

## ADOPTED BY GOD HEIRS WITH CHRIST

### I. Romans 8:12-17

A. Last Sunday I shared 1 Peter 1:15-16 on the holiness of God: **15** but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16** since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." (cf. Lev. 11:44-45; 19:2) (Holiness is the absolute pure, undefiled perfection of God. God's total transcendent gloriousness beyond everything! He is set apart from all. God dwells in unapproachable light and utter absolute sinless perfection. And we do not! When Isaiah and John saw their respective visions, they heard angelic beings singing, "Holy, holy, holy." Picture this as a constant before the throne of God!)

B. I also shared about our call to holiness: God became Man. And Jesus, as that Man, lived a pure and holy life. He was the Lamb without spot or blemish who went to the cross as the only acceptable sacrifice for our sin. His holiness has been imputed to us by faith, even as our sin was imputed to Him. The Holy Spirit has come to dwell in those who belong to Christ. The Holy Spirit not only regenerates us but works within us to make us holy. (Handkerchief Illustration)

C. In our text today I want us to see that our Holy God is also our Heavenly Father. I want us to juxtapose His absolute holiness with His love and deep desire for intimate relationship with His chosen sons & daughters. He is Yahweh, *I AM*, who's name, out of reverence, God's people would not utter. And yet it was Jesus who taught us to call God, *Father*. Don't be confused about this-totally embrace it!

D. Romans 8:12-17 (AMP) from the Amplified is our beginning text...

1) **V12-13: 12** So then, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation, but not to our flesh [our human nature, our worldliness, our sinful capacity], to live according to the [impulses of the] flesh [our nature without the Holy Spirit]— **13** for if you are living according to the [impulses of the] flesh, you are going to die. (Think eternal death!) But if [you are living] by the [power of the Holy] Spirit you are habitually putting to death the sinful deeds of the body, you will [really] live forever. (Galatians 6:7-8 (ESV) echoes the same: **7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. **8** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption (NIV: destruction), but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. (How many of you continue to reap the consequences of sowing to your flesh, before you were saved? How about since you were saved? If the seeds of the flesh you are presently sowing are the size of pumpkin seeds, what will the size of the consequences be when they come to fruition down the road?)

2) (Next we see evidence of genuine sonship.) **V14: 14** For all who are allowing themselves to be led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. (Are your friends, neighbors, workmates and classmates increasingly recognizing whose child you are? Or are they becoming increasingly doubtful of your family ties? Are you still an orphan posing as God's child or are you genuinely His?)

3) **V15: 15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading again to fear [of God's judgment], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we [joyfully] cry, "Abba! Father!" (The most endearing term for Father in the Aramaic language.)

4) **V16-17: 16** The Spirit Himself testifies and confirms together with our spirit [assuring us] that we [believers] are children of God. (The Holy Spirit reassures us as to whose children we are!) **17** And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance], if indeed we share in His suffering so that we may also share in His glory. (Galatians 4:4-7 (NLT) pounds the point: **4** But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. **5** God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children. **6** And because we are His children, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." **7** Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are His child, God has made you His heir.

### II. Communion

A. Christ Jesus, on behalf of God the Father, has purchased our freedom with His precious blood. He's not only ransomed us from slavery and captivity, but secured our adoptions. And we are not children to just any Father, but to God Almighty who is *Holy! Holy! Holy!* (The Bread & Cup remind us!)

B. Titus 3:3-7 (NIV) affirms we are heirs: **3** At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another. **4** But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, **5** He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, **6** whom He poured out on us

generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. **(R.C. Sproul said:** “Nobody is born into this world a child of the family of God. We are born as children of wrath. The only way we enter into the family of God is by adoption, and that adoption occurs when we are united to God’s only begotten Son by faith. When by faith we are united with Christ, we are then adopted into that family of whom Christ is the firstborn.” **(The Bread & Cup remind us!)**

**C. 1 Peter 1:3-5 (ESV) is for all you former orphans: 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, (NIV: "An inheritance that can never perish, spoil, or fade.") kept in heaven for you, 5 who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (The Bread & Cup remind us of our adoptions and our inheritance.)**

**\* Pray and Serve Communion...**

**\* Ephesians 1:3-8 (NLT) is our Benediction Verse: 3 All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. 4 Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. 5 God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure. 6 So we praise God for the glorious grace He has poured out on us who belong to His dear Son. 7 He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins. 8 He has showered His kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.**

## **Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff**

### **Romans 8:12-17 (AMP)**

**12** So then, brothers and sisters, we have an obligation, but not to our flesh [our human nature, our worldliness, our sinful capacity], to live according to the [impulses of the] flesh [our nature without the Holy Spirit]— **13** for if you are living according to the [impulses of the] flesh, you are going to die. But if [you are living] by the [power of the Holy] Spirit you are habitually putting to death the sinful deeds of the body, you will [really] live forever. **14** For all who are allowing themselves to be led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. **15** For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading again to fear [of God’s judgment], but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we [joyfully] cry, “Abba! Father!” **16** The Spirit Himself testifies and confirms together with our spirit [assuring us] that we [believers] are children of God. **17** And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance], if indeed we share in His suffering so that we may also share in His glory.

### **Galatians 6:7-8 (ESV)**

**7** Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. **8** For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

### **Galatians 4:4-7 (NLT)**

**4** But when the right time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. **5** God sent Him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that He could adopt us as His very own children. **6** And because we are His children, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, “Abba, Father.” **7** Now you are no longer a slave but God’s own child. And since you are His child, God has made you His heir.

### **Titus 3:3-7 (NIV)**

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### **Quote by R.C. Sproul**

“Nobody is born into this world a child of the family of God. We are born as children of wrath. The only way we enter into the family of God is by adoption, and that adoption occurs when we are united to God’s only begotten Son by faith. When by faith we are united with Christ, we are then adopted into that family of whom Christ is the firstborn.”

### **1 Peter 1:3-5 (ESV)**

**3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to His great mercy, He has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, **5** who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

### **Ephesians 1:3-8 (NLT)**

**3** All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ. **4** Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. **5** God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure. **6** So we praise God for the glorious grace He has poured out on us who belong to His dear Son. **7** He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins. **8** He has showered His kindness on us, along with all wisdom and understanding.

### **Film Clips & Other Links**

**Adopted Into the Family of God - Greg Laurie**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGLxN0cxk6Y>

**Adoption - C.J. Mahaney (Sermon Jam)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DV6cG6F8yXI>

**"Good Good Father" - Housefires**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djrY\\_eFDOwE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djrY_eFDOwE)

**"Good Good Father" - The ZOE Group**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibbsFuX\\_eHg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibbsFuX_eHg)

### **Bonus Stuff**

#### **Leviticus 11:44-45 (ESV)**

**44** For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy. You shall not defile yourselves with any swarming thing that crawls on the ground. **45** For I am the Lord who brought you up out of the land of Egypt to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy."

#### **Leviticus 19:2 (ESV)**

**2** "Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.

#### **Galatians 5:16-24 (ESV)**

**16** But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. **17** For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. **18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. **19** Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, **20** idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, **21** envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. **22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **24** And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

#### **Quote by Thomas Watson**

"Adoption is a greater mercy than Adam had in paradise."

#### **Quote by J.I. Packer**

"If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all."

- J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 201.

### **Quote by John Piper**

"The Gospel is not a picture of adoption, adoption is a picture of the Gospel."

### **Quote by Max Lucado**

"If anybody understands God's ardor for His children, it's someone who has rescued an orphan from despair, for that is what God has done for us. God has adopted you. God sought you, found you, signed the papers and took you home."

### **On Adoption - Author Unknown**

"The first time I saw you was like a dream come true.  
No I didn't give you the gift of life  
Life gave me the gift of you."

### **A Child of the King**

By Harriet E. Buell

My Father is rich in houses and lands  
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands!  
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,  
His coffers are full, He has riches untold.

My Father's own Son, the Saviour of men,  
Once wandered on earth as the poorest of them;  
But now He is reigning forever on high,  
And will give me a home in heaven by and by.

I once was an outcast, stranger on earth,  
A sinner by choice, and an alien by birth;  
But I've been adopted, my name's written down,  
An heir to a mansion, a robe and a crown.

I'm a child of the King, a child of the King;  
With Jesus my Saviour, I'm a child of the King.

### **4 Benefits of Our Adoption**

By Sinclair Ferguson - From *The Trinitarian Devotion of John Owen*

<https://www.ligonier.org/blog/4-benefits-our-adoption/>

To contemplate all the privileges of communion with Christ would be, Owen says, "*work for a man's whole life.*" Yet these are all summed up in what he regards as "*the head, the spring, and fountain whence they all arise and flow.*" This—the highest privilege of all—is adoption into the family of God with all the rights and privileges of knowing Him as our heavenly Father.

Outside of Christ, we were strangers to the family of God both on earth and in heaven. But now we are brought near and made heirs. In Christ the Son, we have become the adopted sons of God: "*Adoption is the authoritative translation of a believer, by Jesus Christ, from the family of the world and Satan, into the family of God, with his investiture in all the privileges and advantages of that family.*" Thus, we enter into the manifold privileges that belong to the royal children of the heavenly King.

At first glance, it may seem strange that Owen discusses the theme of adoption within the context of communion with the Son. Adoption, after all, is by definition an act of the Father, and its confirmation is effected by the Spirit in His capacity as the "*Spirit of sonship.*" But Owen's reasoning is fairly obvious: in union and communion with Christ, we become joint heirs with Him. So while each of the divine persons plays His particular role in adoption, it is appropriate to discuss adoption as the highest privilege of our union with Christ.

But in what do we enjoy communion as adopted children? Owen gives a fourfold answer:

1) We enjoy the liberty of the children of God. We are set free from the hold of the old family. No longer is its influence dominant—even if we are not entirely free from its atmosphere and even its menacing influence. There is all the

difference in the world between obeying the Father who has given His Son for us, so that we can be sure He will also give us everything we need, and being in bondage to the law while making our best efforts to keep it.

2) We have a new title, and as royal sons enjoy “*a feast of fat things*,” not least in the church, where we have the privilege of belonging to the family of God and being served by, and in turn loving and serving, its members. More than that, there is a sense in which the whole world is ours to enjoy, because it belongs to and is preserved by our Father. No child in this family can ever justly complain that his Father has set up a restrictive regime without pleasures and joy. Isaac Watts was surely reflecting on this when he wrote:

*The men of grace have found,  
Glory begun below.  
Celestial fruits on earthly ground  
From faith and hope may grow.  
The Hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets  
Before we reach the heav'nly ground,  
Or walk the golden streets.*

3) We experience boldness before the face of God. In Christ, we are as righteous as He is before God. We have the privilege of calling Him “Abba, Father.” We can ask anything in Jesus’ name. What more could we ask for?

4) We experience affliction. But for the child of God, affliction is always chastisement—the action of the Father. This, as Owen rightly points out, is precisely the burden of ([Hebrews 12:5–11](#)). It is one of the chief distinctions between Christians and unbelievers. The latter seek but do not find any ultimate meaning in their suffering; as a result, unbelievers must attempt to create meaning. But not so Christians. For Scripture teaches them that, in Christ, trials have a goal. God is treating His people as sons by training them. Were He indifferent to us in our sin and waywardness, questions could rightly be raised about our legitimacy. In this sense, all discipline is evidence of His love. More than that, suffering in the Christian life is the training ground of the soul. The Father is equipping His children through adversity. If our earthly fathers discipline us for our good, how much more will the heavenly Father, who knows His children through and through?

Thus, when we were united to Christ, a transaction and transition of monumental proportions took place. It would be a tragedy if we did not catch a glimpse of the grandeur of what this means—it is nothing less than union and communion with the Son of God in our flesh.

- This excerpt is taken from *The Trinitarian Devotion of John Owen* by Sinclair Ferguson. This book may be ordered by going to: <https://www.ligonier.org/store/the-trinitarian-devotion-of-john-owen-hardcover/>