

ADOPTION INTO GOD'S FAMILY

August 22 & 23, 2009

WE CAN LIVE AS SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE KING

ADOPTION IS A THEME THAT RUNS THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE

- Moses was adopted by pharaoh's daughter in Exodus 2:10.
- Joseph adopted Jesus after Mary miraculously conceived as a virgin.
- Paul, an apostle and writer of several New Testament letters, explains how adoption is God's desire for all people and a reality for all of us who believe in Him.
- It has roots in the Old Testament, but was even more common in the Greek and Roman culture of Jesus' day.

MY STORY: HOW GOD GAVE US TWO WONDERFUL GIFTS AND MADE ADOPTION A NORMAL CONCEPT IN OUR LIVES

- A mentoring relationship with a 16 year old that started in a parking lot became an intimate relationship between two parents and their son Miles.
- God surprised us with an unnamed newborn this fall who would officially become Noah Christopher Hanley as the judge declared his legal adoption this June.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MILES & NOAH

- Adoption is not a natural act, but a voluntary choice that makes it uniquely special.
- The love I have for my boys is so indescribable to the point that I would give my life for them.
- My deepest desire is to cultivate an intimate relationship with each of them that develops more and more all the time.
- Above all else, I want the best for my boys, and it hurts me to think that they may make decisions in the future that will bring unnecessary pain into their lives.
- Had it not been for God's grace in giving us these two precious gifts, and using other people in the process, the relationships would have never been possible ("Thank You Father").

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY

But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

John 1:12 – 13

- God adopts us as his own children when we trust in Christ and his death for our sin.
- This adoption by God gives us a new life and new identity than the one we had before.

God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.

Ephesians 1:5

- Our adoption as God's children was his special voluntary choice for all of us who place our faith in him.
- He made this decision with our best interests at heart, and he desires the best for our lives.

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."**
Galatians 4:5-6

- Adoption comes with a cost and requires sacrifice on the part of the one doing the adopting.
- God's sacrifice on our behalf results in freedom from former relationships and full privileges as sons and daughters of the king.

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children.* Now we call him, "Abba, Father."**
Romans 8:15

- Our relationship with God is based upon unconditional love and freedom in Christ, not the heavy burden to be perfect children.
- The Holy Spirit is instrumental in this process of adoption as he unites us with Christ by entering our hearts and minds.
- Our relationship with God is uniquely intimate ("Abba": Dad) and the continued development of that relationship is God's highest desire for us.
- The result of this intimate relationship with God is a desire within us as children to obey our dad.

And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.*
Romans 8:23

- Our intimate relationship with Christ as sons and daughters has ongoing benefits that will not be fully experienced until the future when we will experience the full rights and privileges that he offers to his family.

LIVING OUT OUR IDENTITY AS CHILDREN OF GOD & MODELING THE CONCEPT OF ADOPTION

- ✓ Are you making time for a growing relationship with God (bible study, prayer, fasting, etc.)?
- ✓ Are you living as sons and daughters of God, taking his advice for your life because you know that he has your best interests at heart (relationships, marriage, finances, desires)?
- ✓ Are you living in the freedom that God offers as his children or are you still trying to earn good standing with him?
- ✓ Are you striving to model the concept of spiritual adoption in your life (By: intentionally praying for young people, mentoring someone, serving kids or teens at Bethel, or possibly even considering foster care or adoption)?

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MENTORING, FOSTERING AND ADOPTION:

Bucks County Children & Youth
(215) 348-6900

Pennsylvania Mentor
(800) 788-0380
www.pa-mentor.com

Philadelphia DHS
(215) 683-4DHS
www.dhs.phila.gov