

“The Grace of Adoption”
John 1:11-12
(Preached at Trinity, May 18, 2016)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Last time we saw in **Verses 11-12** the rejection of Christ by the Jews. God's covenant people would not have their Messiah.
John 1:11 NAU - "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."
2. But we also saw the glorious blessing of the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's redemptive purpose. Christ and salvation is open to all who will receive Him.
John 1:12 NAU - "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,"
3. As I pointed out, the Old Covenant always looked forward to the New. And God's covenant people have always been those who believed God and trusted in His promise. They have always been children of faith.
Galatians 3:26 NAU - "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."
 - A. Paul stressed that the true Jew has always been one inwardly, in the heart, not outwardly by circumcision.
Romans 2:28-29 NAS - "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. ²⁹ But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God."
 - B. The deciding factor is not being the blood heir of Abraham, but of being a new creature in Christ.
John 1:13 NAU - "who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."
Galatians 6:15 NAS - "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation."
 - C. Paul makes the profound declaration that God's elect people are those who follow Christ in faith and that they are the true Israel of God.
Galatians 6:16 NAS - "And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God."
4. The church is the full expression of God's covenant people, the true Israel.
 - A. God's promises to ethnic Israel have found their full expression in the church. It is a **NEW** covenant, signifying that the old has passed away.
 - B. But God hasn't rejected the Jews outright. The Gospel is open to all who receive Christ, including the Jews. Paul's own conversion is testimony to this.
Romans 11:1 NAU - "I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin."

5. There is another glorious truth set forth in this passage. The Jews have rejected their Messiah and have abandoned the right to be called the children of God. But to those who receive Christ they receive the amazing blessing of adoption.

6. John says, "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name"

The word for "right" is ἐξουσία – it refers to a legal right or authority.

7. John often refers to Jesus as the Son of God.

John 1:34 - "I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."

John 3:16 NAU - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

John 20:30-31 NAU - "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

8. In **Verse 12** he is saying that for those who receive Christ, His Father has become our Father. We have become heirs with Christ.

Romans 8:16-17 NAU - "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷ and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*."

9. Are you amazed that the Creator of the universe would raise us up to such infinite heights. Who are we that God would place such honor as to adopt us as His own dear children; that He would place such love upon us? Let us consider for a few moments the grace of adoption.

I. Let's begin by looking at the Source of adoption – How is it we were adopted?

A. John says we are given the right to become sons by receiving Christ

1. The problem is no one receives Christ

John 1:5 NAU - "The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it."

John 1:10 NAU - "He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him."

2. If the world does not know Him and the Jews did not receive Him does that mean the purpose of God has been defeated? No, the eternal counsel of God stands. He does what men cannot do.

3. We need a change of heart, a new nature. We'll see in **Chapter 3** we need a whole new life. We need to be born again. And this is exactly what God does. In **Verse 14** John says this new birth is a work of God

John 1:13 NAU - "who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

B. Adoption began with Divine Sovereign Election

1. God chose us before the world began

2 Thessalonians 2:13 NAU - "But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth."

Ephesians 1:4-6 NAU - "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵ He predestined us to adoption as sons

through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

2. This sovereign prerogative was clearly demonstrated under the OC
 - a. Of all the men on the face of the earth God chose Abraham
God called forth Abraham out of a land of idolatry and made a covenant with *him*
 - b. He then chose Isaac, not Ishmael
 - c. He then chose Jacob, not Esau
Romans 9:13 – “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”
 - d. It was through Jacob that God would raise up the twelve tribes
 - e. All of this was by God’s sovereign choice - election
We are made sons through Jesus Christ by Divine election.
Ephesians 1:5-6 NAU - "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

3. This Election unto the adoption of sons was unconditional—in other words it was not conditioned upon some quality that we had.
There was no good in us to cause God to show favor upon us, nothing of value. He chose us according to His own sovereign pleasure.
Ephesians 1:5 - "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will"

B. Second of all, adoption was made possible through the atonement of Jesus Christ
Galatians 4:4 NAU - "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons."

1. Something had to be done to change us from the enemies of God, defiled and worthless to that which is beloved and precious.
2. The death of Jesus brought about this change. His death upon the cross purchased our adoption through justification.

C. There is also a human dimension

1. The NT doesn’t connect adoption to justification. It doesn’t connect it to regeneration. It connects it to faith.
2. It is required that we believe. It is required that we receive Christ as Lord and Savior

John 1:12 NAU - "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name."

Galatians 3:26 NAU - "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

3. This was made possible through the life-giving Spirit.
We are no longer the sons of Adam or the sons of Satan but the sons of God. We have undergone a unique and marvelous change. We have been born of God and adopted into His family.
4. The offer of the Gospel is an invitation to sonship and it is made to all men – all have the responsibility of receiving it through faith and repentance.

II. What are the benefits of adoption?

- A. We have a relationship with God as our Father
1. We are no longer outcasts from God. The Law no longer condemns us. We have been translated from children of wrath to children of God.
Isaiah 43:1 NAU - "I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!"
 2. We have been united to God in a close fellowship. He is now called our God and we are now called His people. But even more stirring God has become our Father.
Romans 8:16 NAU - "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,"
Galatians 4:6 NAU - "Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"
 - a. ABBA is a term of affection. It is an Aramaic term and in lands where Aramaic was spoken it was the word small children called their father.
 - b. In the NT it is most often used in the context of prayer. Jesus used it.
Mark 14:36 NAU - "And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will."
nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt."
- B. We have continual access to our Father through prayer
1. Our Lord taught us to pray:
"Our Father which art in heaven . . ."
 2. This is a gift that most take for granted. As the sons of God, God's precious children, we have access before the throne of God at all times.
- C. There are many other privileges that come with adoption
1. We have been united in a close fellowship with one another. If we are God's children then we are brothers and sisters. We have been joined to a unique family. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.
 2. We are heirs. We have inherited all that pertains to Christ.
Revelation 21:7 NAU - "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son."
Romans 8:17 NAU - "and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* so that we may also be glorified with *Him*."
 3. We have Divine protection. A father will not allow harm to come to His children
 - a. As our Father, He protects us, keeps us.
 - b. Our Father also disciplines us – He will not let us fall into terrible sin that will destroy us.
Heb. 12:6 - "For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline?"

4. He pities us. He is tender towards His little children.
Psalms 103:13 NAU - "Just as a father has compassion on *his* children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him."
5. He cares for our needs
Matthew 7:11 NAU - "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!"
6. We have become partakers of the nature of our Father – Children bear the resemblance to their parents. We resemble our Father
 - a. We have been brought into the family of God – we are to bear the marks of this relationship
 - b. Peter describes this as being partakers of the Divine nature
2 Peter 1:4 NAU - "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."
7. The sons of God also have God's unconditional love
1 John 3:1 NAU - "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and *such* we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him."
 - a. God loves us with an infinite love.
It is an unfailing love
 - b. God's love for us is beyond comprehension

Conclusion:

1. The Amazing love of God is displayed upon His chosen children
God gave up His beloved Son Jesus that we might be made sons.
God loved us enough to give His Son
John 3:16 – "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."
2. Are you a child of God? This Sonship is only available through Jesus Christ
The greatest and most wicked ingratitude is to despise the Son of God. God commands every man to submit to His Son. Jesus sits exalted upon His throne.
4. What is keeping you from serving Him?
There is no other way to the Father. No other way to sonship. But it is available to all who will receive Him. It cannot be purchased. It can only be received.
John 1:12 NAU - "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name"
5. Those who receive Him become children of God.
Those who refuse remain the children of wrath.
Ephesians 2:3 NAU - "Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest."