

**Group Study on Adoption**

*What you will need:*

* A print out of this document
* A Bible

*Read aloud the following excerpt and use your Bible to look up the passages cited in the text*

To some degree, all Christians understand what it is to be adopted. We are, after all, adopted sons and daughters of God. As St. Paul writes in Galatians 4: 4-5: *‘God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,**to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.’*

St. Paul continues by explaining what our adopted status means. First, it means we have the privilege of calling God ‘Father’, trusting He hears and responds to us as our loving Father. Second, our adoption means we have a rich inheritance as heirs of God’s Kingdom (Galatians 4:6).

Our adoption has got nothing to do with anything we have done, and nothing to do with any genetic or family tie, as Jesus himself teaches (Matthew 12: 48 – 50). It is a sheer gift of grace. God saw us stumbling under the weight of our own sin, destined for an unhappy future. He did not turn a blind eye. He had mercy on us, calling us into His family through baptism, and granting us a secure future.

When we understand our own adoption as sons and daughters of God, we are better equipped to reflect on the gift that adoption offers children who have been abandoned or orphaned. God has embraced us as members of His family, revealing that family is much more than mere flesh and blood (1 Corinthians 15:50). Can we, too, embrace children to whom we are not biologically related as our own?

God invites us to do this very thing (Psalm 82:3; James 1:27), remembering that we ourselves are members of His family not by nature but by grace.

*Discussion questions*

* Adoption is often seen as a last option. Why is that?
* Do you know anyone who is adopted? Do they perceive the love of their parents differently than you do yours?
* We are all adopted sons and daughters of Christ. Knowing that God has paid the price for your sin and called you His own affect the way you live?
* People are adopted by those who want to love them. They go into the relationship looking to love. Discuss.
* Would you consider adopting or fostering a child? Why or why not?

*Close with prayer*

*Reading recommendation*

* Book: ‘Forming Families Through Adoption: Not by Nature but by Grace’ by Gilbert Meilaender