

17.a. COMMUNION WITH CHRIST IN PRIVILEGES

ACCEPTANCE - HOLINESS - PRIVILEGES (THE 3 GREAT PURCHASED BLESSINGS)

The third thing in which we have communion with Christ is in the grace of our privileges before God. These Spiritual privileges arise from one source, and that is our adoption as children of God. 1 JN 3:2 "Beloved, now we are Sons of God". The source of all love is God the Father, and we have been brought into His family. We received this honour through Jesus Christ. He takes us to be His brethren. God is our Father, because He is the Father of Jesus Christ, our brother.

"Adoption is the authoritative transfer of a believer, by Jesus Christ, from the family of the world and Satan into the family of God, with his being admitted into all the privileges and advantages of that family"

To be adopted, we must leave the one family, and transfer to the other family. The person to be adopted must have no right whatever of his own, to be taken into his new family. Adoption must be done by the authority of a sovereign power.

The person being adopted must be freed from all his obligations to his first family, as he cannot serve two masters. He therefore has full rights and privileges to the whole inheritance of his new family, as though he had been born into his adopted family.

As they were born into the family of wrath, they have now been adopted into the family of peace and love. The family that we were originally born into, gave us no rights or privileges. It was a family headed by Satan, who tried to usurp God's authority. By deceiving man, Satan alienated man from God, to inherit a family of destruction.

The legal adoption that we enjoy on being transferred from the family of Satan to the family of God, is not done in secret, but by an open confession ROM 1:9-10. This confession is confirmed at our open baptism. And therefore, as we read in JN 1:12 "Yet to all that received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God". It is the judicial exalting of us into membership in that family where God is the Father, Christ the elder brother (the first born), the angels and fellow children inherit the crown which is immortal and does not fade away.

This declaration of ours is made freely and publicly as a witness to our acceptance of Jesus Christ as the Lord of our lives. This declaration is made to angels to Satan and to the conscience of believers. This is to advise (angels and believers) that we are now part of the greater family of God.

This declaration can be found in the gospel (EPH 30:10), that now the gentiles are to become fellow heirs with Gods chosen people to the privileges of the offspring of Abraham. Although angels do not know if a person has truly been born again, they are enlightened by Christ Himself in the appointing of them to take care of us. Christ declares to them that these repentant sinners are now sons, so that now the angels can carry out their duty to them HEB 1:14 "Are not all angels ministering Spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?"

Satan is informed, and bound by Christ, that he has no more claim on the souls of the redeemed. This does not mean that he will not hound them. Did he not arrogantly tempt the Master in the descent?

Christ declares our adoption to our conscience, that we may now know where our loyalties lay. We are now free from our obligations to the deceiver for we now serve the living God. Do we now not cry "Abba, Father"? GAL 4:6

There is an authoritative ingrafting of the believer actually into the family of God and admitting of him into the whole right and title of sonship.

John Owen, in his book dealing with the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints, brings to our attention two of the fundamental pillars of our faith in discussing God's covenantal promises.

- a. God will never forsake us, and
- b. He will never allow us to forsake Him. We are intrinsically the weaker partner of this covenant, but God in His gracious loving mercy will not permit the breaking of His covenant of salvation by us. This is the unfathomable love and compassion of God for us.

The believer is given a new name in a white stone. We now have a new name in the family of God. Only he who receives that name knows what it is. The white stone is the admission certificate into the house of God. The new name gives us the right and title to the new family. This new name is written in the Lamb's Book of life. This is the catalogue of names that will form the basis on judgement day. We are freed from the obligations of our old family as we are admitted to the rights and privileges of our new family.

We need to know what we receive when we are adopted into our new family. Firstly, we receive liberty from the bonds of sin. 2 COR 3:17 "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is (in the hearts of the regenerate), there is freedom". The "freedom" of the world is nothing more than a licentiousness to sin. We are set free from the obligations to the family of Satan. We are also set free from the ordinances of the law which none were able to keep. Paul encourages us to GAL 5:1 "Stand fast in the liberty by which Christ has made us free".

The moral law (ten commandments) were given in such a way as to make us tremble. They were frightened into obedience. We are freed from these terrors through the righteous obedience of Christ. We now enjoy free obedience of Christ. We now enjoy free obedience to the moral laws of God. The Spirit of adoption is opposed to the Spirit of bondage in the unregenerate. The Saints, therefore, being adopted into God's family, freely and willingly obey out of the fulness and gratitude of their hearts.

Son - like obedience lies in a life of love. Life gives power to obey. The Spirit of Christ enables us to freely and willingly obey. The life that Paul lived in the flesh was a life of obedience to God, which he was enabled to live by Christ living in Him. We have the same privileges and opportunities to obedience as Paul had. This we do by the Lord Jesus Christ, living in us by the power of the Holy Spirit.