

Adopted

It's a special thing to be adopted. The Apostle Paul says that you and I, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, have been adopted by God. That is why we are heirs of every good thing God has. We are God's adopted children. We were specially chosen because God wants children with which to share His love.

But notice that there is a purpose to our adoption: Paul writes, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he provided for adoption to Sonship through Jesus Christ . . ."

That's a word we don't use much in the church anymore, "holy." Yet we are called as Christians to be holy as Christ is holy. We are called to live an excellent life excelling in faithfulness, excelling in generosity, and most importantly, excelling in love. When we seek after excellence in these things, we do not feel ourselves to be superior to anyone. Indeed when we excel as Christ excelled, we seek to be a servant to others.

St. Paul says we are to be holy and blameless. But notice how he qualifies the words, holy and blameless. He writes, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight . . ." What a beautiful statement. In God's eyes, when we confess our sins and accept Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior, committing our will to God's will, we look as if we have never done anything wrong.

A story was circulated on the Internet sometime back. The author is unknown. It is interesting because it is a true story. It's a letter written to a man on death row. The letter was written by the Father of the man who was killed by the death row prisoner. The letter reads like this:

"You are probably surprised that I, of all people, am writing a letter to you, but I ask you to read it in its entirety and consider its request seriously. As the Father of the man whom you took part in murdering, I have something very important to say to you. I forgive you. With all my heart, I forgive you. I realize it may be hard for you to believe, but I really do. "At your trial, when you confessed to your part in the events that cost my Son his life and you asked for my forgiveness, I immediately granted you that forgiving love from my heart. I can only hope you believe me and will accept my forgiveness. But this is not all I have to say to you. I want to make you an offer--I want you to become my adopted child. "You see, my Son who died was my only child, and I now want to share my life with you and leave my riches to you. This may not make sense to you or anyone else, but I believe you are worth the offer. I have arranged matters so that if you will receive my offer of forgiveness, not only will you be pardoned for your crime, but you also will be set free from your imprisonment, and your sentence of death will be dismissed. At that point, you will become my adopted child and heir to all my riches. "I realize this is a risky offer for me to make to you--you might be tempted to reject my offer completely--but I make it to you without reservation. Also, I realize it may seem foolish to make such an offer to one who cost my Son his life, but I now have a great love and an unchangeable forgiveness in my heart for you. "Finally, you may be concerned that once you accept my offer you may do something to cause you to be denied your rights as an heir to my wealth. Nothing could be further from the truth. If I can forgive you for your part in my Son's death, I can forgive you for anything. I know you never will be perfect, but you do not have to be perfect to receive my offer. Besides, I believe that once you have accepted my offer and begin to experience the riches that will come to you from me, that your primary (though not always) response will be gratitude and loyalty. Some would call me foolish for my offer to you, but I wish for you to call me your Father.

Sincerely, God the Father of Jesus."

Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus- That's what it's all about.

We have been adopted by God to become holy & blameless in God's sight. We've been called to excellence in living.

Our community ought to be a better community, our family ought to be a better family, just because we are here. Why? Because we have a Heavenly Parent who looks at us with the eyes of love.

God looks at us as if we have never in our lives done anything wrong.

And in response to that love, we, in turn, give God our best.