

The Doctrine of Salvation

A Study of the Ordo Salutis

July 1 – Oct. 14, 2018

The Ordo Salutis

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Adoption – Children of God

- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name
- “The Father has chosen us, the Son has redeemed us, the Spirit has regenerated us and begotten divine spiritual life in us, giving us eyes to see the glory of Christ and the ruin of sin. As a result of that new birth, we experience conversion, having been given the gifts of repentance and faith. We are justified, forgiven of all our sin and the eternal punishment we rightfully deserve and credited with the full righteousness of Christ Himself, such that we can stand confidently before our Holy God. Through faith, we are intimately united to Christ, such that all that is His becomes ours as the Father adopts us as His children.” – MacArthur, pg. 624

Adoption – Children of God

- Roman Adoption – “The adoption process consisted of several specific legal procedures. The first step completely terminated the adopted child’s social relationship and legal connection to his natural family. The second step made him a permanent member of his new family. Any previous financial obligations were erased as if they had never existed.” – MacArthur, pg. 624 (footnote)

Adoption – Children of God

- “Adoption is an act of God whereby He makes us members of His family.” – Grudem, pg. 736
- Two families, two fathers: “Those who do not believe in Christ are not children of God or adopted into His family, but are ‘children of wrath’ (Eph. 2:3) and ‘sons of disobedience’ (Eph. 2:2; 5:6). Although the Jews who rejected Christ tried to claim God was their Father (John 8:41), Jesus told them, ‘If God were your Father, you would love Me...you are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father’s desires’ (John 8:42-44). – Grudem, pg. 736

Adoption – Children of God

- Romans 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, **these are sons of God**. 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.” 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that **we are children of God**, 17 and if children, then heirs—**heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Adoption – Children of God

- One Family – We, like Isaac, **are children of promise!** (Gal. 4:28, 31)
- Romans 9:7 nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, “In Isaac your seed shall be called.” 8 That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the **children of the promise** are counted as the seed.
- Abraham is our Father – Gal. 3:26 For you are all **sons of God through faith** in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ’s, then you are **Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**
- Sarah is our Mother – 1 Peter 3:6 as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, **whose daughters you are** if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.

Adoption – Children of God

- 1 John 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called **children of God**! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. 2 Beloved, now **we are children of God**; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.
- Jesus calls us “brothers” - I will declare Your name to My brethren (Heb. 2:12).
- Jesus is the firstborn among many brethren - For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Rom. 8:29)
- In a sense He then is our older brother, and yet He still has a unique relationship to the Father as His only begotten Son.

Adoption – Children of God

- We are also still in the process, so to speak, having not yet fully realized all the benefits of our adoption, which will happen at our Glorification.
- Romans 8:23 Not only that, but we also who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.** 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Adoption – not by birth, but by choice

- We are not adopted at regeneration. That is, even though we are born again, the new birth is not the point or cause of our adoption. Adoption into the family of God is connected to faith. In response to our faith we are adopted.
- Galatians 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 **For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.**
- Galatians 4:6 And **because you are sons**, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!”
- John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who **believe in His name.**

The Privileges of Adoption

- We are able to speak to God and relate to Him as a loving Father.
- “No longer slaves, but sons” (Gal. 4:7).
- God will take care of our needs (Matthew 6:32; 7:11).
- We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and are led by Him (Luke 11:13; Rom. 8:14).
- We are given an inheritance in heaven as heirs with Christ (Gal. 4:7; Rom. 8:17).
- We will reign with Christ over the new heavens and earth (Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21).
- Angels are sent even now to minister to us and care for us (Heb. 1:14).
- Discipline is a blessing of belonging to God’s family (Heb. 12:5-6).

The Privileges of Adoption

- We have a share in the suffering and the victory of Christ (Luke 24:36; Rom. 8:17).
- We are members of one family, the body of Christ, members of one another, brothers and sisters in the Church (Rom. 1:13; 8:12; 1 Cor. 1:10; 6:8; James 1:2; Rom. 16:1; 1 Cor. 7:15; James 2:15).
- We are called and enabled to imitate the Father (Eph. 5:1; 1 Peter 1:14-16).
- We are called and enabled to honor and glorify our Father (Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:15; 1 John 3:10).

Adoption – Union with Christ

- “While Christ relates to believers as Lord, Master, Savior, and Teacher, they are not merely associated with Christ as the object of His saving grace and love. It is not that Christians merely worship Jesus, obey Him, or pray to Him, though surely those privileges would be enough. Rather, they are so intimately identified with Him and He with them that Scripture says they are united – He in them and they in Him.” – MacArthur, pg. 603
- Christ and His children share a common spiritual life.
- Colossians 3:3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.
- Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Adoption – Union with Christ

- We have been crucified with Him (Gal. 2:20), have died with Him (Rom. 6:8; Col. 2:20), have been buried with Him (Rom. 6:3), have been raised with Him (Eph. 2:5-6; Col. 3:1), and have even been enthroned in heaven with Him (Eph. 2:6).
- We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ (Eph. 1:3).
- The object of our worship has become the life of the worshipper!
- Col. 1:27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

Adoption – Union with Christ

- “The believer’s union with Christ is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation.” – John Murray
- The Father chose us IN HIM, before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4).
- God gave us grace “IN CHRIST JESUS before the ages began” (2 Tim. 1:9).
- We have been “made alive together with Christ” (Eph. 2:5).
- We have been created in Christ Jesus for good works (Eph. 2:10).
- This means there has never been a time that God did not contemplate His elect apart from their union with Christ.

Adoption – the Evidence

- As we abide in Christ, we bear fruit (John 15:4-5; Rom. 7:4).
- We grow and mature as part of the body, receiving communication from the head (Eph. 4:15-16).
- We increase in holiness and persevere (John 10:27-28).
- We are being built up into the Church (Eph. 2:19-22).

Adoption - Conclusion

- God adopts believers into His family, so that we may relate to Him not only as the Giver of spiritual life and provider of legal righteousness but also as our loving and compassionate Father. Adoption then has been regarded as “the highest privilege of the gospel offer” (JI Packer, *Knowing God*), and the “apex of grace and privilege that staggers imagination because of its amazing condescension and love” (John Murray, *Redemption Accomplished and Applied*).