



The Word at Work

Adopted and Accepted: From Slavery to Sonship

Reading the Word

Key Scriptures: Ephesians 1:5-6; Galatians 4:1-7

Key Points:

Paul was a Jew and a Roman citizen and this background determined his concept of adoption.

- God teaches us, through Paul, that spiritual adoption is about a change *from slavery to sonship* – receiving a new status and all the full rights of a son.

Regeneration (new birth) is about new life (at work within us) whereas *adoption* is about our new status (true about us).

We were slaves to:

- Satan – Eph.2:1-2; Heb.2:14-15
- Sin – John 8:31-36; Rom.6:6; 2 Pet.2:19
- Religion (basic principles and/or the Law) – Gal.4:1-5

Rom. 6 teaches us about slavery to sin; Rom.7 teaches us about slavery to Law and Rom.8 teaches us about the freedom of sonship.

Many Christians are still like the elder brother in the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32), bound up with religion. His father was his master rather than his dad.

Such a life of ‘creeping religion’ is characterised by:

- Trying to earn God’s approval
- Either self-righteous or self-condemning
- Judgemental and critical – of self and/or others

- Uptight and driven
- Insecure and restless
- Cold and distant

Freedom from religion begins with realising that we are accepted in Christ by our adopting Father.

- He sings songs of joy over you (Zeph.3:17)
- He loves you as much as he loves Jesus (John 17:23; Luke 3:21-23)
- *There is nothing you can do to make God love you more and there is nothing you can do to make God love you less* (Yancey).

How do we receive this realisation of our adoption and acceptance?:

- **By the Holy Spirit!** – Rom.8:15-16; Gal.4:6

Learn to let your heart and spirit be set free by ‘crying’ out in praise to God – Abba, Father!

The more you live by the Spirit, the more you will walk like a son; and the more you realise that you are a son, the more that you will release the Spirit from within you.

Doing the Word

To Discuss:

1. Why is it so important that we grasp this truth of adoption?

To Do:

1. Check to see whether you are being ‘mastered by anything’ and determine to walk in the freedom that Jesus has for you.
2. Check yourself to see if there are any areas of the religious attitude creeping into your life and determine to resist it.

Trevor Lloyd 18th November 2007