

Joy of Adopted Sonship

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Galatians 3:19-4:7

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

- Adoption -“a key doctrine for believers! ”
- Paul shows us that believers are adopted:
 - By Christ’s work we are redeemed and adopted as sons Gal 4:4-5
 - By the Spirit we experience what it means to be a son Gal 4:6-7
- If you are a believer then you are already a son Gal 3:26
 - being a son is not something we work towards – it is fact
 - this is not a blanket universal sonship, like Act 17:29, we’re created in the image of God
 - Our adoption as a son is a specific legal transaction of God.

Two observations about Adoption as Sons:

- 1) Paul uses the term son – from Roman adoption
 - don’t take offense at masculine word ‘son’ when he refers to believers. Paul is radically egalitarian Gal 3:28.
 - son is a legal term meaning “legal heir” who inherits all
 - The bible refers to men as the ‘bride of Christ’ Rev 21:2 and men and women as God’s sons, as heirs. Deal with it!
- 2) Paul is using the picture of Roman adoption.
 - Paul is writing to Gentiles in a Greco-Roman world. Don’t take your cultural understanding and read in, rather consider the original audience and understand Roman adoption to get the full picture!
 - Adoption almost always male adult sons, not babies!
 - patria potestas - ‘the power of the father’ could disown or kill son
 - Adoption was irrevocable according to Roman-Syrian law.

Adoption had Serious Results for the One Adopted:

1. You had a new father. You were now part of your adopted family. You used their name and had all rights and privileges.
2. You were Heir to the estate. If family had other sons they could only be co-heirs, they could not supplant the adopted son.
3. Previous debts were wiped out. All previous debts gone. Effectively past life was erased. The past no longer mattered!
4. Son purchased with high price. Wealthy families paid a lot for an adopted son. Many of the Caesars were adopted.

Adoption is a RICH picture for believers!

When we are adopted we have a new life!

Because of Christ we are adopted. When we are adopted we are to “put on Christ”. Gal 3:27

Being Clothed with Christ or Putting on Christ is a Biblical picture: Rom 13:12, 14; Eph 4:22-24; 6:11, 14; Col 3:10,12

So HOW do we “put on Christ”? Consider:

- 1) Our primary IDENTITY is IN CHRIST.
Think uniform, how it identifies. Our identity is to be found not in our gender, race, social class, or nationality, but IN CHRIST!
- 2) The CLOSENESS of our Relationship TO CHRIST.
Your clothes are kept closer to you than any other possession. They go with you everywhere, you rely on them.
Likewise we are to have a moment-by-moment dependence and awareness of Christ.
- 3) The IMITATION of Christ.
This biblical metaphor is that we are to “put on Christ”, in other words we are to imitate Christ or be like Christ.
We are told WHY we were saved by God: Rom 8:29 - to be conformed to the image of Christ!
- 4) Our ACCEPTABILITY to God is IN CHRIST.
We wear clothes to cover our nakedness.
When Adam sinned they realized nakedness - Gen 3:7
God provided clothes Gen 3:21 out of animal skins (blood shed)
In God’s sight we are clothed in Christ because of His perfect work and salvation. When God looks at believer, He sees us as His sons because He sees Christ.

Come to the table as a Son!