

THE BLESSING OF ADOPTION **(Ephesians 1:4-6)**

1. God's plan.

- a. God has always planned on adopting people into His spiritual family.
 - i. Notice that God has chosen a group of people in Christ before the foundation of the world.
 - ii. There has never been a time since the world began that this group was not in God's mind.
- b. It is a special group being only those who are in Christ.
 - i. The word "Him" refers back to Christ in verse 3.
 - ii. One has to be in Christ to be part of God's adopted family.
- c. There is only one way to be in Christ, and that is to be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27).
- d. In this way, those in this group, the ones in Christ, can be holy and without blame before God.
- e. Our love for God will be shown because we have been made holy and are living lives without blame by virtue of our faith and being in Christ.
- f. What we note from this is that this has always been in the mind of God.

2. God's Person.

- a. There was only One Person who could make this possible and that is Jesus the Christ.
 - i. The adoption process was made possible because of Jesus.
 - ii. He paid the adoption price for us.
- b. In that day, there was an adoption ceremony.
 - i. The adopting father would pay the adoption price to the father who was giving up the child.
 - ii. The one giving up the child would give the money back, then they would do it again.
 - iii. On the third time payment was given, it was accepted and the adopted child was fully taken into the family of the father doing the adopting.
- c. There was a price paid in the adoption process and Jesus, spiritually, paid that price for us.
 - i. He purchased us with His own blood (Acts 20:28).
 - ii. Another blessing of being in Christ, Paul tells us, is being sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13).
 - iii. Notice Ephesians 1:14 - you and I are that purchased possession.
- d. Only Jesus could pay that purchase price.
- e. So, only Jesus could be the Person that God could use to pay the adoption price for mankind.
- f. This was all done according to God's will.
- g. The story is told of Abraham Lincoln walking past a slave auction and seeing a young girl being auctioned.
 - i. He was moved by the sight of this young girl and paid the purchase price.
 - ii. When she came to him as his possession he told her, "You are now free."
 - iii. She asked what that meant.

- iv. He said, "It means you are free."
- v. She asked, "Does that mean I can be anything I want to be?"
- vi. He replied yes.
- vii. She then asked, "Does that mean I can go anywhere I want to go?"
- viii. He replied yes.
- ix. With tears in her eyes, she said, "Then I'll go with you."
- h. God's person paid our adoption fee with His blood and we accepted the payment by getting into Christ through baptism - we said, "Then I'll go with you."

3. God's praise.

- a. When one was adopted in Paul's day, all rights of the former family were relinquished.
 - i. The adoptee had all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family.
 - ii. He lost all rights in his old family and that family lost all rights to him.
 - iii. In the eyes of the law, he was a new person.
 - iv. It even extended to any debts he may have had in connection with his former family - they were entirely removed.
- b. When a person puts on Christ and is adopted into the family of God, all debts are removed because the debt has been paid.
- c. The one in Christ has a new identity and, spiritually speaking, has become a new person (2 Corinthians 5:17).
 - i. The old man of sin was put to death and the new man arose out of the watery grave.
 - ii. Romans 6:3-4.
- d. Since our debt of sin is paid, we ought to praise God for the grace that was extended to us in order for the debt to be paid.
 - i. God is worthy to be praised simply because of Who and What He is.
 - ii. When you add to that the fact He has adopted you and me into His family, there should be no end to His praise by us.
- e. Hebrews 13:15.

4. Man's privilege.

- a. This passage tells us of two privileges at least, that we have as adopted children of God.
- b. We have a Father's love.
 - i. We get to be before Him in love according to verse 4.
 - ii. I believe that to be standing before God being loved by Him.
 - iii. We should know God loves us because of the cross.
 - (1) There should never be a doubt in our minds that God loves us because He gave His Son for us.
 - (2) Romans 5:8.
 - iv. We also see His love for us in the fact He has made a way for us to be adopted into His family and become His children (1 John 3:1).
 - (1) You and I, on our own, have not given God a reason to adopt us.
 - (2) He does so out of love for us.
- c. Did you ever hear of Edson Rogers, the son of a wealthy farmer in Virginia? This lad died of wounds in the tragic war between the states. He was a fine specimen of young manhood, and during those hard days of fighting he had met

Robert Sawyer. They became bosom pals, enduring much together. Bob was a poor orphan, but Ed came from a well-respected family.

i. Near the end of the war Edson was mortally wounded. Realizing his life was fast ebbing away, he asked Bob to promise he would go to his parents' plantation and tell them of their wonderful friendship. But Bob said, "I am only a poor boy, they will not believe me, they will think I am an impostor." But Ed had thought it all through and had written a letter in a very shaky hand. He gave it to Bob to deliver. Their farewell was sad and sudden.

ii. A few months later the war was over, and Bob timidly made his way to the Rogers mansion. His clothes were shabby, which made things worse. But when he explained his visit and delivered the letter, all was changed. Later, when he started to leave, the father said, "Bob, you must not go. We want you here. Edson was our dearest treasure; he was everything to us. Won't you come to our home and be a son in his place?"

iii. What an invitation! A poor orphan boy suddenly becoming a son and heir, to be loved and honored in a home of luxury! How did it happen? It was Edson's name that made the difference.

iv. Wearing the name Christian makes the difference with God.

v. No other name allows us to be adopted into the family of God.

d. The second privilege we have is being made accepted in the beloved.

i. The word accepted, according to Thayer, means, "to pursue with grace, compass with favor, to honor with blessings."

ii. The word beloved, again according to Thayer, refers to "the love with which God regards Christ".

iii. God pursues us with grace, compasses us with favor, and honors us with blessings with the same love that He holds for the Christ.

iv. The magnitude and depth of that type love is truly beyond our mental grasp.

e. How could anyone turn down the opportunity to be a part of this family?