

Reconciliation & Adoption | Doctrine of Salvation | Theological Equipping Class

April 14, 2024

The Effects of Union with Christ

- Justification
- Reconciliation
- Adoption
- Sanctification
- Preservation
- Glorification

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1)

“To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is greater.” (JI Packer)

The Relational Realities of the Gospel

Reconciliation: at peace with God

Adoption: sons and daughters of God

Rec-on-cile: “re” = back
“conciliare” = bring together

A-dop-tion: “ad” = to, toward
“optio” = to choose

The Destruction of Our Relationships

I. Our Relationship with God: union → estrangement → war

A. Union: the Crown Jewel of Creation

*God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them. And God blessed them. (Genesis 1:27-28a)*

B. Estrangement: Fear & Flight

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

C. War: Constant Combat

⁵ *The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually ... ⁷ So the LORD said, “I will blot out man whom I have created.” (Genesis 6:5, 7)*

II. Our Relationships with Each Other: adoration → alienation → adversaries

A. Adoration: Poetic Praise

Then the man said,

*“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”* (Genesis 2:23)

B. Alienation: the Blame Game

The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate. (Genesis 3:12)

C. Adversaries: Poetic Brutality

When they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel and killed him. (Genesis 4:8)

²³ *Lamech said...*

*“I have killed a man for wounding me,
a young man for striking me.*

²⁴ *If Cain’s revenge is sevenfold,
then Lamech’s is seventy-sevenfold.”* (Genesis 4:23b-24)

III. Our Relationship with Creation: caretakers → cosmic chaos

A. Caretakers

And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food.” (Genesis 1:29)

The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. (Genesis 2:15)

B. Cosmic Chaos

¹⁷ *To Adam he said, “Because you listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;*

¹⁸ *thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.”* (Gen. 3:17-18)

The Redemption of Our Relationships: condemnation → reconciliation → adoption

I. Reconciliation & the Gospel

A. God saves his enemies by going to war with himself

^{8:21} The LORD said in his heart, "I will never again curse the ground because of man, for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth..."^{9:13} I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh." (Genesis 8:21, 9:13-15)

⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. (Romans 5:9-10)

Reconciliation is: An event, not a process
God's work, not ours
Given through faith in Christ alone (sola fide, solus Christus)

B. We are at peace with one another through the gospel

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace. (Ephesians 2:13-15)

²¹ Peter came up and said to Jesus, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?"²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times." (Matthew 18:21-22)

C. We bring the gospel of peace to our enemies

¹⁸ All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹ that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20)

D. All creation waits for the worldwide peace of the gospel

¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:19-20)

¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (Romans 8:19-21)

II. Adoption & the Gospel

“Adoption is the highest privilege that the gospel offers.” (JI Packer)

A. The Reality of Adoption: intimacy and access

¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:12-13)

Jesus said to her, “...Go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” (John 20:17)

⁴ 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. (Gal. 4:4-7)

B. The Implications of Adoption

1. Trust your Father in your trials

“God’s providence is his almighty and ever present power, whereby, as with his hand, he still upholds heaven and earth and all creatures, and so governs them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, food and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, indeed, all things, come to us not by chance but by his Fatherly hand.” (Heidelberg Catechism, Q27)

²⁵ Do not be anxious about your life... ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? (Matthew 6:25-26)

⁶ The Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives. ⁷ It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons. (Hebrews 12:6b-7a)

2. Ask your Father for good gifts

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. (James 1:17)

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! (Matthew 7:11)

3. Be like your adopting Father

Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. (James 1:27)

4. Make peace with your brothers and sisters

²⁶ In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. ²⁷ For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise. (Galatians 3:26-29)

5. Wait for your inheritance

Give thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. (Colossians 1:12)