

God's Amazing Adoption

Let us turn to our Bibles to Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 5. So after going over the grand theme, almost two grand themes at the same time interwoven between themselves in this doxology, I'm going in now into several of the verses to drill into some of the themes here that are good to go over and remind ourselves. And here is one of them. Let us listen attentively to the word of God, Ephesians 1 verse 5. Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, let us pray.

Herein God, we read in the pen of Paul, moved by the power of the Holy Spirit, to speak and utter, that is to write these holy truths, that we are predestined, Lord, unto holiness, to be without blame before him in love, as we heard last time. And here also unto adoptions as sons by Jesus Christ. Lord, this is a wonderful truth.

May we learn it anew. And if we have not before heard this, may it bring our hearts in any case closer to you with joy and thanksgiving, God Almighty, that you as our heavenly father have brought us into the family of God, brought us, Lord, out of the darkness of Satan's kingdom into the light of your marvelous truth. May this strengthen us and indeed embolden us to carry on as believers and Christians in our calling in this world, we ask by your mercies alone.

Amen. One teaching I think sometimes we forget about is adoption. We've learned about justification, we hear about it, it's a big debate between us and the Roman Catholics, for example, so there's a long and huge history in this regard.

We hear about sanctification for that too, came along with the debate of justification, and the Roman Catholic Church, to put it simply, they conflated the two, sanctification, your own personal struggles, and striving to be obedient with justification, God's objective and declarative act that you are righteous in Christ. And we may even learn about sometimes, a number of times, glorification, the future coming of Jesus and a new heaven, a new earth, to be in heaven with God Almighty in our resurrected bodies in the future as well. Between these, we have this other truth, a truth of our being brought into the household of faith, a teaching that is necessary for us to understand our new relationship to our Heavenly Father, and that we may thereby learn what is ours through Jesus Christ, the privileges therein.

And so I wish to here drill into the teaching of adoption, the chapter put into the confession that wasn't there in other Reformed confessions. It's brought out separately and unpacked. And this is the nature, of course, to be human, and to be, in this case, a human entity in the sense of the Church, although divine from God Almighty, sustained by the Spirit, is full of humans, and we learn and grow over time, both individually and collectively, in our understanding of the Word of God.

And so from the mighty Reformation of God, working through the likes of Luther and Calvin, they brought back a lot of things that were lost and hidden by the false teaching accrued over the many hundreds of years. Yes, even a thousand. It's really something to think about, 500 to 1,500 to 1,000 years.

So this is one of them, that they had a better understanding than the prior generation of the teaching of adoption. Let's go over it. The first point, adopted by God in Christ.

Adopted by God in Christ

Adopted by God in Christ. And so I'm going to read and unpack that chapter on the adoption. So it's one paragraph in the confession.

All those that are justified, God vouchsafes, or grants, it's an older word, in and for His only Son, Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God. So those who are justified, there's another thing going on here, they are granted or vouchsafed in and for that is Jesus, by Jesus again. It's always because of His work for us.

We are thereby made partakers of the grace of adoption, so that we are brought into the number and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, that, I'm filling in the blanks here, we did not have in justification. In justification, we are declared righteous, as though we fulfilled the Ten Commandments in thought, word, and deed, although Christ did it for us in our stead. We could never do that.

It's a declarative act of a judge saying, you are perfect. You're not just innocent, but you have perfectly obeyed the law, that is, Christ did it for us in our stead, and it's imputed to us by faith alone. That has nothing and says nothing about being part of the family of God.

And that's what we're going to talk about here, and thereby have liberties and privileges. Other families, there's only one other family, either the family of God, or even the family of Satan. That's the great divide, the great antithesis.

The proof text they use here for this doctrine of adoption, Ephesians again. It's used a number of times, because it says so much in these verses. Ephesians 1.5, having predestined us to adoption, to this end, that we would be sons and daughters of the Most High, and that through Christ, not because of how wonderful we are ourselves.

Just as justification is by grace alone, and so is adoption by grace alone, particular by Christ alone. Our adoption is to be taken into the number, is the phrase they use here in the larger catechism, as well as the shorter and here in the confession. Taken in the number, what number? The number of God's family, the member, become a member of God's family and his kingdom, and that through his eternal mercies in Jesus Christ.

Galatians 4 is another text that speaks of this wonderful truth for us. Which is to say that there are not just Christians who are justified, and a few of you get to be adopted, but all of us are adopted. Galatians 4.4-5, but when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who are under the law that we might receive the adoption as sons.

So, it's part of the work of Christ for all of us, not just some of us. And the adoption here is clearly tied to his work, but the implication being as well in this text, that we might receive

the adoption of sons, some progression of movement of sanctification. For the Old Testament saints, of course, were part of the family of God.

They had the Holy Spirit, they were justified, they were sanctified, and they were even adopted. But we have a better understanding and more grace therein, because Christ has come, and therefore there's a change of degree, but not a change of quality. The quality of being saved.

They are just as saved as we are, although it was unclear in many ways how much sanctification, how much growth they would have, who this Jesus was, and the like. And so, it's reflected in their lives to some extent, but they were saved nevertheless. Our adoption here, by adoption, is a legal idea, just like justification.

And we have legal codes in America for adoption. Our prior pastor, who was my mentor here, Dr. Coppice, most people don't know this, he was adopted. He was adopted.

In his case, it's interesting the historical divide. I don't know how common it is, but back then you were adopted, you didn't get to see your biological parents ever again. Typically, you just dropped off or whatever.

And his new father was always, as far as he was concerned, it was just his biological father. He didn't seek out his old father. He wasn't like, who is this guy? There's no connection at all.

It's a complete cutoff, and that's what we have adoption. We are adopted into the family of God from the family of Satan in his kingdom, and it's a complete cutoff that way, and it should be. But if justification is a legal truth and adoption is a legal truth, what's the difference then between justification and adoption? You kind of have a vague idea, perhaps, or maybe you already know.

Well, here we go. The difference is it's not just forgiveness from sins and being declared righteous. That happens in justification.

It does not happen or occur in adoption. The adoption, we can say, assumes and is built upon the idea, this teaching, that you are justified, forgiven of your sins, as well as declared righteous in Jesus Christ. But from this perspective, justification doesn't just stop.

If you just have justification and then you're left with, now what? Great. I'm innocent. What Adam did has been blotted out and wiped away by the work of Christ on the cross and his resurrection.

I am justified and declared perfect before God, so now I just go off and become another Adam. Now what? Now what's my relationship to the world and to God? No. Rather, we are brought into sweet, glorious fellowship of God our Father.

That's what adoption does, out of Satan's kingdom and into God's kingdom or his family. So we're not just left with a justification, but now you have a change of relationship. So

justification deals with the legal status before God the judge, and God the judge says, you're perfect in Jesus Christ.

Adoption deals with our relationship with God the judge, and it's no longer God the judge, it's God the what? Father. He who had condemned us by the law, and that rightly and justly we condemned ourselves, we deserve punishment. As our judge, he said, you believe in Jesus Christ, you trust in him, and therefore you are justified and declared righteous before my eyes on account of Christ and him alone.

And that same judge says, I'm going to go one step further. You're not just left in this state. I'm going to bring you into my family, my household, the royal household of God.

And now this judge is now your father. That's the difference between justification and adoption. A change of relationship now, not just a change of legal status.

And here the two go, of course, hand in hand. The convict, think of it this way, is not only pardoned from his unrighteous wickedness, and one step further declared righteous as though he fulfilled all the laws of the land. And then the idea of justification is, that's great.

This is true. Now what? Well, now the judge adopts him or adopts you, and you are therefore brought into this new relationship and restored to God. The judge has become your father.

That's what's going on in adoption. The judge has become your father. And that's a wonderful truth.

And we're going to see why here. You're not left out in the cold wondering what your relationship to the judge is. The judge says, you're mine.

That means all the rights and privileges of the judge, of this great and mighty judge and king of the universe, right? He's judge and king. The two go hand in hand. You have his name upon you.

Adopted into Blessings

And these wonderful truths, therein in these blessings, as we're going to go here mostly in the second point. I divide it from the present blessings in the second point to future blessings or the promises of God preserving us into heaven in the third point. So I'm going to continue reading here, excuse me, in the chapter on adoption. So we're brought into the number, quote, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God.

That language fits, right, now that we understand what adoption is, our change of relationship from judge to father, and have God's name upon him or upon us, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are unable to cry, Abba Father, are pitied, protected, and provided for, and chastened by him as by a father. Chastened by him, not as a judge, but as a father. And that's all the difference that we need.

It's a wonderful difference. So here, the first part, the liberty and privilege of adoption, Romans 8, 17. And if children, then heirs, and heirs of God, and join heirs of Christ, if indeed we suffer with him, that we may also be glorified together.

And so the language here, of course, is that we are children, and thus heirs. If we have heirs, that we are given things and promises, the implication being privileges that others do not have. You have your family, other people have their family and their kids, and the two aren't mixed up, they shouldn't be.

You will give your kids things that other kids will not get. Sorry, that's just all there is to it. Special gifts, special times, maybe even normal things that other families don't even do, unfortunately.

Whatever the case is, they're your kids, and you are their parents, and you treat them differently than you treat other kids and other families, insofar as they are your own. And that's the idea here of liberty and privileges that others do not have. The implication, that others do not have.

John 1, 12, but as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become the children of God to those who believe in his name. It is a right, it is a privilege thereby as well. It is a right.

Here we have rights. In America, we love to talk about rights in the Western tradition. We have our rights, and you better not trample on my rights.

And there's a good use of that, of course, there's an abuse of that as well. Here is a very good use of the idea in teaching of right. We have rights that others do not have who are outside of Christ Jesus, because we are adopted into his royal kingdom and his family.

We have rights to be called the children of God that other people do not have. This of course implies the uniqueness of Christianity and of salvation as well, that Christ did not die for the world. If he did, then you'd all be his children, because it's all of a package.

We're predestined unto adoption in Christ Jesus. Not just short of that and everyone else gets half the benefits or whatever. It's all of a piece.

It's all one savior, not a savior broken in half. And as his children, we have these wonderful privileges and liberties and freedoms that we never had under Satan. One of them being that God's name is upon us, that we have God.

We have a new name, right? The wife gets married, she gets a new name, that is a new last name. And if we get adopted, we were given a new name. Or if we had wealthy and popular king and people that we would like and look up to, and they what adopted us, it would change our name.

I'm no longer Matthias. I'm this new guy. I'm this new king.

I'm part of a new, wonderful privilege and place and relationship that wasn't there before. This is what's going on here. And so having God's name upon us is very significant.

We understand this, of course, as so far as on the negative side, that if people drag our name through the mud, we say, what are we saying? We're saying our public reputation, our identification of who we are is seen by others as less than what it is. Here is the flip side. It's much greater than what it could ever be because God has put his name on us in our baptism.

Like a stamp, you are mine. It's upon the heart as well. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, but we're also sealed through baptism.

That is a public separation and identification. So God's name upon us is an idea of what? Ownership. That's something we certainly don't like in the American scene.

No one owns me. I'm my own man. Yes and no.

But in Christianity, we should embrace this, for it's a privilege and an honor to be owned by God instead of owned by Satan. 2 Corinthians 6.18, 2 Corinthians 6.18, I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty, as he quotes the Old Testament. You shall be my sons and daughters.

Unless we are embarrassed of our family, we know what it is to be sons and daughters of a family we like and are proud of. I mean that in the best sense of the word, of course. And having God's name is the greatest of all privileges.

And that's what one of the great benefits of being adopted. Even if we can't always see or understand as we're going to go through the other descriptions and of the blessings and liberties that we have, having his name upon us, in particular through baptism, we should not lose sight of. It's there objectively, whether we feel it, whether we see actual blessings sometimes, because they come and go.

Some of these descriptions here, of course, would slide into the doctrine of sanctification, boldness, and the like. And sometimes when we're not as bold as we should be, therefore we are weak in our sanctification, when we should be strong. But our adoption doesn't change.

It is objective, like justification. And baptism is a sign of that. And we should look to our baptism at that time for our encouragement therein that he has, in his providence, guided us in ways other people are not guided to an actual act of being baptized.

Next we have the spirit of adoption. We're granted the spirit of adoption. Romans 8.15, 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 the children of God. And so in this blessing, this next blessing, that we are given the spirit of adoption that is adopted and given the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, is what he's referring to, in our lives, who dwells within us,

drawing us into Christ, and therefore fullness of assurance, and so that we cry out, Abba, which is Aramaic for Father. So he's being emphatic here, Abba, Father, Father, Father, to he who was our judge, but now is our Heavenly Father, the one who cares for us.

The judge isn't there to care. The judge is there to make a decision, and to judge you, and to condemn or justify you, if you believe in Jesus Christ. And so we should no longer worry of God as our judge, but come and petition to him as our Father, the one who cares for us.

He is here, and we are his sons and daughters, and as we earthly parents and fathers care for our children, even if it doesn't always seem so obvious to them. And so God cares for us, even if it doesn't always seem so obvious to us. It doesn't matter.

He does take care of us, and even more. Not only do we have the Spirit, the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of a sealing upon us, as we know in verse 14 here in Ephesians 1, and thereby as well we have the Spirit of boldness. Ephesians 3.12. In Ephesians 3.12 we read, "...in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in him." Or boldness to enter into the Holy of Holies, as it says elsewhere in the book of Hebrews.

Picking up the imagery of the Old Testament temple, which uses physical dimensions to show us spiritual access. It's a big metaphor, it's a big picture, symbol of our access to God. And to go into the Holy of Holies is to be into his presence, the closest presence you can get.

And you can only do that as the priest, the great high priest, not just any priest, and that once a year, the great day of atonement. But now we can go all the time through the blood of Jesus Christ. We have this boldness to come to our Father and no longer fear him as our judge.

That's the picture here. We shouldn't be afraid to pray, to talk, and to petition him. For certainly before we sinned, when we were in our sins and trespasses, we were ashamed.

Our guilty conscience pricked us. And we didn't want to draw near to God. We didn't want to hear about God.

This is why churches aren't full often in America. People don't want to feel condemnation. They want to feel happy things.

They don't want to be drawn back to the conviction of their heart and their conscience, which tells the unbeliever that you are not saved, that you hate God, and you don't want to do anything with him. You know you're guilty, but you suppress the truth and unrighteousness. That's the state of men and women who do not have God as their father, but only as their judge, and that he who condemns them.

And so before this fact of being born again and of loving God, we are ashamed, and we're ashamed, and should have been ashamed. This is right and proper. It's like children.

Children do this when they sin. They trespass their parents' commandments. What do they do? They hide.

They run away. They lie. I didn't do that.

They're not very sophisticated when they're younger. They just say, I didn't do it. They get older.

It becomes more sophisticated in how they lie. But they lie, and they hide, and the like, because they're afraid. They're embarrassed.

But over time, they do come to the parents, even on their own, because they understand my parents do judge me, but they're also my parents. It's my father and my mother who love me. The picture of a heavenly father is a picture of a one who loves us and cares for us.

And so we should come to him with our petitions and our sins and not hide them. We should never hide but ever confess our shortcomings and our desires before God. The next three blessings I put together, a nice alliteration of three Ps, the blessings and the privileges we have are we are pitied, protected, and provided for.

Pity, protected, and provided for. Now the first one here, Psalm 103, verse 13. As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him.

So here we have a description of God as a father in the Old Testament. I'm going to bring this up as a side note. You don't see this very often in the Old Testament.

It isn't strongly emphasized, given all the literature, right? 66% of the Bible is the Old Testament. But it's there. It just wasn't as clear.

It wasn't as emphasized. Again, because their sanctification was collectively and even individually lesser than ours, believe it or not. I know you look at Moses and David like, I wish I was like those guys.

They're wonderful. But in many ways, they were very, very weak compared to us. That's that collective growth before Christ comes.

And this is one of them. This is one of the teachings that wasn't as clear to them. But it's here nevertheless.

As a father pities his children, so the Lord, what? As a father pities those who fear him. The teaching of adoption implied in the Old Testament, made clearer in the New Testament. When we have hard times, however, in our lives, when we're down and out, as they say, and someone comes to help us, but we're embarrassed, what do we say? Sometimes we say, I don't want your pity, man.

Right? What is that but pride? I don't want your pity. But here, it's a blessing. You want God to pity you.

You want your father to have mercy and compassion upon you, to swallow our pride. In Proverbs 14.26, we read, in the fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence in his children

will have a place of refuge. So here we have the idea of adoption, again, of God as a father, and we are his children in the Old Testament.

And it's confidence in this case, because we are his children, we have a place of refuge or protection. Right? A high tower. Our Lord God is our protection of old and our protection of here and now today.

In the Old Testament, of course, that protection came often with miracles. So they were given the physical promises of the land and the like, and God came along with miracles, taking down the entire Jericho wall, for example, that we shouldn't expect today. Because God's telling us, don't be so concerned about the physical stuff, outward forms, but especially your soul and trusting, obeying God, no matter what happens to your outward form and your body and your possessions.

So in that sense, there's a step up in sanctification, again, from the Old Testament, New Testament, nevertheless, the same saving, same truths, and the like. One interesting truth here, that is sometimes lost in our churches is the fear of the Lord. What do these two verses have in common? Psalm 103 about being pitied by the God is what? The father pities his children, so the Lord pities whom? What does he pity? Those who fear him.

Proverbs 14.26, in the fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence that God is our sure tower and fortress and protection if we but fear him. The commonality is the word fear. But in that context is what kind of fear? Is it a servile fear of a servant waiting to be beaten down by his master who treats him as a slave, and he is the master who is what? A judge? Or as a father? The fear of a child who doesn't want to disappoint his parents or get spanked by them.

That's a different kind of fear, isn't it? A relationship there. And that's the kind of fear that children need to have when they're growing up so they obey their parents and ultimately obey God because they see God through the parents. And so we who are aware of our own transgressions fear, and we should fear sin in that sense as a child fears sinning against their parents, not the servile fear that we're told perfect love cast out from the epistle of John.

Matthew 6.30 is the next part here. We talked about God pitying us. We want that kind of pity.

And God protecting us and providing for us here is the third one. He provides for us. Matthew 6.30. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, it's inconsequential is the emphasis here.

Will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? He tells the disciples and those listening to him. And the answer is clear. Verse 32.

For after these things the Gentiles seek, for your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. God knows it. God takes care of the most insignificant thing, not just the sparrow, we know from the other text, but here the grass of the field.

You just trample down grass. I don't take care of grass in particular unless you're into photography or something. You just walk on it.

You don't care about it. But God cares about it enough that it's taken care of, provided for with moisture. We got moisture by God's grace.

And what happens to the grass? It gets a little more happy, doesn't it? That's the Lord taking care of grass, brothers and sisters, right before your very eyes. And if he takes care of this insignificant thing that dies the next day, that's what he says here, which today is, here it is, and tomorrow thrown into the oven, right? You burn it up. You use it for fuel.

He takes care of that. How much more, he makes a logical argument for spiritual ends and encouragement. Will he not take care of you? And he does take care of you.

That's why you're here. You got clothes on your back. So this is a verse to keep close to your heart when you are struggling, because God does indeed take care of us, and he will in his time, in his own way, but it will happen.

And then lastly, we have this blessing in right and privilege. We are chastened by our glorious father. Just like pitying in our culture is not usually taken well, don't pity me, neither certainly is chastisement and discipline in the family or in society as a whole.

Hebrews 12 is a classic text here. Hebrews 12, 6, for whom the Lord loves, he chastens and scourges every son whom he receives. Children don't like that part of love when it comes to the family.

They don't like getting spanked, and that's the point. Because they are children, and unfortunately, adults can act like children, so I'm speaking of two categories at the same time here. It's better that they just say, I got to do the right thing because it's the right thing, and I love my parents.

But barring that, it's good that they just simply have fear. I don't want to be spanked. Good.

Great. That's why we have laws in America that discipline people, a very serious kind of spanking, jail time, and ultimately death if you're bad enough. And we have the same kind of weakness, of course, when God uses hard providence upon us, and he disciplines and scourges us with hardships in our life, of our body, and even our soul.

And so we have the next verse, not just six. Well, okay, great. The Lord loves me enough.

He's spanking me and scourging me. I'm tired of the spanking and scourging. It's so hard and difficult upon me.

How's that a comfort? Verse 7, Hebrews 12, 7. If you endure chastening, if you endure and persevere, brothers and sisters, while God disciplines you, God deals with you as sons and daughters. For what son is there whom a father does not chasten? The answer is there is none, ideally. Even the pagans do this.

But if you are without chastening, that is discipline of God, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. You're not sons of God if you're not being disciplined. That's what you need to remind yourself.

God, why are you doing this to me? It becomes so discouraging. You've got to remember, well, because he loves me. And if I wasn't his, he wouldn't do it.

He wouldn't care enough for me if I wasn't his to draw me out of my wickedness. I was reading some literature, as you know why, from my committee work, and the gentleman was arguing, well, in the Old Testament, you see that God chastised and disciplined the nations, not as a father, of course. He used the word chastise to discipline and punish the nations.

You have large chapters in Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah, three to seven chapters, where God just describes each nation, Syria, Babylon, Egypt, God's discipline, God's discipline. And he's pointing out, hey, you know, if you notice here in this list, nothing about the first table, I'm paraphrasing, nothing about the first table, well, you guys are not worshipping me, so I'm going to punish you. You know why? He's wrong, by the way.

God does mention it a number of times. But it's not emphasized. I grant that.

It's not emphasized. Why is that? God didn't love them. Sorry, not hard.

If he loved them, he would draw them away from idolatry and into what? The Jewish church at the Old Testament. And he did sometimes, the locals, as you know, could convert to Judaism, but the Old Testament Jewish and worship God, Jehovah. But the rest of the nations, he didn't call them there.

They're left to their own devices. He did not have compassion. He, therefore, he did not scourge them in the full kind of scourging that we get, which is idolatry is wicked.

Come to me and flee these things. That's why. And we're adopted forever.

Adopted Forever

This is the latter part of that chapter there in the confession. And yet never cast off, we are never cast off, but sealed to the day of redemption and inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation. So they list, they define adoption as being brought into the number given the privileges and rights thereof.

And then list of the blessings from being disciplined, pity protected, provided for the boldness to enter into prayer, to God, to petition him. And here we are adopted forever. He'll never cast us off, brothers and sisters, never, ever, ever.

Lamentations 3.31. Lamentations 3.27 following the 31. It is good for a man to bear the yoke of his youth. Let him sit alone and keep silent because God has laid it on him.

Let him put his mouth in the dust. There may yet be hope. Let him give his cheek to the one who strikes him and be full of reproach for the Lord will not cast off forever.

Book of Lamentations, as you know, is about a bunch of sighing and crying and lamentations and woe. It's a book of woe from Jeremiah for Israel has been conquered by the through the mouth of the prophet for mercy. And here they're told, it is good to bear such burdens in your youth to turn the other cheek.

Have you heard that one before? It's the same ethics because God will not cast off forever. God will avenge, but God will also bless. And so adoption therefore is a second security, a double security, if you will.

The first being justified. God, our judge, has declared us perfect in Christ Jesus. That's our first security, eternal security forevermore.

Our second is now he is our father and we are adopted into the judge's household. And that's a greater security, isn't it? That is we are secured into eternity forevermore. Praise be to his name.

And you may feel like God has left you. You're outnumbered and hopeless, but the Lord will not cast off forever. This is another text perhaps you want to memorize and put into your Bible.

Ephesians 4.30. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Right? Sealed. Set aside and verified and legitimate.

You can grieve the Spirit of God as you may grieve your parents and your sins, but that does not mean we lose our redemption any more than our parents are like, I give up on you. Who cares about you? They don't. And you know it.

You've been through it yourself. And thus we are sealed by the Spirit of promise until the day of redemption, the coming of Jesus Christ. And that seal, because it is the Holy Spirit, can never, ever be broken.

You will never be cast off. 1 Peter 1.3-4. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you. He's saying the same thing as Paul does in different languages.

This metaphor, this picture of adoption, of inheritance rights, of having possessions. Of course, he means of the soul especially, but of the body as well. We will have a better body.

Praise be the Lord. But this here, verse four in particular, an inheritance, future glory and of heaven, incorruptible, will not fade away. No more sin.

No more aging. Boy, did I feel aging yesterday. We got our new mattress.

I helped the FedEx guy. He's very heavy, he said. I'll help you.

I didn't lift right. You got to hinge. You got to hinge your hip.

I knew better. I was too quick, and that's why I'm walking a little stiff. Come quickly, Lord Jesus, we say, because we feel it in our body.

Undefined. Sin will never touch it and does not fade away, which means what? You can't lose it. You're not going to lose it.

You don't want to lose it. You always follow God because you have the Spirit within you. Your Redeemer and Lord of heaven and earth, brothers and sisters, did not just justify you, declare you righteous, and leave you on your own to your own devices, wandering the earth without a home, but gave you a home, His own home.

Adopted you with an amazing adoption and brought you into the family of God, brothers and sisters. Rejoice. This is a wonderful thing for you now have all the rights and privileges of the eternal Creator and Lord of heaven and earth by His everlasting love forever and ever.

Let us pray. Indeed, God, may this be a sign of encouragement and words of truth for our hearts and lives and minds, no matter what we are going through, the difficulties of home ownership or whatever else, at work and the like, and especially of our soul and our response to these things. Help us thereby, God, to cling to this promise of adoption, the second double security, that we are not only justified, but we are also adopted and brought into the number with a new relationship that You are our Father and we are Your children.

We plead the blood of Christ, our Lord and Savior, thereby we pray. Amen.