

CHAPTER 12: ADOPTION

For the sake of His only Son, Jesus Christ, God has been pleased to make all justified persons sharers in the grace of adoption, by means of which they are numbered with, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of children of God. Furthermore, God's Name is put on them, they receive the Spirit of adoption, and they are enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace and to cry 'Abba, Father'. They are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by God as by a Father. He never casts them off, but, as they remain sealed to the day of redemption, they inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation.

Adoption is a legal word, and describes the way a person can become a son or daughter without being born of the parents. In the Bible the word occurs in Romans 8:15,23, Galatians 4:5, and Ephesians 1:5. We are children of God both by the new birth and by adoption.

(a) **The ones God adopts:** “all justified persons”. God does not only declare the sinner to be righteous in Christ, but also a member of His family. It would be like a judge setting a criminal free and then bringing him into his own family! Adoption is such a great blessing, beginning from when we become Christians, but only complete when we receive the full inheritance on the last day (Romans 8:23, 1 John 3:2).

(b) **The blessings of adoption:** “they are numbered with, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God”. This general statement is followed by a list of specific blessings:

1. “God's Name is put on them” – just as children bear the name of their father. Read 2 Corinthians 6:18, 1 John 3:1, Revelation 2:17, 3:12.
2. “They receive the Spirit of adoption” – it is one thing to have the legal name, but we also need the ability to know God as Father, and to bear His image. This the Holy Spirit does in us. Read Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6.
3. “They are enabled to come boldly to the throne of grace and to cry ‘Abba, Father’ ” – ‘Abba’ is the word ‘father’ in the Aramaic language, and is the more familiar word used in the family, like ‘daddy’. This is how Jesus prayed (Mark 14:36). It is because Christians have God as their Father that we have the freedom of access into His presence. Read again Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6.
4. “They are pitied” – Read Psalm 103:13-14.
5. (They are) “ ... protected” – like a father who jealously protects his children. Read Psalm 34:7, 121:1-8, 125:2.
6. (They are) “ ... provided for” – Jesus emphasized this fact in the Sermon on the Mount. Read Matthew 6:8,32, 7:7-11.
7. (They are) “ ... chastened by God as by a father” – Read Hebrews 12:5-11. His punishments are no longer as of a judge unto condemnation, but as of a father for our blessing.
8. “He never casts them off” – He will never reject us, or no longer count us as His children (see John 10:28-29). The Spirit of adoption is the guarantee of this. He is the ‘seal’ that shows us that God promise is true (2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). We must receive the full inheritance unto eternity (Romans 8: 17, Hebrews 1:14, 1 Peter 1:4).