

# Instruction In The Westminster Standards

The Historic Standards of Presbyterian Denominations.

---

## STUDIES IN THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

Q. 34 What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges, of the sons of God.

Scripture References: I John 3:1. John 1:12 Rom. 8:17 Col. 3:10.

### Questions:

1. What is the difference between adoption in the sight of men and in the sight of God?

Adoption, according to man, is simply a taking into the family a child because of some qualification on the part of the child or because of some need of the adopting parent. God adopts those who are strangers, the children of wrath, those in whom there is nothing commendable and gives them all the rights and privileges as children of God.

2. What is involved in this new relationship?

A. A. Hodge states, "Adoption presents the new creature in his new relations - his new relations entered upon with a congenial heart, and his new life developing in a congenial home, and surrounded with those relations which foster its growth and crown it with blessedness." (Confession of Faith, Pg. 192.).

3. Are all children of men adopted by God?

No, only those who believe on Christ. (John 1:12).

4. Who specifically does the act of adopting?

The act of adoption belongs to God the Father. "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." (I John 3:1)

5. What are the privileges to which the adopted children of God are entitled?

The list could be endless. Primarily the privileges are: (1) Protection from evils of all kinds (Ps. 121:7). (2) The bearing of his likeness (Col. 3:10). (3) The access to God the Father (I Jn. 5:14, 15). (4) The provision of the needs of the believer (Ps. 34:10). (5) A surety of entrance into the kingdom of heaven (Rom. 8:17).

## FELLOW CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." (Eph. 2:19). The hymn writer spoke the truth when he said, "What a wonderful change in my life has been wrought, Since Jesus came into my heart." Because we have been adopted by God we are different, we are no longer aliens or those who do not rank as citizens, but are fellow citizens with the saints.

This new relationship brings the believer into at least two links with the Father. The first is a privilege, that of having within himself a spirit becoming the children of God. This spirit is a free spirit as it is free from the sense of bondage and of guilt and of death itself. This spirit is a royal spirit. The Bible teaches us that the believer is "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people (People of God's own possession)." This spirit is the spirit of glory, one that means the believer is blessed.

The second link with the Father is a responsibility. The Bible teaches, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." (Heb. 12:5). As children of God, as adopted children of God, the Bible teaches us that we are prone to punishment when we do wrong in the sight of our Heavenly Father. This link is as important as the link mentioned above, the link of privilege.

The relationship as adopted children of God is one we should accept with all seriousness. We should ever keep this relationship in our minds in order that we might act as children. A child has respect for his parent. A Christian child should have the utmost of respect (fear is pertinent here) for his heavenly Father. A child is to obey his parent. A Christian child should live in the very atmosphere of obedience toward his heavenly Father. A child is to love his parent and show that love in pleasing his parent. A Christian child should adore his heavenly Father and strive to please him, no matter what the situation might be. A child should accept discipline. A Christian child should literally pray for the discipline of the heavenly Father. (Eph. 5:1).

---

**Published By: THE SHIELD and SWORD, INC.**

Dedicated to instruction in the Westminster Standards for use as a bulletin insert or other methods of distribution in Presbyterian churches.

For information write to: **The Shield and Sword, Inc., French Camp, Mississippi.** A non-profit religious organization.

Vol 3      No. 34

October, 1963

Price

Rev. Leonard T. Van Horn

Editor



To Churches — \$2.00 per 100

Individuals — \$1.35 per year

### Back Copies

To Churches — \$2.25 per 100

Individuals — 15c each