**Biblical Foundations – Adoption (Membership In God’s Family)**

**What are the benefits of being a member of God’s family?**

**The Privileges of Adoption-** the benefits or privileges that accompany adoption are seen, first, in the way God relates to us, and then also in the way we relate to one another as brothers and sisters in God’s family. One of the greatest privileges of our adoption is **(1)** *being able to speak to God and relate to him as a good and loving Father*. (Matthew 6:9) It is the realization that we are “no longer a slave, but a son.” (Galatians 4:7) This relationship to God as our Father is the foundation of many other blessings of the Christian life, and it becomes the primary way we relate to God. The fact that God relates to us as Father **(2)** *shows very clearly that he loves us* (1 John 3:1), **(3)** *shows that he understands us* (Psalm 103:13-14), **(4)** *shows that he cares for our needs* (Matthew 6:32-33), **(5)** *provides us with many good gifts*. (Matthew 7:11) He especially **(6)** *gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to comfort us and to empower us for ministry and for living the Christian life*. (Luke 11:13) In fact, it is not only gifts in this life that God gives us, but he also **(7)** *gives us a great inheritance in heaven, because we have become joint heirs with Christ*. (Galatians 4:7) As heirs, we have the rights to a great eternal “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.” (1 Peter 1:4) All the great privileges and blessings of heaven are laid up for us and put at our disposal because we are children of the King and members of the royal family. As a foretaste of this great privilege, **(8)** *angels are sent to minister to us and serve us even now*. (Hebrews 1:14)

It is in the context of this relationship with God as our heavenly Father that we are to understand the prayer that Jesus told his disciples to pray daily “forgive us for our sins, just as we have forgiven those who sinned against us.” (Matthew 6:12) Because of the relationship of God as our Father, we receive daily forgiveness of sins. (not as repeated justification, but as restoration of a severed relationship) (1 John 1:9)

The privilege of **(10)** *being led by the Holy Spirit is also a benefit whereby the Holy Spirit guides our daily decisions and puts in us desires to obey God and live according to his will*. (Romans 8:13-14)

Another privilege of adoption into God’s family, though we do not always recognize it as a privilege, is the fact that **(11)** *God disciplines us as his children*. (Hebrews 12:5-6)

In addition to these great privileges that concern our relationship to God and fellowship with him, we also have privileges of adoption that affect the way we relate to each other and our own personal conduct. Because we are God’s children, **(12)** *we are all members of one family*. (1 Corinthians 1:10-11, Romans 1:13) Paul tells Timothy to relate to individuals in the church at Ephesus as he would relate to members of a family. (1 Timothy 5:1-2) This concept of the church as God’s family should give us a new perspective on the work of the church as “family work”, and the members of the family should never compete with each other or hinder one another in their efforts but should encourage one another and be thankful for whatever good comes to any member of the family .

Another privilege of our membership into God’s family as his children is that **(13)** *we are to imitate our Father*. (Ephesians 5:1) Paul emphasizes the natural tendency for children to imitate their earthly parents.