

ABBA FATHER - PART 1
THE PROCESS OF ADOPTION

Romans 8:12-17

April 3, 2022

"Adoption is the act of God's free grace by which we become His sons with all the rights & privileges of being His."

Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 12 - All those who are justified God graciously guarantees to make partakers of the grace of adoption in and for His only Son, Jesus Christ. By this act they are taken into the number of God's children and enjoy the liberties and privileges of that relationship; they are given His name; they receive the spirit of adoption; they have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are they are enabled to cry, "Abba, Father." Like a father, God has compassion on, protects, provides for, and chastens them; yet they will never be cast off, but are sealed to the day of redemption; and will inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

1. The Glory of Spiritual Adoption

† **In how our adoption came to be**

† **In what adoption brings to its recipients**

📖 **When we are adopted by God all of our spiritual debts are cancelled.**

📖 **When we are adopted by God He give us His Name**

📖 **When we are adopted by God we come to share His Nature** (2 Peter 1:4)

† **To be a child of God is to be a saint**

"A godly beggar is a thousand times more exalted and glorious than the greatest monarch who has ever been in the world." (à Brakel)

† **The process of adoption reminds us that we are not natural children.**

By nature we were deeply indebted because of our sin and our failures. By adoption we have become heirs of all the riches in heavenly places. (Romans 8:17; Ephesians 1:3)

By nature we were children of wrath, justly condemned. By adoption we are now children of the King, with all the rights & privileges that go with it. (Ephesians 2:2-3)

By nature we are children of the devil. By adoption we have become children of God (John 8:44; 1:12-13)

2. The Manner of Our Spiritual Adoption:

† **Spiritual birth is supernatural**. (John 1:12-13)

† **Spiritual birth is by God's eternal decree** (Ephesians 1:5). He knew us before the world was even made. Our names were written in His book before we were even born. (Romans 8:29; Revelation 17:8)

† **Spiritual birth connects us to God by regeneration** (Titus 3:5). We actually become new people, with new hearts & new spirits.

† **Spiritual birth connects us to God by adoption** (Galatians 4:5). It is a legal transaction. It is final.

† **Spiritual birth connects us to God by way of spiritual marriage** (Hosea 2:19). We become one with Christ, who is clearly God's eternal Son.

† **Spiritual birth connects us to God by connecting us to the body of His Son** (Ephesians 1:23). The connection to the head is through connection to the body.

3. The Analogy between Natural & Spiritual Sonship:

Greek: στοργή (*storgae*); "An innate love, an inner inclination, which spontaneously issues forth from the heart; it can only exist between parents and children, and cannot go forth toward others."

This love unites parents and their children with a sense of belonging, mutual concern, and a desire to bless.

☛ **Children delight to be with their parents.**

A child of God desires the continual presence of God. (Psalm 73:28)

- † If God's Presence seems to be absent, the child of God feels a sense of loss. (Psalm 30:7; 42:2).
- † When sin creates a barrier between us & God, we are not at peace until it is dealt with, and then we are filled with praise and rejoicing. (Isaiah 12:1-2).

A litmus test: Do you struggle with sin in your life? Do you long to know God and to at peace with Him

☛ ***Children trust their parents implicitly for the necessities of life.***

- † He is not concerned about food or clothing, but expects this from the parents. Even if the child has very little at home, he would rather have dry bread at home than to enjoy all sorts of treats with strangers in the absence of his mother.
- † Likewise children of God trust God for their food and clothing and realize that all good gifts such as that are from their loving hand of their heavenly Father (Matthew 6:25-34; James 1:16-17)

A litmus test: Do you find yourself growing in your desire for the bread of heaven?

☛ ***Children delight to help their mother.***

- † They find great joy in their parents' pleasure towards them.
- † Likewise children of God desire to do God's will. (Psalm 40:8)

A litmus test: Do you find joy in seeing your life used for the glory of God?

☛ ***Children implicitly do not want to anger their parents.***

- † If they have been naughty and the parents maintain somewhat of a distance, the child won't like this. He won't stop pursuing them until he has a sense of restoration.
- † Likewise the child of God cannot be at peace when they are walking in disobedience. (Psalm 32:3-5)

A litmus test: Do you find yourself deeply troubled by your sin?

☛ ***Older children are offended when someone makes a disparaging remark about their parents. "Ah, yer mother wears army boots!"***

- † Likewise the child of God takes offense when God's Name is slandered. (Psalm 119:32; 139:21-22)

A litmus test: Do you find yourself offended when you hear others take the Name of the Lord your God in vain?

☛ ***There is a natural connection between siblings, in most cases.*** A child finds joy in being with them, whereas he is often very uncomfortable with strangers. We can fight intensely with family and yet still be family.

- † Likewise the child of God loves other children of God. (1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:14)
- † They can often sense the difference between a child of God and a child of the world.
- † They don't love each other because we are so lovable, or easy to be with, but rather we love each other because we recognize that God's children love Jesus and that Jesus loves them.
- † They have a common bond with other children of God because they have the same Father, and because they have a common basis for their standing in His family...
- † They would rather suffer with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of this world. (Hebrews 11:25-26)

A litmus test: Are you growing in your love for and enjoyment of God's people? Do you find yourself getting excited when you cross paths with another child of God at unexpected times?

A Truth to Remember: God adopted us in full knowledge of all our shortcomings and sins. He has fully cancelled all our debts, past, present and future, and is in the process of conforming us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Challenge to Consider: Can you see evidence in your heart and life of the transforming work of the Spirit in your desires and affections?

One thing I heard this morning was...

One way I heard the gospel this morning was...