



Adoption

Adoption is the voluntary legal acceptance of a child born of other parents to be the same as one's own biological child. As believers, we are all adopted as sons of God at salvation. Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5.

“For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”” (Romans 8:15, NASB)

“so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” (Galatians 4:5, NASB)

The Believer's Adoption at Salvation

Adoption is one of the 40 things which every believer receives at the moment of salvation. Adoption is always connected with Positional Truth where the Holy Spirit enters the believer into Union with Christ. This is called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and are the mechanics of this spiritual adoption.

When we are entered into Union with Christ at the point of salvation, we become adult sons (*huios* in the Greek) positionally. This is our adoption. At the same time, we are entered into fellowship with Jesus Christ which involves the filling of the Holy Spirit. This speaks of our experience in time and experientially we are called *nepios* which means little child, or sometimes *brephos* which means a babe on the mother's breast.

As little children, we need to grow up spiritually. In 1 John 3:1, *teknon* is for sons - the one who is caught with his hand in the cookie jar. As adult sons, we have the rights of an adult, operation of volition, heirs, etc.

“See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.” (1 John 3:1, NASB)

Adoption in the Ancient World

The Bible must be interpreted in the time in which it was written (Isagogics). Adoption in the ancient world (in the Roman Empire) had to do with children born into the family - blood relations. Every father adopted his son at age 14, at which time he received adult status with adult privileges. For the first 14 years, a son was put under slaves. Someone took him to school (called in Galatians a pedagogue) and he protected him from being kidnapped. Some tutored him.

Sons were barely as good as slaves for the first 14 years. They wore a robe called a toga of youth and it always had the same pattern or design. You could always tell a child's age by the type of robe. On his 14th birthday, the whole family were gathered together and the boy was brought in wearing his toga of youth for the last time. His father stepped forward and took the toga by the shoulders and lifted his left hand and dropped it to the floor.

A slave standing there took another toga called the toga virilis (robe of manhood) and gave it to the father who took this robe and put it around his son and then usually for the last time kissed his son. Then he stepped back and said, “My son, you have now been adopted into the family.”

Adoption meant that they were now an adult and this gave them certain privileges. The privilege of voting. He was allowed to manage money for the first time. He could now get married. He could enter



military service. He was now regarded as an adult at age 14. Life span was shorter then, so they became adults sooner.

Adoption dealt with a natural child of a family, an heir. He was now no longer under slaves, but now commanded them. Adoption meant taking someone already in the family and recognizing him as an adult son. The Greek word *thesia* means to place. To place one who is already a son or son recognition. *Thesia* has been translated “adoption.”