



THE CHALLENGER

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PROCLAIMING THE WORD TO THE WORLD

March 2009

Adoption (Part II)

BY THE EDITOR

This thrilling position of being in God's family is part of the blessings that belongs to every Christian. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places IN CHRIST" (Ephesians 1:3). This position is not of our effort, nor is it deserved on our part, nor is it some possible attainment by human labor. We are saved by grace and not works. (Ephesians 2:8) Adoption is one of God's choice blessings, and we live in the reality of such a thrilling relationship. In Christ, we have full access to all the benefits of a loving, heavenly Father.

Adoption is the gracious act of God toward once-alienated humanity, to give them a place in His household of Christ as acceptable and recognizable children. Four divisions of adoption are: 1) *Foreknowledge*, 2) *Election*, 3) *Purpose*, and 4) *Predestination*. *You are not going to give us an understanding of these four functions?* Of course I am with the Lord's help! All four are clearly defined and explained in the Scriptures. Here is my reason for the four divisions of **Adoption**: "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father" (1 Peter 1:2). This reveals that foreknowledge precedes election. "That the purpose of God according to election might stand. (Romans 9:11) Likewise, election precedes the accomplishments of His purpose: "Being predestined according to the purpose of Him. . . ." Ephesians 1:11 places purpose before predestination. (This paragraph comes from the writings of my father, S. F. Porter.)

Foreknowledge

It means that from everlasting our holy God has known all the events prior to any of them happening. "Known unto God are all His works, from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18). The sin of Lucifer in heaven and the fall of man in the Garden of Eden were known by our great God. He has always known of your arrival upon this earth and also your time of departure from it. Here is a very important point to grasp: His knowledge does not determine your action or reaction. He simply knows what you are going to do. God's plan of salvation was determined in eternity before the measurement of time. Here is the reason for Christ being slain before the foundation of the world. What God knows today, He has always known.

"Remember this, and show yourselves men, bring it again to mind, O you transgressors. Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:8-10). "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked

hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:23).

Election

Of all of our spiritual blessings, I personally think this is one of the most thrilling. Some misguided people concluded they are on the way to heaven because of choosing Christ as their Savior. "You are not of this world, but I have chosen (elected) you out of the world" (John 15:19). "You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain that whatsoever you shall ask of the Father, in My name, He may give it to you" (John 15:16). Notice in that verse His purpose in choosing you: "If you were of the world, the world would love his own; but because you are not of the world, but I HAVE CHOSEN you out of the world, therefore the world hates you" (John 15:19).

"According as He has chosen us IN Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4). Thus the reason for choosing us is to be holy. This position does not start subsequent to being saved. Christians live a holy life! Not doing so? Then you need to be chosen by God. This is part of your eternal salvation. *Don't you accept everybody saved who says they are?* Of course not! How can an unrepentant, hell-bound sinner ever choose a holy God? He cannot and will not. Can man or woman living in sin do anything that is acceptable to God Who is holy? Never

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Adoption (continued from page 1)

could we possibly choose Him — He chose us. What a glorious Truth!

Election is the sovereign act of God, using His freedom of choice in His creation to choose whom He pleases, whether individuals or nations, for whatever purpose He pleases. Remember, this is one of our blessings “IN CHRIST.” (Ephesians 1:3)

Purpose

Here is an important doctrine that is missed by many theologians. It signifies that in eternity God planned to give access to the riches of His grace in the Son and determined to bring it to pass. In His foreknowledge, God purposed by means of election to prepare those who will be saved to become members of His eternal household. “Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own PURPOSE and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began” (II Timothy 1:9). “The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass, and as I have PURPOSED, so shall it stand” (Isaiah 14:34). “Yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have PURPOSED it, I will also do it” (Isaiah 46:11).

Remember, the purpose of God is the overall plan that God has determined to bring to pass. I conclude this discourse with two verses: 1) “According to the eternal PURPOSE, which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Ephesians 3:11), and 2) “Being confident of this very thing that He who has begun a good work in you (His purpose) will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6).

Predestination

It is that effective exercise of the will of God by which things before determined by Him are brought to pass. “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will” (Ephesians 1:5). As some would teach, predestination is God’s predetermining from past ages who should and who should not be saved. He has *not* predestinated some for heaven and others for hell! This you will *not* find in the Scriptures.

Here is the scriptural position of predestination in the Bible. We are predestinated unto adoption (Ephesians 1:5), to have a part in Christ’s glorious inheritance. “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance to the PURPOSE of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will” (Ephesians 1:11). We are predestinated to be perfectly conformed to God’s Son. “For whom He did foreknow, He also did PREDESTINATE to be CONFORMED to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did PREDESTINATE (predetermined), them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified” (Romans 8:29,30). It has been determined beforehand that all who belong to Jesus Christ shall be in God’s family and conformed into His image. Don’t write anything else into this wonderful provision.

Are you in Christ Jesus, having been born again by the Spirit of God? If so, these are your blessings located IN Christ. (Ephesians 1:3) Live in the glorious reality of them. God has provided them by His grace. By His enabling power, let’s cry out to God for His purpose to be realized in our life. O how we should love Him! If we do, obedience and service will be the automatic result. (I am praying for every reader.)

From Box 400 “Your printed messages and cassettes arrived. Your audio message ‘Paul’s Joy’ is very good. I’m copying your CDs onto cassettes and will pass them out at the local senior citizen’s home. Thank you for all you have done over the years. May God continue to bless your ministry.” — *Illinois*

Personal Word

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no political muscle to oppose him. The time for free speech and religious toleration is now about over. Who controls the microphones and all media publications? The resistance to anyone speaking otherwise than the liberal government voice will eventually be silenced just like the recent reporters who asked embarrassing questions.

We are obviously headed for a change. The Church of Jesus Christ needs to live by faith, trusting in His promise of preservation and deliverance. We have been told to pray for our national leaders. Such time should certainly match our criticism. We have no business trusting in “God and Country.” We are citizens of God’s heavenly Kingdom, not the product of mere men. We are not to take back America by human effort.

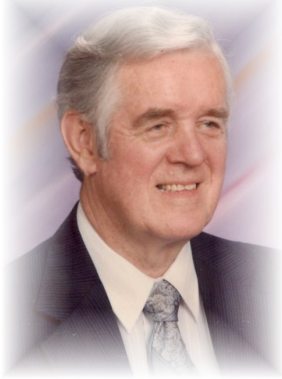
In the midst of our increasing chaos, let us hear God speak: “Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass. And He shall bring forth your righteousness, as the light, and your judgment as the noon day. Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him; fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way, of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; fret not yourself in any wise to do evil. For evil doers shall be cut off, but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth” (Ps. 37:5-9).

We Do Our Best!

Since we are doing the King’s business, we endeavor to be efficient and prompt as possible in our response to your varied requests. Our literature, CDs, and cassettes are mailed from Titusville, Florida. Our Bible study lessons are sent from Indian Harbor Beach, Florida. The remainder of the mailing is from Sebastian. These addresses are included on the material sent to you. We try hard to have all requests in the mail within a week of receiving the requests. If we cannot grant what you ask for, we do not respond. You know of our postage bill, so we try to be as efficient in mailing as possible. After all, it is the Lord’s money.

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Personal Word



A sudden unexpected phone call came to my Miami study. A radio station manager in Homestead, Florida, wanted to know if I was interested in placing my Miami program on his station, which was about 65 miles to the south. He proceeded to inform me that a used furniture dealer wanted my broadcast on his local station. Of course I was very much interested. This dealer met the Lord through our Miami broadcast and immediately wanted others to know of His Savior. When he went to be with the Lord, his wife carried on with the needed expenses. A wonderful happening at that funeral shall never be forgotten by this preacher. Immediately

after the funeral, Marian and I went to their home for dinner as was the custom of that area. I would say about 45 people there.

Immediately after eating, the widow got the attention of the crowd. She told of the sad condition her husband was in. He had an alcohol problem and was in poor physical condition. For the first time in his life he faced his sin as he listened to THE HOUR OF GRACE AND POWER. She continued to talk about the change and thanked me for giving him the gospel over the radio. She indicated her concern that every member of her family reach heaven. She turned to me and said, "Brother Porter, right now I want you to tell my family the same things you told my husband on your radio program." What delight on my part to open the Bible and give the message of God's grace, whereby God provided a Savior Who took our deserved punishment on Himself and rose from the dead to empower those who received His gift of repentance, faith, and everlasting life

Friend, I am just as thrilled with that message as I was at my first sermon in Benton, Tennessee, on that street corner. Today, my messages can be heard on our web-site around the world. We mail them to those on our CD and cassette list. Really, though, they are not my messages. They come direct from the Bible — chapter, verse, and in His chosen words. Please pray with me for the Holy Spirit to direct many to hear and read this God-given Truth. Never would we be where we are today independent of your financial gifts. I thank God for the motivation He has given you to be a part of what HE IS DOING.

Box 400

"I have just discovered *The Challenger*. Your message "Why Did Christ Die?" was an eye-opener. I have been betrayed by my loved ones, and I have been living in darkness for 37 years. I now know that Christ died for my sin. I am forgiven, and for that I give thanks and dedicate my life from this point that I first learned this fact. I am writing to see if you have a mailing list I can get on and to see if you have any other literature. I want the Bible Study Course mentioned in your paper. What is the literature sheet? Thanks for your time." — *an inmate*

No Reason to Wonder Why

Ever question why the USA is not mentioned in the latter days of biblical prophecy? We are not there. Our once great God-fearing nation no longer exists. God's name is seldom mentioned on a national level and his enemies work hard at removing any memory of His goodness to this nation. How much longer will our churches have the liberty to preach and teach the Word of God?

Friend, this liberty is already being challenged, and it is coming from the government. One legislative pressure is "Hate Crimes." The enemy is closing in on us. The church has lost its power and influence in America. Whose fault is that? I am afraid the issue of abortion is lost. Recognition of homosexuality is upon us. Look at our last-elected president's stand on these issues. Still he was elected because there were not enough people in this country to take a stand for biblical authority. God help us. Do you think for one moment God is going to tolerate such positions? If he does, He must apologize to the people of two cities destroyed by fire. If ever we are to preach and teach the Word of God, it is NOW, for the fire is soon going to fall upon America.

A Big Change

America faces one of the biggest changes in its history. Although President Obama declared such in his campaign for the White House, I doubt if this nation faced the reality of such a change. It seemed that his announcements meant nothing to our general population. He was honest and forthright about his recognition of gay relationships. Without hesitation He informed us of his position on abortion. (Fifty-three percent of the Roman Catholics voted for him!) We know the caliber of men who he will nominate for the Supreme Court. He publicly announced his social philosophy to a plumber. The total number voting in this election was about the same as the previous national election, despite the many thousands of new voters. Where were the rest who evidently did not vote this year?

The United States is the only nation that has survived its revolutionary origins without reverting to anarchy or totalitarianism. Will this change in cultural rule to another one be a turn in this direction? We will soon find out. Friend, we have made a sharp turn in this nation. I doubt seriously if anyone knows the extent of it.

Someone has said that the only real serious opposition our new president has will come from the Christians. The last election has done away with that problem, for we learned that Christians have

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Personal Word (continued from page 2)

Who Is the Most Important?

Many of you who receive this publication are very much interested in our ministry. Through this medium I shall endeavor to keep you informed. Our mailing process is improving as members of Heritage Baptist Church in Titusville gather to mail the requested literature. I handle the preparations of the cassettes in my office and mail the individual ones. Mike Eccleston mails both the bulk cassettes and CDs. Bob Williams prepares all the CDs and supervises the web-site. His professional assistance in this regard brings praise to the Lord from my heart. Bob and Marge are very helpful in the preparation and mailing of our literature. By the way, this part of our ministry is still on the increase. Wayne and Sandy Page mail the bulk *Challengers* each month to the various prisons across the USA. George and Mae Mitchell provide the addressing for this mailing. John Porter assists us on his computer. Who is the most important in this outreach for Jesus Christ? It is not me! I just produce the sermons. The others help to distribute them. Where does the big cost of postage come from? What about our printing cost, the purchase and maintaining of our equipment? As the mailing list of *The Challenger* increases, so does the cost of printing and mailing. Who takes care of that? It is plainly evident that large and small gifts keep us heralding forth the glorious gospel in all directions. In this ministry of proclaiming the Word of God, again I ask the question on the human level, who is most important?

Will You Help Us?

The need is great and the hour late. I pray as you read these lines, you will be one to say YES to the above question. We have a thrilling opportunity before us with little time to take advantage of it. We are reaching men and women in the USA prison system with the gospel. Their present position in life calls for some real soul-searching. Are they going to continue in their present state or allow God to transform their lives? Many men have wives who have divorced them. Many despair with very little hope for the future. They will either despair, become bitter, or cry out to God for divine intervention. We can get the Word to them in printed messages. Then we must depend upon the Holy Spirit to reveal their sin to their consciousness and introduce Jesus Christ to them.

Please pray for them. Many say their relatives have disowned them, and they hear from no one. Many letters say, PLEASE HELP ME. This burden is too heavy for just a few to carry. Pray for the Holy Spirit to invade their heart and mind from the Scriptures. There is no other source for the way of victory over sin. Pray for the prisoners themselves. Pray for us who are endeavoring to reach them with liberating Truth. Please pray!

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~ **WEB SITE** ~
thehourofgraceandpower.org

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*"Be you steadfast, unmovable, always
abounding in the work of the Lord . . .
You know your labor is not in vain
in the Lord" I Corinthians 15:58*

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