

A Biblical Framework for Adoption

As Christians, we want the Scriptures to confirm everything we do. You may find yourself asking, “What does the bible have to say about adoption?” As we examine the Scriptures for specific, we can construct a biblical view of adoption.

1. Adoption embodies the Biblical theme of the covenant.

More than Legal

Adoption in strict terms is a legal process. But it is important to see that adoption is more than a legal contract-it is a relationship of promise. The adoption process goes through the courts and is made legal, but as in all parent/child relationships it becomes much more than that. Law and promise are different in principle, the one pivoting on reward or punishment for conduct, the other on acceptance of an unconditional gift.

God’s Covenant Family

Paul described how Christians were adopted into God’s family, a privilege originally bestowed exclusively on Israel but made available by the new covenant to all who have faith in Christ. Interestingly, according to a Roman-Syrian law book, a man might be able to disown his biological son if he had good reason, but he could never disown his adopted son.

This is not to say that children adopted into families today have a greater standing than biological children. But this should clarify any misconception in the other direction-that somehow adopted children are second-best, or not *really* a member of the family.

2. Adoption upholds Marriage as the Building Block for Parenting.

God Designed Marriage!

Adam’s aloneness is the only thing that God finds “not good” before the fall. God ordained marriage between a man and a woman to create a child. God’s intent was for the unique combination to stay intact in a covenant relationship to raise the child. When this does not take place, for whatever reason, adoption can and should be considered because it upholds God’s original intent for two parents.

Families are an Extension of the Marriage Covenant.

The husband and wife relationship, centered in Christ, builds a “tent” that not only shelters the couple, but means physical, emotional and spiritual security and shelter for their children. God’s plan for children is that they experience life in the midst of this covenantal relationship between a mother and a father.

A marriage firmly rooted and grounded in Christ is the strongest possible foundation for family-building, whether through birth or adoption. Many birth parents realize the stability of a Christian family and make that quality a priority when making their adoption plan.

3. Adoption upholds the scriptural emphasis on the role of the father. Separate and Distinct

Although we have seen the importance of two parents, the father's role as illustrated in the Scriptures is separate and distinct from the mother's. The Bible speaks of the father as a man of compassion, a teacher at home, and a man to be honored by his children. Proverbs especially elaborates on these important roles a father can and should play in the lives of his children.

God purposefully chose to relate to *us* as a Father. Our earthly fathers are important in modeling or being images of God as Father.

It is important to note that many women choose adoption because they see the father as vital for their child.

Joseph Adopted Jesus

Perhaps the most profound example of adoption in the Scriptures is Joseph's adoption of Jesus. Joseph assumed the role of Jesus' father for all intents and purpose. It should not surprise us that God desired for Jesus to have an earthly father, consistent with His plan for marriage and parenthood.

4. Biblical examples show how God has used adoption to provide for children and to further His purposes and kingdom.

Pharaoh's Daughter and Moses

We can summarize Moses' adoption by seeing it in the context of two loving mothers whose first concern was a child—Jochebed, who parted with her child knowing that his life was at stake if he remained with her; and Pharaoh's daughter, who felt compassion on a child she knew by edict was to be killed. God used these two women to save Moses' life and provide him with a safe and secure childhood.

Jochebed's decision is a great example of a birth mother's love for her child. Her godly example sets straight the misconception that birth parents don't love their children. Her love for Moses prompted her to make the adoption plan.