

# Blessings of Adoption

Ephesians 1:3-14

## Introduction

Today, people basically adopt for one of two reasons: 1) they cannot have children of their own, or 2) out of love, they want to make a difference in someone else's life. In the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, a wealthy patron would see some potential in a child of poor parents and pay the parents for the right to adopt their child. The biological parents surrendered all rights and broke all contact with the child, as he or she was now the son or daughter of the wealthy patron. This is the model of adoption Paul would have had in mind when he wrote this letter.

## Trinitarian Adoption

The first thing we notice about our adoption is that it is Trinitarian. The Father is the Source, the Son is the Medium, and the Holy Spirit is the Seal.

### Father, the Source

It all begins with the Father. He has chosen us from *before the foundation of the world* (v. 4). Just like the wealthy patron, He initiated and controls the proceedings. Unlike the wealthy patron, God didn't choose us because He saw something in us. Out of His love, He predestined us in Christ. He does have a purpose and a plan for us. He chose us that we should be *holy and blameless before Him* (v. 4). Even if we could live a life without sinning, we wouldn't be holy and blameless, but when God looks at us, He sees us through the blood of His Son. Covered in Christ's blood, we are clothed in His righteousness. When Christ returns, the corruptible will put on the incorruptible and we will stand holy and blameless before the Father. That's the goal, but how do we get there?

### The Son, the Medium

The phrase "in Christ", "in Him", or "in the Beloved" appears 10 times in this passage, showing us that Christ is the Medium in which this all takes place. In Christ, the Father chose us and blessed us. In Christ, we have redemption, obtained an inheritance, and have our hope. As Christ has said, *"Apart from Me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5).

### The Holy Spirit, the Seal

*We are sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the Guarantee of our inheritance* (v. 13). More than a promise, the Holy Spirit is the guarantee. A guarantee is like a pledge. It's a portion of what's promised. Life in the Spirit is a foretaste of our heavenly life.

## Blessings of Being a Child of God

How do we become children of God? What is our inheritance and how do we get it?

### Redemption

To become a child of God, a price had to be paid. Christ paid it on the cross. The Law demands death for sin. Christ fulfilled the Law. By paying the price, He redeemed us. Through His blood we have

redemption and the forgiveness of sins, *according to the riches of His grace (v. 7)*. This is how we have become children of God, how we qualify for the inheritance. But we have other blessings.

### A New Name

*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, with a new name written on the stone that no one knows except the one who receives it (Revelation 2:17)*. To become a child of God, one takes on the name of God. More than just a handle to go by, a name is who you are. It is your identity. We find our identity in Christ as we are baptized into *the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19)*.

### Belonging

As children of God, we belong. We are no longer orphans; we have a family. But there's something else about belonging to God. We live for Him. *We who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of His glory (v. 12)*. Our life is His; we are His to command. His goal for us is to be holy and blameless. Our reason for living is Him, that our lives might give honor, praise, and glory to God.

### Inheritance

The inheritance is salvation. We have been saved by the blood of Christ. He is saving us as He continues to work faith and forgiveness in us each day, sanctifying us by the Holy Spirit and the power of His Word. And when He returns, Christ will complete our salvation and take us home to be with Him forever.

### Means of Grace

We celebrate this each time we receive the Lord's Supper. We look back to the cross and see our redemption. He works faith within us and forgives our sin. And we look forward to the day when He comes and completes our salvation. We claim our inheritance at Communion.

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*And the peace of God,  
Which surpasses all understanding,  
Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

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