



THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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ADOPTED BY GOD

God has revealed Himself to us in a variety of ways. He has shown us that He is our Creator. God wisely and wonderfully made us. God is our Sustainer. He provides for us from the moment of our conception until this moment. He has taught us that He is our Savior. Through His Son Jesus, He has reconciled us to Himself.

One can go on and on concerning the number of ways that God has made Himself known to us. Yet, of all the ways that God has revealed Himself, the most powerful and richest way is that of a Father. God is the Father of all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

A person can have a deep and intimate relationship with the eternal God. You can become the child of the almighty God of heaven and earth. It's difficult to understand this. Yet, the Bible reveals that a person can become a child of God – loved, accepted, and secure.

I'm referring to the theological concept of adoption. God adopts a person who believes in Jesus Christ. God accepts that believer as His own child. Adoption is the free act of God's grace whereby a believer is received into the family of God and has all the privileges of being a child of God bestowed on him.

In this issue of *The Prayer Closet*, we will look at the truth of adoption. We will examine what the Word says about being adopted by God. We will also look at how this affects us practically in our daily life. In addition, we will see what difference it makes in our prayer lives.

The Basics Of Adoption

As I stated earlier, adoption is the act of God's free grace whereby a believer is accepted as a child into the family of God. That believer receives all the privileges of being a child of God. The following are the basic facts of the biblical teaching about our adoption:

- (1) *Adoption flows out of God's free grace (Ephesians 1:5).* We have this blessing because of God's grace. We do not merit or earn adoption. It is not something that we attain by good works. It is something that God does out of His grace. Adoption is the gift of God. Your adoption flows out of God's sheer grace and goodness. It is rooted in His eternal purpose through Jesus Christ.

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- (2) *We experience adoption through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.* The Bible is clear – we become children of God through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of God says in **Galatians 3:26**, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.” By faith in Jesus, a person comes to know God as a Father. When you trust in Christ, He declares that you are His child. There is no such thing as the universal Fatherhood of God. God is the Creator of all men, “And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation” (**Acts 17:26**). Yet, God is the Father only to those who trust in His Son Jesus Christ, “But as many as received him, to them gave he the power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name” (**John 1:12**).
- (3) *Adoption takes place in a moment of time.* When a person believes in Jesus Christ, at that moment, God adopts that believer. As I said in our definition of adoption, it is the “act” of God. It is something that is done all at once. It is not a work of God that takes place over a long period. It is an act of God that takes place in the moment a person trusts in Christ. The moment that you savingly believe in Jesus Christ, you become a child of God.
- (4) *Adoption is something that we are made conscious of and experience personally.* God not only makes us His sons, but He also makes us aware that we are His sons. He proves to us that we belong to Him, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (**Galatians 4:6**). God bears witness that we belong to Him, “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (**Romans 8:16**). You can know in this life that you are accepted and adopted by God.
- (5) *Adoption provides you with a new relationship to God.* By faith in Jesus Christ, you now relate to God as your Father. You are His child; He is your Father. You are accepted and loved by God as your Father. You have a brand new

way of relating to and approaching God, “Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ” (**Galatians 4:7**).

- (6) *We must remember the difference between our sonship and that of the Lord Jesus Christ.* We must always remember that we are sons of God by adoption through faith in Jesus. Our adoption by God does not make us divine. Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God (**John 1:18**). Our Lord Jesus Christ is of the same substance with the Father and equal in power and glory. Moreover, this means that He is God. We don't share in this equality with the Father. We are –and ever shall be– nothing more than creatures of God. Does this take away from our adoption by God? No, it only increases the wonder of it. We, sinful creatures, are forgiven and adopted by God. God makes us a part of His family and blesses us richly. We, who were by our sinful nature, were the children of the devil, are now the sons and daughters of God. What amazing grace!
- (7) *Adoption by God is permanent.* Your Father will never forsake you or fail you. Adoption by your heavenly Father remains in effect permanently. When we become the children of God by faith, we are in God's hands. He will protect and guard us, “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand” (**John 10:28-29**). An earthly father may fail you, disappoint you, and even forsake you, but your heavenly Father never will. “When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up” (**Psalms 27:10**).

The Benefits Of Adoption

When you trust in Jesus Christ, God adopts you as His own child. Because of this, you receive a variety of benefits. The Father grants you all the privileges that the child of God can receive. The following are some of

the main benefits you receive as an adopted child of God:

- *You receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 4:6).* Paul declares that we receive the Holy Spirit because we are sons of God. The Father sends the Holy Spirit to live inside of you. The Holy Spirit empowers you to fellowship with God and to live the Christian life. You experience the supernatural gift of the Spirit because of your adoption.
- *You receive the assurance of your salvation (Romans 8:15-16).* Your Father teaches you that you belong to Him. He grants you assurance through the witness of the Holy Spirit. Your Father desires that you know that you belong to Him – that you are accepted and adopted by Him (1 John 5:13).
- *You gain the confidence that you can approach God in prayer (Hebrews 4:16; Ephesians 3:12).* Prayer is your time alone with your Father. You can communicate with God as your merciful and loving Father. When you pray, you can know that your Father is listening. The God who has adopted you now receives you and wants to hear from you.
- *You are delivered from the bondage of fear (Romans 8:15).* You can now approach God as a loving, sovereign Father. You do not have to have a cowering fear of God as a tyrant. You can approach Him knowing that you are accepted and loved.
- *You have God's unflinching care in all that you face in this life (Psalm 103:13-14).* Through Christ, God is now your Father. He will care for you in all the circumstances of your life. He will have compassion and mercy for you. He is concerned about you and your life. He cares for you!
- *You have God's faithful protection over your life (Psalm 27:1-3, 34:7; Proverbs 14:26).* Because God is your Father, you have Someone who continually watches over your life. He guides you and protects you every day. You always have a place of refuge since God became your Father through Jesus Christ.

- *You receive God's discipline (Hebrews 12:6-12).* You may not see this as a benefit of your adoption. Our Father's discipline is not pleasant; it's painful and certain. However, as a loving Father, He seeks to teach us to hate sin and to love righteousness. He strives to correct us and change us. It might be painful and unpleasant but it is for our best.
- *You have become an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ (Romans 8:17).* You have available to you all the resources of God. You have a right to receive from your Father for all your needs. He is more than able to supply all your needs.

The Results Of Adoption

Adoption is not some abstract theological truth that has no result on your day-to-day life. This truth makes a profound difference in your life. The fact that God has adopted you has significant practical results in your life. Some of the following are the results of your adoption by God:

- ✓ *You have a Father that loves you unconditionally.* When God adopts you, He accepts you and loves you. You become His own special child. He does not love you because of who you are or what you do or don't do. He loves you because He has set His love on you. He loves you because you are now a part of His family through His Son Jesus Christ. In a world where people love you today and don't the next, this is good news. In a world where people love you because of what you are or what you do, this is amazing news. You have a Father who will love you no matter what. On your best day, your Father loves you. On your worst day, when you fail and make a mess of the day, He still loves you. Your Father loves you and accepts you as you are. He loves you right now as much as He ever has or will. He loves you completely. If you doubt His love for you, look to the Cross, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

- ✓ *You have a Father who will provide for you.* You now have a Father who is concerned about every area of your life – physically, spiritually, emotionally, and financially. He desires to meet your needs and will do this by His power and wisdom. Your Father's promise to you is, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (**Philippians 4:19**). He promises that He "shall supply" all your needs. You can depend on Him and call on Him for every need in your life.
- ✓ *You have a Father who listens to you and answers you.* You now have a Father who longs to hear from you and to speak to you. You have the amazing privilege to approach the living God of all time and eternity as your Father. Your Father promises to hear you, "I love the LORD, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications" (**Psalms 115:1**). Your Father promises to answer you, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (**Matthew 21:22**). You can be bold in prayer. Why? Because God is your Father. You approach Him as a child in need. He promises to hear you and answer you. Why doubt Him? Why pray timidly? Your Father invites you to come and to call on Him. He will hear and respond. You know God as your Father; you are permitted to address Him in the same way that His unique and beloved Son did (**Mark 14:36; Galatians 4:6**).
- ✓ *You have a Father who wants to change you.* As I said earlier, your Father loves you as you are. He accepts you and His love for you does not waver. Yet, He loves you too much to let you stay the way you are. He wants to shape and mold your life into the image of His Son (**Ephesians 1:5**). He wants to deal with the sin and corruption in your life. He longs to create godly character in your life. For this reason, He works to make you different. He disciplines you when you sin (**Hebrews 12:6-10**). He also daily works in your life to enable you to grow spiritually, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (**Philippians 2:13**).
- ✓ *You have a Father who works in and through the adversity of your life.* Your life isn't governed by chance or fate. Your life is in the hands of your heavenly Father. He is in charge of your life, guiding you in the path that He has ordained for you, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way" (**Psalms 37:23**). God is in charge of your steps and your stops! Your Father is working through all that you face – the good, the bad, and the ugly. You can have the confidence that nothing takes place in your life by chance or coincidence. Your Father filters all the things that come your way. They enter your life because He has some purpose in allowing into your life. As God's child, you can know with certainty that all things work for your good, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose" (**Romans 8:28**). Not everything that happens in your life is good. In fact, many rotten things can take place in your life. Yet, God is at work in every single event to accomplish His good pleasure in your life.
- ✓ *You have a holy Father.* You are now in a relationship with a holy Father, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (**1 John 1:5**). This means that Your Father is pure without any taint or stain of sin. Because of this, your Father hates sin. He loves you as His child. However, He loathes the sin in your life. As His children, we must be diligent to confess our sins, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (**1 John 1:9**). Sin hinders and damages our fellowship with God. We cannot have deep and powerful fellowship with Him if we tolerate that which is evil in His sight. This should drive us as His children to confess our sins. We must be diligent to deal with sin that our fellowship with Him might not be hindered.
- ✓ *You have a Father you can trust.* You may not be able to trust anyone else, but you can trust your Father. He is faithful to His