

11. ADOPTION AS SONS

GALATIANS 4:3-7

INTRODUCTION

- Our method: systematic theology
- Our topics:
 1. God's wrath at our sin
 2. Jesus' incarnation and obedient life
 3. Jesus' death upon the Cross
 4. Jesus' resurrection, ascension and heavenly rule
 5. Our union with Christ
 6. Predestination
 7. Irresistible grace and effectual calling
 8. Regeneration, repentance and faith
 9. Justification: the imputation of Christ's righteousness
 10. Justification: by faith, and not by good works
 11. Adoption
 12. Perseverance: once saved always saved?
 13. Glorification: what will the new creation be like?
 14. Assurance of salvation: how do I know I'm really saved?
 15. Assurance of salvation: what do I do if I'm not sure?
 16. Q&A.

1. WE ARE NOT BY NATURE CHILDREN OF GOD

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² 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 - ³ 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."

John 8:44 - "You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires..."

1 Corinthians 1:9 - "God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful."

2. GOD'S AIM IS TO BRING US TO THE FATHER

(a) Definition of Adoption

“God takes the justified person, & makes them one of his children with all the privileges of sons.”

(b) By grace, God adopts us as sons

Ephesians 1:5, “In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace...”

John 1:12-13, “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.”

(c) Father, Son and Spirit all work for our adoption

Galatians 4:3-7

- The *Father* (vv4,6)

- The *Son* (v5)

- The *Spirit* (v6)

(d) As a result we can have access to the Father

E.g. Ephesians 2:18, “For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.”

John 20:17, Hebrews 2:11

Westminster Confession of Faith - XII

All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for His only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption: by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God; have His name put upon them, receive the Spirit of adoption; have access to the throne of grace with boldness; are enabled to cry, Abba, Father; are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a Father; yet never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption, and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.

3. THE CHIEF BLESSING OF SONS IS PRAYING TO THE FATHER (GALATIANS 4:4-6)

(a) **To the Father... (verse 6; Luke 11:1-4)**

(b) **Through the Son... (verse 5; Hebrews 10:19-22, 4:16)**

(c) **In the Holy Spirit... (verse 6, Romans 8:15-17)**

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION:

1. Think about your confidence that God hears your prayers. When you have doubts about this, do you think mainly about...
 - a. what a good and faithful praying person you are, or
 - b. how faithful and acceptable to God Jesus was on our behalf?
2. Read Hebrews 4:16, 7:25, 10:19-22. What encouragements are here to draw near to God in prayer?
3. Ask God for grace and mercy such as you need it right now.
4. For next week, as we think about Perseverance ("How will I stay Christian?") please read Romans chapter 8.

A HYMN

1 ARISE, my soul, arise, Shake off thy guilty fears;
The bleeding sacrifice On my behalf appears;
Before the throne thy Surety stands;
My name is written on his hands.

2 He ever lives above, For me to intercede,
His all-redeeming love, His precious blood, to plead:
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

3 Five bleeding wounds he bears, Received on Calvary;
They pour effectual prayers, They strongly speak for me:
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry;
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

4 The Father hears him pray, His dear Anointed One;
He cannot turn away The presence of his Son:
His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God.

5 My God is reconciled, His pardoning voice I hear,
He owns me for his child, I can no longer fear,
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And, Father, Abba, Father, cry!
(Charles Wesley)

BOOK RECOMMENDATION

J.I. Packer on adoption in "Knowing God."