


# Ordo Salutis: Adoption

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Harvesters

# Ordo Salutis, “The Order of Salvation”

1. **Election** (God’s choice of who will be saved.)
2. **General Call** (The preaching of the Gospel.)
3. **Effectual Calling** (Regeneration)
4. **Conversion** (Coming to Christ by exercising faith and repentance.)
5. **Justification** (To be put in right standing with God)
6. **Adoption** (Becoming a member of God’s family)
7. **Sanctification** (Cooperate with the Spirit’s leading to godly living.)
8. **Glorification** (Being with the Lord and being like Him.)



If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes at the thought of being God's child, and having God as his father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship in prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well... Our understanding of Christianity cannot be better than our grasp of adoption.

- J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, 201-202



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Chapter 19: Sons of God

# Justification and Adoption: An Unfortunate History

- **Reformation**

- The loss of salvation by grace and the true meaning of Justification
- Luther and Calvin speak much of adoption
- Westminster and Heidelberg include adoption
- A whole lot of nothing until J.I. Packer in 1973

- **Fundamentalism to Evangelicalism**

# Justification and Adoption: An Unfortunate History

- **Reformation**

- **Fundamentalism to Evangelicalism**

- “Fundamentalism became focused on agreement with essential doctrines: ‘What do you believe?’ If you agree with the right things, then you're a good Christian; no further growth needed. This led to a reductionist gospel: The good news of Jesus gets reduced to a gospel of forgiveness of sins. You don't have to trust Jesus; you just have to trust that he died on the cross for your sins.” –Dr. Stephen Porter

## Justification and Adoption: How Are They Different?

"Justification is a *forensic* idea, conceived in terms of *law*, and viewing God as judge. In justification, God declares of penitent believers that they are not, and never will be, liable to the death that their sins deserve, because Jesus Christ, the substitute and sacrifice, tasted death in their place on the cross.

This free gift of acquittal and peace, won for us at the cost of Calvary, is wonderful enough, in all conscience - but justification does not of itself imply any intimate or deep relationship with God the judge. In idea, at any rate, you could have the reality of justification without any close fellowship with God resulting.

# Justification and Adoption: How Are They Different?

But contrast this, now, with adoption. Adoption is a *family* idea, conceived in terms of love, and viewing God as Father. In adoption, God takes us into his family and fellowship - he establishes us as his children and heirs. Closeness, affection and generosity are at the heart of their relationship. To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater."  
- Packer, 207



# A Multifaceted Gospel



## **John 1:12-13**

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

## **Galatians 4:4-7**

4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,  
5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

### **Romans 8:13-17**

13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 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!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

**Matthew 7:7-11** “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. 9 Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? 10 Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? 11 If you then, who are 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!

### **1 John 2:28-3-3**

28 And now, little children, abide in him, so that when he appears we may have confidence and not shrink from him in shame at his coming. 29 If you know that he is righteous, you may be sure that everyone who practices righteousness has been born of him.

3:1 See what kind of love the Father has given [lavished on] to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 3 And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure.

# What Do Children of God Do?

- Bear the family name
  - Adoption as the basis for their conduct
  - Imitate their Father
  - Love their siblings
- Abide in their Father's love

# What Do Children of God Do?

- Adoption as the basis for their conduct
  - “Law keeping is the family likeness of God’s children; Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, and God calls us to do likewise. Adoption puts law keeping on a new footing: as children of God, we acknowledge the law’s authority as a rule for our lives, because we know that this is what our Father wants. If we sin, we confess our fault and ask our Father's forgiveness on the basis of the family relationship, as Jesus taught us to do - Father... forgive us our sins. The sins of God’s children do not destroy their justification or nullify their adoption, but they mar the children's fellowship with their Father.” –Packer, p. 222



# What Do Children of God Do?

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- Abide in their Father's love
  - Adoption as the basis for Christian prayer
  - Live in Assurance

# Reflection

Practically, what does it mean for you to abide in God's love this week?

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“God receives us as sons, and loves us with the same steadfast affection with which he eternally loves his only begotten. There are no distinctions of affections in the divine family. We are all loved just as fully as Jesus is loved.” -Packer, p. 216