

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



# THE LENEXA EDIFIER



John 8:32

*"And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"*

MAY 21, 2017

## HIS ADOPTED SONS

by Jim Stauffer

The apostle Paul uses the subject of adoption to explain how the Law of Moses led mankind to faith in Christ Jesus and the adoption as sons of God. He tells us in **Gal. 3:24**, *the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith*. He then begins to explain this process metaphorically as a slave becoming a son (**Gal. 4:1-7**). He tells us the child is under guardians and managers just as the slave is while he remains a child. Yet, the clear difference is, the child will ultimately be heir to the estate while the slave will not **vss. 1,2**. The time of the inheritance is set by the father.

The time of being under guardians and managers was when God's people were under the Law of Moses, but the time of the inheritance was when, *God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons vss. 4,5*. It is at this point that we can have the *Spirit of His Son* in our hearts and cry *Abba Father vs 6*. *Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God vs 7*.

The context of this presentation to the churches of Galatia was to teach them to cast aside the Law of Moses and accept the Son of God, Jesus Christ as the One who had the power to save.

While we may not suffer the same problem with our adoption as they, we do from time to time fail to recognize the commitment of a son to the Father in order to inherit the estate, in this case heaven in eternity. The cost to God and Christ for our adoption was the blood of His Son, Jesus of Nazareth (**Eph. 1:4-7; 1 Pet. 1:18,19**).

This adoption is dependent upon our faith being a saving faith that leads to us putting on Christ in baptism (**Gal. 3:26,27**). Putting on Christ in baptism is the new birth Jesus taught Nicodemus about, telling him it was necessary to enter the kingdom of God. **John 3:3** *Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to*

*you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."* **4** *Nicodemus \*said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?"* **5** *Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That new birth comes from our obedience to the word of God, 1* **Pet. 1:22** *Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God.*

Following this new birth Paul says we are led by the Spirit and have now become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. He describes this spirit this way, *you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" (Rom. 8:15)*. The life we will lead, guided by the Spirit will not be easy. It will be fraught with trials and tribulation that are endured as we look to the hope of glory. Glory, Paul says far exceeds any suffering we shall endure on earth. That hope of our ultimate redemption, adoption, inheritance of the Father is heaven itself and spurs us to serve faithfully while here in His Kingdom so we may obtain that eternal rest that remains for those whose faith endures (**Rom. 8:14-23; Heb. 4:1**).

The Holy Spirit guides us by way of the revelation of the mind of God. It becomes our responsibility to hear the word of the Lord and be guided by His Spirit through His revealed word. We are taught that those who become the adopted sons of God do so by obedience to that word and by allowing it to dwell in them (**Rom. 8:9-11**).

We, then, will choose how we walk in this life whether according to the Spirit or the flesh. *But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh (Gal. 5:16)*.

## ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

*"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? 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 good things to those who ask Him! Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets"* (Matthew 7:7-12).

It is a good thing that God knows what is best for each of us. We might ask, seek, and knock all in an effort to gain something, be something, or do something that we shouldn't gain, be, or do. God doesn't refuse our prayers: Ask, and it will be given you. God will not mock our prayers: He will give us bread rather than a stone or snake. If we, even at our worst, know that we should give good gifts to our children, how much more that the God of heaven will give us what is right, needed, and what will ultimately glorify Him.

God's promises encourage us; they make us want to pray. Let us not miss, though, our responsibilities when we pray. Asking, seeking, and knocking imply a persistence upon the part of the kingdom citizen. Are we as serious at the business of praying as we should be? We must keep on asking, seeking, and knocking. We must ask, seek, and knock in faith, with an expectancy that always points to God's sovereignty. The call to serve Jesus is exciting. But answering that call is hard work. Self-sacrifice, walking in purity, and standing at all times for truth, while noble pursuits, are often met by the unexpected, daily rigors of kingdom living. Prayer, while important, is not the only activity of righteousness. Flash-in-the-pan Christianity will ruin us. But if we are not holy, meek, truthful, loving, pure, and obedient, what can we do? Pray! Thoughtless children forget benevolent fathers. Christians pray!

Luke's statement summarizes this section of Jesus' teaching. *"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him"* (11:13). The idea of giving what is best is accentuated by the promise of the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit will be given to those who ask for Him. Does that mean that anyone at anytime can say: "Lord, send the Holy Spirit to me," and then expect the request to be answered? No. It means that God knows how to give good gifts to those who ask as He requires. The work of the Holy Spirit in revelation and confirmation of heaven's will come to all who seek to know God's will. Will our spiritual needs be met by the Holy Spirit? Will God guide your life here on earth? The answer is yes, as long as we pay attention to God's word for our lives. Without it, how do we know what God wants us to be

and to do in the kingdom?

*"Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."* The conclusion is: Do you want men to give you good gifts rather than bad, evil gifts? Do you want to pray and have your prayers answered? If you say yes, then you go and do the same for others.

**Randy Harshbarger**

## Old Testament Answers

There are three Fundamental Questions for which philosophers of all ages have sought to find answers. Each of these questions is answered in the Jewish Pentateuch, contained in our Old Testament as the books Genesis through Deuteronomy.

The first of these questions is: Who am I? The Old Testament answers this by pointing out that mankind is the pinnacle of this creation. God's Word shows Man naming all of the other creatures of God in **Genesis 2:18-25**. He is similar to the other animals in God's creation but is not one with them. He is superior to them not descended from them. Anyone can tell the difference between a chimpanzee and a man with just a casual examination. The difference is found in **Genesis 1:26f** where *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the heavens, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* All men are made in the image and the likeness of God. No animal can say that. Because I am the image and likeness of God I am a little picture of God and no one can harm me without permission from the Creator without guilt. Because I am a little picture of God the penalty for killing me without just cause is forfeiture of life itself. So God told Noah after the flood in **Genesis 9:6**, *"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: For in the image of God made he man."* All of this makes mankind special in the world.

**Cleveland Reddinger**

## What Are YOU Looking For In A Church?

At this very moment, hundreds of thousands of our fellow Americans are looking for a church (or, as some express it, a "church home"). They are looking (1) because they have recently moved to a new area, (2) because they had drifted and are now ready for a renewal of religious interest in their lives, or (3) because they have become unhappy with "their old church." What are they looking for? What are YOU looking for? What do they hope to find? What do they feel they need?

\* Some are looking for a church that is like the former

church they belonged to. They don't want to change from the religion or way of worship that they have become accustomed to.

\* Some are looking for a church (building) that is close to where they live. One that is within easy driving distance. They don't want to have to go very far to get to "church."

\* Some are looking for a church made up of friendly people who will make them feel welcome and wanted. Warm feelings and caring hearts are important and a church that is cold and formal has no appeal.

\* Some are looking for a church that will lift their spirits and build up their self-esteem. They want a sense of importance and belonging. They don't want a church whose members just never seem to accept them.

\* Some are looking for a big church. They prefer to blend in with the crowd. They don't want a church that is so small they everyone is noticed and everyone is expected to chip in and help out.

\* Some are looking for a small church because they don't want to be lost in a crowd. Smaller churches, it is believed, are more friendly and more like a family. They don't want a church that is so big that you don't know who the regulars are and who are the visitors.

\* Some are looking for a church that is busy with all kinds of activities in the community. They like family affairs and youth groups. They want some good wholesome activities that young people can be a part of: a softball team, camping, lock-ins, etc., as long as there are several choices for a family to choose from.

Now, if you will, look back, over that list. There is not one word about God, Jesus, the Bible, salvation from sins, strengthening the soul, heaven or eternal life. Churches were established in the first century for the purpose of teaching God's word, saving souls and strengthening the members.

When a group of Christians constitute a church, they do not have to wonder what God wants of them. The lives they are to live, the organizational arrangement they are to have, the doctrine they are to teach, the collective work that they are to do are all clearly defined in the New Testament. With open Bibles we find out what a congregation of God's people is supposed to be, to teach, and to do.

Permit me to offer some suggestions:

\* Look for a church that respects the sovereignty of God and the authority of Jesus Christ (**Col. 3:17**).

\* Look for a church that respects the Bible as the inspired word of God, and the gospel as the power of God unto salvation (**Rom. 1: 16**).

\* Look for a church that strives to be like the churches you can read about in the New Testament - in name, in worship, in organization, in teaching and in work (**I Thes. 2:14**).

\* Look for a church that is concerned about lost souls and eternal destinies (**Mt. 28:19-20**).

\* Look for a church that ministers to the spiritual needs of men. It is the soul of man that will live forever (**Eph. 4:11-16**).

*by Steve Hardin*

**Matt. 16:18** *"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."*

## **"In Understanding be Mature"**

**Stan Cox**

It is interesting how foundational the concept of authority is to the Bible. Almost every page includes the concept, with calls to obey God, warnings about disobedience, and examples of those who experience God's pleasure or wrath. Often the references are explicit, but there are innumerable implications as well.

In **1 Corinthians 14**, the apostle Paul instructs his readers in the matter of spiritual gifts. He there explains that the gift of prophecy is of greater value than speaking in tongues. This is because prophecy can be understood, where tongue speaking can't (without an interpreter). Paul writes, *"Yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue"* (**vs. 19**).

He then writes, *"Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature"* (**vs. 20**). One might ask, why is it so important to be mature in understanding? The answer is found in Paul's contention in **verse 37**, *"If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."*

One wag said, "It is the 10 commandments, not the 10 suggestions." We need awareness of what scripture teaches, because scripture contains God's commandments to men. These instructions, by nature, are not optional. Remember, Jesus *"became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him"* (**Hebrews 5:9**).



**Eph. 2:19** *So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;*

**1Pet. 2:9** *But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:*

**Psa. 1:1** *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.*

## **HOURS OF WORSHIP**

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

**Visitors welcome**

**We conduct in home Bible Studies**

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GENERIC AND SPECIFIC  
AUTHORITY



## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10