



## A Worship Discussion Guide for Individuals, Groups & Families for the week of December 21, 2025

Read the Bible passage aloud in your group meeting. This is a worship discussion guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for your meeting, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

### Galatians 4:4-5 Adoption as Sons

*In the Christian year, Advent is a time that helps us to remember Christ's first coming and reflect on the mystery of the Incarnation. It also teaches us to look eagerly for His second coming when He will return to redeem His creation and exercise His rule with all power and authority.*

*This Advent, we prepare for celebrating the birth of our Lord by considering God's great promises in Galatians 4:4-5. Each sermon and liturgy of the four Sundays of Advent will focus on a single phase from this text.*

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<sup>4</sup>But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those who were under the law, **so that we might receive adoption as sons.**

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- In Sunday's *Preparation for Worship*, we reflected on a quote from J.I. Packer that said, "Adoption is the highest privilege the Gospel offers... That justification—by which we mean God's forgiveness of the past together with His acceptance of the future—is the primary and fundamental blessing is not in question... Adoption is higher, because of the richer relationship with God that it involves." **What is the difference between justification and adoption? What do you think of the statement that "adoption is higher"?**
- Each Sunday, we pair a complementary Scripture reading with the sermon text. This week's Gospel reading was from **John 1:9-13**, describing the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. **What does John say about who is a child of God? How does one become a child of God?**

*"The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."*
- WEPC often uses historic confessions and creeds in worship as summary statements of the teachings of Scripture. This week, we read from the *Belgic Confession*, Article 15 as our *Confession of Sin*. **What reasons does the confession give for why we need the adoption offered in the Gospel?**

*"We believe that by the disobedience of Adam original sin has been spread through the whole human race. It is a corruption of all nature—an inherited depravity which even infects small infants in their mother's womb, and the root which produces in man every sort of sin. It is therefore so vile and enormous in God's sight that it is enough to condemn the human race, and it is not abolished or wholly uprooted even by baptism, seeing that sin constantly boils forth as though from a contaminated spring. Nevertheless, it is not imputed to God's children for their condemnation but is forgiven by His grace and mercy— not to put them to sleep but so that the awareness of this corruption might often make believers groan as they long to be set free from the 'body of this death'."*
- Each Sunday, following the *Confession of Sin*, we hear words of encouragement from the Scripture. This week, sinners were blessed to hear from Romans 8:1-2, 23 "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death... And we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." **In what way are we now adopted into God's family? In what way do we "wait eagerly for adoption as sons"?**
- Pray together in light of this week's passage.