



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION: LESSON 177

**Receive a new name** – Having looked at the nature of adoption, in this study we will look at the blessings of being adopted into the family of God. Those who are adopted into the family of God receive a new name, a name that represents their new life. Biblical names represent important information about the one who bears it (Exodus 3:14-16). Not only Jews but people of all nations who believe in God and His promises are called by His name (Deuteronomy 28:9-10; Isaiah 43:5-7; Jeremiah 14:9; Amos 9:11-12). In the New Testament, those who believed in Christ were at first known as those who belonged to “the Way” (Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:12, 22); and later they were called Christians (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). This name not only means that we are followers of Christ but that we belong to Him, being members of His family, and over which He has authority (Revelation 14:1; 22:3-4).

**Receive the Spirit of adoption** – The Bible teaches that before we were saved, before we believed in Christ, we were enemies of God, slaves of sin, and in a state of fear (Genesis 3:8-10; Romans 1:32; 6:20; Hebrews 2:15; 1 John 4:18). But in Romans 5:1 Paul writes, “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” In addition to having peace with God through Christ, we who have been adopted as the children of God have also received the Spirit of God, who is called the Spirit of adoption, by whom we are enabled to cry out and call God “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7; Ephesians 2:18; Hebrews 10:19, 22). The word “Abba” is an Aramaic term, and is an informal and most intimate way for a person to call their father. During His darkest of times, Jesus Himself used this term when praying to God (Mark 14:36).

**Internal testimony** – In addition to the many evidences that the Bible gives that we are saved and the children of God, in Romans 8:16 Paul writes, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” This is known as the internal testimony of the Spirit (1 John 3:24). This is not an inner, supernatural voice, nor is it a testimony apart from or contrary to the Word of God. Rather, the Spirit takes the external (objective) Word of God and confirms its truth to us internally (subjective), enlightening and showing us that what is written is valid and applies to us as God’s children.

**Divine providence** – The Westminster Confession of Faith states that we are “... pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by Him as by a Father.” This is referring to God’s care, comfort, compassion, protection and provision for us, His adopted children (Psalm 3:5; 4:8; 103:13; Matthew 6:31-33; Romans 8:31-32; 2 Corinthians 1:3-4; Philippians 4:6-8). Another sign that we are the true children of God is being disciplined by Him (Hebrews 12:5-8, 11). All true children of God will at one time or another bear some form of discipline from their heavenly Father, who has planned this for our growth in holiness. Otherwise we would be illegitimate children, much like Ishmael was to Abraham.

**Sealed to the day of redemption** – All who are born of the Spirit are also sealed by the Spirit, who is an inward and indelible mark of God’s ownership of us, and authenticates us as His children. In addition, the Spirit is the Father’s initial pledge or down payment on us, which guarantees our full redemption (2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30). Even though in this life we will go through trials, will sin and fall, and will be chastened by our heavenly Father, if we are His true children and thus sealed by the Spirit, then He has promised to never cast us out of His family, but to protect us to the very end, and to glorify us (John 6:37-54; 10:27-30; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6; 2 Timothy 4:18; Jude 1:1).

**Already and not yet** – In our adoption we see the biblical concept of the “already and not yet,” where we already have been adopted as God’s children and heirs, and we already have received the Spirit; but the full realization of our adoption is yet future. The Holy Spirit is a foretaste of the full glory that is to yet be revealed; He is a guarantee that the full inheritance is coming, which God has reserved for us in heaven, which is imperishable, undefiled and will not fade away (Romans 8:17-25; 1 Peter 1:3-7).