

## Chapter 37: Adoption (Membership in God's Family)

*What are benefits of being a member of God's family?*

- I. Definition: *Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.*
- II. Explanation & Scriptural Basis
  - A. Scriptural Evidences for Adoption
    1. Several New Testament passages talk about our adoption as God's children (John 1:12; Eph. 2:1-3)
    2. The status of adoption as God's children was not fully realized in the old covenant (Gal. 3:23-26)
    3. The Holy Spirit bears witness in our hearts that we are God's children (Gal. 4:4-7; Romans 8:14-17)
    4. There is a sense in which our adoption is still future (Romans 8:23)
  - B. Adoption Follows Conversion and is an Outcome of Saving Faith
    1. New Testament evidence (John 1:12; Gal. 3:25-26)
    2. Objection: (Gal. 4:6)
      - a) Gal. 4:6 does not refer to the giving of the Holy Spirit in regeneration
      - b) Holy Spirit begins to bear witness and to assure us that we are members of God's family
  - C. Adoption is Distinct From Regeneration and Justification
    1. Adoption is distinct from regeneration.
      - a) Regeneration: being made spiritually alive to God
      - b) Angels are spiritually alive to God without having the status of being God's children
    2. Adoption is distinct from justification
      - a) Justification – our right standing before God's law.
      - b) Adoption – our relationship with God as our Father
  - D. The Privileges of Adoption
    1. Being able to speak to God and relate to him as a good and loving Father
      - a) He loves us (1 John 3:1)
      - b) He understands us (Ps. 103:13-14)
      - c) He takes care of our needs (Matt. 6:32)
      - d) He gives us many good gifts, especially the Spirit (Luke 11:13)
      - e) He gives us a great inheritance in heaven (Gal. 4:7)
      - f) He forgives our sins (Matt. 6:9-12)
    2. We are led by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14)
    3. God disciplines us as his children (Heb. 12:5-6)
    4. The privilege of sharing both in Jesus' sufferings and in his subsequent glory (Rom. 8:16-17)
    5. We relate to other believers as members of one family (1 Tim. 5:1-2)
    6. We imitate and honor our Father in heaven (Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-15)
- III. Questions for Personal Application