

Behold What Manner of Love!

Why it matters that God is the Father who adopts

A FEW DAYS

before his arrest and crucifixion, Jesus was walking out of the Jerusalem temple, when one of his disciples exclaimed, "Look,



Teacher, what wonderful stones and what wonderful buildings!" (Mark 13:1).

And he was right. The temple was simply stunning. Built of colossal blocks of masonry, faced with cream coloured marble and crowned with gold, it dominated the skyline of the holy city. It was one of the wonders of the ancient world.

"What wonderful stones! What wonderful buildings!"

Wonderful love!

John says exactly the same thing about the love of God: "See what wonderful love the Father has given to us, that we should

be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).

John stands back to look at the love of God the Father and he is simply stunned by what he sees – God the Father loves him with the same love with which he loves God the Son (John 17:26)! God's adopting love dominates John's thinking in the same way that the temple dominated Jerusalem.

This is salvation!

God the Father loves his adopted children with the same love with which he loves God the Son.



Salvation planned

It is salvation planned.

We appreciate a gift all the more when we know that it was carefully prepared. The thought that went into it, long before it was given to us, speaks volumes about the love that motivated the giver.

Well, think about this: "In love [God] predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:4-5). God the Father is necessarily the God of love, and it was true fatherly love that moved him to plan our salvation.

Salvation accomplished

In fact, not just to plan it... but also to carry it out. "God sent forth his Son...so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:4-5).

How appropriate that God the Father sent God the Son so

that we could be adopted. How fitting that we become sons through the work of *the* Son.

Salvation applied

The idea of adoption by God exposes the false idea that God is the Father of all people. Instead we are by nature "sons of disobedience... children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:1-3).

So the salvation planned by God the Father and accomplished by God the Son has to become part of our experience. This happens through the work of God the Holy Spirit.

And what an amazing work the Holy Spirit does! He brings us into the fellowship of the family of God: "You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons." And he causes us to pray like Jesus: by him "we cry, 'Abba! Father!'" (Romans 8:15).

Salvation consummated

But amazing as the planning, accomplishing and applying of salvation is, nothing will compare to its consummation.

This will happen when Jesus returns. On that great day God will completely redeem every aspect of his adopted children.

Our bodies as well as our hearts will be “conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers” (Romans 8:29).

Crowning privilege

Then, as God’s adopted sons, in the company of God’s unique Son, we will enter into the full enjoyment of an inheritance that will never be taken from us, that cannot be spoiled by sin, and of which we will never grow bored (1 Peter 1:4).

John Murray rightly said that adoption “is surely the apex of grace and privilege. It staggers imagination because of its amazing condescension and love. Eternity will not exhaust its marvel.”

Adoption as sons “is surely the apex of grace and privilege. It staggers imagination because of its amazing condescension and love. Eternity will not exhaust its marvel.”



Behold what manner of love!

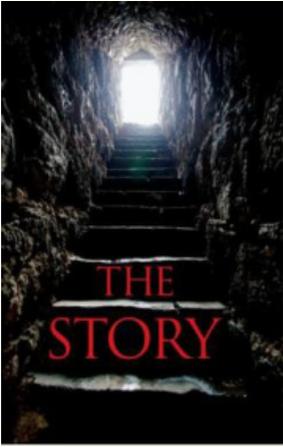
Come and learn about the adopting love of God the Father.

7 PM, third Sunday of each month.

Bailiesmills RP Church

We would like to invite you to accept a free copy of “The Story.”

A first-class historian interviews the key eyewitnesses and records their testimony concerning the man who turned the world upside down. His writings make up two Books of the Bible – Luke and Acts.



By reading them together we get drawn into the epic story of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, and then into the world of his early followers as Christianity spreads across the globe.

To obtain a free copy of this book, phone John on (028) 9263 9684, or contact him through the Bailiesmills website: bailiesmills.rpc.org.

Bailiesmills is a Bible-based, confessional and evangelical congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (also known as “the Covenanters”).

We meet for worship at 11.30 AM each Lord’s Day and at 7 PM on the first and third Sunday of the month. The church building is at 15 Drennan Road, BT27 6UT.

Drennan Road is on the A49, 4.0 miles from Lisburn, and 4.7 miles from Ballynahinch.

From Anahilt, take the Glebe Road. After 1.2 miles turn right onto the Ballykeel Road. After 0.3 miles turn left onto the Bailiesmills Road. At the end of the Bailiesmills Road turn left onto the A49. After 0.5 miles turn right onto the Drennan Road.

