

Introduction:

- In Christopher Nolan's movie "Batman Begins" there is a scene where Rachel (Bruce Wayne's lifelong friend and love interest) tells Bruce "It's not who you are underneath, but what you do that defines you." Later in the film when Batman is about to jump from a rooftop, Rachel asks him "Who are you?" Batman's response to her is "It's not who I am underneath, but what I do that defines me." **Application:** The Christian would answer, "It's not who I am underneath, or what I do, but who I am in Christ that defines me."
- I have been preaching into the topic of what Resurrection Sunday means to us. Many people think of Resurrection Sunday as Jesus is alive and He conquered sin, but fail to understand what it is that we get because He did rise again.
 - Jesus said, "You must be born again." Regeneration. We get that when we believe.
 - When we put our faith in Jesus, at the same moment we are born again we are also declared, "Not guilty" by God, and charged with righteousness! How can God do that? He carried our sin to Calvary...past present and future!
- This morning I want us to look at something else we get when we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. We get adopted by God. We become sons of God.
- *"We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world. But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir."* (Galatians 4:3b-7, NLT)

I. Born a Slave

- A. Have you noticed in this series that the starting point for us as individuals without Christ is death and slavery? Spiritually dead and a slave to sin, slaves to the law and that meant certain death for no one could keep it.
- B. All men died when Adam died. 1 Cor 15:22; Romans 5:14. What does that mean? *"Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life."* (1 Corinthians 15:22, NLT)
 1. Ie. If a man is a slave and he has a wife who is a slave, and they have a child; that child is born into slavery. It has sadly, happened all through history...and not just American history but in many nations that took others as slaves. Those slaves had children and those children were born into slavery. They had no choice in the matter.
 2. Adams sin made him a slave to sin and every child born after him a slave to sin.
- C. Those born into slavery were born into a state of hopelessness.
 1. Man's condition when he is born is that he is born a slave to sin. That slavery has no means of escape. Man cannot be good enough to get out. He cannot work himself out of slavery. It is the state and condition of his life forever.
 2. We can say of that man, his birth is his death sentence. He is born, bound by the power of sin, and unable to break those chains.
- D. But, God had mercy and took pity on us and He himself took the initiative and sent His own Son born of a woman to make a way for us to be Free!

II. Purchased Through Christ

- A. God wanted children. He was willing to adopt the whole lot of us!

- B. God sent His Son to purchase our freedom so that He could adopt us. Jesus life and obedience was the price of our freedom. It was His sinless/guiltless blood, that paid the price of our Freedom.
1. *“God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.”*
 2. (1 Cor 6:20) *for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.*
NLT
 3. *“God paid a high price for you, so don’t be enslaved by the world.”* (1 Corinthians 7:23, NLT)
 4. *For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.* Rev 5:9
- C. God did not buy us from Satan. The devil is not the one who is being paid off so that we can be freed.
1. God by His very nature judges sin. Therefore, sin is separated from Him, and all sinners are separated from Him. And, God by His very nature must punish our guilt/sin.
 2. Jesus carried my sin and punishment upon himself to the cross. His death on the cross as the sinless Lamb of God satisfied God’s justice...it paid man’s debt to God.
 3. God in His love, purchase our Freedom from sin, death and the grave through the blood of His Son.
- D. God saw us as slaves to sin. He saw us under a heavy-handed taskmaster the devil. God saw us there, as slaves to sin/we born into this slavery, and in His great mercy sent His son to satisfy His justice that all who received Him in faith might be born again! Justified! Adopted into His family!

III. Adopted as Sons

- A. What does it mean to be adopted by God?
1. Gk. huiothesia - a legal act that is done in public where a child is brought into ones home and made son of that house. huios - Gk for son.
 - a) It was determined by the Father accepting a child into his home as a son of the house.
 - b) Adoption is the legal action by which a person takes into his family a child not his own with the purpose of treating him as and giving him all the privileges of his own natural child. An adopted child is legally entitled to all rights and privileges of a natural-born child.
 - c) IE. *A little girl in the class said “I know all about adoptions,” “because I was adopted.” Another little boy asked her, “What does it mean that you’re adopted?” “It means,” said the little girl, “that you grew in your mommy’s heart instead of her tummy.” Spiritually speaking our adoption began in the heart of God. It is the result of Grace! We do not deserve a thing and it’s not a bad thing to be reminded of that fact! Adopted by the Grace of God!*
 2. It means God wants us! The whole process rests in the hands of God who has set our to adopt us. His mercy and compassion, His loving kindness moves Him to take us as His children. I belong! I have a place!
 - a) And I am under the loving care of a very loving Father. I have the right to enter into this loving relationship.
 - b) This relationship with Father is diametrically opposed to the spirit of bondage. Ro 8:15
 - c) Adoption emphasizes more exactly the Father - son relationship against the judge-prisoner relationship. It is not so much the judge setting the prisoner free as it is the Father restoring the (wayward son Lk 15:22ff).
 3. It means we have a new family. The family of God. In all my travels around the world, when I meet other believers we instantly have one thing in common: we are part of the same family!
 - a) God is now our Father

- b) We are brought into a new family and relationship where we now have privileges and responsibilities as a member of that family.
 - c) We are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We all share in God's Kingdom.
 - 4. It means I have a new position! I am no longer a slave but a son! I am no longer rejected but accepted!
 - 5. It means we now have a new name.
 - 6. In regeneration we are born again/ or born anew. That means we are literally children of God. Welcome to the Family! In adoption, we are legally made a child of God.
- B. Scriptural evidence
1. *"But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God."* (John 1:12, NLT)
 2. *"Dear friends, we are already God's children..."* (1 John 3:2, NLT)
 3. *"...for he who touches you touches the apple of His eye."* (Zechariah 2:8, NKJV)
 - a) Did you know, "The pupil of the eye expands as much as 45 percent when a person looks at something pleasing." **Application:** for he that touches you touches **the apple of his eye.** The original Hebrew for this idiom was 'iyshown 'ayin, and can be literally translated as "Little Man of the Eye." This is a reference to the tiny reflection of yourself that you can see in other people's pupils. (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apple_of_my_eye) Israel is the apple of God's eye because she is the focus of His gaze. As such, her reflection is on God's pupil. Not only that, as the focus of God's longing, Israel causes the pupil of His eye to expand by 45%!
 - b) I am talking about the amazing love that God has for his children. You and I who have been adopted into His family.
- C. The Holy Spirit bears witness to us that we are now God's children and our hearts cry: Abba! Gr. Papa! Latin, Dada French! It is a very intimate term that is only used by a son or daughter.

Conclusion:

- God made a way. He sent Jesus His son.
- Jesus paid/satisfied the very justice of God.
- We receive the finished work of Christ by faith.
- Holy Spirit bears witness with our hearts and we cry Abba Father!
- Some of you have been living for a long time under the heavy hand taskmaster bound by the power of sin. God is giving you an opportunity to choose your Father today to be both born again to God literally and adopted as sons legally.

Adoption Story: (Leslie B. Flynn). On one occasion, an orphaned boy was living with his grandmother when their house caught fire. The grandmother, trying to get upstairs to rescue the boy, perished in the flames. The boy's cries for help were finally answered by a man who climbed an iron drainpipe and came back down with the boy hanging tightly to his neck.

Several weeks later, a public hearing was held to determine who would receive custody of the child. A farmer, a teacher, and the town's wealthiest citizen all gave the reasons they felt they should be chosen to give the boy a home. But as they talked, the lad's eyes remained focused on the floor. Then a stranger walked to the front and slowly took his hand from his pockets, revealing severe scars on them.

As the crowd gasped, the boy cried out in recognition. This was the man who had saved his life. His hands had been burned when he climbed the hot pipe. With a leap the boy threw his arms around the man's neck and held on for dear life. The other men silently walked away, leaving the boy and his rescuer alone. Those marred hands had settled the issue. And so it is with Jesus. His nail-pierced hands remind us that he has rescued us from sin and its deadly consequences.

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.” Christian, we've been saved, we've been freed, we've been adopted into the Family of God. Let's appreciate Him now!