



ISSUE

22.20

May 17, 2020

Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN OF
THE OL-
SEN PARK
CHURCH OF
CHRIST

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Brady McAlister

Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Steve Dixon

Ryan Ferguson

Ben Hight

Blake McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Justin Smiley

Kevin Wise

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

The Figure of “Adoption” in the New Testament

By Kyle Pope

The figure of adoption is one of many figures used to describe our relationship with God. As with all figures, there are limitations to its application. We see this from another common figure used to describe man’s relationship to God. Both Isaiah and Paul use the figure of God as the potter and mankind as the clay (Isa. 64:8; Rom. 9:21). This beautiful figure illustrates how God as Creator has shaped us and formed our very existence. Yet, does that indicate that we are nothing more than inanimate clay? Obviously not. The Bible teaches that we are not a lifeless lump—we are souls made in the **“similitude of God”** (Jas. 3:9).

What Is Illustrated by the Figure of Adoption?

All of us are the **“offspring of God”** (Acts 17:29)—we are all children of the **“Father of spirits”** (Heb. 12:9). However, sin changes that. Sin takes one who is a child of God in his creation and makes him a child of Satan. Jesus told the Jews who rejected Him, **“you are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do”** (John 8:44). The grace of God brought to us through Jesus Christ allows those who have forsaken their spiritual Father (like the prodigal son)—a way to be adopted as sons of God,

and thus **“heirs of God and joints heirs with Christ”** (Rom. 8:17).

Who Chooses Whom?

Does the figure of adoption indicate that man’s relationship with God, like human adoption, involves a choice by the parent (i.e. God) alone? *What does Scripture say?* Certainly in human adoptions of babies the child has no choice in the matter. However, even in human adoption it isn’t always the case that the child has no choice. When older children are adopted the preferences of the children are often taken into consideration before the adoption is finalized.

Ephesians 1:5, uses this figure in declaring that

God **“predestined us to adoption as sons BY JESUS CHRIST to Himself”** (emphasis added). We can notice in the context of this passage how often the emphasis is on what Jesus accomplished for us. God **“chose us IN HIM”** (Eph. 1:4, emphasis added); **“He made us accepted IN THE BELOVED”** (Eph. 1:6, emphasis added); **“IN HIM we have redemption”** (Eph. 1:7, emphasis added); which is something that God **“purposed in HIMSELF”** (Eph. 1:9, emphasis added). God chose that all in Christ will receive the adoption. This is God’s choice, but it is the election of a class of people—not individuals.

Where Do We Fit In?

Does our choice have a bearing upon whether we are “in Christ” or not? Paul told the Galatians, **“you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”** (Gal. 3:26-27). We choose to accept the message of the gospel—the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). This message produces faith (Rom. 10:17) which leads us to confess Him, repent of sins, and be baptized. Paul says, in doing this the one who has been baptized into Christ has **“put on Christ.”** Thanks be to God for this wonderful offer of adoption!



Olsen Park Church of Christ

“That Which Is Perfect”

By Kyle Pope

First Corinthians chapter thirteen makes an important declaration related to the duration of miraculous spiritual gifts. Verse 10 declares, **“But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away”** (NKJV). Just prior to this, Paul had declared through the Holy Spirit that tongues would **“cease,”** prophecies would **“fail”** and knowledge (which seems to refer to miraculous knowledge) would **“vanish away”** claiming all such gifts to be given simply **“in part”** (13:8-9). The time when this would happen is given—**“When that which is perfect has come.”** The question is what is “that which is perfect?” There are at least four answers often given to this question:

1. The return of Christ. If this idea is correct it would be reasonable to expect the text to say, “when *He* who is perfect has come.” In the Greek the word translated **“perfect”** is a neuter adjective. This is why it is translated **“that which,”** rather than “He who.”

2. Our state in heaven. Many lean towards this view largely because of verse twelve—**“Then I shall know just as I also am known.”** The problem with this is the declaration of verse eight that knowledge will **“vanish away.”** In what sense will knowledge *vanish away* in heaven? If it is common knowledge surely it isn’t suggesting that we will

lose our ability to reason. If it is miraculous knowledge, won’t heaven be the ultimate revelation of the mind of God?

3. A mature church. This idea would harmonize well with Ephesians 4:11-16 which speaks of different gifts being given **“till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”** (Eph. 4:13). Yet, one would have to concede that this occurred in the first century. Jude speaks of the faith **“which was once for all delivered to the saints”** (Jude 3) and Peter claims of God that **“His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness”** (2 Pet. 1:3). The context of First Corinthians thirteen doesn’t seem to concern the incomplete (or immature) nature of



The context of Paul's teaching concerns partial revelation. The early church had been given miraculous spiritual gifts to confirm their message (Mark 16:20) and to complete God's revelation to man (John 16:13; 14:26). This partial nature of God's revelation was fully accomplished by the time late New Testament

the church, but rather the incomplete nature of revelation.

4. Complete revelation. The Greek word translated "**perfect**" is the word Greek *telion* (t^lion) meaning: "*brought to its end, finished; wanting nothing necessary to completeness; perfect*" (Thayer).

writers composed their works (Jude 3; 2 Pet. 1:3). This revelation is preserved for us in the form of the written words of Scripture. Thus, the most reasonable conclusion is to interpret "**that which is perfect**" as the completion of revealed Scripture. If this is correct, it tells us "**that which is in part**" (i.e. miraculous spiritual gifts) are now "**done away.**"



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We are so glad that you joined us today.
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