

Salvation - Adoption by God

New Privileges, New Relationships, New Responsibilities

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Part two of a series. Read [part one](#).

What does adoption mean for the saints during this present life?

A New Relationship with God the Father

First, we have a new relationship with God the Father. Because of what Christ has done, God the condemning Judge is now God our loving Father. He is not only "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" as Scripture tells us in several places, but He is the God and Father of us all, Paul tells us in Ephesians chapter four, because we are in Christ. When Jesus met Mary Magdalene after His resurrection He said to her in John chapter 20, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' "

Scripture tells us that because of our adoption, God our Father is now approachable. Through the intercession of the risen Christ, seated at His right hand, we have access to the Father. When Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He taught them to pray, "*Our Father* who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name." And so the writer to the Hebrews tells us, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." God our Father wants us to come to Him. He wants us to fellowship with Him. He wants to care for us. He hears and answers prayer.

He is also, as we read in Hebrews chapter 12, a Father who corrects us when we need it. And he does that with far more wisdom and patience and infinite love than any

earthly father ever could. And Hebrews tells us that the fact that God does correct us is proof that we are truly His adopted sons.

And He is also the Father that Jesus described to us in the parable of the prodigal son. When the son who had strayed from the father's house repented and came back, and said, "Father treat me as one of your servants, I'm no long worthy to be called your son," the father rejoiced that his son had repented and returned. The prodigal son never stopped being a son. But because he was truly a son, even though he had strayed, he returned to the father's house.

A New Relationship with God the Son

Secondly, because of adoption we have a new relationship with God the Son. Not only is He our Savior, the One who paid for our justification, but He is now also our Brother. We see this in Hebrews chapter two, beginning with verse 10, where we read of the Lord Jesus:

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect (that is, complete) through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying: "I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You." And again: "I will put My trust in Him." And again: "Here am I and the children whom God has given Me."

One day in glory the Lord Jesus Christ will present us to His Father, saying, "Father, here are the brothers You have given Me, safe at home, safe at last, safe before your throne, safe for all eternity. And I haven't lost even one that you gave me. All of my adopted brothers are here."

A New Relationship with God the Holy Spirit

Thirdly, adoption means a new relationship with God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit indwells every believer. He comes and brings us to spiritual life by the work of calling us and regenerating us, and He takes up residence within us.

We read in Romans 8 that this has something very specific to do with our adoption. Scripture calls God the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of adoption." Actually in Romans 8 it reads, "the Spirit of the adoption." And in Ephesians one Paul writes, "Having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." What Paul is saying is that as adopted sons of God we have the promise of an inheritance, and God the Holy Spirit taking up residence in our hearts when we are converted is the guarantee that God, without fail, will give us that inheritance when we reach heaven.

Also, the Holy Spirit within us bears witness with us that we are the sons of God. In Romans 8 beginning at verse 14 we read, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs — heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

It is by the Spirit of adoption that we cry out, "Abba, Father." We can speak to God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit on the most intimate and personal terms. We can tell Him all that is on our hearts, as a trusting child comes to an earthly father to tell him everything — the things that give us joy, the things that worry us, the things that hurt us, the things that we are thankful for, the things we need, our deepest thoughts, our deepest desires, the sins we wrestle with — we can bring them all to our loving Father, and know that He will hear us with a heart of love and kindness.

New Relationships with Other People – Both Saved and Unsaved

And fourthly, adoption involves a new relationship with other people. There are two aspects to this. First, those who, like us, are adopted sons of God are our brothers in Christ. Not just the ones next to you but the ones in the next town and the next state and the next country and all around the world, and even the ones that have gone on before us to glory and are at this moment in the presence of the Lord.

And as brethren with all believers we have a new name. We have His name. In Ephesians chapter three Paul tells us that the entire family of God -- those who are already in heaven from the fall onward, those now on earth, those yet to come -- all have the name of Christ. That is our family name. We are Christians. And only those who are truly believers in the Lord Jesus Christ and Him alone for their salvation, have the right to be called Christians.

This also means that we have a new relationship with unbelievers. They are no longer our brothers. They are still in Adam. They are still dead in their sins. We are no longer part of that family. We are no longer of the world. We have a different family name, the name of Christ. We have a different set of family interests, centering not in the glory of man but in the glory of God. And God calls us to live as is fitting for our new family name and our new family interests. If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. We are to be witnesses to the world. If we are truly new creatures in Christ, we will walk the walk. God the Holy Spirit will see to it. He will work that work of sanctification in us.

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