

# The Traveling Pulpit

Published By



Covenant of Grace Ministries

2704 Fairway Drive  
Greensboro, NC 27408

Burley W. Moore—Bible Teacher

e-mail: [burleymoore@att.net](mailto:burleymoore@att.net)  
[www.covenantofgraceministries.com](http://www.covenantofgraceministries.com)

Phone (336) 292-2408

Listen to Covenant of Grace Radio over [www.covenantofgraceministries.com](http://www.covenantofgraceministries.com)

Or Over AM830 WTRU in the Triad at 1:00 PM Every Sunday Afternoon

Volume 8, Number 3

July

Summer 2013

## Adoption

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” (Eph. 1:4-6)

Spiritual “adoption” is a privilege bestowed upon those who have been “justified by faith” (Rom. 3:28) and admitted into the family of God. Those who are united with Christ have been adopted as his “children” and made “joint-heirs” (Rom. 8:17) with Him in His “eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15). There is “only” ONE “begotten Son” (Jh. 3:16) of God in the strictest sense, Who is “the express image of his person” (Heb. 1:31). However, by being “born again” (Jh. 3:3) we can enjoy all the benefits of “adoption” as a child of God.

In the Old Testament, the angels are sometimes referred to as the “sons of God” (Job 1:6, 38:7). Also, “Adam” (Lk. 3:38) as well as “Israel” (Ex. 4:22) are spoken of as a “son” of God. This son-ship implied that their existence and position was due to a creative act of God. Our study of spiritual “adoption” is a study in son-ship ascribed to a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. When the terms, “sons of God” (Jh. 1:12) or “children of God” (Rom. 8:16), are used in the New Testament, it’s speaking of sinners that have been “saved” (Rom. 10:9), thus entering into a spiritual family relationship with Almighty God. Throughout Scripture, God uses various analogies to teach us about what it’s like to have a personal relationship with Him. Such words as children, sons, adoption, wife, and bride (Eph. 5:23-33, Rev. 21:9) help us to better understand that spiritual relationship.

## The Origin of Adoption

Son-ship is not due to any merit of our own nor does it result from human achievement. It's simply the "gift" (Rom. 6:23) of God's love to those whom He has brought by "faith" (Eph. 2:7-8) into spiritual union with Jesus Christ. It's an act that originates entirely from the "good pleasure" of God's "will." In human adoption, a couple receives the child of another person into their family and confers upon that child the same privileges and advantages as if that child were their own. Likewise, God adopts all who are justified by His grace and makes them His "children" (Gal. 3:26). There is such a thing as both civil and spiritual adoption with many similarities between the two. Both are voluntary acts on the part of the adopter upon the adopted, who is given the honor of bearing the family name, coming into line as an heir, made a part of the family by special favor, and provided for by the adoptive parent. A major difference between civil and spiritual "adoption" is that in civil adoption, the adopter cannot impart his nature to the adopted, but in spiritual "adoption," it's possible because we are "born" into God's family by means of the Holy Spirit (Jh. 3:8). "Regeneration" (Titus 3:5) and "adoption" have the same author and flow from the same source, but are different acts of God's "grace." Adoption is an act of God in choosing His "elect" from "before the foundation of the world," whereas "regeneration is an act of God's "grace" in TIME. In other words, men are not adopted because they are regenerated, but they are regenerated because they have been adopted. Allow me to describe it this way. Adoption results in a new relationship. Regeneration is a change of moral nature. Adoption gives us a "new name" (Rev. 2:17) and title to an "eternal inheritance," whereas regeneration gives us the nature of sons.

Adoption into the household of faith (Gal. 6:10) is due only to the accomplished work of Jesus Christ. Like "justification" (Rom. 5:16,18), adoption is conferred only upon those that trust Christ as Lord and Savior "through faith." However, the blessing of adoption is NOT the same thing as justification. To pardon one from a crime is one thing, but to bestow upon him all the privileges of son-ship is another. In justification, the believer regards God as a justifying Judge, but in adoption, he acknowledges Him as an affectionate Father. Along with the gift of justification, God grants the gift of adoption. Justification is the basic blessing on which adoption is founded. It's because of this privilege of adoption that we can have a Heavenly Father with Whom to converse (Matt. 6:9). Adoption is not a matter of attainment at some point in believer's process of sanctification, but experienced at the moment of conversion. Divine adoption is an act of God's sovereign grace upon His elect that originated from eternity past. Our text reminds us that along with our "election" (Rom. 11:5) is found the teaching of our predestination to the "adoption of children."

## The Nature of Adoption

God's gift of son-ship is an act whereby He chooses to take those who are Not His "children" and make them His "children" by spiritually adopting them. The doctrine of adoption pictures us as being fathered into the human race with a natural tendency to sin. This describes how the "father" of the "natural man" (I Cor. 2:14) is "the devil" (Jh. 8:44). Only by means of the new birth and spiritual adoption can we become "children

of God” (I Jh. 3:10). By God’s supernatural decree, He paid the price to ransom us off the slave block of sin and adopt the believer into His “household” so that we are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints” (Eph. 2:19). This makes all believers, brothers and sisters (“brethren” II Pet. 1:10), in God’s family regardless of race or nationality, as we share together the same eternal inheritance.

Being united in this son-ship with Christ makes us “partakers of the divine nature” (II Pet. 1:4). Our son-ship is not dependent upon what we do, but what Christ has already done for us. All that have been adopted into the household of God comprise the “body of Christ” (I Cor. 12:27, Eph. 4:12). It is for His dear “little children” (I Jh. 2:1) that Christ prayed to the “Father” (Jh. 17:20-26).

### The Blessings of Adoption

The first birth was physical and not only made us “children of the devil,” but the devil’s bondservants. The second birth is spiritual and not only paid the price that bought us off the devil’s slave market, but also made us “a son” of God (Gal. 4:4-7). Being “redeemed” (I Pet. 1:18-19) by the “blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:14, 12:11) means that we are indwelt with the “Holy Spirit” (Eph. 1:13-14) which is a confirmation of our son-ship (Rom. 8:14,16).

As born again children of God, we become conscious of our new relationship to our Heavenly Father (Gal. 4:6, Rom. 8:15). Believers are promised not just a mere inheritance in glory, but that we’ll share in the vast estate that will be given to Christ (Rom. 8:17). All that this promise involves, we will not know until we get to Heaven, but we can rest assured that we’ll not be disappointed (I Jh. 3:2, Rev. 21:7). When a woman marries into a royal family, she becomes a part of the family and is entitled to the benefits thereof. So it is with the church that is presently espoused to the Father’s “only begotten Son.” From both the standpoint of marriage and son-ship, the believer is guaranteed “the promise of eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15). The full benefits of adoption will not be realized in this life, but only in the life to come (Rom. 8:18-19). Presently, we’re just earthly pilgrims, looking “for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:10). As the “heirs of God,” we’re waiting for an “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you” (I Pet. 1:4). All during this earthly journey, we must never forget that the difficulties of life serve a divine purpose (Rom. 8:28).

### Closing

Spiritual adoption is a favor that God grants believers out of His great “love” (I Jh. 3:1). The doctrine of adoption shows us the change of relationship that occurs in a believer upon conversion to Christ. When the new birth takes place, the Christian recognizes God as his new spiritual “Father.” No longer is he under the same control as before, but now acknowledges God as his divine and supreme authority.

Adoption is the experiencing of God’s parental love that flows to us freely from His marvelous grace. It confers upon us the undeserved privilege and benefit of son-ship. As children of God, we become not just heirs of God, but “joint-heirs with Christ.” This doctrine teaches us about our close intimate endearing relationship to God that lifts us

out of the spirit of bondage and places us on speaking terms and in fellowship with the Great Sovereign of Creation and Redemption.

It's because of our adoption that God treats us with fatherly "chastisement" when we sin (Heb. 12:5-7). God doesn't whip up on the devil's children as He does His own, but He will convict and bring many under conviction unto Himself in adoption. A sign of true son-ship is to experience God's "chastening" hand of correction upon us when we go astray (Heb. 12:8-11). To profess Christ and live in sin, without knowing God's "chastisement," exposes one as an illegitimate professor of Christianity. Children of God can and do sin, but they cannot sin and get by with it in the sight of God. Divine discipline is a blessing known only unto the redeemed "children of God" (Ps. 103:13).

### A Word From the Ministry

As I write this edition of "The Traveling Pulpit" I cannot help but reflect upon all the happenings since our last publication back in the Spring. My Mother died on May 22 just seven weeks shy of her 98<sup>th</sup> birthday. God blessed her with a lengthy life and was merciful in her last days. I would like to thank everyone for their many acts and deeds of kindness unto us during those days when death visited our family. Your presence and expressions of love was most meaningful. Words cannot begin to tell how much you mean to us. Thank you so very much!!

Also, at this time of year, I cannot help but reflect back and project forward. On June 20<sup>th</sup>, COGM celebrated the beginning of its eighth year of organization and on the third Sunday of August, we'll celebrate the beginning of our sixth year of Bible Teaching over radio station WTRU. We praise the Lord for the opportunity and privilege of serving Him and teaching His Word over radio, Internet, and the printed page. I would like to say a special "thank you" to everyone that has supported this ministry and enabled me to carry out God's call upon my life. May God bless you abundantly.

Because of His Sovereign Grace.....BWM

# The Traveling Pulpit

Published Quarterly by

**Covenant of Grace Ministries**

2704 Fairway Drive  
Greensboro, NC 27408

Burley W. Moore-Bible Teacher



Listen to COVENANT OF GRACE RADIO over [www.covenantofgraceministries.com](http://www.covenantofgraceministries.com)  
or over AM830 on WTRU in the Triad at 1:00 PM every Sunday afternoon