

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH
Robert R. McLaughlin Bible Ministries

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.
The Tree of Life from the week ending 06/04/06
What it means to be initiated into the secret of the mystery. Part 32.

We concluded our study of the mystery of adoption by noting the benefits of adoption which free us from slavery to the bondages of life. Rom 8:14-23, *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.*

When we advance to spiritual maturity, we will receive what we have been adopted, Roman style, to receive which is the imputation of divine blessings which glorifies God in time. However, to advance to spiritual maturity one must be led by the Spirit of God, and to be led by the Spirit of God, one must know the word of God in order to execute the will of God. When we were born again, we were also adopted Roman style by God the Father, and we became sons of God! This involves the notion of similarity or likeness. A son and a father have similarities, certain things in common. This is one of the amazing aspects of our relationship to God as His adopted sons. We are to look at things from God's standpoint, with the mind of Christ. Mat 5:44-45, *"But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you in order that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven;"* This is how a son of God thinks! Mat 5:16, *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."*

This son-ship also carries other implications. In 1Pe 2:9, we are said to be *A chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession.* We are God's own possession, and God does not love the world as He loves His sons. Joh 3:16 says, *"For God so loved [agape love] the world."* But in Joh 16:27, *"for the Father Himself loves [phileo love] you."* We are told to treat those who are members of the Royal Family in a special way, Gal 6:10, *So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.* As our father, God takes a special interest in us, Mat 10:30, *"But the very hairs of your head are all numbered."* A father tries to develop a plan with the child's interest and future in mind, and that is what our Father has done! God is always ready to receive us, listen to us, and to grant us His blessing. In fact, He is more ready to give than we are to receive. Our Lord said in Mat 6:8, *"For your Father knows what you need, before you ask Him."*

Rom 8:14, *For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.* The Greek word for *sons* is *huios* which means a child of the King, or mature sons. As a child of the King we never have to be in the dark about life. We can understand what God's purpose for our life is and what the objectives are. Rom 8:15 has to do with developing confidence, *For you have*

not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" Having complete confidence in your relationship with the Lord is an important part of having happiness in life. Happiness is not a set of pleasant circumstances, but the ability to be confident and secure in every situation; this is done through Bible doctrine. If you are discouraged or encouraged, happy or sad, based upon your circumstances, then you are a slave to your circumstances and you cannot have true happiness. Doctrine provides the basis to be free from being a slave to your circumstances. We were not born again and adopted by God the Father so that we could become disturbed about life.

Another benefit of our adoption is the ability to face, understand, and recognize reality in life. Rom 8:16, *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God*, God the Holy Spirit actually teaches us by transferring doctrine from our human spirit to our human soul which orients us to time and temporal things, and orients us to eternal life related to our relationship with God.

Rom 8:17-18, *and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* We are children of God and therefore potential heirs; this is based upon doctrine and the execution of the PPOG. 2Ti 2:12 says, *If we endure [undeserved suffering], we shall also reign with Him.* The *sufferings* are not only designed for the blessing of mature believers, but also to magnify doctrine and meet those situations with the doctrines that glorify God. If you desire to glorify your Father as an adopted Son you must learn how to handle undeserved suffering. God has allotted to each one of us, a segment of time devoted to undeserved suffering, and this is part of our military training as heirs and adopted sons. It is imperative that we have the ability to meet the suffering in the same manner we meet anything else in life, through thought.

Paul is emphasizing that glorification is the ultimate end and goal of adoption. Glorification means full and entire deliverance from sin and evil in every respect, and the final result is that we shall become like TLJC, perfect and in glorified bodies. He is already glorified, and we shall be glorified because of our union with Him. Glorification therefore means that man is not only delivered from all the effects of the fall, but granted a far superior position and blessing than he would have had if he had remained without sin.

Rom 8:19, *For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.* The original function of nature was perfect order; however, nature had its fall along with man. When man fell, all that he had dominion over also fell; this is suffering because of association. So, even nature wants to return to what it was before the fall, and it is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. When TLJC returns nature is going to function properly. Nature is going to give us perfect environment during the Millennium. So, even nature itself is in bondage and in slavery to man's sinfulness. Rom 8:20-22, *For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.* Nature also suffers intensely until the Second Advent, not because of anything that creation has done, but because of what man has done. Rom 8:23, *And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.* Nature had absolutely no say in the situation in the Garden, and we have absolutely no say when we suffer for righteousness' sake. There are actually two redemptions in the scriptures: 1) The redemption of our soul, when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. 2) The redemption of the human body. The groaning therefore in this verse is not the groaning of pain, but the groaning of anticipation. So, why are we to look forward to our Lord's return and the redemption of our bodies as adopted sons? **First**, the body we live in now is the body of humility, but someday our body will be like His, 1Jo 3:1-2, *See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For*

this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. Secondly, Mat 25:34 tells us what we are going to inherit, "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" Thirdly, Rev 7:15 tells us what are we going to do, "For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them."

Believers become sanctified at the moment of salvation; this is known as **positional sanctification**. Believers become sanctified after salvation when doctrine is resident in their soul and they are filled with the Spirit; this is known as **experiential sanctification**. Believers will become sanctified when the resurrection of their bodies takes place; this is known as **ultimate sanctification** (Phil 3:21). So, when applied to the Church, sanctification means that God has created a brand new species of spiritual royalty set apart for the maximum glorification of TLJC. The doctrine of sanctification teaches that God's purpose is to make each Church-age believer like the humanity of Christ. Rom 8:29, *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren; This conforming us to the image of His Son takes place in those three stages of sanctification.* Sanctification means to be under a grace contract with God forever; we call this the **New Covenant** which sets apart every individual at the point of salvation and places them in union with Christ. So, sanctification means to be set apart as sacred, to be consecrated, to be devoted to worship, and to belong to God in a special way.

We noted the etymology of the Greek words of the N.T. concerning sanctification. Etymology refers to the history of the word and its Biblical usage. The most popular word used in the Bible concerning sanctification is the Greek word *hagios* meaning holy or saint. This word describes each member of the Royal Family as one set apart for God. Because of positional sanctification, all believers are holy and are saints! This word means that you have been set apart by God for a special purpose which can only be discovered when you have a maximum amount of Bible doctrine in your soul. The Church-age is the only dispensation where this takes place. You are set apart by God as Royal Family through the baptism of the Spirit and therefore you are called saints! A saint is someone who has been consecrated for God forever and all Church-age believers are called saints. So, *hagios* is translated holy and saint and is merely the Bible title for royalty. This word actually relates the believer to the perfect integrity and holiness of God! Sanctification says that you are in a plan and you are royalty; it gives the believer the right to advance to the greatest heights in this life. So, the adjective *hagios* is one of the titles for the Royal Family of God.

So sanctification in all its implications goes back to our Lord Jesus Christ, the supreme aristocracy in the human race. Therefore, *hagios* is also used because your aristocracy is related to Christ. Although human aristocracies eventually disappear, yours is the most secure that could ever exist, and is the only aristocracy which will last forever. Paul said in 1Co 1:2, *to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours:* The Corinthians would shock most Christians in our day and age. Yet, even though they were raising all kinds of hell, and one of the worst congregations, the Apostle Paul said they were sanctified ones. They were fighting over which one of them was better than the others (1Co 1:12). They were carnal, filled with jealousy and strife (1Co 3:3). They were very judgmental and critical of the apostle Paul as their pastor-teacher (1Co 4:5). Paul said that there were those who were filled with arrogance (1Co 4:18). Then there was the situation of the young man having sex with his step-mother (1Co 5:1). They were also taking each other to court on spiritual or church matters and suing each other in (1Co 6:1). There were some that were going to the prostitution temples and having sex with the prostitutes (1Co 6:16). Then there were the legalists in the congregation

who were married but considered sex to be a dirty thing (1Co 7:5). There were those who were born again, but their mate was not, who said that it's time to get a divorce and marry someone in the local assembly (1Co 7:11-20). There were also those who accused the apostle Paul of being in the ministry for money (1Co 9:1-9). There were those who came to the communion service intoxicated 1Co 11:21, *for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk*. Many members of their congregation were sick mentally, emotionally, physically and some had even died the sin unto death, 1Co 11:30, *For this reason many among you are weak and sick, and a number are dead*. They knew nothing about virtue love (1Co 13), but they were carried away with the gift of tongues and thought that speaking in tongues made you superior to others (1Co 14).

Notice what the apostle Paul said in talking to this wild bunch, 1Co 1:2, *to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours*: In 1Co 1:30, *it is by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption*, When you believed on Christ you were made royalty and in spite of how bad you are or how much you have failed, you are royalty forever.

A second word, *hagiotēs*, translated holiness, describes the principle by which all believers are related to the integrity of God and the aristocracy of God. It simply means the result of being royalty forever. It is used in 2Co 1:12 for the believer conducting himself as a saint in the world in which he lives. 2Co 1:12, *For our proud confidence is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you*.

The third word, *hagiosune*, is used only by the apostle Paul, who apparently coined it; it means holiness, or set apart, or sanctification. Since this concept applies to Church-age believers only, it is found only in the Greek. It has no Hebrew equivalents, since everything related to the Church, as part of the mystery doctrine, was not revealed to O. T. writers. This word denotes a manifestation of the quality of life that God has placed within us as members of the Royal Family and is used in 2Co 7:1. It is also used for the heart being filled with doctrine and promoting holiness in 1Th 3:13, *so that He may establish your hearts unblamable in holiness [hagiosune] before our God and Father*.

The fourth word which describes another aspect of sanctification is *hagiasmos* translated sanctification or sanctifying. It is also translated holiness or consecration and refers to the state of being made an aristocrat forever. It especially emphasizes our relationship to the integrity of God. It is used for the believer presenting his body unto the Lord as a member of the Royal Family in Rom 6:19-22, *I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life*.

The fifth word is the verb *hagiazō* which means to be holy, sanctified, or set apart. And that's exactly what God does with the Royal Family; He sets us apart in order to show that we are royalty. *Hagiazō* tells us that we are set apart in a special way in history. We have unique privileges and unique opportunities which start at salvation. This word is used in Joh 17:17 to describe how we are set apart for God *Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth*.

It is through the understanding of doctrine that we realize we are Royal Family and set apart for God. It is used for TLJC setting the church apart in Eph 5:25-26, *Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word*, In addition to these there is a phrase which refers to the Head of the Royal Family of God or the Prince Ruler: *Ho hagios tou Theou* meaning the Holy One from

God or the Saint from God. This is a title for TLJC in Joh 6:69. Even the demons recognized our Lord in Mar 1:24, *We know who you are, you are the holy One from God* [Ho hagios tou Theou]. Because we are aware of the fact that we have been cut off from the slavery of the sin nature and the self-life, through having died on the cross with Christ, now that we know that we are alive from the dead, we can present the members of our physical body unto God. But, what does that mean, to present the members of your physical body unto God *as instruments of righteousness*? It means we can present our eyes unto God and in 2Co 5:7 *Walk by faith, not by sight*. We can present our ears unto God and take care how we listen; and take care what we listen to. We can present our hands unto God as in Ecc 9:10, *Whatever your hand finds to do, verily, do it with all your might*; We can present our feet unto God and in Eph 6:15, *and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace*; We can present our fingers unto God and in Psa 144:1, *He trains my fingers for battle*; We can present our mouth unto God as in Eph 4:29, *Let no corrupt communication proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear*. We can present our knees unto God in prayer, Eph 3:14, *For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father*, In other words, our entire body can be presented unto God.

It's so easy to be judgmental and critical and criticize the way things are being done, but the interesting thing is that those who criticize have no fruit themselves! There's usually an ulterior motive that is hidden that the stupid do not see until it's too late. Rom 16:17-18, *Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting*. Our Lord said in Mar 9:40 *For he who is not against us is for us*.

So be careful that you do not touch God's ministry, or God's man, or God's servants. Present yourselves to God, and if you're smart, mind your own business and let God take care of His family! Everything we have, whether it is our sight, our hearing, and the members of our body, all is because of the grace of God! However, the point is that we do not present ourselves to God to become free, but it is because we are free in Christ, and because we have been given an understanding of adoption and sanctification that we can present ourselves to God. Having died unto the old, we are alive and free in the new, and now our life has meaning, purpose, and definition.