

Adoption

by

Ellis P. Forsman

Adoption

by

Ellis P. Forsman

October 8, 2011

Adoption

Rom 8:14-17

One of the means for the greatest inheritance, that of eternal life, is adoption. We should all be grateful that we may qualify for the riches of the eternal inheritance by adoption. No one today is a rightful heir to this inheritance, except by adoption. One must become an adopted child of God to inherit eternal life.

The word “adoption” does not appear in the Bible many times, but its great importance is seen in its value and relationship to the eternal inheritance with God in heaven.

Adopted Children Loved and Wanted

One may become an adopted child of God because he is wanted and loved by God:

John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

God wants us as His adopted children; and He loves His adopted children.

Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God. But men and women of all tribes and nations, sons and daughters of mankind, may become children of God by adoption.

The inspired apostle Paul wrote in Rom. 8:14-17, *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”*

According to this text, as adopted children of God, Christians have a legal, spiritual heir relationship with God, the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son. What a wholesome relationship! What a glorious expectation of the future when life on this earth is terminated.

Before the coming of Christ into the world, there was a covenant between Israel and God. The Israelites were in a covenant relationship with God, but there was to come a time of adoption

when all men of every nation, whether Jew or Gentile, might become adopted children of God.

The apostle Paul wrote in Gal. 4:3-7, “*Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.*”

The apostle concluded that Israel constituted the “*children of promise,*” as you may read in Gal. 3:29 and Gal. 4:28. Even so, all mankind, whether Jew or Greek, male or female, are one in Christ Jesus by adoption as children of God.

Aliens Adopted

Before reconciliation and adoption, the Gentiles were alienated from God, as Paul declared in: Col. 1:21, “*And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled.*”

But after Christ came and established His kingdom, His church, and souls were “*... delivered ... from the power of darkness, and hath translated ... into the kingdom of his dear Son.*” (Col. 1:13), then reconciliation, redemption, and forgiveness were obtained and God adopted all His children in His kingdom. As adopted children, they became heirs to “*inherit salvation,*” as we find in Heb. 1:14.

Joint-heir With Christ

The inspired apostle declared one is “*an heir through God,*” revealed in Gal. 4:7. And the “*Sons of God,*” children of God, are “*joint heirs with Christ,*” (Rom 8:14-17). As “*joint-heirs*” with Christ, the Son of God, the children of God may expect God, the Father, and Christ, the Son, to share with them all the riches of the eternal kingdom, throughout all eternity.

The term “*joint-heir*”, as used in the original language, was that of co-inheritance. The apostle Peter in 1 Pet. 3:7 referred to husband and wife, who are united in Christ, as “*being heirs together of the grace of life.*” The husband and wife who are one in Christ are co-servants of the Lord and co-inheritors of the riches of the eternal kingdom of the Lord.

As a “*joint-heirs*”, with Christ as our elder brother, one acquires the rights, privileges, and blessings of the family of God. What blessings to behold! What eternal blessings to inherit!

An incomparable joy and eternal blessing Christians are promised, as joint-heirs with Christ, is to share in the glory of Christ in eternity, if we have shared in the sufferings of Christ on earth. The inspired apostle Paul declared:

Rom. 8:17, “*And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.*”

The apostle Paul spoke of God’s children, when he said in Col. 3:3-4, “*For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*”

Think of it! If you are a child of God, a joint-heir with Christ, His beloved Son, then you shall appear with Christ in glory. The glory that God has for His Son will be shared with you, as one of His adopted children. What a glory that will be!

How to Become Adopted Children Of God

The Bible very specifically states the conditions of adoption of children of God.

Throughout the epistle to the Galatians, Paul discusses adoption; how that they had become adopted children of God, and the necessity of faithfulness and loyalty to that adoption.

In Gal. 3:26-27, the apostle declares in unmistakable terms, how they became children of God, “*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*”

How and when is one a child of God in Christ through faith? “*For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*”

Please observe closely the transition. The word “*into*” is important” “*baptized into Christ,*” the apostle said.

“*For as many ... as were baptized into Christ, did put on Christ.*” How many “*put on Christ*”? “*As many*” as were “*baptized into Christ,*” the apostle said. Surely there can be no doubt about the conditions of adoption of children of God.

Blameless Sons of God

God desires that His children be blameless and harmless. Hear these words from God in 2 Cor. 6:17, *“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”*

Also, in Phil. 2:15, *“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;”*

Love And Be Loved

A loving parent will bestow his love upon his sons and daughters. And respectful sons and daughters will love and honor their father and mother. Eph. 6:1, *“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.”*

God loves His children, and what incomparable love He bestows upon His children!

John, the apostle of love, declared in 1 John 3:1-3, *“Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”*

To be loved of God is to love God and obey His will. The apostle concluded in:

- 1 John 4:8, *“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”*
- 1 John 4:11, *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”*
- 1 John 4:16, *“And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”*

This is the love of God for His children; and love of children of God for our Heavenly Father.

1 John 5:2-3, *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”*

God loves His children and His faithful children love Him. God's adopted children have the promise of the greatest inheritance ever to be anticipated. Our God has given to us the Holy Spirit as an "earnest," our guarantee, of "our inheritance."

Eph. 1:14, "*Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.*"

The adopted children of God have a living "...hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you," (1 Pet. 1:3-4).

Hope of Eternal Life.

The inspired apostle James gives assurance of the riches the heirs of the kingdom may enjoy.

He declared in James 2:5, "*Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*"

From this divine record, four conclusions are inevitable:

- God loves His children and provides for them greatest riches because of their faith and obedience, even though they may be poor in this world.
- Brethren in Christ are in the kingdom, therefore, "*heirs of the kingdom.*"
- To the heirs of the kingdom, God "*hath promised*" the blessings of the eternal inheritance. The blessings are a promise.
- The promise of the inheritance is predicated upon love: "*to them that love Him,*" and faith, "*rich in faith.*"

It must not be forgotten that the apostle of love, John, declared in 1 John 5:3, "*For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.*"

Adoption, Redemption of Body

The apostle declared that God's adopted children may expect redemption of the body, a new body, for eternity.

Rom. 8:23, "*And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*"

Our bodies for eternity will not be mortal bodies with all the possible disabilities of our present bodies. The apostle said that the “*Spirit*” shall “*give life also to your mortal bodies,*” just as the Spirit raised up Jesus from the dead.

Rom. 8:10-11, “*And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*”

The apostle summed up the matter of the body in the eternal kingdom after the resurrection in these words from the Apostle Paul:

1 Cor. 15:35-44, “*But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body. All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*”

Do Not Forfeit Rights

The child of God wants to be sure that he does not forfeit his rights to the eternal inheritance.

The apostle Peter declared in 1 Pet. 1:3-5, “*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*”

It must always be remembered that a child of God may cease to be a living, faithful, obedient child of God. Such warnings are given to God’s children over and over again.

- Heb. 3:12, *“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”*
- 1 Tim. 4:1, *“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;”*

Now listen to this final warning given to God’s children in the kingdom, members of the Lord’s church in Laodicea:

Rev. 3:15-22, *“I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”*

God will not forsake His children and deny them the benefits of the eternal inheritance. But God’s children may forsake God, the heavenly Father, and deny themselves the riches of the eternal inheritance in heaven.

The Lord God stated this principle in the long ago when the prophet Azariah declared in 2 Chron. 15:2, *“And he went out to meet Asa, and said unto him, Hear ye me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin; The LORD is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you.”*

The apostle Peter admonishes God’s children in 2 Pet. 1:5-11 to be faithful so that not one will be denied the riches of the eternal kingdom: *“And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather,*

brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Take Heed Lest Ye Fall

The apostle Paul warned God's people of the danger of falling.

1 Cor. 10:12, "*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.*"

As the apostle considered his own personal responsibility, he wrote:

1 Cor. 9:27, "*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*"

Paul realized there could be a possibility of being lost himself, although he was a faithful apostle of Christ. In his letter to the Hebrews the apostle warned God's children:

Heb. 3:12, "*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*"

Jesus declared in John 15:5-6, "*I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.*"

Christ is the vine and His disciples are the branches. What happens is a "man", described as a "branch", does not continue to abide in the vine (Christ), and becomes "withered"? Jesus gave the answer: they "...gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

The erring child of God must be converted, turned again to the Lord, that his sins may be forgiven (James 5:19-20). The terms of pardon for the fallen child of God include:

Repentance and prayer, Acts 8:13-24, "*Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. And*

when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answered Simon, and said, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me."

Confession of sins. James 5:16, "*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.*"

May be Disinherited.

A good father loves his children and provides for them. A good father who loves his children makes preparations for them in his will, for their benefit after his death. However, it is possible for a father to disinherit his child.

Our heavenly Father loves His children and has provided for their enrichment of life. God will never forsake His children, but they may forsake Him, and thereby lose out on their inheritance.

God Fails Not.

Our heavenly Father loves His children and has "*reserved in heaven*" "*an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,*" (1 Pet. 1:4).

1 Cor. 2:9, "*But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*"

The love of God never fails His children. His children must never fail Him.

