

ADOPTION

Rom. 8:15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

Many 21st century churches despise doctrine. Doctrine causes dissension and division; it causes rows and disharmony ... but oh ... how we need to hold to the sound doctrines of the Bible, - not in order to win arguments or to cause strife but simply in order to keep our 'garments clean'. Paul said to Timothy, II Tim. 4:3 the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. He told Titus, 2:1 speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.

Sound doctrine ensures sound Christians for it is sound doctrine that directs the way we live for Christ. I trust you are seeing the benefits of studying together our *1689 Baptist Confession of Faith* and the bearing it has on our spiritual walk. Too many Christians don't really know what they believe on the fundamentals and that is why they are so fickle and so easily turned this way and that.

Indeed, I would dearly love for our church to formally subscribe to this historic *Confession*. Perhaps the Deacons might think about that ...!?

The doctrine of adoption is a plain Biblical doctrine. Adoption is described in the dictionary as "a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood; the adopted child is entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child of the adoptive parents (including the right to inherit)". ... Let's consider this definition in the light of Scripture.

A LEGAL PROCEEDING

* Some of us know people who were adopted. In some instances it worked out well, but in some instances it hasn't.

* Pearl has a friend who discovered why she was being not as much favoured as her 'brother', - she discovered she was adopted. She worked hard for her adopted mum and dad, - far harder than her lazy 'brother'. When her adopted parents died she was left with nothing, while her 'brother' inherited everything.

* Adoption requires an enactment of law, - it can be a complicated and a long process. There are many I's to dot and t's to cross.

* It requires deep searching of the soul and concentrated thought by the perspective adoptive parents. It is not something which is done lightly or frivolously.

* The child to be adopted must be promised love and care. The authorities tell us there is a pressing need for more adopters to provide families for the thousands of children waiting to be adopted from care ... but it is a tremendously stringent process ... *and rightly so*. The law says, "Local authorities and voluntary adoption agencies are required to carry out a full assessment of applicants before approving them as adopters."

* Therefore, it is only right that every effort has been made through the laws of Parliament to establish the correct legal proceedings in the best interests of the child.

* Consider your salvation from the point of view of **adoption**.

* In eternity God began to put the wheels in motion whereby you would become His adopted child.

* You were born in sin, - to be born in sin means you were the product of a fallen, sinful generation. That generation can be traced back to our first parents. Every child born into this world was born a lost sinner. *But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (Eph. 2:4,5) ... Eph. 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

* ... In eternity it was His sovereign choice, - and no-one else's, - that He should adopt some to be "sharers in the grace of adoption" simply because, - and here is the Biblical explanation, - He set out to adopt us because it was *the good pleasure of his will*.

* The little baby, - just given up for adoption, - has no say over who his/her parents are going to be; in the same way, God chose us to be His children long before we had a mind to choose Him to be our Father. It was simply in accordance with *the good pleasure of his will*.

* It took a **legal proceeding** to bind the covenant by which He would make us His. The legal proceeding goes under the Biblical word, 'propitiation' (i.e. that which turns aside the wrath of God from the sinner).

* The only source of propitiation is the love of God, *I Jn. 4:10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ... Rom. 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* The sole initiative is with God.

* And propitiation means that, whilst God's anger burns righteously against both the sin and the sinner, His love demonstrated at Calvary directs the sinner by grace to Himself in order that by faith, - a gift from God, - the sinner would believe and come to Christ.

* Jesus Himself, - the Bible says, - [Heb. 2:17 in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation \[Gk. Word, propitiation\] for the sins of the people.](#) John tells us too, [I Jn. 2:2 He is the propitiation for our sins.](#) ... He reconciled us unto God! God's anger and judgement was poured out upon Him alone.

* The Judge condemned the sinner and Christ took the sinner's place. It was truly a **legal proceeding**, *signed* with His precious blood.

* To continue ... "Adoption is a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood".

A PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

* The *Confession*, "are numbered with and enjoy the liberties and privileges of children of God". Indeed, what a privilege! Paul said to the [Ephesians, 2:3 \[we\] were by nature the children of wrath.](#) We were born under a curse, foreigners to God's grace, children of disobedience, - the Bible has so many ways to describe our lost state outside of Christ.

* But, how beautiful is God's grace that He has made His children by adoption even closer to His heart than the angels in Heaven. The angels attend Him round the Throne, the believers in Christ are His very Family!

* Thomas Watson wrote, "Since God has a Son of His own, and such a Son, how wonderful God's love in adopting us! We needed a Father, but He did not need sons".

* In Glory His Family are gathering round Him, - someday every member of that Family will be there. There will be none missing. Some of them have yet to be adopted in time, - they are not saved yet ... but they will be! He's still searching for them ... like the Shepherd searching for His sheep, - He won't finish until they are all in the sheepfold.

* [We were by nature the children of wrath,](#) but now God calls us His own, [Is. 43:6 I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; 7 Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.](#) Through the grace of adoption we belong to Him, - He is our Heavenly Father ... and nothing can ever change that or take it away ... because the plans whereby He adopted us were made in His own Council Room in eternity.

* “Adoption is a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood” ... but He shed His blood in order to ratify the covenant promise of salvation by which the blood would be applied to wash away the sinner’s sin.

* The statement goes on to define adoption, “the adopted child is entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child of the adoptive parents”.

ENTITLED TO ALL PRIVILEGES

* What kind of privileges is the child of God entitled to?

* Access before the Throne. In the days of Ahasuerus, Queen Vashti could only come into the King’s court when she was invited; Moses could only come before the Pharaoh when he was invited, - even though he had been brought up in the Egyptian Pharaoh’s court.

* Yet we have the privilege to [come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need \(Heb. 4:16\)](#).

* We also have access to the wardrobe of Heaven. Our old filthy rags have been taken off, destroyed and replaced; [Is. 61:10 I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.](#)

* There is nothing cheap in Heaven’s economy ... but the price for all that He grants us has been paid completely and in full.

* ... When we stand before the Throne we shall look into the face of God our Saviour. We’ll see the angels, and the Throne, and the finery of Heaven ... and we shall be taken aback with it all; but more than anything else we shall see the One Who put into operation the plan whereby He would adopt us and make us His own. [Is. 43:1 now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.](#)

* Adoption is “a legal proceeding that creates a parent-child relation between persons not related by blood; the adopted child is entitled to all privileges belonging to a natural child of the adoptive parents (including the right to inherit)”

... INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO INHERIT

* It’s not all over when you die, in fact it’s only really starting to begin!

* Paul said, [Rom. 8:15 ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.](#)

* The *Confession* says that He will never cast us off but that we shall remain sealed to the day of redemption, then to “inherit the promises as heirs of everlasting salvation”. ... When it’s all over on earth ... it’s not finished, for in Heaven it’s only beginning for us!

* I have no right to inherit what God will give me, but what He gives to me in tender mercy and love is all according to His Sovereign grace.

* I have a friend and he and his wife couldn’t have children. They went off, - first of all, - to India and they brought back a beautiful little orphan baby. They went off again to South America and they brought back another beautiful little orphan baby.

* Both those little babies were facing a very dark future but they were brought into a family in which they are treated as if they are the ‘blood-children’ of those adoptive parents. They want for nothing, absolutely nothing. They were facing poverty, - the little girl might even have been facing death, as many baby girls in India are abandoned.

* If it were not for the grace of God we should have been left abandoned. We have no right to privilege. We have no right to Heaven ... and we have no right to salvation in Christ ... but in Sovereign and Saving Grace the Almighty and Everlasting God adopted us into His blood-bought Family.

* Here, this evening, we have the right of inheritance ... and no-one can take that right from us that He has freely given to us. It is ours because of Him Who is our Father.

* Adopted ... adopted; I’m not fatherless. Turn please to Deut. 23:2 where it tells you who cannot enter into the congregation and presence of the Lord, [A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.](#)

* I’m not one of those, - I’m a child of the King. The hymn says ...

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in His hands!
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, He has riches untold.
I’m a child of the King, A child of the King:
With Jesus my Saviour, I’m a child of the King.
I once was an outcast stranger on earth,
A sinner by choice, an alien by birth,
But I’ve been adopted, my name’s written down,
An heir to a mansion, a robe and a crown.