Chapter 37: Adoption (Membership in God’s Family)

What are benefits of being a member of God’s family?

I. Definition: Adoption is an act of God whereby he makes us members of his family.

II. Explanation & Scriptural Basis
   A. Scriptural Evidences for Adoption
      1. Several New Testament passage talk about our adoption as God’s children (John 1:12; Eph. 2:1-3)
      2. The status of adoption as God’s children was not fully realized in the old covenant (Gal. 3:23-26)
      3. The Holy Spirit bears witness in our hearts that we are God’s children (Gal. 4:4-7; Romans 8:14-17)
      4. There is a sense in which our adoption is still future (Romans 8:23)
   B. Adoption Follows Conversion and is an Outcome of Saving Faith
      1. New Testament evidence (John 1:12; Gal. 3:25-26)
      2. Objection: (Gal. 4:6)
         a. Gal. 4:6 does not refer to the giving of the Holy Spirit in regeneration
         b. Holy Spirit begins to bear witness and to assure us that we are members of God’s family
   C. Adoption is Distinct From Regeneration and Justification
      1. Adoption is distinct from regeneration.
         a. Regeneration: being made spiritually alive to God
         b. Angels are spiritually alive to God without having the status of being God’s children
      2. Adoption is distinct from justification
         a. Justification – our right standing before God’s law.
         b. Adoption – our relationship with God as our Father
   D. The Privileges of Adoption
      1. Being able to speak to God and relate to him as a good and loving Father
         a. He loves us (1 John 3:1)
         b. He understands us (Ps. 103:13-14)
         c. He takes care of our needs (Matt. 6:32)
         d. He gives us many good gifts, especially the Spirit (Luke 11:13)
         e. He gives us a great inheritance in heaven (Gal. 4:7)
         f. He forgives our sins (Matt. 6:9-12)
      2. We are led by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14)
      3. God disciplines us as his children (Heb. 12:5-6)
      4. The privilege of sharing both in Jesus’ sufferings and in his subsequent glory (Rom. 8:16-17)
      5. We relate to other believers as members of one family (1 Tim. 5:1-2)
      6. We imitate and honor our Father in heaven (Eph. 5:1; Matt. 5:16; Phil. 2:14-15)

III. Questions for Personal Application

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