

# Predestined for Adoption

## The Verse Behind Ephesians 1:5

Ephesians 1:5 says: *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."*

When we hear the word "**predestinated**," we can become so occupied with theological arguments that we barely notice what God predestined us for.

Paul tells us plainly. God predestined us: "**Unto the adoption of children.**" The destination in this verse is **adoption**.

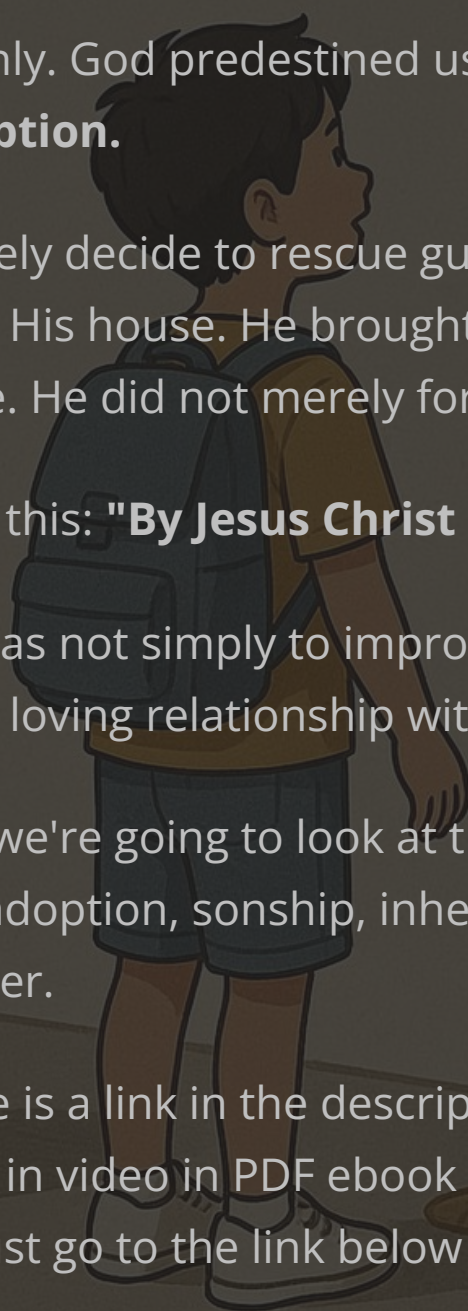
God did not merely decide to rescue guilty people from punishment and then leave them standing outside His house. He brought us inside. He did not only cancel our debt. He gave us a place at His table. He did not merely forgive criminals. He adopted sons and daughters.

And He did all of this: "**By Jesus Christ to himself.**"

God's purpose was not simply to improve our circumstances. His purpose was to bring us into His family and into a loving relationship with Himself.

So in this study, we're going to look at the verse behind Ephesians 1:5 and see why predestination, adoption, sonship, inheritance, the work of Christ, and the Father's good pleasure all belong together.

By the way, there is a link in the description box below where you can download the entire transcript of this in video in PDF ebook format absolutely free and no I don't even ask for your email address, just go to the link below and download it with no hoops to jump through.



# The Verse Continues Paul's Opening Sentence

Ephesians 1:5 does not begin a separate thought. It continues what Paul has already said.

Ephesians 1:3 says: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ."*

Verse 4 says: *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."*

Then verse 5 continues: *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."*

These truths flow together. We are **blessed** in Christ. **Chosen** in Christ. **Predestined for adoption** through Christ.

Paul is praising God for His eternal purpose to create a holy family in His Son. The subject is not cold fate. The subject is a **Father forming a family**.

# "In Love" and Predestination

There is a question concerning where the final words of verse 4 belong.

The King James Version reads: *"That we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."*

The words "**in love**" can describe the holy life God desires in His people. But because the earliest Greek manuscripts did not contain the same punctuation and verse divisions we use today, the phrase can also be connected with verse 5: *"In love having predestinated us unto adoption."*

Both truths agree with the rest of Scripture. God intends His people to walk in love. And God predestined our adoption **in love**.

Predestination in Ephesians 1 is not presented as God acting without feeling, compassion, or personal concern. His purpose flows from **love**.

We are not unwanted children reluctantly allowed into the house. God planned our adoption because He loved us and wanted us for Himself.

# What Does "Predestinated" Mean?

The Greek word translated "predestinated" is ***proorizō***. It means to determine beforehand, mark out beforehand, or appoint a destination in advance. The word combines the idea of "before" with the idea of setting a boundary or determining an outcome.

Paul is telling us that God's purpose for those who are in Christ was not invented halfway through history.

## Before we knew God

He knew what He intended to do in Christ.

## Before we understood salvation

God had already established its purpose.

## Before the church existed

God had determined that those in His Son would be brought into His family.

Predestination tells us that **adoption was not an unexpected bonus** added to forgiveness. It was part of God's plan. God did not say, "I suppose I have forgiven them, so I may as well let them call Me Father." No. He planned to bring a people to Himself as children through Jesus Christ.

# Predestined to What?

The verse does not merely say: *"Having predestinated us."* It says: *"Having predestinated us **unto the adoption of children.**"*

The word "**unto**" points toward the intended result. God's plan has a destination. **Adoption.**

This is important because people sometimes discuss predestination as though the word stands by itself. But in Ephesians 1:5, Paul immediately tells us what God determined beforehand. He determined that those in Christ would receive the **standing of sons.**

Romans 8:29 uses predestination in a similar way: *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."*

Again, the destination is stated. **Conformity to Christ.** Ephesians says adoption as sons. Romans says conformity to the Son. These belong together. God brings us into His family, and then He forms the character of His Son in us.

# What Does Adoption Mean?

The Greek word translated "adoption of children" is ***huiothesia***. It literally carries the idea of **placement as a son**. The word is formed from *huios*, meaning son, and *thesis*, referring to placement or appointment.

This does not mean daughters are excluded. In the ancient world, the legal position of a son carried inheritance rights and family standing. Paul uses that recognised legal language to describe the full position given to every believer, male and female, in Christ.

In Christ, women do not receive a lesser spiritual inheritance. Men do not receive a greater share of the Father. **Every believer receives the full standing of an heir.**

Galatians 3:28 says: *"There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."* Then verse 29 says: *"And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."*

Adoption means God gives us a recognised place in His family, with the **rights, relationship, identity, and inheritance** belonging to His children.

# Adoption Is More Than a Metaphor

Adoption is a picture, but it describes a **real spiritual relationship**.

God truly becomes our Father

We truly become His children

We truly receive the Spirit of His Son

We truly become heirs

We truly receive a family name

We truly gain access to the Father

This is not God asking us to use comforting language while remaining distant from Him.

First John 3:1 says: *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."*

John then adds: *"Beloved, **now** are we the sons of God."* Not merely one day. **Now**. Our full inheritance and bodily transformation are still future, but the relationship has already begun.

# God Did Not Merely Forgive Us

Forgiveness would have been an astonishing act of mercy by itself. We sinned against God. We rejected His rule. We broke His commands. We misused His gifts. We deserved judgment.

God could have forgiven us and still kept us at a distance. A judge may pardon a guilty person without taking that person home for dinner. A creditor may cancel a debt without writing the debtor into the family will.

But **God did more than pardon us. He adopted us.**

Colossians 1:13 says God: *"Hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son."*

We were removed from one dominion and brought into another. But Ephesians takes the truth even closer. We were not only brought into a kingdom. We were brought into a **family**. God is both **King** and **Father**.

# From Enemies to Children

Romans 5:10 says: *"When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son."*

We began as **enemies**. Reconciliation removes hostility and restores peace. But adoption brings us into an even more intimate relationship.

The former enemy becomes a child. The stranger becomes family. The one who was far off is brought near. The guilty person is not only acquitted but welcomed.

Think about that. God did not merely stop being against us. He brought us **to Himself**.

The gospel is not only the announcement that God no longer counts our sins against us. It is the announcement that through Christ we may know God as **Father**.

# "By Jesus Christ"

Our adoption comes: "**By Jesus Christ.**" There is no adoption apart from the Son.

God does not bring us into His family by ignoring Christ, bypassing the cross, or declaring that every human being automatically possesses the same relationship with Him.

God created every person. Every human being bears God's image. God loves the world. But the adoption described in Ephesians comes **through Jesus Christ.**

John 1:12 says: *"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."*

We become God's children by **receiving Christ.** Why? Because Jesus is the eternal Son. He possesses by nature what we receive by grace. He is not adopted. He is the **only begotten Son.** We are brought into sonship through union with Him.

# Jesus Is the Son by Nature

Jesus did not begin to be God's Son at Bethlehem. He is the **eternal Son** who came into the world.

John 1:1 says: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

John 1:14 says: *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."* Then John says: *"We beheld his glory, the glory as of the **only begotten** of the Father."*

Jesus possesses a unique relationship with the Father. He is the **beloved Son**. At His baptism, the Father declared: *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Jesus knows the Father perfectly. Reveals the Father perfectly. Obeys the Father perfectly. And **brings us to the Father**.

# The Son Brings Many Sons to Glory

Hebrews 2:10 says it was fitting for God: *"In bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."*

Jesus is the Son who brings many sons to glory. He does not remain alone. Through His death and resurrection, He creates a family.

Hebrews 2:11 says: *"For which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."*

That statement should stop us for a moment. **Jesus is not ashamed to call redeemed believers His brothers and sisters.** We know enough about ourselves to wonder why. We remember our failures. We know our weaknesses. We know the thoughts we would rather nobody else heard.

Yet Christ is not ashamed to identify His sanctified people as His family. That is **grace**.

# Adoption Comes Through the Cross

God's adoption does not happen by simply pretending sin does not matter. **Jesus had to redeem us.**

Ephesians 1:7 says: *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."*

The cross removes the legal and moral barrier created by sin. Christ bears our judgment. He pays the price of redemption. He reconciles us to God. Then He brings us into the family.

The Son was rejected so that we could be accepted. He cried: *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* So that we could cry: *"Abba, Father."*

He endured the darkness of judgment so that we could walk as **children of light.**

# Adoption and the Resurrection

Romans 1:4 says Jesus was: *"Declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."*

Jesus was already the Son, but His resurrection publicly declared and vindicated His identity and authority. The resurrection also begins the **new creation**. Jesus is called: *"The firstborn from the dead."* He is the beginning of a resurrected family.

Our adoption includes the promise that our bodies will be redeemed. Romans 8:23 says believers are: *"Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."*

That may sound strange because Romans 8 also says we have already received the Spirit of adoption. Both are true. Adoption is already ours in relationship and standing. But its full public manifestation awaits the **resurrection of the body**.

# Already Adopted, Still Awaiting Adoption

This is one of the Bible's "**already but not yet**" truths.

## Already

We are already God's children. First John says: "Now are we the sons of God." We have already received the Spirit of adoption. We already call God Father. We are already heirs.

## Not Yet

But we do not yet look like everything we will become. Our bodies still age. We still experience weakness. We still battle temptation. Creation still groans. We still attend funerals.

The full revelation of our sonship will come at the resurrection. Romans 8:19 says: *"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the **manifestation of the sons of God.**"*

The children will be publicly revealed when Christ returns and our bodies are transformed.

# The Spirit of Adoption

Romans 8:15 says: *"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the **Spirit of adoption.**"*

Adoption is not only a legal declaration written somewhere in heaven. God gives us His Spirit. The Holy Spirit makes the Father's relationship real within us.

Romans 8:16 says: *"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."*

The Spirit assures us that we belong to the Father.

- He produces the family likeness.
- He leads us.
- He corrects us.
- He teaches us to pray.
- He helps us in our weakness.
- He prepares us for our inheritance.

# "Abba, Father"

Romans 8:15 says that by the Spirit: *"We cry, **Abba, Father.**"*

Galatians 4:6 says: *"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."*

**"Abba"** is an Aramaic term used in a close family relationship. It expresses intimacy and trust, but it is not childish or disrespectful. Jesus Himself used it in Gethsemane.

Mark 14:36 says: *"Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee."* Jesus approached the Father with deep intimacy and complete submission.

That is the relationship into which the Spirit brings us. We do not approach God casually. But we also do not approach Him as terrified strangers. We come as **children through Christ.**

# From Slavery to Sonship

Galatians 4 contrasts **slavery** and **sonship**.

Galatians 4:4 and 5 says: *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*



Jesus entered our condition so that He could bring us into His relationship with the Father.

Verse 7 says: *"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."*

The gospel moves us from **slavery to sonship**.

# Servants and Sons

The Bible honours faithful servants of God. Paul regularly called himself a servant of Jesus Christ. Adoption does not mean we no longer serve. It changes the **relationship from which our service flows**.

## A slave or hired servant

A slave may serve because of fear. A hired servant may work for wages and leave when the arrangement ends.

## A son

A son serves because he belongs to the family. A child shares the household's identity and inheritance.

Our obedience is not an attempt to earn a place in the family. It is the response of people who have been brought into the family **by grace**.

# The Older Brother and the Father's House

The parable of the prodigal son helps us see how people can misunderstand the Father.

The younger son left home, wasted his inheritance, and fell into misery. When he returned, he planned to say: *"Make me as one of thy hired servants."* He no longer believed he deserved to be called a son.

But the father ran to meet him. He embraced him. Clothed him. Placed a ring on his hand. Put shoes on his feet. And prepared a feast.

The father restored him openly as a son. The son wanted **servant status**. The father restored **family status**.

# The Elder Brother's Spirit of Bondage

The elder brother remained physically near the father but did not understand the father's heart.

He said in Luke 15:29: *"Lo, these many years do I serve thee."* His language sounded more like a servant keeping an account than a son enjoying a relationship.

He complained: *"Thou never gavest me a kid."*

The father replied: *"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine."*

The elder brother had access but lived with a mentality of **scarcity and resentment**. We can do the same. We can be in the Father's house yet behave as though we must earn every expression of His love.

Adoption calls us out of both **rebellion** and **religious slavery**.

# Adoption Does Not Mean God Spoils Us

Being God's children does not mean the Father gives us everything we demand. A loving father does not hand a toddler the car keys because the child cried with great sincerity.

God's wisdom is greater than ours. He knows what will help us and what will harm us.

When to give

When to withhold

When to correct

When to make us wait

Hebrews 12:6 says: *"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."*

Discipline is not proof that God has rejected us. It is evidence that He treats us as **children**.

# The Father's Discipline

Hebrews 12:7 says: *"If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons."*

Earthly fathers discipline imperfectly. Sometimes they are too harsh. Sometimes too soft. Sometimes inconsistent.

But Hebrews says God disciplines: *"For our profit, that we might be partakers of **his holiness**."*

The Father is committed to forming the character of Christ in His children. He loves us too much to leave us unchanged.

Adoption provides assurance, but it does not provide permission for rebellion. The Father **welcomes us** and then **trains us**.

# Adoption and Holiness

Ephesians 1:4 says we were chosen to be **holy and without blame**. Verse 5 says we were predestined for **adoption**. These purposes are connected. God's children should resemble their Father.

First Peter 1:14 and 15 says: *"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy."*

**Holiness is family likeness.** We are not trying to become divine beings. We remain creatures. But God forms His moral character in us.

Love

Truth

Mercy

Purity

Faithfulness

Justice

Compassion

# Children of Light

Ephesians 5:8 says: *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as **children of light.**"*

Our identity leads to conduct. Paul does not say, "Walk in light so that perhaps God will eventually consider making you His children." He says we are light in the Lord, therefore we should walk accordingly.

**Grace gives identity.** Then grace calls us to live consistently with that identity.

We do not obey to achieve adoption. We obey **because** we have been adopted.

# Children of God in a Crooked World

Philippians 2:15 calls believers to be: *"Blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation."*

The children of God are meant to **shine**. Not by withdrawing from everyone who does not know Christ. Not by acting morally superior. But by displaying a different character.



Honesty in a dishonest world



Purity in an impure world



Peace in an angry world



Generosity in a selfish world



Faithfulness in an unreliable world



Love in a world that divides people into enemies

The **family resemblance** should be visible.

# Adoption and Inheritance

Romans 8:17 says: *"And if children, then heirs; **heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.**"*

Sonship brings inheritance. The inheritance belongs to Christ by right. We share in it through union with Him.

This does not mean we become equal with Christ. He remains the unique eternal Son and Lord of all. But by grace, He shares His inheritance with His people.

Ephesians 1 later speaks repeatedly about inheritance. **Adoption explains why we inherit.** Children receive the family inheritance.

# What Is Our Inheritance?

Our inheritance includes far more than material prosperity.

Eternal life

Resurrection

The kingdom

The restored creation

The presence of God

Freedom from sin  
and death

Perfect fellowship  
with Christ

A glorified body

A place among God's  
people forever

Psalm 73:25 says: *"Whom have I in heaven but thee?"* Then verse 26 says: *"God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."*

The greatest part of the inheritance is **God Himself**. Adoption brings us to the Father.

# Joint Heirs With Christ and Suffering

Romans 8:17 does not stop after saying we are joint heirs with Christ. It continues: *"If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

Sonship does not guarantee an easy earthly life. Jesus is the beloved Son, and He suffered. The apostles were God's children, and they suffered. Paul taught adoption while being persecuted and imprisoned.

Being loved by the Father does not mean avoiding every painful experience. It means **suffering cannot cancel our relationship or steal our inheritance.**

# The Father Knows What We Need

Jesus taught His disciples not to pray like people who do not know God. Matthew 6:8 says: *"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."*

Then Jesus taught them to pray: *"Our Father which art in heaven."*

Prayer begins with **relationship**. We are speaking to our Father. He is in heaven, so He possesses authority. He is our Father, so He cares.

We do not need to manipulate Him. We do not need to repeat empty phrases as though He is reluctant to listen. We come through Christ as **children**.

# The Father Gives Good Gifts

Matthew 7:11 says: *"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"*

Jesus reasons from earthly fatherhood to the **perfect goodness of God**. Human parents are imperfect, yet they know not to give a child a stone instead of bread. How much more can we trust our heavenly Father?

That does not mean He gives everything in the exact form or timing we request. It means His response is governed by **perfect wisdom and goodness**.

# What About Those With Painful Fathers?

The language of God as Father can be difficult for people whose earthly fathers were absent, abusive, cold, unpredictable, or controlling. Some people hear the word "father" and immediately think of disappointment.

But **God is not a larger version of our earthly father**. Earthly fatherhood was meant to reflect Him. He is the original. Human fathers may fail to represent Him. God does not.

Psalm 27:10 says: *"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."*

God's character corrects our broken picture of fatherhood.

Faithful where  
people were  
unreliable

Gentle where  
people were harsh

Present where  
people were absent

Truthful where  
people manipulated

Holy where people  
were corrupt

# God Is Not Reluctant to Receive Us

Sometimes we imagine Jesus as kind and the Father as angry. In that picture, Jesus has to persuade an unwilling Father to accept us. But **Ephesians 1 destroys that idea.**



The Father **predestined** us for adoption.



The Father **sent** the Son.



The Father **blessed** us in Christ.



The Father **chose** us in Christ.



The Father **desired** to bring us to Himself.

John 3:16 says: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."*

The cross does not cause a reluctant God to begin loving us. The cross reveals the love of the Father and the Son **working together** for our salvation.

# "To Himself"

Ephesians 1:5 says God predestined us for adoption: *"By Jesus Christ **to himself.**"*

Those final words reveal the heart of salvation. **God wanted us for Himself.** He did not merely want to improve our behaviour from a safe distance. He wanted relationship.

He brought us near. He placed us in His household. He gave us access to His presence. He made us His children.

We sometimes concentrate so much on what we receive from God that we forget the greatest gift is **God Himself.** The Father brings us to Himself.

# The Father's House

Jesus comforted His disciples in John 14:2: *"In my Father's house are many mansions."* Then He said: *"I go to prepare a place for you."*

The hope of eternal life is described in **family language**. The Father has a house. Christ prepares a place. The children will dwell with Him.

The goal is not floating in an unfamiliar heaven while playing a harp we never asked for. The goal is **dwelling with God**.

Revelation 21:3 says: *"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them."*

Adoption ends in **shared dwelling with the Father**.

# The Household of God

Ephesians 2:19 says believers are: *"No more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the **household of God**."*

The gospel removes outsider status. We were strangers. Now we belong to the household.

The church is not merely an organisation we attend. It is a **family** into which God has brought us. That sounds wonderful until we remember that families include difficult people.

Adoption connects us not only to the Father but to brothers and sisters. We cannot celebrate God's adoption while refusing everyone else He has welcomed.

# One Father and One Family

Ephesians 4:6 speaks of: *"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

The unity of the church is rooted in the **Fatherhood of God**. Believers from different nations, social backgrounds, ages, and histories belong to one family.

We may disagree. We may annoy one another. We may occasionally wonder why the Father adopted that particular person. They may be wondering the same thing about us.

But we share **one Father through Christ**. Family identity calls us to humility, patience, forgiveness, and love.

# Adoption Removes Spiritual Orphanhood

Many believers trust Christ for forgiveness but continue living as **spiritual orphans**.

## An orphan mentality says

- "I must look after myself because nobody else will."
- "There will never be enough."
- "I must earn my place."
- "One failure will get me thrown out."
- "I have to compete with everyone else for the Father's attention."

## But adoption says

- "I belong to the Father through Christ."
- "My place rests on grace."
- "The Father knows what I need."
- "I can ask for help."
- "I can receive correction without assuming rejection."
- "I do not need to compete with my brothers and sisters."

We can be legally adopted and still need our minds renewed to the reality of **sonship**.

# Adoption Does Not Remove Reverence

Intimacy with God should never become disrespect. Jesus taught us to pray: *"Our Father which art in heaven, **Hallowed be thy name.**"*

He is Father. And His name is holy. We come boldly, but not arrogantly. We come confidently, but not casually. We are welcomed children, but He remains the eternal God.

**Healthy sonship combines intimacy with reverence.**

# Bold Access to the Father

Ephesians 3:12 says: *"In whom we have **boldness and access with confidence** by the faith of him."*

Through Christ, we have access. The word carries the idea of being brought into someone's presence. Under earthly kings, entering the throne room without permission could cost a person their life.

Through Christ, the children of God are invited to come. Hebrews 4:16 says: *"Let us therefore come **boldly** unto the throne of grace."*

We do not come because we have had a flawless week. We come because **Jesus is our High Priest.**

# The Father Hears His Children

First John 5:14 says: *"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, **he heareth us.**"*

Adoption gives confidence in prayer. Not confidence that we can control God. Confidence that **He hears us.**

A child may not understand every decision a father makes, but healthy relationship allows the child to speak honestly. We can bring:

Fear

Confusion

Pain

Need

Failure

Questions

Thanksgiving

Worship

The Father hears.

# Adoption and Assurance

Romans 8:31 asks: *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"*

Verse 32 says: *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all."* The cross is evidence of the Father's commitment to save.

Verse 33 asks who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect. Verse 34 points to Christ who died, rose, and intercedes. Then Paul declares that **nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ.**

Adoption gives assurance because it rests on the **Father's purpose**, the **Son's finished work**, and the **Spirit's presence**.

# Does Adoption Mean We Can Live Any Way We Want?

No.

First John 3:9 and 10 distinguishes the children of God from the children of the devil by the direction of their lives. The children of God practise righteousness and love one another.

This does not mean believers never sin. First John has already said that denying our sin makes us liars. But sonship creates a new **identity, direction, and desire**.

A child may disobey the Father. But a child of God cannot treat rebellion as though it is the family likeness. The Spirit leads us toward **holiness**.

# Children Imitate Their Father

Ephesians 5:1 says: *"Be ye therefore **followers of God, as dear children.**"* The word translated "followers" carries the idea of imitators. Why should believers imitate God? Because we are beloved children.

Then verse 2 says: *"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us."*

Our conduct flows from **family identity**.

- We forgive because the Father forgave us.
- We love because Christ loved us.
- We show mercy because we received mercy.
- We tell the truth because our Father is true.
- We pursue holiness because our Father is holy.

# Adoption and Obedience

Jesus said in John 8:29: *"I do always those things that please him."* The true Son delighted to please the Father.

Our adoption brings us into that same **direction of life**. We will not obey perfectly in this age. But the Spirit begins forming the Son's desire within us.

Obedience is no longer merely fear of punishment. It becomes a **desire to please the Father who loved us**. That is a very different motivation.

# "According to the Good Pleasure of His Will"

Ephesians 1:5 says our adoption happened: *"According to the **good pleasure of his will.**"*

The Greek word translated "good pleasure" is ***eudokia***. It refers to delight, favourable purpose, or good intention.

God did not adopt us under protest. He did not sigh, reluctantly sign the paperwork, and hope we stayed quiet in the spare room. Our adoption was according to His **good pleasure**. It pleased God to bring us into His family.

Jesus used similar language in Luke 12:32: *"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's **good pleasure** to give you the kingdom."*

The Father delights to give His children the kingdom.

# According to His Will

Our adoption rests upon **God's will**, not ours. That does not mean human faith is unnecessary. Scripture calls us to believe, repent, receive Christ, and continue in faith.

But our salvation did not begin because human beings designed a way back to God.

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God **purposed** it.

02

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God **sent** the Son.

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God **gave** the promise.

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God **provided** the sacrifice.

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God **sends** the Spirit.

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God **calls** us through the gospel.

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God **receives** those who come through Christ.

The foundation is His **gracious will**.

# Grace Destroys Boasting

If our adoption rests on God's good pleasure, **we cannot boast**. No adopted child can claim: "The Father chose me because I was clearly the best candidate."

Ephesians 2:8 and 9 says salvation is: *"Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

Adoption produces **gratitude**. It also changes how we treat others. When we remember how we entered the family, we cannot look down on people who are still outside.

We did not earn the Father's name. We received it **by grace**.

# The Cost of Adoption

Our adoption was **free to us**, but it cost the Son His blood. First Peter 1:18 and 19 says we were redeemed: *"With the **precious blood of Christ.**"*

In human adoption, there may be legal costs, emotional costs, and years of patient love. In divine adoption, the Son entered our fallen world, took our nature, bore our sin, and died our death.

The Father's good pleasure should never be confused with **cheap grace**. God gladly adopted us, but He did so through the sacrifice of Christ.

# The Name of the Father

Adoption gives us the **family name**. In Revelation 14:1, the redeemed are pictured with the Father's name written in their foreheads. Revelation 22:4 says: *"They shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."*

The name speaks of **identity, ownership, character, and belonging**. The beast marks those who belong to his system. God places His name upon His people.

Adoption means we belong to the Father. His name defines us more deeply than our past, failures, social status, or human reputation.

# A New Identity

Before Christ, Paul describes us as: *"Children of disobedience."* And: *"Children of wrath."*

But through Christ, we become: *"Dear children."* And: *"Children of light."*

The gospel changes our **identity**.

|                                              |                                    |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| From children of wrath<br>to children of God | From strangers<br>to family        |
| From slaves<br>to sons                       | From outsiders<br>to heirs         |
| From fear<br>to access                       | From condemnation<br>to acceptance |

This is not positive thinking. It is a **new position created by Christ**.

# Adoption and Our Daily Struggles

There will be days when we do not feel like children of God. We may feel distant. Weak. Ashamed. Confused. We may stumble and wonder whether the Father still wants us.

That is when we return to what God has said. Our adoption rests on **Jesus Christ**, not the emotional weather of the day. Feelings matter, but feelings do not rewrite the gospel.

When we sin, we confess it. We do not hide like Adam. We come to the Father through our Advocate. First John 2:1 says: *"If any man sin, we have an **advocate with the Father**, Jesus Christ the righteous."*

Notice the relationship remains: *"With the Father."*

# The Difference Between Conviction and Rejection

When the Father corrects us, we may mistake **conviction** for **rejection**.

## Condemnation says

"You have failed, so you no longer belong."

## The gospel says

"You belong through Christ, so bring your failure into the light."

God's correction does not tell us to run away. It **calls us home**.

The prodigal rehearsed his shame. The father ran toward him. That does not make the prodigal's sin harmless. It shows that the father's mercy was greater than the son's failure.

# Adoption and Prayer

Ephesians 1:5 should change how we pray. We are not trying to persuade a distant deity to notice us. We come to the Father through the Son by the Spirit. **Prayer itself reflects the Trinity.**

The Father

receives us.

The Son

gives access.

The Spirit

helps us pray.

Ephesians 2:18 says: *"For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."*

That one verse contains the whole pattern. **Through Christ. By the Spirit. Unto the Father.**

# Adoption and Fear

Many people relate to God mainly through **fear**. They imagine that one wrong move will make Him abandon them.

There is a proper fear of God, meaning reverence, awe, and recognition of His holiness. But Romans 8 says we have not received: *"The spirit of bondage again to fear."*

The Spirit of adoption does not keep us trapped in terror. **Perfect love casts out the fear of punishment.** We respect the Father. We do not flee from Him as though Christ never opened the way.

# Adoption and Loneliness

A believer may still experience human loneliness. Adoption does not mean we will never feel isolated or need close earthly relationships. But it means **loneliness is not the final truth about us.**

Jesus said in John 14:18: *"I will not leave you comfortless."* The word translated "comfortless" carries the idea of being orphaned. Jesus does not leave His people as orphans.

He sends the Holy Spirit. He gives us the Father. He joins us to His body. We may feel alone, but in Christ **we are not abandoned.**

# Adoption and the Church

The church should become a **living expression of God's family**.

- Caring for those who have no support.
- Honouring older believers as fathers and mothers.
- Treating younger believers as brothers and sisters.
- Bearing burdens.
- Sharing needs.
- Restoring those who fall.
- Refusing favouritism.
- Making room for people who do not look or sound like us.

A church can use family language while behaving like a business meeting with music. Ephesians calls us to something more real. We are the **household of God**.

# Adoption and Earthly Families

Following Christ may sometimes create conflict within earthly families. Jesus warned that loyalty to Him can divide households. Some believers are rejected by relatives because of their faith.

But Mark 10:29 and 30 promises that those who lose family relationships for Christ receive a **larger spiritual family** among God's people.

This does not erase the pain. But it shows that God's family crosses **bloodlines, cultures, and nations**. In Christ, we belong to one another.

# Adoption and Care for Orphans

If God adopted us, His family should care about people who lack family protection.

James 1:27 says pure religion includes visiting: *"The fatherless and widows in their affliction."*

Adoption should shape the church's **compassion**. We were spiritually helpless. God brought us near. Therefore, we should notice people who are vulnerable, forgotten, or without support.

The doctrine of adoption is not merely something to debate. It should produce **practical love**.

# Adoption and Our Future Glory

First John 3:2 says: *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be."*

Then: *"We know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

Adoption is moving toward **transformation**. The family likeness will one day be complete. We will not become God. But we will be free from sin and conformed to the glorified humanity of Christ.

Our bodies will be  
raised

Our character will be  
perfected

Our fellowship with  
the Father will be  
unhindered

# The Whole Creation Waits

Romans 8 connects adoption with the **restoration of creation**. Creation was subjected to corruption because of human sin. But creation waits for: *"The manifestation of the sons of God."*

When the children are glorified, creation will also be delivered from bondage. Adoption is not merely a private spiritual experience. It belongs to God's plan to **renew the whole creation under Christ**.

The Father is forming a family that will share in the renewed world.

# Predestination Gives Purpose

Ephesians 1:5 tells us our adoption was **planned**. That gives purpose to the Christian life. We are not spiritual accidents. We are not forgiven people wandering without a destination.

God intends to bring His children to **maturity**. Romans 8:29 says we are predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son. The Father is preparing a family that resembles Jesus.

Our struggles, correction, growth, service, and perseverance belong to that **purpose**.

# Predestination Should Produce Worship

Paul does not introduce predestination to begin a philosophical debate. He begins with: "***Blessed be the God and Father.***"

Predestination should produce **praise**.

01

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God **planned** salvation before we knew we needed it.

02

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He **sent** the Son.

03

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He **secured** redemption.

04

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He **called** us through the gospel.

05

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He **gave** us His Spirit.

06

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He **brought** us into His family.

07

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He **promised** an inheritance.

The proper response is **worship, humility, gratitude, and trust**.

# The Verse Behind the Verse

So what stands behind Ephesians 1:5?

## Behind "predestinated"

stands the eternal purpose of God established before we knew Him.

## Behind "adoption"

stands the movement from slavery to sonship, from outsider to family, and from fear to intimacy.

## Behind "by Jesus Christ"

stands the eternal Son who became flesh, fulfilled the law, bore our sin, rose from the dead, and brought many sons to glory.

## Behind "to himself"

stands the Father's desire not merely to rescue us, but to bring us into relationship with Him.

## Behind "the good pleasure"

stands a God who did not adopt us reluctantly, but acted according to His loving delight.

## Behind "his will"

stands the grace of God, which planned, provided, and accomplished salvation in Christ.

# Conclusion

Let's read Ephesians 1:5 again: *"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."*

|                                                                         |                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>God did not merely forgive us</b><br>He brought us into His family.  | <b>He did not only remove condemnation</b><br>He gave us the Spirit of adoption. |
| <b>He did not merely release slaves</b><br>He made them sons and heirs. | <b>He did not leave us standing at the door</b><br>He brought us to Himself.     |

Our adoption was not an afterthought. It was part of God's purpose in Christ **before the world began**. The Father planned it. The Son purchased it. The Spirit makes it real within us. And one day, at the resurrection, the whole creation will see the children of God revealed in glory.

We were enemies. Now we are children. We were strangers. Now we belong to the household. We were under bondage. Now we cry: ***"Abba, Father."***

That is the destination stated in Ephesians 1:5. **Predestined for adoption. Brought to the Father. Made heirs through Jesus Christ.** And all of it was according to the **good pleasure of His will**.