

The Doctrine of Adoption

A Biblical-Theological Overview of Adoption in Scripture

Our sonship to God is the apex of creation and the goal of redemption.

-- Sinclair Ferguson

Sonship is the guiding principle and character of our relationship with God through all of Scripture, and adoption is the means by which our sonship is revealed and sealed, in the gospel, through Jesus Christ.

1. Created to be sons

a. Luke 3:38 Adam, the son of God

b. Image and likeness

- Pay attention – this is big! (1:26)
- Dominion (1:26,28)
- “Gender-neutral” – Sonship covers both male and female (1:27)
- Stewardship (1:29-30)
- Procreation (1:28)
- A living being (soul 2:7)
- Vocation (2:15)
- Moral (2:16)
- Relational (2:18)

c. The offices of sonship

- Prophet – Speaking the Father’s words
- Priest – Fellowship with the Father through worship
- King – Governing and stewarding the Father’s kingdom

2. Fallen from sonship

a. In Adam

b. In Moses

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3. Re-created as sons – sonship in the Second Adam
 - a. Jesus the true son – the redeemer and the prototype of our salvation
 - Heb 2:10
 - b. 2Cor 3:18 and Col 3:10
 - c. Predestined unto adoption: unto conformity to the likeness of Christ (Eph 1:4-5 and Rom 8:28)
 - d. Moral conformity the goal - The already and not yet
 - Col 3:10 the new self is “being renewed”
 - 2Co 3:18 we are “being transformed”
 - Rom 8:23 creation groans eagerly awaiting their adoption as sons, the redemption of their bodies
4. Key implications
 - a. Foundational for our faith
 - b. The necessity of increasing likeness to the Father
 - c. The centrality of the gospel