

## Westminster Confession of Faith

### Chapter 11--Of Justification

Calvin (Inst. 3:11:2):

"Therefore we must now discuss these matters thoroughly. And we must so discuss them as to bear in mind that this is the main hinge (the doctrine of justification by faith) on which religion turns, so that we devote the greater attention and care to it. For unless you first of all grasp what your relationship to God is, and the nature of his judgment concerning you, you have neither a foundation on which to establish your salvation nor one on which to build piety toward God."

Dabney (Systematic Theology p.618):

"Indeed, when we consider how many of the fundamental points of theology are connected with justification, we can hardly assign it too important a place. Our view of this doctrine just determine, or be determined by, our view of Christ's satisfaction; and this, again, carries along with it the whole doctrine concerning the nature and person of Christ..."

Cunningham, Historical Theology, p. 1, vol. 2:

"There is no subject (justification) which possesses more of intrinsic importance that attaches to this one, and there is none with respect to which the Reformers were more thoroughly harmonious in their sentiments."

1. General Introduction: How would you distinguish the objective work of Christ vs. the subjective work of Christ for our salvation? What do most people tend to think about today and how does this impact our religion?

Objective: Refers to the work that Christ did for us within history (time and space). In that it stands outside of us, it makes us to appreciate the God-centeredness of our salvation, together with forming a criterion for evaluating the subjective work. In other words, the subjective work of Christ is unique as compared to other religions only in its relation to the objective work of Christ. Therefore, Scripture makes "the cross" the central focus of the Gospel, not our conversion.

1. Central to Paul's Gospel: 1 Cor.1:17-18; 2:2; Gal.6:15

2. Central to Peter's Gospel: 1 Peter 1:18-19, 2:24; 3:18; Ac.2:23

3. Central to John's Gospel: Rev.1:5,18; 1 John2:22; 4:1-3

4. Central to Christ's perspective and presented as the *telos* and climax of his mission: Mk.8:31-32; 9:31, Mt.16:21-23.

Subjective: Refers to the work Christ does in and to us through the Holy Spirit as a result of his objective work.

*Conversion is not uniquely Christian, but Christian conversion is unique and uniquely true... Conversion has come to be understood in purely subjectivistic terms as changed behavior. The objective realities of conversion, its divine origin supernatural change and eternal results-- have been downplayed and rejected. If the truth of the gospel is tied to a testimony of transformation and change, then non-Christians can point to similar stories of transformation and change in non-Christian religions, sects, cults and even among users of certain drugs ...*

David Wells, *Turning To God*

2. What are some of the theories about Christ's objective work that have been advocated in church history? (See handout: *Theories of Atonement* )

3. The Assembly immediately provided a negative and a two-fold positive definition of justification. What is justification not? Positively, what is justification?

4. What did the Assembly understand to be the object or "termination" of Christ's work on the Cross? What is satisfied? (see also Section 3)

God is satisfied as the object of Christ's objective work. Both his holy justice (Rom.3:25-26) and his holy love (Rom.5:5-8) are satisfied by the death of Christ. God's justice and love are simultaneously revealed and rendered infinitely compatible by Christ's substitutionary death. Therefore, Christ's objective work on the cross vindicates God's character in its fullest sense. Humanity, is merely the recipient of this divine interaction but not the object.

5. A.A. Hodges says that "Justification is a judicial act of God whereby he *declares* (rather than *makes*) us to be conformed to the demands of the law." (see below--imputation vs. fusion) But as a judicial act, what is the difference between "justification" and "pardon" according to Hodge.

6. The heart of the Reformation debate with Rome was over the distinction between "imputation" and "infusion" of righteousness (LC #77). Note, for instance, what the Council of Trent said about the matter: "If any one saith, that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them...let him be anathema." (*The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, "On Justification", Canon XI). Luther often used the expression "alien righteousness" to describe the righteousness that is ours by faith. What was he attempting to accomplish by such language?

7. Because of this basic difference about imputation and infusion, the Reformation also distinguished itself from Rome by distinguishing sharply justification from sanctification. What are the several distinctions the Assembly made between sanctification and justification (see LC #77)?

8. Biblically, the Protestant understanding of imputation, while taught in many places by inference, is most especially developed in Romans 5:11-21.

1. Justification is the opposite of condemnation, both seen as a judicial "verdict". (Rom.8:33-34)
2. Justification is an declarative act that holds with it certain benefits. (Rom.4:5-8, Luke 7:27)
3. This declaration is by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to humanity and humanity's sin to Christ. (Rom.5:12-18)
  - a. In this sense, christ "became" sin-- to whome was rendered the verdict "guilty" and treated as such.
  - b. In this sense, humanity "became" righteousness-- to whome was rendered the verdict of "not guilty" and treated as such.
4. Justification is made effective in us through the gift of faith to us by the Holy Spirit. (rom.4:1-9; Eph.2:10)

9. What is the relation of faith and works in the believer's life, according to section 2 of this chapter of the Confession of Faith?

10. What is the sense of the language of "debt" in section 3 (or in the Lord's Prayer)? Is this an economic/financial debt, or some other kind of debt? What is meant by "penal substitution?" (see J.I. Packer's, What did the Cross Achieve?)

- a. Substitution: "putting one in the place of another" so that Christ took our place in satisfying God's penal code representing his righteous character as standard.
- b. Penal: Anchors Christ's substitution within the category of moral law. (not to be distinguished from, but consistent with, God's character. God's law is the means through which God condescended to humanity so as to reveal his glory.) Therefore, the penalty of the penal system was diverted to Christ. (Gal.3:10-13)
- c. Forshadowed in Old Covenant Sacrificial system
  1. Blood is representative of life. (Gen.9:4; Dt. 12:23)
  2. Blood is indispensable to atonement. (Lev.17:11; Heb.9:2) "Life for life"
  3. OT examples corresponde to Christ's fulfillment.
    - a. Passover-- Ex.11-13; 1 Cor.5:7-8
    - b. Sin offering and Day of Atonement-- Lev.16:5-22; Heb.9:7-28
- d. Five aspects of Penal Substitution: (Packer)
  1. Retribution: Wrath is a just penalty of which all men are without excuse and without hope of escape apart from Christ. (Rom.1:18ff)
  2. Solidarity: Christ is the second Adam. He carries our identity at the cross. (2 Cor.5:14)
  3. Mystery: Such love is mysterious to us. (Rom.5:8); The "god-man" is mysterious to us. (Philip.2)
  4. Salvation: God's chosen ones are the beneficiary
  5. Divine Love: Not of a kind that merely placates a fierce Father, but one that is compatible with the father's justice.

11. What is the relation of the doctrine of justification to chapter 7 of the Confession of Faith?

P1 The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension on God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of covenant.

P2 The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

12. What does section 5 teach about justification in relation to assurance? In relation to perseverance? (See also Chapter's 17 & 18 of the Confession)

13. Other Creeds:

Heidelberg #60:

How art thou justified in the sight of God?

Only by true faith in Jesus Christ; so that, though my conscience accuse me that I have grossly transgressed all the commandments of God, and kept none of them, and am still inclined to all evil, notwithstanding, God, without any merit of mine, but only of mere grace, grants and imputes to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ."

14. How ought the doctrine of justification affect us as we gather to the Lord's table on Sundays.

15. In what sense does Justification need to be "rediscovered" by evangelical Christian's today? (See "Reclaiming the Doctrine of Justification," by Rod Rosenblatt, *Modern Reformation*, Volume 1, Number 6 - November/December 1992)

(Notice: What Rod doesn't mean by "law" in his "law-gospel-law" is the classical "third use" of the law as a "law" for sanctification... rather he means by "law" that which condemns us as unholy... )

## Addendum: Theories of Atonement

**At Issue:** What was "satisfied" by Christ's sacrificial death so as to secure the forgiveness of sins for those in Christ by faith.

**Warfield's Method:** Arranged them according to the conception each entertains of the person or persons on whom the work of Christ terminates as they fall naturally into five classes.  
(B.B. Warfield's, *The Person and Work of Christ*,)

### I. Ransom Theories, "Cristus victor":

*Conceive of the work of Christ as terminating upon Satan, so affecting him as to secure the release of the souls held in bondage by him.*

1. A mainstream position in the early church. (Augustine and Origen. One also finds it in book one of the Narnia Chronicles by C. S. Lewis. It is defended in modern times by Gustav Aulen, *Cristus Victor*)
2. Biblical history is a great cosmic drama with the forces of good fighting the forces of evil. Central theme of the atonement is Triumph, Christ triumphs over Satan, death and sin.
3. Christ is the ransom paid to Satan to free us from his reign. It is Satan and not God who demand Christ's blood.
4. In so far as Christ is perfect, he cannot be held in Satan's grasp and thus a final victory is secured by his perfect obedience.
5. Important question for early church: Did God deceive Satan into believing he could have Christ as an eternal prisoner.  
Yes: Origen and Gregory of Nyssa- but God alone can justly deceive  
No: Satan thought he could control Christ out of arrogance and therefore no deception took place.
6. Texts Used:  
Mt.20:28; 1 Cor.6:20.
7. Problems:
  - a. Satan given too much power. The devil has no rights of which God must satisfy.
  - b. Sets God into a divine transaction with Satan.
  - c. Lowers the work of God to a deception.
  - d. Fails to satisfy God's justice. Forgiveness is still necessary and not merely a change of masters.

### II. Mystical Theories:

*Conceive the work of Christ as terminating physically on man, so affecting him as to bring him by an interior and hidden working upon him into participation with the one life of Christ. The fundamental characteristic of these theories is their discovery of the saving fact not in anything which Christ taught or did, but in what He was. (stress upon incarnation)*

1. Platonizing Fathers... Pseudo-Dionysius, in west, Johannes Scotus Erigena. In reformational age, Osiander, Schwenckfeld, Franck, Weigel, Boehme. In modern church, Schleiermacher and the "Mercersburg School."
2. Saving work is not in what he does for us but in what he does in us.
3. Human nature is assumed by Christ and kept from sinning and so purification from sin as the first fruits of humanity-- mystically applied to all humanity.
3. Assumes that the basic problem of salvation is in us. Christ makes us forgivable.  
Problems:
  - a. Equates sin with ignorance and loss of mortality.
  - b. Platonic view of humanity is assumed. Christ becomes the "formal" or "universal" human in us.
  - c. Leads to mysticism.
4. Texts used:  
"in Christ" passages, "first fruits" passages

### III. Moral Influence Theories:

*Conceive the work of Christ as terminating on man, in the way of bringing to bear on him inducements to action; so affecting the man as to lead him to a better knowledge of God, or to a more lively sense of his real relation to God, or to a revolutionary change of heart and life with reference to God.*

1. Peter Abelard, More recently, Horace Bushnell (1802-1876), Hastings Randall.
2. Atonement is something done to us rather than to God. God is essentially love and therefore we do not need to fear God's justice.
3. Jesus comes to demonstrate God's love for us.

4. Sin is a type of sickness from which we must be healed.

5. Texts Used:

Luke 19:10; 2 Cor.5:19;

6. Problems:

a. God's love is not inconsistent with his justice

b. Christ is a demonstration of God's love but of a costly love.

c. Scriptural notions of sacrifice are rooted in the OT. We do injustice to them if we read God's forgiveness without understanding the nature of these sacrifices.

#### **IV. Governmental Theories: (atonement as a demonstration of God's justice)**

*Conceive the work of Christ as terminating on both man and God, but on man primarily and on God only secondarily. These suppose that the work of Christ so affects man by the spectacle of the sufferings borne by Him as to deter men from sin; and by thus deterring men from sin enables God to forgive sin with safety to His moral government of the world... No less than moral influence theories, the atoning fact is man's own reformation.*

1. Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) Reacts against Socinians.

2. Framework

a. God is holy and just in all his ways

b. God can forgive rather than punish if he so chooses.

c. The atonement shows what would happen if we continue in our sin. Christ's death serves to return us to obedience

d. Christ cannot take our sins since sins are not the sort of thing that can be transferred.

3. Problems:

a. Misses the substitutionary nature of the atonement.

b. Misses the pattern of representative headship in scripture and the corresponding "imputation" doctrine.

#### **V. Satisfaction Theories: (Penal Substitution)**

*Conceive the work of Christ as terminating primarily on God and secondarily on people. Christ sympathetically entered into our condition and became a true and perfect sacrifice offered to God, of intrinsic value ample for the expiation of our guilt and at the same time is a true and perfect righteousness offered to God in fulfillment of the demands of His people, and, on being accepted by God, accruing to their benefit; so that by this satisfaction they are relieved at once from the curse of their guilt as breakers of the law, and from the burden of the law as a condition of life; and this by a work of such kind and performed in such a manner as to carry home to the hearts of men a profound sense of the indefectible righteousness of God and to make to them a perfect revelation of His love and holiness.*

1. Anselm (1033-1109, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cur Dues Homo)

2. God alone is king over us, Satan is not owed anything.

3. Retributive justice entails not only that we change our behavior but also that just reparation be paid.

4. God alone can provide the infinite compensation necessary because of our sin and his infinite holiness.

5. Prerequisites of the atonement

a. atonement faithfully represent humanity

b. atonement fully compensate God

c. atonement finally defeat sin and Satan

6. The Sacrifice of Christ

a. as fully human he could serve as our representative

b. as fully divine he could fully compensate God

7. Biblical texts:

Rom.3:21ff, 5-9

Heb.9-10

Westminster Confession of Faith  
Chapter 12: Adoption

It has not been made the subject of much controversy, nor has it received the didactic exposition which has been devoted to most of the other topics included in the theology of redemption. Its importance has been to a large extent overlooked, its place in a distinct and independent treatment of the covenant of grace has been refused, while leading theologians have differed in regard to its nature and office.

John Girardeau, *Discussions*, p.429

1. Of the many creeds and confessions framed by the various Protestant churches from 1530 to 1640, the Westminster Confession was the first to give a separate chapter to adoption. Other creeds and confessions mentioned adoption, but included it in the section on justification. What is the significance of adoption receiving separate treatment from justification?  
(see also Murray)
2. What is wrong with the commonly-heard statement, “We are all God’s children”?  
(see Murray and Addendum #1))
3. Many passages in scripture affirm that we are God’s children (1John 3:1 “Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God”). Why is it important to know that we are children by adoption? (Hint: According to Paul, we are “by nature children of \_\_\_\_\_”).
4. Which aspects of the Assembly’s description of adoption are associated with the following passages?  
**Rom. 8:16** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.  
**Rom. 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.”  
**Eph. 3:12** in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.  
**Pss. 103:13** As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him.  
**Heb. 12:6** For whom the Lord loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.
5. How is adoption related to regeneration? How is it different?  
(Hodge, Girardeau handout)
6. How is adoption related to justification? How is it different?  
(Hodge, Girardeau handout)
7. Calvin once said,  
*“Therefore, God both calls himself our Father and would have us so address him. By the great sweetness of this name he frees us from all distrust, since no greater feeling of love can be found elsewhere than in the Father... He could not attest his own boundless love toward us with any surer proof than the fact that we are called “children of God.”*  
What are some of the benefits of adoption that had Calvin so excited?  
(Murray, Girardeau handout)
8. What are some of the duties that are related to this doctrine? (see Gerardeau)

**Addendum 1: "God is the father of us all?"**

**I. Universal Fatherhood: To know and be known**

**Malachi 2:10**, "Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us?"

**Acts 17:28**, "We are God's offspring..."

**Luke 3:38**, "Adam, son of God."

**Acts 17:26-28**, He has made on one blood all the nations of men... He is not far from every one of us; for in him we live and move and have our being as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Implications:

1. Theology: To believe in the true God is to know him-- a "person" with personal attributes together with relational privileges and responsibilities-- a person who is also the one in whom we have come into being.

God as father is capable of love, anger, jealousy, mercy, justice, volition, desires, purpose, etc.

2. Anthropology: We are known-- related to as persons of worth by God our Father.

a. "Nothing buttery" Anthropology

*Nothing-buttery is characterized by the notion that by reducing any phenomenon to its components you not only explain it, but explain it away. You can debunk love, or bravery, or sin for that matter, by finding the psychological or physiological mechanisms underlying the behavior in question.* Donald MacKay, *The Clock Work Image*

b. Modern Example: "Machine-minded" anthropology"

*There are no ghosts in the brain's machinery, no unmoved movers. It is all a matter of physics and chemistry.*  
Quoted by C. Stephen Evans, *Preserving the Person*

*Self identity... a well integrated pattern of input, corresponding logical process, and an appropriate output functioning. This feedback system is the core of the computer.*

Sarasvati Chennakesavan, "The Future of the Human: Man or Machine", *Bangalore Theological Forum*

c. "The Soul in Relation to God"

Central Question; Where do we begin in coming to grips with who we are as human persons?

Theo-centric Answer: "What is man in relation to God"

*We may say that we never encounter in the Bible an independently existing, abstract, ontological, structural interest in man. In the Bible, man is indeed analyzed, but in a very special sort of analysis... This man, now in the impossibility of his being isolated and independent, is the whole man.*

G.C. Berkouwer, *Man: The Image of God*

**Genesis 2:7**, and the man became a soul.

3. Cosmology: "He exercises a watchful providence over mankind, extending his care to every individual"

## II. Covenantal Fatherhood:, "two, not one, Fathers"

Social/Relational contract shared together with corresponding "privileges and responsibilities"

1. "Your Father the Devil"

**John 8:41-44**, "You are indeed doing what your father does." They said to him, "We are not illegitimate children, we have one Father, God himself." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now I am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me. Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot accept my word. You are from your Father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires.

**Also Acts 13: 10**, You son of the devil...

Relational implications with heavenly Father: social contract altered

**Dt.31:17**, I will become angry with them and forsake them. I will hide my face from them... because our God is not with us.

**Hosea 2:4**, Upon her children also I will have no pity because they are children of whoredom for their mother has played the whore... she said "I will go after my lovers.."

**Lk. 15:11-16** Prodigal son

**Romans 5:12**, Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man (Adam) and death came through sin, and so death spread to all because all have sinned...

2. "Your Father in Heaven" Children by adoption

Adoption is that act by which a person takes the child of another into the place, and entitles him/her to the privileges of his own.

**John 1:12**, "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God."

**John 14:8-9,11;** "Lord show us the Father"... "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father...believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me.

**Ephesians 1:5,** He has destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will

**Romans 8:14,** For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption... heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.

## **Addendum #2: A Theological Discussion of Adoption**

(From John Girardeau's "The Doctrine of Adoption", Discussions of Theological Questions)

### I. It's Nature:

Although adoption is related to the doctrines of regeneration and justification, it has a distinctive and peculiar value of its own as distinguished from regeneration and justification.

#### 1. In its relation to regeneration:

a. Adoption is in one sense by regeneration. We are "re-begotten" (made) children of God.

b. Distinguished in "order of salvation" from regeneration

1) Regeneration precedes adoption and is in order to it.

But as many as received him, to them gave he the privilege to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

(Jn.1:12)

2) Regeneration precedes faith and faith precedes adoption

For you are all the children of god by faith in Christ Jesus. Gal.3:26

c. Regeneration is not conditioned upon faith,, adoption is.

d. Regeneration is a creative act, adoption is an legal act.

We are authorized to become children of God...

The former effects our nature, the latter our relations.

e. Regenration adapts us to our place in God's family, adoption formally introduces us into it. By the one we have tempers of children, by the other their rights.

f. Regeneration *makes us* God's children; adoption recognizes and treats us as his children and invests us with all the rights, privileges and immunities of his children.

Otherwise our "rights" would be contingent upon our "tempers".

#### 3. Adoption in relation to justification and distinguished from justification.

a. Both are legal acts exerted by God's legal authority

b. In justification, the legal relation is of servant to Lord, in adoption it is of child to parent.

Justification: God as judge and ruler

Adoption: Paternal relation

It is our relations which are altered in each case, but the sort of relation in one is different from that in the other-- as the relation of servant and the relation of child. It is one thing to be approved by a governor, another to be loved by a father. (p.486)

c. Both presuppose regeneration, justification introduces believer into kingdom society or polity, adoption legally and formally introduces the regenerated sinner into the society of God's family.

d. A subject of moral government is not an heir per se. Heirship supposes another relation, that of a child. Therefore, justification doesn't entitle to an inheritance, adoption does. It is grace upon grace.

#### 4. Adoption is a translation from the family of Satan into the family of God.

"A change which is distinguished from that of regeneration in that it is legal, formally authoritative and irreversible."

Girardeau

**John 8:41-44**

### II. The Grounds of Adoption:

1. The eternal purpose of God the Father: Those adopted by the Father are predestined through Jesus Christ according to God's good pleasure.

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

**Rom. 8:29,** For whom he did foreknow, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren.

2. Union with the Son of God, naturally, by virtue of his incarnation and his consequent community of nature with the elect. (Christ the brother of the elect by his incarnation)

**Gal. 4:4** But when the time had fully 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.

**Hebr. 2:11** For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying, "I will proclaim thy name to my brethren, in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee."

3. Union with the Son of God spiritually and vitally through regeneration leading unto faith.

**Jn.1:12**

4. Union with the Son of God federally as he is the covenant head and representative of the elect.

**Rom. 5:2** Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. (vs. 18 depicting Christ representational role as second adam)

### III. The Rights Involved in Adoption:

Divided into two classes, general (heirship) and special (immunities and privileges)

#### A. Heirship:

*It is all that can be conceived or believed as embraced in the paternal favor and love of God.*

HOME! All that is wrapped up in that sweet, transcendent word, heightened, sanctified, glorified and projected everlastingly; our Father's house, because Jesus' Father's house with all it includes of fellowship with God the Trinity, with holy angels, with glorified saints, with elect relatives, brethren and friends. Ineffable communion! And to this will be added it to it aught can be added, all outward circumstances of glory which can be collected by an Almighty Father around the brethren of his Son."

1. Here: Present benefits amidst the trials of life

2. Hereafter: at the resurrection of the dead.

#### B. Immunities:

1. From an slavish temper of obedience

2. From bondage to human authority when exercised contrary to or apart from the word of God.

3. From bondage to the OC law

**Col. 2:16** Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a sabbath. 17 These are only a shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

4. From bondage to the moral law as a standard of justification.

#### C. Privileges

**Rom. 8:14** 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 sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" **16** it is the Spirit himself bearing 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.

**1John 3:1** See what love the Father has given 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.

1. Privileged access as children vs. respectful distance of servant

"The free spirit of filial obedience, leading to boldness of access to God. ...The servant, with hat in hand, stands at a respectful distance awaiting the orders of his master; the child of God, as Luther has graphically suggested, rushes into the presence of his Father, leaps into his lap, and nestles in his bosom." (p. 493).

2. . Offering imperfect, though sincere obedience to God, with hope of its acceptance

3. "The wholesome, loving, saving discipline of children in God's family"

Hebr. 12:5 And have you forgotten the exhortation which addresses you as sons?-- "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor lose courage when you are punished by him. 6 For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives." 7 It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 If you are left without discipline, in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

### IV. Duties of Adoption: (all taken from Girardeau; organized a little differently)

A. To render honor and obedience to God as a Father.

B. To render filial affections and feelings:

1. Filial love

2. Filial trust

3. "Submission to, and acquiescence in, his parental will and government" ( p. 494)

4. Filial hope

C. To imitate him as a Father "even as our Father in heaven is perfect," "for then you will be children of your Father in heaven," "imitators of God as dear children"

**Matt. 5:48** You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Phil. 2:15** that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world,

**Eph. 5:1** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

**Rom. 8:29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren.

D. "To render to the Lord Jesus the utmost honor, love, gratitude and obedience, as our Brother through whom alone we are related to God as a Father.

- E. To seek and receive the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption, bearing witness with our spirits that we are children of God.  
F. To love all God's people, and treat them as our dear brethren. "It should be a maxim with us, that whenever we perceive in others the lineaments, however faint and disfigured with error or weakness, of our Father's children, they shall surely experience the embrace of a brother's arms" ( p. 495).

Calvin (Institutes, Book iv, 17.40) says that during communion, each individual should consider "whether, after his (Christ's) example, he is prepared to give himself to his brethren, and to hold himself in common with those with whom he has Christ in common; whether, as he himself is regarded by Christ, he in his turn regards all his brethren as members of his body, or, like his members, desires to cherish, defend, and assist them".

**1Ths. 4:9** But concerning love of the brethren you have no need to have any one write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another;

**1Pet. 1:22** Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart.

**1Pet. 3:8** Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love of the brethren, a tender heart and a humble mind.

**1John 3:14** We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death.

**1John 3:16** By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.

- G. To separate ourselves from the world, so far as it is out of sympathy with God our Father.

- H. "Ever to aspire with longing towards heaven--our Father's house, the family gathering place, our glorious and everlasting home." ( p. 495).

**Col. 3:1** If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

**Hebr. 11:13** These all died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. 14 For people who speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. 15 If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

#### IV. Scripture:

Eph. 1:5 He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Rom. 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the first-born among many brethren. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

John 1:12 But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God.

2Cor. 6:18 "and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."

Matt. 6:9 "Pray then like this: Our Father"

Ps. 103:13 As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear him.

Prov. 14:26 In the fear of the LORD one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.

Matt. 6:30 "But if God so clothes the grass of the field will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? 6:32 and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

Hebr. 12:6 For the Lord disciplines him whom he loves, and chastises every son whom he receives.

Rom. 8:17 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.

Eph. 2:18 for through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Rom. 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of sonship. When we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Hebr. 12:28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe;

Hebr. 13:15 Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name.

Eph. 1:5 He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will,

Matt. 6:30 But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith?

Matt. 6:32 For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

Rom. 8:17 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.

Hebr. 2:17 Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people.

„To forgive is to set the prisoner free, and then discover the prisoner was you.%o

-Unknown

" . . . not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing." (1 Peter 3:9)