

Christian Perspectives: Adopted into God's family

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Almost two years ago, my wife and I were in the car driving from Orangeville towards Arthur when we made a fateful decision that changed our lives and will continue to for the rest of our days.

We had talked about adoption for years but until now we'd never had a sense of peace or conviction from God that it was the time to move forward.

In the car that day, we made the decision to pursue adoption though we had absolutely no idea what it would look like. During the past two years, we've navigated the confusing and at times harrowing path of adoption - and we're not done yet!

We've completed the paperwork to adopt two children from Haiti and are waiting to hear from our adoption agency on a match.

Along the way, we've learned so much about God and our faith in Him. As we've sacrificed so much for these two children we haven't even met, we've grown to truly appreciate God's adoption of us as His children.

Galatians 4:4-7 says: "But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, 'Abba, Father.' Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir."

Adoption is costly. It has been for us and it was for God. We've spent countless hours, shed many tears and raised a hefty sum to pay for our adoption. We know from reading the stories of others that our journey is still only beginning.

We'll continue to sacrifice and struggle continually for our children as they (and us as well) adjust after they join our family.

Our sacrifices pale in comparison to what God sacrificed in order to adopt us as His children. We were once legally separated from God. His perfect justice and Holiness demanded payment for our sins yet He was willing to send His Son to die in our place. Through the sacrifice of His Son we are legally part of His family!

When our children come home from Haiti they'll legally be our children.

Legally, there will be no difference between our biological children and them. Just as they will be part of our family, God has legally adopted us into His family. When Paul wrote the book of Galatians the original audience understood adoption, it was a common practice in the Roman world.

In those times, all who were adopted had identical rights to any other child born naturally to the family. They gained the family name as well as a right to any inheritance. It's amazing to realize that we who have trusted in Christ to pay for our sins are sons and daughters of God - He sees us just as He sees His own Son Christ! His blood has paid the price of our sins and we've gained His righteousness. We also gain an inheritance both in this life and the life to come.

As sons and daughters of God we receive many spiritual blessings that He equips us with in this life. We also have promise of everlasting life in heaven with Him! Likewise, adoptive parents have the same rights and responsibilities as any natural parent. They have authority over their adopted children, it's their job to love them, care for them and to train, correct and discipline them. God

takes that job seriously and loves us perfectly.

Adoption is not for the faint of heart. Though we haven't yet met our children we love them deeply. Much of this is born from our sacrifice for them. How much more does our Heavenly Father love us? He who created us, watched us turn from Him and yet was willing to pay the ultimate price to have us become one of His children. If you've trusted in Christ know that you are deeply loved and are secure in an everlasting family.

Ephesians 1 sums it up well: "God decided in advance to adopt us into His own family by bringing us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure. So we praise God for the glorious grace He has poured out on us who belong to His dear Son. He is so rich in kindness and grace that He purchased our freedom with the blood of His Son and forgave our sins."