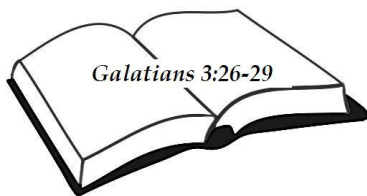


BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED - GOD ADOPTS US (I)!

Justification is the first blessing of the Gospel. It is wonderful for a man to be to be declared righteous (*justified*) before God. It is a great blessing to have one's sin imputed to Jesus and to have Jesus' righteousness impute to us. But the blessings of the gospel do not stop at *justification*. Not only are believers in Jesus Christ declared righteous, but they are further adopted into God's family to be His children. Adoption is the highest privilege and the greatest blessing of the gospel!

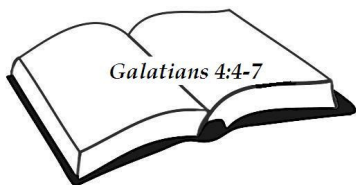
Imagine being adopted by the king to be his son and to inherit his riches, when you were once a beggar. If that is wonderful and exciting, how much more, that God, the Almighty King of the whole Universe should adopt us to be His children, to be His heir, when we were once enemies of God and horrible rebels who only deserve condemnation!

A Christian can, without being presumptuous, call God as His Father and address Jesus Christ as his Elder Brother. We will not dare to say such things nor believe them to be true unless God Himself teaches us so in His very own Word (the Bible). We'll look at two passages below:



For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

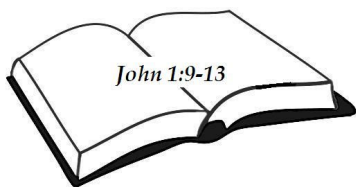
You are *all sons of God*, says the apostle Paul. And he is speaking to the Christians at Galatia, to ordinary people, to ordinary believers like you and I!



But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Here, the apostle Paul tells us that we are sons because we have *received the adoption as sons*. He further tells us that because we are sons, we have the Holy Spirit sent into our hearts, causing us to cry out to God and address Him as our Father. The next thing which Paul tells us here is that fact that from now on, we need not relate to God as a slave relates to his master. No, rather we relate to God as a son relate to his father. We are sons of God, we are heirs. And it is all through Christ, it is all because of what Christ has done.

How then does one become (gets adopted to be) the children of God? This is a very important question to ask. It is so important that we should never attempt to answer it by ourselves, but we must go back to the Bible and see what the Bible has to say:



That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

According to **John 1:12**, those who received Christ, that is, those who believe in His Name, they and only they are the children of God! No one knows God as Father, no one can rightly call God as his Father, unless he or she has come to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said: *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.* If you do not come to Christ, you will not come to the Father. But if you do come through Christ, then you can call God as your Heavenly Father. In other words, before a person has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, he is not a child of God. It is only *after* a person has been *converted*, after he has *repented* of his sins and turned to *believe* in Jesus Christ, then that person is *justified* and that person is being *adopted* into God's family. Before that, he like the others, are children of wrath. Now, having believed in Jesus Christ, he has been adopted into God's family and has become a child of God. Friends, is this true of you today – child of God?