

The Wednesday Word, March 6, 2013: Gospel Adoption

It's good to have all charges against us dropped and even better to be declared righteous, but it's best to have been adopted as children of God. And that's exactly what has happened to us as a result of the gospel. We are now children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26). As we look at gospel adoption, we realize that grace has outdone sin, for it has lifted us much, much higher than the place from which we fell.

'Adoption' is a legal term derived from Roman law. There were often two stages to this ancient legal process. In the first stage, a Roman nobleman would identify a child he wanted to adopt and would clothe him with robes appropriate for his new status. The second step came later; it was the public acknowledgment of the adoption whereby the adopted person entered into their full and active rights as a member of the nobility. Just as there was a season during which the privileges of adoption were not fully seen, it is not yet fully seen what we are in Christ. However, there is coming a day when all will be revealed. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

We have been adopted by the Father! Indeed, "Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us that we should be called Sons of God" (1 John 3:1). But why did He do this? Why did He adopt us? The answer is simple and yet at the same time profound. He adopted us simply because He wanted to adopt us, He exercised His free will in the matter. We know this because the Bible says, "Having predestined us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, (Ephesians 1:5).

The privilege of adoption makes us sons of God. Every morning when you look in the mirror you encounter royalty. Oh yes I know that you also encounter a wretch, however, "You are no more a servant but a son and an heir of God through Christ (Galatians 4:7). This is remarkable, for it means that, as His child, the Father loves us just the same way He loves Christ! It's not, therefore, a presumption for you to say (and to keep saying), "The Father loves me." The fact is, and I don't want to sound irreverent, He's crazy about you! It's hard for us to believe, isn't it?

Too often we don't feel loved because we feel unlovable. We have, as some call it, 'an orphaned heart'! But the more we know the gospel, the more we will realize that we don't have to feel loved. We need to stop trying to feel His love and begin to believe His love. We are His blood bought children, we are in Christ, and we have been loved from before time! Being adopted means that, in and through Christ, we have been given the rights of sons of God; the Father loves us as he loves his only-begotten Son. We are now children of God, "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Romans 8:17).

If we are in Christ, we will have all things with him. If we are his, we shall share the crown with him. If we are in Christ, we as adopted children will receive the inheritance of the saints in light (Colossians 1:12).

This is remarkable, we who were once heirs of hell have now been adopted and made Heirs of Heaven.

And that's the Gospel Truth!