wrong views about adoption. Most people at that time. Justification, there was a war going on, as we know, and from Luther in 1517 on up through this 1642 time, there was a hundred year period there where there was really wrestling with justification and those things. There wasn't that in adoption. There was not that. So much of the chapter on justification is an argument against error and a correction of error. And so that's why the brevity is there. And then the other reason there's a brevity here is, and we're going to see this later, we might not get to it this year, there's a considerable overlap with assurance of faith.

You know, one of the great things, Packer will talk about that. Assurance of faith, knowing you're going to go to heaven. So much of it's tied up in understanding your adoption. But that's chapter 18 of the confession is just a separate chapter on assurance. And there's a real overlap between the two. So they could make this one statement really short and sweet.

The second thing to remember in this chapter, as we heard last week from Chad, We heard about, you know, you get a job and you get a salary. Most jobs out there, you have a salary, but then you get a benefits package, okay? You get the salary's not all you get, you know?

All right, you're gonna make \$50,000 a year, but then you get health insurance, you get life, most of them have life insurance they give you. Most of them, you know, there's a retirement package, there's this, there's that, there's this. You know, you got a \$50,000 a year job, but it's costing your business 85 or 90,000, okay? The business owner's paying about 90,000 for a \$50,000 a year job. And that's when you say, what's the package?

What's all the benefits? What comes with it? Well, this adoption is full of benefits. All the benefits. It's a package that we receive in Christ Jesus. The saving blessings and graces that come from Jesus Christ always come as a package. Our Father is abundant in loving kindness. We can't even count the ways that He shows it to us. He has storehouses of mercy, we know. But just as we are justified in Christ, we're adopted in Christ, and we will talk about some of those benefits today. So that's your introduction. Adoption with liberties and privileges. Let's talk about adoption. First thing we can say about adoption is its uniqueness. Our sonship, A, is different from Jesus Christ's. Jesus Christ was begotten, not made. Jesus Christ is eternal sonship. We are adopted. By nature, we are from an alien group brought into a new group.

That's what adopting is. And we come by virtue of effectual calling. Secondly, adoption is a one-time act that follows justification. and in which state sanctification begins. Okay, think about that now. You're justified, adopted, but you're also initiating sanctification. Those are really like, we can't really see it. It's almost all instantaneous, but there's an order in God's word to it.

And you begin the path of sanctification until you get to heaven, glorification. But you operate sanctification out of the state of adoption. You're a son of God. You're trying to become and look more like Jesus Christ throughout the rest of your life. That's what sanctification basically is. We'll deal with that next week.

While justification is a legal declaration, and sanctification is kind of like a surgeon. Remember, it's dying more and more into sin and living more and more into God. A surgeon's going in and cutting out that sin, and he's cutting out that error in your mind, and then he's also infusing you, say, like Hutton just finished immunotherapy. They're injecting things that make him resistant to sin and increasing graces.

And so while you rejoice when you come out of a courtroom and you have been acquitted, not guilty. You can ask somebody that's been on trial, they'll probably tell you that. Not guilty. They come out of that courtroom door, they're rejoicing. You come out of a surgery and the surgeon says, got it all. It's done. You're healed. That's great.

But one of the great things you rejoice about is you get to go home to your family. Where do you want to go? I want to go home. I want to see my family. I want to see my children. I want to see my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters. I want to be with my family. The rejoicing, even in those things, are towards going to be part of a family. There's a rejoicing in being part of a family. And adoption creates that in us. It's amazing that God would justify the guilty. We're guilty. That's amazing.

The fact that He will make you part of His own family is a mouth-shutting, just gaping, as Hank was talking about the other day when I talked about 117 at prayer meeting, Psalm 117, where he tells us to laud God for his love and kindness. I don't even know if you can make a noise to give enough lauding to do that, to make it loud enough, because it's just overwhelming.

But we are joiners with Christ, says in Romans 8. You're joint heirs with Christ. That's being part of God's family. Secondly, you are called by God's name. You know, Proverbs 22, 1, great verse says, a good name is to be desired more than great riches. You want the best name? You can be adopted into the Son to be a child of God. You have God's name put on you.

It says so in Revelation 3.12, 2 Corinthians 6.18. I won't read all the verses because that would take all day, but I'm telling you to be called by God's name. You get His name. When you adopt a child in your family, they don't go by whatever family name they had. They get your last name. They become yours just as if you'd had them naturally. You're adopted into God's family. What does it mean to be called by God's name? You receive the Holy Spirit. He's the spirit of adoption, Romans 8, 15. The one who through faith gives us access to the throne of grace, okay, with boldness and confidence. By the spirit, we can cry out Abba. That's one of the benefits.

Abba is People in modern terms, I've heard people try to do it here, say daddy. You really, that's almost coarse. Abba's more like affectionately saying Father. There's not the loss of respect. You understand, just like we'll talk about this later, but in the Lord's Prayer it says, our Father which art in heaven. So you understand who you're

dealing with. He is my Father, but He's also God. So there's an Abba is not as coarse as we hear it sometimes in modern evangelicalism as kind of a reference to Daddy. It's still an understanding of who your father is, but there's affection tied to it.

There's a gripping of, he's mine. I can go to him personally. This is not some philosophy or something that is a way of thinking. It's that God is mine. I am his. I can grab hold of him. That's where we're talking about. And yet, understanding who he is.

It's a simple, childlike ability to cry out with trust. You know, it's something we lose when we're almost six or seven now. But when you're little, three, four, dada or daddy, Help. It's just help. You don't even have to say what, because you expect him to come running. If he's within earshot and the three-year-old son cries, help. He doesn't even know how to explain it. He's in trouble. The expectation there is he's coming. I'm OK. He can hear me. He'll come get me. That's what it's like. The spirit of adoption creates that in us. It's also not just what we receive from God. In adoption, we receive those kinds of things, those benefits, but it's also what He gives. So take the example I just gave.

Psalms 103, 13 assures us that He pities us. He pities us. He has compassion on us. Like a father to his children, God lowers himself in an explanation to make us understand, do you hurt for your child, dad, when they're hurting? Sometimes it's their own fault, yes. Yes, they did something stupid. Yes, they sinned against God. But you have, they're hurting because of it. They're suffering the consequences of it. And sometimes we have, one of the most loving things we do is say, that's why this is happening to you, but I still love you. And God does that to us. But He pities us when we cry.

The whole Old Testament is a picture of it. They would fall and sin and rebel. And he'd send somebody to correct them with the rod of men. He would correct them with the rod of men. Let some foreign enemy come in and invade them. And then what happens? They're getting oppressed by that foreign enemy and they cry. They cry. And it says over and over again, he heard their cry. He heard their cry. He heard their cry. You want to know the privileges of Abba, Father? He hears your cry.

Whatever it is. It doesn't always have to be spiritual. It can be your body. It can be your relationship with a family member. It can be all sorts of things. He hears your cry. He also protects us. He is a bulwark and a shield. You know what? You know when you're a little boy and you're getting in an argument with somebody and my daddy can beat your daddy arguments? Your daddy can beat anybody's daddy. There is no daddy. There is no threat. And guess what?

Not only can He, but will He. Not only can He, but will He. We talked about the first petition of the Lord's Prayer that He is willing and able. When you pray, Our Father, the assumption on your part is that He is not only able, that He is willing. When you say, Our Father, you're saying He's willing to come do it. We'll stand up and we'll stick our daddy up, my daddy, whip your daddy, that kind of mess. Well, God's saying, not only can I, but I will, if that's what's necessary. So that is part of the Abba Father, that's what he gives us. But he also provides for us. He provides for us. So he pities us. And he fights our battles and he protects us. But he also

provides for us, Matthew 6. What does Jesus tell everybody about worry? Why are you worried? Why are you worried? Because your Father will provide for you.

You know, in the Old Testament, His name is Jehovah-Jireh. I will provide. You tell that to Abraham. He provided a ram. If He'll provide a son for a sacrifice, what will He withhold that you need? If He will provide His own Son for the sacrifice, for the propitiation of your sins, what will He withhold? This is one of the gifts you receive to be adopted into the family of God.

He says, in my Father's house are many mansions. Guess who lives in the Father's house? The children do. He wants us, He wants you to cast all your cares upon Him. 1 Peter 5 and verse 7. He's like, I want to be your father. I chose you before the world began. I gave my own son to die for you. I put myself into a relationship with you. And now I want you to tell me everything you got problems with. You might not be able to tell everybody else in this room, but you can tell Him. Okay.

That's the joy of fatherhood for him to exercise fatherhood. He gets the joy of exercising fatherhood towards us. Another thing that he does, and we talked a little bit about this last week, though, a good father disciplines his children. You know, in Hebrews 12, we read that whole passage. You know, those whom he loves, he disciplines. And he says, even while you're going through that discipline, it may be painful at the time, but because it's your father's discipline, you know that it is good because it will yield a peaceable fruit of righteousness.

He even uses earthly fathers as an example. We all had earthly fathers who did what they thought was best at the time. They thought it was best. And they were flawed and all the things that go wrong with fathers and children. but he's saying how much more so, he argues from lesser to greater, how much more so will your Father in Heaven, if you're really His Son, He's gonna make sure, He's gonna conform you to the image of His eternal Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. And if that means He has to shave something off, we talked about wandering sheep, good shepherds, sometimes if they consistently wander, He has to break their legs so they won't leave the pasture.

That's a good father that does that. He'd rather you stay fat and happy and immobile in his presence. That's what God as a father, one of the benefits of adoption. You're never outside of his reach. We think about the prodigal son that he came to his senses, it says.

But he came to his senses because it was the overwhelming sense of, The servants in my father's house are eating better than me. I'm over eating out of a trough with a bunch of pigs. It's my father's house. My father's house. That was a discipline of the father, really, in the sense that, wake up, son. And he wasn't even there to tell him. But the memory of it had been pressed into his mind by the father.

I am good to you. I treat you well. I even gave you things and let you see if you could handle it. You couldn't. and you're in trouble now. But he's thinking, I can always go back to him. The thought of his father is, I can go

back. Even in the prodigal son, that's not the full application of the story, but it's part of it. I can go back to my father. In fact, the reason why we are given the spirit of adoption is that the spirit is God's seal. He'll never forsake you.

It's the seal to the day of redemption, Ephesians 4.30. Moving on, another aspect of adoption. Adoption by the Father means you have brothers and sisters. The richness of adoption creates the primary alignment for us in this world toward our Father who is in heaven.

When you think of God, what do you think of Him as? You think of Him as Father? Is that your first thought? That's the one that overrides all the rest of it? It should be. That's what should override it. Adoration, love, trust, and the loyalty of our hearts should be his.

That's what good fathers receive. We love to brag on our dads, you know. You know your dad's a sinner. You know your dad's failed, all the ways he failed. But you love him. And if you called him and asked for his advice, you'd trust what he told you was coming from a sincere heart. And you're loyal to Him.

You know, there's some passages in Leviticus. I've always wondered about the whole therapy industry. So much of it is about the idea that we expose our Father's nakedness. And that is condemned over and over and over in God's Word. Well, my daddy did this. My mother did that. She was this way, that way.

I understand trying to understand why people act like they do, but at the same time, it ought to be the last thing that comes to your mind, even your earthly father. We're not to expose our parents' nakedness. We're not to open it up to ridicule or to abuse. Yes, it may deserve it. It may deserve it. But we ought to be very careful to expose our father's nakedness.

But in this family that we have in Christ, if our first primary alignment in the world is towards our Father, and that's who you think of God as, your second primary alignment is towards the rest of His children. To the rest of His children. This is your family. This is your family. If God is the Father of all His people, and only His people, these are your brothers and sisters. Jesus Christ died for the church. That's the bride of Christ. He loved it enough to die for it.

People sitting right here in this room, right next to you. It's the church. We are in a new family. One family, a spirit of adoption with one older brother. That ought to be our second area of alignment is with the father and his children. That's your two areas. Sometimes that includes members of your own family, but not always.

One way to praise our father's name is service to his children and seeking to do all we can to help your brothers and sisters on their way to heaven. So we have Sunday school, we have church, we have worship. Why are we doing that? A, God tells us to. He calls us to come worship me. But B, it's also for helping one another get to heaven. We're gonna limp there. All of us gonna limp with something.

If we're children of Abraham and we're children of Israel, how did Jacob, after God changed his name, go to the promised land? He limped. Remember, he touched the socket in his hip, and for the rest of his life, he limped. That's how Jacob made it to the promised land. He limped. And we'll probably all limp into heaven. in some form or fashion. How do I help you limp on to the finish line?

That's what ought to be my thought as an adopted son of God. Okay, I got a few minutes here to talk about some of the things J.I. Packer said. This is all contained in that. You get all those benefits, but we're going to talk about what I call uses. It's chapter 19. If you want to go back and look up the Knowing God, it's chapter 19.

He opens that chapter and says, what is a Christian? What is a Christian? A follower of Jesus Christ, someone who has repented and believed in Jesus Christ, all these things. He says, the best and highest definition, a Christian is one who has God for a father. A Christian is one who has God for a father. Everybody doesn't have that. Everybody does not have that. A Christian is one who has God for a father. Galatians 3, 26.

The gift of sonship to God becomes ours, not by being born, not by being created on this earth. All men are not sons of God, but by being born again. That's how you become a child of God, John 1.12. Sonship to God is a gift of grace to undeserving sinners. It is not natural. It's adoptive by its very nature. That means you came from one group to another group.

To those who are Christ, the Holy God is a loving Father, and you as His child can boldly approach Him. What's the model of this relationship? child to father in the Christian and the God of heaven and earth. The model is Jesus Christ and the Father. What's our relationship supposed to look like? And this was very helpful to me. It may not be to you, but I thought it was The model for both Jesus and for us, because we were being conformed to His image, right? Romans 8, 28, 29, 30. That's the goal, to make us all look like Christ.

So how He relates to His Father should be the way we relate to our Father. Number one, that relationship, back to what I said earlier, is based on authority. Jesus recognized the Father's authority. The Father commands and disposes. We'll look at... He says you can see all this if you just stay in John and 1 John, so we'll probably stay there. John 6 and verse 38. I have come down from heaven not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me. Okay, first there was ascending, two, there was an obedience, because there's an authority recognized. There are a couple of other verses, we won't look up all of them, 17, 434. Remember the Father's words about Jesus. This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased. Because why? He always did what His Father told Him to do. He recognized the authority of the Father. So there was an authoritative relationship here.

In general, we talk about this a lot, amongst session members probably, but in the modern world has a rejection of authority in general. He's actually talking to others Friday about this. The fifth commandment, the understanding that there are superiors, inferiors, and equals in the world, and that God put them there. You have a boss, therefore you're an employee. You are to honor, respect, you're to treat them like a father. You know, you have a teacher in a school and that teacher is over the classroom and the teacher is superior to the inferiors who

are being taught. That notion has, because we've got this weird idea that equality was something that God made and we're not equal.

Our father is owed respect, fear, and love. The second aspect of Jesus Christ's relationship, though, with His Father after that is affection. The Father loves me. He delights in me. This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased. There's delight. There's an affectionate embrace there. You can almost see it. There's delight in it. John 5, 20, John 15, 9.

Third way that Jesus Christ and His Father relate that we ought to is there's fellowship with Him. I am with the Father, I and the Father are one, we're together. How much time do you spend in the presence of your Father? If God is your Father, how much do you pray?

Wow, we can bring everything to Him. Even things we can't even articulate, we can grunt before Him and it's okay. Jesus, where was He always going? He went away by Himself to a place to pray. He wanted to spend time with His Father. There was fellowship. He wanted to be with His Father. Fourth aspect of the relationship is honor.

God the Father, after all these wonderful things, wills to exalt the Son. And He will His children. He will bring you to heaven. He will give you crowns. You will rule. We're a royal priesthood. We're keenly in Christ, in Christ. And all of this extends to his adoptive children. As Jesus obeyed all ten commandments without exception all the time, so must we. As God loved his beloved, so he does his adopted sons. As God has fellowship with Jesus, so he does with us.

1 John 1.3. As God exalts Jesus, so he will us.

Third aspect of adoption. Adoption is the highest blessing of the gospel. Did you hear what I said there? He said adoption is the highest blessing of the gospel. It's not the primary, not the first one. Justification is the first. God justifies sinners. That's an amazing thing. And he could have stopped right there and we should be overwhelmed. But he didn't stop there. Because he went further. He said, not only are you righteous now, now are you forgiven now, and I'm going to bring you to heaven now.

He says, I want to do one more thing. I want to make you my child. I want to take you into my family. So there's an initiation. The first one is definitely justification. But the highest, we're part of God's family. I can't give it enough praise or I can't give it enough Elevation, the way it ought to be in our minds, but I hope you get a little grasp of it. Fourthly, because it is the highest blessing of the gospel, the entire Christian life has to be thought of in terms of it. Jesus always thought of himself as the Son of God.

You remember, when he was 12 years old, I got to be in my father's house. I got to be doing my father's business. I only do what pleases my father. I came to do his will, not my will. He operated his whole life

obeying and doing the will of him who sent me. And it was out of affection. It was duty. There's nothing wrong with duty. But it was also he did his duties because he loved the one who gave the duties to be done.

Jesus always thought of himself as the Son of God in a unique sense. So he always thought of his followers as children of God, his heavenly fathers, members of the same divine family as himself. You remember in Mark 3 and they talk, your sisters and your brothers are here. You know, and there's like, he kind of dismissed it and he says, the people who do God's will, my Father's will, those are my brothers and my sisters and my father and my mother and all of that. Every follower of Christ is a member of Christ's family.

But most clearly we can see it in the Sermon on the Mount and I'm gonna run through that and we'll be done. The Sermon on the Mount's often called the charter of God's kingdom. But Packer says it can equally be described as the Royal Family Code. The Royal Family Code. And a few brief insights into it. First, adoption appears as the basis for Christian conduct. Number one, by imitating the father.

If you look over in Matthew 5, in verse 44, but I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your father. So you imitate your Father. You glorify the Father. 516, let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works. Why? So they can think well of you. And glorify your Father who is in heaven. Don't do things to bring glory to yourself. You live for the glory of God.

Pleasing the Father ought to be what we are. We are about. We ought to be, as Packer said, a single-minded God-pleaser. 6-1, same sermon. Beware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them. Otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who's in heaven. Be a single-minded God-pleaser, not a single-minded man-pleaser.

Secondly, adoption appears in the Sermon on the Mount as the basis of Christian prayer, which we already said. Matthew 6-9, we have the Lord's Prayer there. Jesus always prayed to His Father, and so must Christians. It also is, if you being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more does your Father know? So in other words, it's the basis for prayer, even when we're asking for stuff. Even when we're asking for things. You know, Jesus knew His Father had heard Him, and those in Christ, you can know that too.

The Father is always accessible to His children. Secondly, prayer in that part is always personal. It's always personal. It says, in verse 7, when you're praying, do not use meaningless repetition as the Gentiles do, for they suppose they'll be heard for their many words. So do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him. It's personal. It's Puffer, it's Wayne, it's Monica. It's Sheila. He knows you and what you need. And it is the basis of this because he's your father. He knows you better than you do. He knows you better than you do.

On top of that, our father does always hear and answer, but not always in the form in which we offer our prayers. Okay, sometimes we ask for the wrong thing. And it's God's prerogative as a good father not to give

you that, okay? But typically, typically, this is interesting. If we unwisely ask for things outside the parameters of our father, he reserves the right to say, no, not that, it wouldn't be good for you, have this instead. And it may not be what you wanted. but he's gonna do what's good for you.

The apostle Paul begged him three times to remove the thorn in the flesh. And he didn't give him relief. He gave him grace to live with the thorn in the flesh. That was his best for Paul. That was best for Paul. Paul acknowledged it was best for him. So he wouldn't have pride. That thorn in the flesh kept Paul in check. And he knew it was from God. He knew it was a blessing. Even though he asked God to have it removed, What he did is he gave Paul grace to live with it. Adoption appears in the Sermon on the Mount as the basis for the life of faith.

As we just talked about in 630, well the whole 25 through 33, just 31, do not worry what we eat, what we drink, what we wear for clothing. For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, for your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." Not only that, He's going to give you beautiful things. It's more beautiful than the lilies of the field. Okay. And the New Testament message is adoption through propitiation. The greatness of God's grace. as He propitiates our sin and brings us into our family. And I'll stop there. There's so much more to say about adoption.

We could go on for a long time. I hope you get a taste. Go back and look at some of the... if you've got Van Dyck's Horner, you've got... most of y'all probably have Knowing God, chapter 19. It's just rich. Let's pray. Dear God, our Father, we come to you. We thank you that we can come to you through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ in his righteousness. And we ask you to meet with us now as we go to worship in the next hour. Give us the grace to honor you with our heart, with our lips, and with our ears. In Jesus' name, amen.