

He Predestined Us for Adoption

“In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will” (Ephesians 1:5, ESV)

* In regeneration God gives us new spiritual life within.

** In justification God gives us right legal standing before him.

*** In adoption God makes us members of his family. Therefore, the biblical teaching on adoption focuses much more on the personal relationships that salvation gives us with God and with his people.

We may define adoption as follows:

Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.

1. Adoption is a distinctly **Christian doctrine**.

2. The biblical foundation for concept of adoption is primarily in the **New Testament** rather than the Old.

There are only three adoptions in the Old Testament (Moses, Esther, and Genubath, 1 Kings 11:20). Israel is called God’s son (Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:1; 32:6; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1) but not until the New Testament is this called adoption.

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved to those that by nature are not gods. ” (Galatians 4:4–8, ESV)

“For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For 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!” The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—

heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. ” (Romans 8:14–17, ESV)

3. **Adoption** starts to be mentioned at the beginning of John’s gospel.

“But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ” (John 1:12–13, ESV)

4. In contrast, unbelievers are called “children of wrath” and **“sons of disobedience.”**

“in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—” (Ephesians 2:2, ESV)

“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ” (Ephesians 5:6, ESV)

“among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ” (Ephesians 2:3, ESV)

5a. We see the Jews who rejected Jesus tried to claim **God was their father.**

“You are doing the works your father did.” They said to him, “We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father—even God.” ” (John 8:41, ESV)

5b. **Jesus** told them “If God were your Father, you would love me...You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires” (John 8:42–44).

6a. When the fullness of time had come God the Father sent God the Son to **redeem us.**

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. ” (Galatians 4:4–5, ESV)

6b. To redeem means to obtain or to set free by **paying a price**.

“Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree”— ” (Galatians 3:13, ESV)

7. Adoption was **seriously planned** by God and was done **on purpose**.

“even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ” (Ephesians 1:4–6, ESV)

8. Adoption was not **Plan B** for God – He predestined us for adoption before the foundation of the world.

9. Adoption means that we **suffer now** and experience **glory later**.

“For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ” (Romans 8:22–23, ESV)