

You Must Be Born Again 3

John 3:1-3 – 1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” 3 Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Galatians Background

- Martin Luther called Galatians “my own little epistle.”
- Emphasizes salvation by faith, not works
- Written during Paul’s 1st missionary journey in the region of Galatia (Acts 13-14)
 - Antioch in Pisidia
 - Iconium
 - Lystra
 - Derbe

Galatians 4:4-7 - 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Quote: John Wesley – “I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God. I have the faith of a servant though not that of a son.”

Quote: JI Packer (author of *Knowing God*) – “What is a Christian? The richest answer I know is that a Christian is one who has God as a father... If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God’s child, and having God as his father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. Our understanding of Christianity cannot be better than our grasp of adoption.”

“Adoption” = *Huiothesia* = 2 Greek words (son + to set in a place, to establish)

- Romans 9:4 – Israel’s relationship as God’s special people is described as that of an adopted child

Quote: Bill Johnson – “Everything that Jesus did was to bring us to the place to be able to say ‘Our Father.’”

Adoption in the Roman World

- Adoption was a common thing
- Sons were adopted more often than daughters
- Wealthy childless couples acquired an heir through adoption. Even emperors did this to transfer power.
- Adopted children had the same rights, responsibilities, and privileges of natural-born children
- Adoption gave the rights and responsibilities of the parents to the adopted child
- The father was the only one with the legal right to begin the adoption process
 - Quote: Charles Spurgeon – “I am quite certain that if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him. And I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards. And He must have chosen me for reasons unknown to me for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love.”
- The new father gained full legal rights and power over the son
- Adoption completely severed the relationship with the birth family

What Was Our Old Family?

- Quote: John Piper – “God did not adopt cute little orphans. He adopted enemies. He set his face to go to the most rebellious part of the kingdom, the most mean-spirited, rebellious, in-your-face kids on planet Earth and say ‘Those are gonna be Mine, and I’m gonna give My Son to make them Mine.’”
- Our father was the devil (John 8:44)
- We were sons of disobedience (Ephesians 2:2, 5:6)
- We were children of wrath (Ephesians 2:3)
- We were strangers (Ephesians 2:19)
- We were foreigners (Ephesians 2:19)
- We were alienated from the promises of God (Ephesians 2:12)
- Our home was in this world and no more (Hebrews 13:14)
- We were in bondage to sin, death, hell, demons, sickness, fear, worry, hopelessness, and all power of the Enemy
- Colossians 1:13 - He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son.

The Blessings of Adoption

- Ephesians 1:3-14 – 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. 11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
- Romans 8:14-17 - 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “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 fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Quote: Alistair McGrath – “Adoption is about being wanted. It’s about belonging to a family... To be adopted is to be invited into a loving and caring environment. It’s about being welcomed and wanted.”

Quote: 14 Year Old Adopted Child – “What I like the most is to be a part of a family, knowing that, even when my new parents are a pain in the backside sometimes, they are always there for me and I feel loved and safe.”