



A Great

Part 8

SALVATION

Adoption

Various Verses

We have **defined** the Gospel, looked at some false gospels and 3 “**phases**” of *salvation*. We looked at **Redemption** and being **bought** with a price and **freed** from the bondage of sin to serve the Lord. We studied peace and hope last time, and saw that peace has 2 aspects: **positional** and **practical**...

A. Adoption in Ancient Rome

To understand the impact of what Paul said, we need to understand the **historical context** of **adoption** in Rome in the first century...

“The practice of adoption is very old and many ancient people practiced it including the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. The term ‘adoption’ is only found in the New Testament. During Apostle Paul’s time, the Roman adoption was typically for reasons other than love. It had to do primarily with money and inheritance...”

In the Roman law and culture of the first century A.D. an affluent but childless adult who wanted an heir would adopt a male in their teens, often a slave, to be his son. Adoption was one of the few ways a slave could come into the *patria potestas*, (the power of the father)...

After adoption, a son ceased to belong to his birth family and became in every respect the child of the person or family who adopted them. Upon the death of the new father, the adopted son inherited the estate. In the case of a master with no heir, a favorite slave might be adopted for the sole purpose of having a legal heir to inherit the master's estate. In ancient times, a slave was never

permitted to use the term Abba (father) when approaching the master for conversation. But after the adoption, the slave was considered a full son and was entitled to call the master father and the mistress mother.

In addition, all the debts of the child being adopted were cancelled, and in effect he

started a new life. The adopted person did, though, lose all rights in his old family, but gained all the rights of a fully legitimate son in his new family. In the most basic sense and in the most literal way, he got a new father.”

<https://sevenminutensermons.wordpress.com/2014/01/18/patria-potestas/>

B. Adoption in the New Testament

The one adopted in the culture then was said to be “**born again**” or “**a new creation.**”

*Adoption in spiritual terms: 1. **Payment.** 2. **Transfer.** What was the *payment for us*? The precious blood of Christ at the crucifixion; a **1-time event**, never repeated: *Hebrews 9:11-15, 1 Peter 1:18-21...**

B. Adoption in the New Testament

Next is the **transfer**. The *Father* initiated the adoption process, the *Son* paid the price for our adoption and the *Spirit* draws us into this new relationship and confirms it. In *John 3*, Jesus told Nicodemus he had to be *...born again*, not physically but of or by the Spirit...

“Adoption is related to regeneration, or the new birth, but they are not the same thing. Regeneration has to do with our receiving a new life or new nature. Adoption has to do with our receiving a **new status**.”

James Montgomery Boice, *Romans vol. 2: The Reign of Grace - Romans 5-8*, p. 838.

B. Adoption in the New Testament

Romans 8:14-17 - For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of **adoption** as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17and if children, then **heirs - heirs** of

B. Adoption in the New Testament

God and fellow **heirs** with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him...

C. Adoption and the Christian

1. Losing all rights to the old family and gaining all rights of the new family as a fully legitimate son. This didn't necessarily mean you *couldn't speak to your family*, but it meant they had **no rights** to you any more. You ***belonged*** to *someone else*. Before we are "born again" we belong to satan... In Christ, we have all the rights Jesus has as sons of God...

C. Adoption and the Christian

1 John 3:1-3 - See what kind of **love** the Father has given to us, that we should be called **children** of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2Beloved, we are **God's children now**, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we

C. Adoption and the Christian

shall see him as he is. 3And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure...

C. Adoption and the Christian

There is the *future aspect to adoption*:

Romans 8:23 – *speaking of the groaning of creation until it is redeemed* – Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly **awaiting** for the **adoption**, the **redemption of our body**...

C. Adoption and the Christian

2. An heir to the father's estate. What is an *heir*? It is someone who gets all or a portion of what their parents have, specifically the **father** in ancient days, when that father dies. We think of the parable of the "***Prodigal Son***," where the disobedient child asked for his inheritance and it was given to him and his brother, before the father died...

C. Adoption and the Christian

Galatians 4:6-7 – And because you are **sons**, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a **son**, and if a **son**, then an **heir** of God through Christ...

C. Adoption and the Christian

Colossians 1:9-12 - And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, 10so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; 11being

C. Adoption and the Christian

strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; 12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the **inheritance** of the saints in light.

C. Adoption and the Christian

3. The old life is completely wiped out.

Imagine a slave or a family that owed **debt** or that you were disowned or rejected. As a natural born son, you could be rejected and lose everything. Spiritually, before Christ, we were sons and slaves of satan! But God's **adoption** of us completely changed this...

C. Adoption and the Christian

Colossians 2:13-15 - And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, **14by canceling the record of debt that stood against us** with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. **15**He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him...

C. Adoption and the Christian

We were in willing rejection and rebellion against God. But God gave us life, forgave us, and wiped out our former life of sin in the death of Jesus, our substitute...

C. Adoption and the Christian

4. We become absolutely the son of the new father. In the first century, if you were adopted, there was **no question** who your father now was. As we read, there had to be ***7 witnesses*** of the adoption in case anyone questioned it. We have that ***7-fold witness***, in the Holy Spirit (*Revelation 1:4* – a reference to *Isaiah 11:2*)...

C. Adoption and the Christian

As the **initiative** in the Roman culture was taken by a father, so **God initiates His adoption** of us. While *we are completely responsible*, salvation is not from us, not by works, baptism, giving, a “second work of grace,” by sacraments, praying, going to church, or by anything we do, but it is an *act of God’s grace...*

C. Adoption and the Christian

5. Because we are in a new family, we are to love one another. - 1 John 3:16-18 - By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the **brothers**. 17But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? 18Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth...