

FAMILY WORSHIP HELPS

WEEK 34

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

QUESTION 34: *What is adoption?*

ANSWER: Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God.



MONDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 89E

Scripture: Read John 1:1-13

Key Thought: *Adoption is an act of God's free grace.*

Questions:

- ☞ With whom does the act of adoption originate?
- ☞ Who is it, according to John, that gives us the right to become children of God?
- ☞ Is there anything in us that makes God want to adopt us?
- ☞ What was the price of our adoption?
- ☞ Why would God send His dearly beloved Son to suffer in order to purchase such unlovely, rebellious sinners as us?

Prayer

Notes: This week's lessons will fix our attention upon the wondrous doctrine of adoption. Notice first that the authors of the *Catechism* describe adoption as an "act" of God's free grace. Ask your children if they remember the distinction between an act and a work. Show them that, just as in human adoptions, the act originates with the father rather than with the child. Orphaned children do not choose their adoptive parents, but rather are chosen by them. Likewise John says that the children of God are born "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Help your children to identify the object of verse 12, which is Jesus Christ. "But as many as received Him [Jesus Christ], to them He [Jesus Christ] gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His [Jesus Christ's] name." It is in and through the work of Christ for us that we receive the right to become the children of God. We do not have this right or power apart from Him. Show your children that Jesus became the Son of Man in order that we might become the sons of God. Help them to see what an incredible act of grace this was, since we are completely unworthy of such love as this.



TUESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 89E

Scripture: Read 1 John 3:1-10

Key Thought: *Through adoption we receive a new Father.*

Questions:

- ☪ Is there a sense in which God is the Father of all men? (Acts 17:28)
- ☪ How did sin change that relationship? (John 8:44)
- ☪ How do Satan's children become God's children? (John 1:12-13)
- ☪ According to 1 John 3:1-10, how can we tell the difference between the children of the devil and the children of God?

Prayer

Notes: Today's lesson focuses on the fact that adopted children receive a new father. It is common for men to talk of something called "the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man." While it sounds like a noble concept, this phrase exhibits a fundamentally flawed view of the world. It is accurate in that it correctly represents God as the Creator of the whole human race, but those who use this phrase mean more than this. They intend to portray the notion that God is in all men and binds them together by some mystical union. This is not so. Show your children that while Paul clearly affirms that all men come from a common Creator and are therefore "His offspring" (Acts 17:28), sin has so corrupted them that they are rightly viewed as children of the devil rather than children of God (John 8:44). Remind them of yesterday's lesson, which showed that we become true children of God only through His will and by His power (John 1:12-13). Next, walk them through the passage from 1 John 3 and discuss the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil. Be sure to explain that John is not teaching that children of God must be absolutely sinless (1 John 1:8) but that there will be a principle of obedience at work in them. Thomas Watson describes: "Though an adopted heir of salvation cannot obey every precept perfectly, yet he does evangelically. He approves of every command 'I consent to the law, that it is good.' Rom. 7:16. He delights in every command. 'O how I love Thy law!' Psalm 119:97. His desire is to obey every command. 'O that my ways were directed to keep Thy statutes!' Psalm 119:5. Wherein he comes short, he looks up to Christ's blood to supply his defects. This is evangelical obedience; which, though it be not to satisfaction, it is to acceptance" (commentary on the *Catechism*).



WEDNESDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 89E

Scripture: Read Romans 8:1-17

Key Thought: *Through adoption we receive a new Spirit.*

Questions:

- ☞ According to Paul, what is it that enables the children of God to do what is pleasing to their Father? (Rom. 8:14)
- ☞ What spirit did we receive if we are indeed God's children?
- ☞ How does the Spirit of adoption change our view of God?
- ☞ How does the Spirit assure us that we are God's children?

Prayer

Notes: In Romans 8, Paul discusses the difference between those who are born of the flesh and those who are born of the spirit. The power that sets these two apart is the Spirit of adoption. Show your children from the text how the Spirit of adoption changes our view of God (i.e. bondage, fear, death, and enmity are changed to freedom, love, life, and peace). Talk with them about the meaning of verse 16 which says, "the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Many mistakenly understand this verse to refer to some sort of subjective feeling that is created in the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit. In Scripture, however, the Spirit of God and the Word of God are never abstracted from one another. To be "led by the Spirit" is to be directed by the Word. The Holy Spirit inspired the authors of Scripture; the Holy Spirit opens the hearts of believers to understand the Scripture; and the Holy Spirit empowers believers to act in obedience to the Scripture. Thus, when we see our lives conforming to the Word of God, we are assured by the Holy Spirit in our hearts that we are His true sons and daughters.



THURSDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 89E

Scripture: Read Colossians 1:3-14

Key Thought: *Through adoption we receive great privileges.*

Questions:

- ☞ What privileges might a child adopted into a royal family receive?
- ☞ What is the "hope laid up in heaven" for the children of God?
- ☞ How does this hope affect our view of earthly sufferings?
- ☞ What privileges and benefits of adoption do we receive in this life?
- ☞ What is the "inheritance of the saints in light"?

Prayer

Notes: The *Catechism* affirms that those who are adopted into the family of God have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. Encourage your children to consider what privileges come to those who are adopted into a royal family. Help them to understand what the Scriptures mean when they speak of our

inheritance as “the hope laid up for us in heaven.” Talk with them about how this glorious hope affects our view of sufferings in this life (see Rom. 8:18). Explain to them that the privileges of the children of God begin in this life and help them to identify some of these blessings from the passage in Colossians. Discuss the meaning in verse 12 where Paul says that the Father has “qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” Verse 13 shows us that the power of darkness has been broken and we have been translated to the kingdom of His Son. As adopted children, then, we have the glorious privilege of shining the light of Christ into a world darkened by sin.



FRIDAY



Praise: Sing Psalm 89E

Scripture: Read Ephesians 5:1-10

Key Thought: *Through adoption we receive a new nature.*

Questions:

- ☪ How can you know if you are an adopted child of God?
- ☪ Do children seek to imitate their parents? Why?
- ☪ What does it mean for us to be “imitators of God”?
- ☪ What does it mean to “walk as children of light”?

Prayer

Notes: In the first ten verses of Ephesians 5, Paul contrasts the practices of the “sons of disobedience” with the conduct of the children of God. He begins by admonishing us to be imitators of God as dear children. Just as a human child seeks to imitate his parents out of love and admiration for them, so God’s children are known by the desire they have to conform their lives to the pattern of holiness that He has given to us in Christ and in the Scriptures. Those whose lives are marked by the sorts of wickedness named here are manifestly not the children of God, but the sons of disobedience. The apostle reminds us that the act of adoption transforms us into new creatures who were “once darkness but now are light in the LORD.” Talk with your children about what it means to walk as children of light. Urge them to examine their hearts to see if the new nature of a child of God is evident in them. Do they have a genuine inclination toward obedience? Do they have a love for the Father’s presence? Do they seek to find out what is acceptable to the Lord? Pray together for God’s grace and power to form the new nature of the children of light in each member of your household, and praise Him for the evidence of His transforming power that may be seen.



Note: Only five lessons per week are included. You are encouraged to lead your family in worship seven days a week. On weekends, you may want to review or build upon the lessons from the previous week, discuss the sermon from Sunday morning, or work on questions from the Catechism or memory verses. These lesson suggestions are intended to provide a simple framework for parents to build upon. You are not limited to this content. The habit of morning and evening family worship is the biblical ideal. We hope you can use these lessons as a starting point for the development of a blessed practice of family worship in your home.