

## **Twice Saved: A Pattern of Adoption in Salvation.**

### ***Abstract.***

The act of adoption as experienced in the life of the “children of God” takes three forms: natural, national, and spiritual. As an orphaned child I have personally experienced, and clearly recall, my natural adoption by loving parents and the characteristics of that process that such an act demonstrate. The scriptures describe the similar act of God as he adopted the nation formed from Abraham and his sons. That nation turned away from God, rejecting the inheritance that was offered in His Name. Called as priests to evangelize the world, they kept their faith to themselves until it was ultimately replaced with a worldly system. God’s call to faith had been replaced by His adopted nation to a set of impossible laws. Jesus’ birth announced the offer of God’s grace to all people. That plan of grace had always been extended to those who would place their faith in Him (see Hebrews, chapter 11.) National adoption was fulfilled by spiritual adoption whereby anyone who would place their faith and trust in Jesus would be adopted into the family of God.

Much controversy surrounds the freedom that we have been given to accept that grace, and this paper will describe some of that controversy, and a somewhat unique solution to that problem that comes from my own experience with both natural and spiritual adoption, as well as my experience with physical science and Christian theology.

## **Twice Saved: A Pattern of Adoption in Salvation.**

*“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God -- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God”  
(John 1:12-13, NIV.)*

### ***I. Natural Adoption***

As a child, I was an orphan.

I am not aware of the circumstances that separated me from my parents at birth, but their lack of contact during those orphan years made it very clear to this young child that he was neither loved nor wanted. I resided in a foster home and recall little about it, other than some specific acts of abuse and the many hours of hiding in a hole under the front porch among the insects and spiders that I greatly feared, though less than the emotional and physical abuse I received at the hands of those who were charged with my care. Little did I know that God was already forming a plan for my salvation from this experience. He had placed in the hearts of a young couple a desire to adopt a son, and on May 9, 1955, at the age of four, I was picked up at a hospital, having for a fifth time recovered from dehydration, malnutrition and pneumonia, by a some strangers who clearly identified themselves as my new, and quite permanent, parents.

I had never before experienced love, and I was receiving it unconditionally from people who did not even know me. I had never experienced peace, and found myself immersed in it. I had never known what it was to receive a gift, and found great joy in even the smallest trinkets and wrapping papers. My new father had also given me his name, a name that could not be taken away by him or any other authority; and I would be known by that name for the rest of my life. Likewise, I was included in the inheritance of his estate, another privilege that no one could take away.

It is said that shortly after my adoption, the social worker responsible for the placement, visited our home to see how this new family was coping with the change. At some point in the meeting I was prompted to wrap my arms around my father's leg and declare, "This is my father!", bringing tears to everyone in the room. As a child and youth I remained obedient and respectful towards my parents because I understood the gift of life they had given me.

Thus begins a testimony that has been repeated in the life of thousands upon thousands of people who experienced the joy of natural adoption. It is a testimony that I have often used to share the gospel of Jesus Christ from the unique comparison that natural adoption presents when compared with the words of Paul as written in his epistle to the Romans as he describes spiritual adoption: "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved" (Romans 8:23-24, NIV.)

As we approach the doctrine of adoption as a believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ, we should note that there are three related forms, or applications, of this act that we can know and understand. They are (1) natural adoption, (2) national adoption, and (3) spiritual adoption.<sup>1</sup> "Adoption" refers to the act "to take into one's family through legal means and raise as one's own child."<sup>2</sup> The scriptural doctrines of adoption are also referred to as the doctrines of election, or "divine election," and are often intermingled with the doctrines of predestination and free will.

Natural adoption refers to the adoption of a person into the natural family of another. The scripture records several instances of natural adoption. For example,

“Mordecai had a cousin named Hadassah, whom he had brought up because she had neither father nor mother. This girl, who was also known as Esther, was lovely in form and features, and Mordecai had taken her as his own daughter when her father and mother died” (Esther 2:7, NIV.) The adoption of Moses by the Egyptian Pharaoh is recorded in Exodus 2:10. “Near Eastern literature, such as the Code of Hammurabi, illustrates adoption laws, but the Bible contains no law showing the process, rights, or responsibilities involved in adoption.”<sup>3</sup> However, the application of natural adoption is relatively consistent in the world’s cultures, and it provides a type for the analysis of national and spiritual adoption as described in the scriptures.

Several characteristics of natural adoption may be noted as they will apply to national and spiritual adoption.

1. Adoption involves two parties: the adopter and the adopted. Adoption is initiated by the decision of an adopter and is under his/her authority. The adopted comes under the authority of the adopter.
2. The adopted is given the name of the adopter. The adopted will always be identified with the adopter. (See Numbers 6:27.)
3. The adopted is made part of the family of the adopter.
4. In most cultures, the adopted takes part in the inheritance of the adopter. Under the laws of most states in America, that inheritance cannot be revoked.
5. Likewise, in most cultures, the adopted cannot be cast out of the family. This is consistent with the laws on inheritance just described. For example, a father and mother can disown a natural child, but not one that has been legally adopted.

6. The experience of my natural adoption made me proud of my name and my relationship to my father. Our response to spiritual adoption should be the same. (See Luke 9:26.)
7. As a child and youth, my remembrance of my life before adoption motivated me to strive to be obedient to my parents and to attempt to never disappoint them. Our response to spiritual adoption should be the same. (See 2 Cor. 9:13.)

## ***II. The Progression from National to Spiritual Adoption***

National adoption is described in many places in the scripture and always refers to God's election of Israel as His own. For example, Moses, who had first hand experience of his natural adoption by the Pharaoh of Egypt, was led by God to "Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the LORD says: Israel is my firstborn son, and I told you, Let my son go, so he may worship me'" (Exodus 4:22-23, NIV.) God, was acting as the adopter as he chose Israel as His "firstborn son" to be the adopted. God called Abraham, promising that through him a great nation would come; a nation that would bless the entire world. God called the nation to a special purpose: "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation" (Exodus 19:6, KJV.) However, the Nation of Israel was subject to the covenant with Abraham: a covenant based upon obedience (the old covenant) rather than on grace (the new covenant.)

As illustrated by the natural adoption of Israel, the purpose for God's election is for the commitment to service of the elect in His name. "Election is for service. This is not to ignore the fact that it carries with it a privilege. For in the service of God is man's supreme privilege and honor."<sup>4</sup>

Unable to fulfill the promise of obedience that God demanded, Israel wandered away from God, demonstrating that a salvation based upon keeping the law was impossible. Many scriptures describe this break between God and Israel. Consider a prophesy of Jeremiah:

"I myself said, "How gladly would I treat you like sons and give you a desirable land, the most beautiful inheritance of any nation.' I thought you would call me 'Father' and not turn away from following me. But like a woman unfaithful to her husband, so you have been unfaithful to me, O house of Israel," declares the LORD (Jer. 3:19-20.)

Hosea prophesied of the Lord's response to this rejection of God by Israel:

After she had weaned Lo-Ruhamah, Gomer had another son. Then the LORD said, "Call him Lo-Ammi, for you are not my people, and I am not your God.(Hosea 1:8-9, NIV.)

Finally, Ezekial's prophesy (Ezekial 10:18) described the glory of the Lord departing from the temple, and for the first time since the Hebrews left Egypt, the Lord's demonstrated presence in the pillar of fire and cloud was gone. Never again would the fire come and consume the sacrifice. The glory of the Lord did not appear, and no prophet was heard for four-hundred years until the glory came back again to some shepherds on a hillside and through the proclamation of angels, announced the birth of the Christ child, through whom all people could be saved. As God had chosen Israel to receive the adoption as sons, God was extending that offer to the whole world through Jesus. Paul describes this transfer of God's adoption covenant in his epistle to the Romans:

For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race, the people of Israel. Theirs is the adoption as sons; theirs the divine glory, the covenants, the receiving of the law, the temple worship and the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen. It is not as though God's word had

failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." In other words, it is not the natural children who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring (Romans 9:3-8, NIV.)

Paul defines the children of God as the “children of the promise” made to Abraham rather than as his natural children. The result of this promise is God’s spiritual adoption of all who believe on His Name and respond to Him in true faith.

“Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs -- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed” (Rom 8:14-19, NIV)

Some would argue that God rejected all of Israel, and accepted the Church as His adopted children, placing at odds the Christian Church and the Jewish Nation. “It was not simply that the Church and the Synagogue were two rival bodies, each claiming to be the People of God, but that the Church affirmed as confidently as the Synagogue that Israel was the Chosen People, but that the Church was the true Israel in accordance with the teachings of the Old Testament itself.”<sup>5</sup> God’s act of salvation through Jesus Christ opened the door of adoption to all who would place their faith and trust in Him, including “salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1:16, KJV.)

### ***III. Spiritual Adoption and Free Will.***

Just as natural adoption serves as a type for national adoption, this national adoption serves as a type for spiritual adoption. Spiritual adoption is described in the

New Testament as God's choosing all of the faithful as His children, regardless of their ancestry; either Jew or gentile. Paul describes spiritual adoption in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, "But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth" (2:23, NIV.) Other references to this adoption are in Romans 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; 1 Thessalonians 1:4, and 2 Peter 1:10. The interpretation of these verses, "along with other related ideas such as predestination and forordination, has been the subject of great debate in the history of the church,"<sup>6</sup> a debate that we will briefly review.

"Paul uses the word adoption to describe the believer's relationship to God. Adoption in New Testament times was very significant. Adoption does not mean the same today as it did in the Roman world. In the New Testament, it meant more than taking an orphan child into a family. The literal meaning of the Greek word is "son placing."<sup>7</sup>

The adopting father had the authority of life and death over the adopted child. Also, the adopted child was literally purchased from the natural parent by the adopting parent. This type can be seen in many verses that describe how we, as the elect, were "bought with a price" (1 Cor. 6:20.) A beautiful example of this redemption can be found in the Revelation of John: "And they sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation'" (5:9, NIV.)

There is little debate over whether or not those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ are adopted as God's sons. On this singular fact, the scriptures are clear and most well-known theologians are in agreement. For example, "if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the

body, you will live because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God” (Romans 8:13-14, NIV) and “now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:25-26.) John relates the spiritual adoption to the natural when he states that “all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God -- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God” (1 John 1:12-13, NIV.)

The conflict in opinion arises when one tries to affirm the part that the adopted takes in the act of spiritual adoption. Ask any theologian the question, “What part does the person’s will play in the adoption process?” The answers to that question are extremely varied as one attempts to reconcile God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom of choice in that adoption process. Consider Sartre who states, “If God exists then the future is determined and I am not free. I am free; therefore God does not exist.”<sup>8</sup> Jonathan Edwards wrote, “If every event has a cause, then so do free human choices. God is the First Cause of everything; therefore God must be the cause of our free choices.”<sup>9</sup> Sartre used freedom to eliminate God, and Edwards used God to eliminate freedom.<sup>10</sup>

Some theologians feel that for God to be sovereign, the human will can play no part in the salvation decision because God predestined or forordained that decision. Adherents to this view include well-known theologians such as Baptists John Gill and Charles H. Spurgeon. Taken to the extreme, this viewpoint removes human involvement in the salvation process as the person is given no choice in the decision since the Sovereign God already ordained that decision. If this is the case, there is no point in evangelism. Some churches fail to evangelize for this very reason. I am surprised that

this viewpoint is rather recent and adamantly defended. This phenomena in modern theology presents a paradox. Why, when we are more knowledgeable of the scriptures and God's creation, have we chosen to more firmly ignore that knowledge and bury our heads in the sand of a fundamentally non-scriptural tradition? This "no free-will" tradition is based upon human reason when applied to an understanding of God's sovereignty rather than on research of the Holy Scriptures. I will defend this point shortly.

When the viewpoint that God dictates our actions is taken to the extreme, we become free of responsibility for our actions. We become defined as automatons: robots; marionettes driven entirely by the strings of the master puppeteer. I've been reduced to a muppet. As an automaton, if I decide to pull out a gun and shoot you dead, it was ultimately God's will that you die, for He has the power to stop the bullet. This removes my responsibility for the act. How many horrific acts of wanton terrorism and violence have been enacted in "God's name" using this philosophy? Today we see this opinion in the defense of much of the terrorism around the world. This view that we have no choice in the matter of salvation is neither historically sound, nor is it part of the mainstream of current Christian theology.

"The early church fathers generally adhered to a belief in which the role and activity of the human will were deemed highly significant in the process of bringing about salvation. Among the early church theologians it was affirmed that electing grace was the stimulation of the powers of reason existent in humans that effected their salvation."<sup>11</sup>

The great reformers, Luther and Zwingli affirmed the active role that mankind takes in the decision, with Luther expressing that even that choice is a gift of God's grace. That is, humans have a choice. This viewpoint affirms that God has offered salvation to all

who would place their faith in Him through Jesus Christ, and mankind has the choice to reject that offer.

“Man should realize that in regard to his money and possession he has a right to use them, or do or to leave undone, according to his own “free will” - though that very “free will” is overruled by the free will of God alone, according to his own pleasure. However, with regard to God and in all that bears on salvation or damnation he has no “free will,” but is captive, prisoner and bond-slave, either to the will of God, or to the will of Satan.<sup>12</sup>

When Luther refers to being captive to the will of God, or of Satan, he is stating that those who do not have faith in God have no choice but to sin because they are out of His will.

“The scripture sets before us a man who is not only bound, wretched, captive, sick and dead, but who, through the operation of Satan his lord, adds to his other miseries that of blindness, so that he believes himself to be free, happy, possessed of liberty and ability, whole, and alive.<sup>13</sup>

The view of the well-respected behavioral psychologist, B.F. Skinner, illustrates some of the blindness to the gospel that Luther describes. “If civilization is to survive we can no longer afford the rhetoric of freedom. It no longer works. All the incentives to get people to behave properly in freedom no longer function. Heaven does not attract and Hell does not threaten.”<sup>14</sup>

These views necessitate that those who have been adopted as children of God have the mission to carry the gospel message to the lost world so that more can be saved. Modern theologians such as Dwight L. Moody and Billy Graham are practitioners of this latter view. “Thus by Christ’s incarnation and his offering himself for the sin of others, God (says Paul) ‘Condemned sin in the flesh’ (Romans 8:3) - condemned it in human nature as a whole - and inaugurated the new age of spiritual freedom, the age, we may say, of the

new covenant.”<sup>15</sup>

Consider some of the following opinions concerning the freedom of choice when applied to adoption.

Some contend that God, as sovereign, can exercise that right of sovereignty by allowing man’s freedom. However, His supremacy allows man only a certain degree of freedom. “By the nature of the case, man’s actions would be bounded in many ways and only exercised within the sphere allotted to him by his Creator. To allow man such a measure of self-determination is something which only a great and omnipotent God would do. The greater and more supreme He is (coupled with the greatness of His grace), the more He would willingly grant man such restricted freedom of action.”<sup>16</sup>

Some see adoption as freedom or liberation from self-centeredness.

“When the Christian doctrines are rightly interpreted, they bear witness to the gospel of freedom. Their intent is to speak of God not as the enemy, but as the foundation of authentic human freedom. . . . Persons are released from their bondage of self-centeredness, self-righteousness, self-hatred, hopelessness and indifference. . . . We are called to practice and promote the new freedom in Christ in every domain of life. True liberation is comprehensive. It is political, cultural, and ecological as well.”<sup>17</sup>

Somewhere in the middle of this theological spectrum are those who affirm that the gospel message is compelling. That is, human choice is removed from the equation by a person’s inability to resist the Holy Spirit when truth is heard and understood. This invasion of the inner-being was the basis for John Calvin’s system of theology. Some disagree: “Irresistible force used by God on his free creatures would be a violation of both the charity of God and the dignity of humans. God is Love. True love never forces itself on anyone.”<sup>18</sup> “Merely to override a human will . . . would be for Him [God] useless. He cannot ravish. He can only woo.”<sup>19</sup>

There are few points in history where this conflict was more evident than in the First Great Awakening that took place in America in the late sixteenth century. The three leaders of this great awakening, George Whitefield, John Wesley, and Jonathan Edwards agreed on the necessity of evangelism and salvation. Their combined efforts brought about one of the most exciting historical periods in the Christian church in America. However, these three great preachers significantly disagreed on the freedom of the sinner's response. Whitefield held the reformed (Luther/Zwingli) view while Wesley was more in line with Calvin. Jonathan Edwards held that we are not merely passive in our response, nor is God, but rather that in the decision for adoption, man does all and God does all. Grace does not overpower the will: it releases the will so that we can respond through faith. However, Edwards still held that our released response is always to accept the gospel message, not through coercion, but through the irresistible call of truth.

This controversy has been exhaustively investigated by many writers, both theologians and laymen alike. There are many excellent and well-respected theologians and preachers from Augustine to Billy Graham who deserve to have their positions stated, but to do so will only add one more tome to the literature.

#### ***IV. God's Sovereignty Over Time and Space.***

In my investigation of the many viewpoints on adoption, I have uncovered a common theme that runs through *all* of the positions that present a conflict between the sovereignty of God and mankind's freedom of choice. These positions all affirm that God works through (and is limited by) the fabric of linear time and space as we know, understand, and experience it. They describe a God who walks beside us through time. For example, I do not know what will happen tomorrow because I have not yet seen it.

These “conflict” positions would argue that God knows what will happen tomorrow only because he is omniscient and thus knows the future while he yet resides with us in our current time. I contend that God created time as we know and understand it when he created the physical universe within which we reside. C.S. Lewis, the renowned British author who penned several texts on apologetics, held a similar view. “Although his works gained little attention during his lifetime, since his death in 1963, he has been recognized as a foremost spokesman for the view that each person’s decision is known from eternity, but not to the individual until the moment of salvation.”<sup>20</sup> Lewis, in his fantasy series, The Chronicles of Narnia, illustrated in an allegorical manner the independence of the spiritual time-space to that of creation when his use of “world time” and “Narnia time” are compared. From God’s heavenly position of eternity, He has already seen my acceptance of Him in faith before my confession was made. He has already heard those prayers that I will pray tomorrow. C.S. Lewis states, “My free act contributes to the cosmic shape. That contribution is made in eternity, or ‘before all worlds’; but my consciousness of contributing reaches me at a particular point in the time series.”<sup>21</sup>

Hyper-Calvinists need read no further, as what follows could be extremely hazardous to your theology. My position is neither radical nor is it new, but my explanation of it might be considered by some lesser-read students and theologians as such, and will require of them a radical shift in some very firmly held paradigms.

Let’s go back to the Summer of 1966. Locked deeply into the race for space, our American scientists and engineers were delving into new concepts of time and space, defining all of the properties of the universe in terms of general relativity and quantum

mechanics. During this period N.A.S.A. sent a team of astronauts to the moon orbit and back. Upon their arrival home, their chronometers were consistently indicating a time different than those on the ground. The astronauts had, while traveling, experienced more passage of time (though only a few milliseconds) than those of us left on earth. Many engineers were befuddled and the theologians were aghast. Albert Einstein would have been laughing at all of us. As a young physics major and budding Christian, I was struck as if with a bolt of lightening by a theophanically illuminated understanding of the awesome wonder of our eternal God. That one experience alone did more to solidify my understanding of my response to the gospel than any other I had yet encountered, for while many were scrambling to explain the time difference, I fully understood the laws of physics that caused it and the theological implications it presented.

What does physics have to do with God's sovereignty in adoption and mankind's freedom to choose it? It has everything to do with that relationship where eternity is considered. Albert Einstein maintained that time was a *physical* property and the rate of its passing is related to the mass and energy of the object experiencing it. He expressed this relationship using the equation,  $E = mc^2$ . That is, the amount of energy absorbed or expended by an object is the product of its mass times the square of its speed of acceleration. If a body of a constant mass is accelerated (as were the astronauts), and it absorbs or expends no energy (as the astronauts), then the time it experiences has to change. That is, time as we know it, is as Einstein hypothesized: is a *physical* property that God created. I consequently assert that God is no more limited by our chronology than he is by our physical existence. God is eternal. God sees all of the time for all of the ages of creation as if it were in the palm of His mighty hand. God said "'I am the Alpha

and the Omega ... who is, and who was, and who is to come" (Revelation 1:8, NIV.) He did not say, "I *was* the Alpha and *will be* the Omega." He is simply the "I Am," and by residing outside of our time frame in the realm of the Spirit, He knows the sin I will commit tomorrow because He is now there. By His grace He still loves me as a Father loves His child, despite my unfaithfulness.

If we remove God's dependence on the space-time relationship of this creation, we can see the doctrine of adoption from an entirely different paradigm. God's independence of what we might call "creation time" presents a new and enlightening look at any doctrine that involves God's eternity and sovereignty such as predestination, (God knows my "destiny" because He already sees it), and Old-Testament Christology (Jesus, as Lord, stepped into history prior to His birth.)

This theological position of God's eternity goes back to the philosophy of Plato, and has its adherents and its opponents. Consider this direct argument presented by Clark Pinnock:

"Perhaps if we say that God is timeless, we can have both sovereignty and freedom, immutability and change. Alas, nothing is gained by making this move. Bringing Plato's view of time into theology only succeeds in making things worse. On one hand, how is a timeless God supposed to act the way the Biblical God is said to act? A timeless being cannot deliberate or anticipate or remember. It cannot do anything or respond to anything."<sup>22</sup>

I contend that there is a difference between "timeless" and "eternal." The apostle Peter states, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day" (2 Peter 3:8, NIV.) I am satisfied to state that I do not fully understand the nature of God's personal time frame, but scripture is clear that it is independent from our own. The scripture does describe a God who acts

in both our time and His. Scripture does not rob God of actions that act in time. God can “deliberate or anticipate or remember” as Pinnock argues, and I would suggest that the astute reader research the original meaning of those words when used of God in the scriptures.

#### ***V. Concluding Testimony.***

Determining the truth concerning the freedom of choice in adoption is, indeed, a complex and winding path that can take us in many directions. However, I have experienced both the natural adoption of my earthly father, and the spiritual adoption of my heavenly father. As I placed myself unabashedly under the authority of my adopted worldly father, I could and did also place myself unabashedly under the authority of my Heavenly Father and again, when prompted, lift my hands to Him and declare, “This is my Father!” I thought I had known love, but now came to receive and understand a love that surpasses all that this world can ever offer me. I thought I had known peace, but now came to receive and understand a peace that gives me stability and strength in the midst of any storm. I thought I had known what it was to give and receive gifts, but the gifts given to me by my Heavenly Father surpass anything I could have ever imagined. Like my adopted father, my Heavenly Father gave me his name, Christian, and I will be known by that name for the rest of eternity. I don’t find it hard to seek obedience to my Heavenly Father, since I love Him, and I understand that to be separated from Him would be to return to the orphanage; to return to that hole under the porch, surrounded by insects and spiders, separated from His love. But, just as my adopted father sealed the promise of his commitment to me in an adoption hearing, my Heavenly Father sealed His promise with the Holy Spirit: that I am His child forever. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, “I know

whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim. 1:12, KJV.) His Love for me will never end. The peace He gives will always be there, helping me through times of trouble. The gifts he has given me will never stop coming.

I praise God for all that He has given me, and all that He has done for me. I want most for all those who will hear my voice or read my written words to know the same love, the same peace, and the same joy that I have received. I am convinced that each of us, as God’s adopted children, are ministers of the gospel, called to share His love and His Word with one another and with a world full of orphans who are as I was, dehydrated, malnourished and suffering. We have an opportunity to be obedient to God’s call, and I encourage each of us to become involved in this ministry by looking for every opportunity to love the orphans of this world so that they too can be adopted into God’s family.

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<sup>19</sup> Lewis, C.S. (1961). The Screwtape Letters. New York: McMillan. p. 38.

<sup>20</sup> McWilliams, Warren. (1991, Summer). Predestination: Time and Space. Biblical  
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<sup>21</sup> Lewis, C.S. (1960). Miracles: A Preliminary Study. New York: MacMillan and Co.  
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<sup>22</sup> Pinnock, Clark. (1986). God Limits His Knowledge. Predestination and Free Will.  
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