

More Than Being Saved!

Eight Major Doctrines Defining New Testament Salvation

II. ADOPTION

Adoption refers to God placing a believer as an adult son (heir) into His family and giving him access to all the privileges that go with it.

A. The Biblical Use Of The Word

1. There is some confusion among Christians about this doctrine because of the modern use of the word *adoption*. The modern meaning, to take a child born of one family and place him into another does not consider the fact that a believer becomes a member of God's family by regeneration (see *Regeneration*). A Christian is *literally* born into God's family, not just placed into it still having only the nature of another.

2. In the scriptures, adoption is not so much a word of relationship but of *position*. It speaks not of how the believer became a member of the family but of the fact he *already* is a member because of regeneration. God has placed him in the position of an adult son, and he has all the rights and privileges that go with it (1 John 3:2).

B. How Adoption Became Available

1. God's justice required Jesus Christ's death on the cross to deal with sin before He could place any person in His family. His death and shed blood fully redeemed the believing sinner and made regeneration and adoption available (Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:4-6).

C. The Privileges Of Adoption

1. The believer has a father that loves him (1 John 4), cares for him (1 Peter 5:7), protects him (Romans 8:31), corrects him (Hebrews 12:5-11), and promises to never leave him (Hebrews 13:5-6).

2. He is a fellowcitizen with the **"...Saints and the household of God"** (Ephesians 2:19). Also, he is an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ (Romans 8:17).

3. He has within him the **"Spirit of adoption"** (the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:17) who bears witness in his heart that he is God's son and leads him to cry upon God as his father. The Spirit will also raise up the saint's body at the second coming of Christ (Romans 8:11-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51-52; Galatians 4:4-6; Philippians 3:21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

4. God has predestinated the believer to be conformed into the image of Jesus Christ and has promised to openly reveal him as His son (Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:5).

D. The Final Adoption

1. Even though a believer is now fully God's child (1 John 3:1-3), God has not yet fully revealed him as such. However, the **"firstfruits of the Spirit"** is a guarantee that He will. This is the main emphasis of adoption, the day when Christ returns and redeems the saint's body making it **"...Like unto his glorious body"** (Philippians 3:21). In that day, God will *openly show* all creation those who are His regenerated and adopted children (Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4).
