

crimes are pardoned and he is given a new name, all the rights of a Roman citizen, a new life, a new home, and a new father. This is such a great picture of what God does for us in adoption. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

Discussion Questions

- Do you know anyone who has been adopted into an earthly family?
- For the man in the movie, what do you think was the best part of being adopted by the Roman commander?
- What do you think is the best part about being adopted by God?

Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Adoption truly is a sweet benefit that God grants to His people. By it, we are drawn into a spiritual family, given intimate access to a loving father, and promised a home in heaven with our elder brother, Jesus. He said, *In my Father's house are many rooms... And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself* (John 14:2-3). Even now, Christians are treated by God as “true sons,” being disciplined and trained by Him. Hebrews 12:8-11 says *If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.* We will talk about this more next week as we consider the benefit of sanctification, but for now let's praise God that His adoption is not just superficial or ceremonial. There are real-life implications of being God's child that affect our daily life. *So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God* (Galatians 4:7).

Discussion Questions

- Are you a “true son” by adoption through Christ into God's family?
- If you are a Christian, what are some of the different ways you have experienced God as a loving father treating you as His child?

Baptist Catechism Family Worship Guide



West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, May 19th, 2024)

Baptist Catechism Question #37

Q: What is adoption?

A: *Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.*

Suggested Memory Verse

Romans 8:15 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!” (ESV)

Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

A few weeks ago, we began a series of questions and answers on the effectual call and its benefits to Christians: justification (last week's catechism), adoption (this week's catechism), and sanctification (next week's catechism). There are also more benefits that flow from these that we will cover later. What is a *benefit*? By definition, it is an act of kindness that produces a good or helpful result and promotes well-being. The one who gives these things is called a benefactor. Adoption is a benefit of the effectual call that comes to us from God (an act of God's free grace) and gives us the right to all the privileges of being God's children. Romans 8:15 says *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!"* This gift is not only good, it is perfect, and it tells us something about the giver Himself as well. If you have received this adoption from God, then He is a loving Father to you, and you can now serve Him with confidence and not be scared of this world, mankind, or Satan. *Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell* (Matthew 10:28). The one who grants adoption to sons and daughters through Christ is the same God who created all things and controls all things. There is no better benefit-giver we could have.

Discussion Question

- What benefits do you receive on this earth from your parents, employers, etc?
- What makes any benefits from God even better than those you may have just mentioned?
- Who is your benefactor?

Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The first part of the definition of any of these benefits of effectual call is that it is an act of God's free grace. Justification is an act of God, adoption is also an act of God, and so is sanctification. It is wonderful news that each of these is a work of God. It is something HE accomplishes. We can trust his promises to us and that He alone can and will keep them. Scripture says in Ephesians 1:4–6 *In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.* His act in this passage was to predestine some to adoption as His children even before the world was created. This adoption would come through the work of His son, Jesus. If Jesus had not come and lived a sinless, perfect life so that He could die for us and take on our sin and punishment of death, then we could not have been adopted. Because He did, 2 Peter 1:4 says *...he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature.* The precious promises were of a Messiah to come (Jesus). Through Him, we can now take part in the divine (or Godly) nature as co-heirs with Christ, our adopted elder brother. God did that.

Discussion Questions

- Have you or somebody you know ever had to declare something and/or make it happen? Describe this act.
- How many acts of God have you seen or experienced in life? Can you describe any?
- What are different ways you can praise God for His sovereign acts? Choose one and do it now.

Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

When Abraham was told he would have more children than the grains of sand on the beach or the stars in the sky, I have always wondered just what that number would be. Some people have even come up with formulas to try to calculate it, but you know what? Their estimates differ widely from each other. The Bible tells us that God knows exact numbers for things... *even the hairs of your head are all numbered* (Matthew 10:30). I love Psalm 56:8 when God counts "tossings" and tears. *You have kept count of my tossings; put my tears in your bottle. Are they not in your book?* God cares about us, and even the smallest details in life, so when the second part of the answer to this week's question says "whereby we are received into the number," that says something special, too. We are adopted by an act of God, and received into a group that is numbered and known. The number refers to all those who belong to God. You are not adopted in isolation, an "only child" of God the Father. No, you are adopted *into* a family. You are not alone because you have Jesus Christ as a fellow heir and countless (to us) brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus teaches us who our spiritual family is when He says in Matthew 12:50, those who do *the will of my Father in heaven [are] my brother and sister and mother.* To be counted or numbered among them is special.

Discussion Questions

- How would you briefly try to estimate the stars in the sky?
- What do you think of God counting your tears or tossings at night?
- Are you counted and numbered among the spiritual family of God?

Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

The boys and girls catechism we use gives definitions for justification and sanctification, but it skips adoption. I guess it's easy to take it for granted that we know what adoption means, but years ago my family went ahead and penciled a definition into our book that another family had found. Spiritual adoption is God taking sinners to be His children, making them heirs with Christ. John 1:12 says *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...* What a privilege it is to be adopted but also to be given all the legal rights as God's child. In the classic movie *Ben-Hur: A Tale of Christ*, a Jew named Judah is imprisoned as a rower on a Roman ship, and when that ship sinks in battle, he saves the life of the ship's commander. In time, the commander officially adopts Judah to be his son. During the adoption ceremony, Judah's old life and