Intro: 1 I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, 2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. 3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:1-7

• What is adoption?

° When we are born again, we have become a child of God – 12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, 13 who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God – Jn. 1:12, 13

° We are then legally recognizing as a child of God – 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him – (Rm. 8:14-17)

° We now live in a new status and position in the life of Christ –5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved – (Eph. 1:5)

I. We have some advantages to being adopted – 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:3-6

a. This means that we have received the Holy Spirit

• Some believe that a person will receive the Holy Spirit sometime after conversion, this is called the baptism of the Holy Ghost. I believe that you will receive the Holy Spirit at or in the very moment of Conversion. This is called adoption.

° 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:4-7

b. We have been given a new name

• What does it mean that we have a new name? We think of having a new name in relation to us having a new identity or a new start in life. And we can use this as a look at the spirit world as having a new identity and a new life in the new world. We are not the same as when we were on this earth. We carry His name, through the blood of the only Righteous Son, Jesus Christ.

° 12 The one who conquers, I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall he go out of it, and I will write on him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name. Revelation 3:12

c. We are being conformed to His image

• God had always had a plan for us to be conformed to His image. We are not just here by accident. Before the beginning of time God already had a plan that will not fail, and that plan is for His church to be conformed into His image of Righteousness and Holiness. we become sons of God, the Holy Spirit, who enters our heart, begins to conform us, or change us, into the likeness of the Lord Jesus. God’s plan is that we should be like Him, and when we see Him we shall be like Him.

° 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:29

d. As being adopted we understand the need to discipline us

• This is a blessing that is rarely seen because of the false teaching that is being taught today. There is a difference between God discipling us and God punishing the sins of the world. God’s discipline is nothing compared to the world being punished for the unrepenting sins. God disciplines those whom he loves and punishes his enemies.

° 6 For the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.” Hebrews 12:6

° 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” Romans 12:19

e. Adopted children will experience Christ’s comfort

• The word comfort (paraklēsis) has a reference to the Comforter of the Holy Spirit in Jn. 14:16. So, with the power of the Holy Spirit we can have the comfort knowing we are adopted by the blood of Jesus Christ.

° 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4

f. Adopted children can enjoy His liberty

• Paul speaks of the liberty from sin, and all that has resulted from sin, which will one day be experienced by the whole creation, and he likens this to the liberty which every son of God may enjoy.

° 13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. Galatians 5:13

g. Adopted children will share in the glory of God

• The apostle had before called us "sons of God," referring to our adoption; here the word changes to "children," referring to our new birth. The one expresses the dignity to which we are admitted; the other the new life which we receive. The latter is more suitable here; because a son by adoption might not be heir of the property, whereas a son by birth certainly is, and this is what the apostle is now coming to.

° 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. Romans 8:16, 17

II. What are our responsibilities of being adopted – 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. Ephesians 5:1

a. Being adopted we are not to grieve Him

• The word grieve (lypeō) means to make one have a heavy heart or sorrow. To cause pain and suffering. There is no greater incentive to holy living than the constant reminder that the Holy Spirit dwells within. V. 17 tells us what grieves the Holy Spirit and v. 18 tells us what does not grieve the Holy Spirit.

° 17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. Ephesians 4:17

° 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 4:32

b. We should not dishonor the name of the Lord

• There is nothing more damaging to the cause of Christ than those who dishonor the very name they claim to worship. So, how do we dishonor the name of the Lord?

° Disobedience –6 Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, 7 again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” Hebrews 4:6, 7

° Idolatry – 14 Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. 1 Corinthians 10:14

° Lack of Respect – 17 Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. 1 Peter 2:17

° Blaspheming against God –31 Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven people, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Matthew 12:31

c. We are to be submissive in the Potter’s hands

• Sometimes His dealings with us may be painful, and often they will be perplexing – but always they are for our good (Romans 8:28). Just as we are in the hands of God being molded in His image, we are clay being molded in His righteousness. This at times will bring pain, unwillingness, and sometimes disfigurement, but will always end in a new image that will be beautiful in the eyes of God.

° 8 But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Isaiah 64:8

d. We are to accept the discipline from our Father

• In every time of testing we should ask, “What new lesson is the Lord seeking to teach me? This is the reason why Peter wrote the book of 1 Peter. To get the church to accept the suffering that they were going through at the hands of Nero.

° 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1Peter 2:25

e. We will be comforted by our God

• How wonderful it is to experience the wonderful comfort by the Triune God. It is also comforting to take the comfort of the Holy Spirit and then share that comfort to others through the word of God.

° 15 “If you love me, you will keep my commandments. 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper (comforter[[1]](#footnote-1)), to be with you forever, 17 even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. John 14:15-17

° 18 Therefore encourage (comfort[[2]](#footnote-2)) one another with these words. 1 Thessalonians 4:18

f. Being an adopted child we have liberty

• Having been adopted we have freedom, we have broken the chains of sin, self, and satan. We don’t have freedom to live in sin, or freedom to sin, but freedom from sin.

° 1 What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? 3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Romans 6:1-3

° 7 For one who has died has been set free from sin. 8 Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. Romans 6:7-8

g. We are going to share in the glory of God

• The great hope and mystery is, in my humbled opinion, the transformation that believers are undergoing in this life and the life to come. Just as children that can see their own transformation as they grow older, it is much the same way the spiritual transformation that takes place in this life and the eternal lift to come.

° 1 See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:1-2

1. The word helper in the Esv is translated comforter in the Kjv. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The word encourage in the Esv is translated comforter in the Kjv. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)