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**WEEK 3**





week three

# You are Adopted by God



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# Overview

This week, we're discussing what it means to be adopted by God. To be adopted by Him is more than just acceptance - it means we're brought into God's family, the Church. Being part of God's family should shape our personal relationship with Him. The Church is where we grow, encourage one another, and live out our faith together. Through baptism, communion, and church membership, we celebrate our identity in Christ and commit to following Him alongside others. Understanding these practices helps us take next steps in faith, deepening both our connection to God and our place in His family.

## Teaching

### Section 1: The Biblical Concept of Church

The Church isn't just a building or a Sunday gathering—**it's the people who follow Jesus**. The Bible gives us several pictures of what the Church is:

- **The Body of Christ** – Jesus is the head, and we are the body, each with a unique role (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).
- **A Royal Priesthood** – Every believer has direct access to God and is called to share His love (1 Peter 2:9).
- **The Temple of God** – God's Spirit lives within His people, showing His presence to the world (1 Corinthians 3:16).
- **The Family of God** – When we follow Jesus, we are adopted into God's family, where we love and support each other (John 1:12-13).

This matters because the Church is a **living community** where we belong, grow, and live out our faith together. Through the Church, we are united, empowered, and sent out to share God's love with the world.



*When you hear the word “church”, what comes to mind? How does this teaching change or expand your understanding of what the Church is?*

*The Bible describes the Church as a body with many parts, each with a role. What are some ways you think people can contribute to the Church, even if they’re new to faith?*

*The Church is also called God’s family. How does the idea of being part of a spiritual family make you feel? What are some ways a church community can support one another like a family?*

## Section 2: Growing in Community

Being part of the Church is more than attending services—it’s about growing in authentic community. The early Church in Acts 2:42 was devoted to learning, sharing life, and praying together. A Gospel Community is a group of people committed to following Jesus together, helping each other grow in faith and show God’s love to the world. When we invest in community, we grow in faith, build deep friendships, and become part of something bigger than ourselves. **It’s not just about what we get, but how we love, serve, and reflect Jesus together.**

### Five key characteristics of a Gospel Community:

- **Centered on Jesus** – It’s not just a social group; it’s about learning who Jesus is and letting His love shape our lives.
- **Built on real relationships** – A place to be real, share joys and struggles, and support one another.
- **Encouraging and accountable** – We challenge each other to grow and become more like Christ.
- **Living on mission together** – Sharing our faith and serving others as we show God’s love.
- **Committed to prayer and growth** – Seeking God together and deepening our understanding of His Word.

*What steps can you take to grow deeper in relationships with others in your Church?*

## Section 3: Baptism and Communion

Baptism and communion are two important practices in the Church that symbolize our faith in Jesus. Baptism is a one-time act that publicly declares our faith, representing our unity with Christ in His death and resurrection. Communion is an ongoing practice that reminds us of Jesus' sacrifice, taken with reverence to remember, proclaim the gospel, and reflect on our relationship with God. Both are commands from Jesus that help strengthen our faith and connection to Him. It's important to note - neither of these practices are a requirement for salvation.

### Key Points:

#### Baptism:

- Baptism is an outward sign of an inward reality, symbolizing our unity with Jesus in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:4).
- Baptism is for those who have personally placed their faith in Jesus. It's a response to salvation, not a requirement for it (Ephesians 2:8-9).
- Why do we get baptized?
  - ◊ Jesus commands it (Matthew 28:19).
  - ◊ It's a public declaration of faith, showing that we belong to Jesus.
  - ◊ It identifies us with Christ and His Church.



## Key Points:

### Communion:

- Communion is a symbolic meal remembering Christ's sacrifice (1 Corinthians 11:24-25).
- Why do we take communion?
  - ◊ To remember Christ's death and resurrection.
  - ◊ To proclaim the gospel (1 Corinthians 11:26).
  - ◊ To examine our hearts and align with God (1 Corinthians 11:28).
  - ◊ To celebrate unity as the Church.

*If you've been baptized, how did it impact your faith journey? If you haven't, what questions do you have about taking this step?*





# Section 4: The What and Why of Church Membership

Spiritual growth doesn't happen alone—God designed us to grow in community. The Christian life is not meant to be lived in isolation; instead, the local church is where we are encouraged, challenged, and shaped in our faith. Through relationships in the church, we learn to love, serve, and grow together.

## Key Points:

- **We grow best in community.** Proverbs 27:17 reminds us, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”
- **Church membership is about commitment, not exclusivity.** It means intentionally placing ourselves in a community where we can be discipled and disciple others.
- **The Bible calls believers to gather regularly.** Hebrews 10:24-25 encourages us to meet together, spur one another on, and support each other in our faith.
- **Membership provides accountability and support.** It helps us take important steps like baptism, serving, joining a small group, and growing deeper in faith.
- **Take your next step.** Whether it's attending a baptism class, joining a small group, or simply connecting with others, find a way to grow in faith alongside others.



# Teaching Notes

As you watch the video, use this page to take notes.

# Practice and Reflection

This week, take some time to practice what you've learned and to spend time in reflection.

## Daily Reading & Prayer Plan

Each day includes a short passage from Scripture, a reflection question to help engage with the text, and prayer prompt. As you prepare to engage the Scripture daily, consider the following steps:

- 1. Read** - read the passage slowly - consider reading it 2-3 times, and reading it out loud at least once
- 2. Observe** - ask questions of the text. Who wrote this text? Who are they writing to? What's happening? Where is this happening? When? Write down your observations
- 3. Interpret** - based off the observations you just made, what is the intended meaning of this text?
- 4. Apply** - consider how you should respond to what you've read. Answer the reflection prompt provided if that's helpful
- 5. Pray** - thank God for what He's shown you and pray to faithfully live it out. Use the provided prayer prompts to guide you.

### Day 1: Ephesians 1:1-14

- Reflection Question: God's plan of adoption was set before the foundation of the world. His grace, lavished on us through Christ, is the foundation of our adoption as His children.
  
- Prayer: Thank you, Father, for choosing me before time began. Help me to understand the depth of Your love and grace that led to my adoption as Your child.



## **Day 2: Romans 8:1-17**

- Reflection Question: Our adoption comes through Christ's sacrifice and the work of the Holy Spirit. As children of God, we are heirs with Christ and share in His glory.
- Prayer: Jesus, thank You for making my adoption possible through Your sacrifice. I am grateful for the Holy Spirit, who assures me of my sonship. Help me live as a co-heir with Christ.

## **Day 3: Galatians 4:1-7**

- Reflection Question: Through Christ, we are no longer slaves but sons and daughters of God. The Spirit of God assures us of our adoption, giving us the confidence to call God, "Abba, Father."
- Prayer: Holy Spirit, thank You for confirming my identity as God's child. May I always have the boldness to approach my Father with confidence and affection.

## **Day 4: 1 John 3:1-12**

- Reflection Question: As adopted children of God, we are called to live as His children, displaying love and purity. Our new identity is a reflection of God's great love for us.
- Prayer: Thank You, Father, for the privilege of being called Your child. Help me live in a way that reflects Your love and purity, showing the world who I am in You.

### **Day 5: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21**

- Reflection Question: Being adopted into God's family means that we are a new creation in Christ. We are ambassadors for Christ, sharing the message of reconciliation with others.
- Prayer: Jesus, thank You for making me a new creation. Help me to live as an ambassador for You, sharing the message of reconciliation with the world.

### **Day 6: Colossians 3:1-17**

- Reflection Question: As God's children, we are called to put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Our new identity in Christ requires a transformed way of living.
- Prayer: Lord, help me to live according to my new identity in Christ. Help me to clothe myself with the virtues that reflect who I am as Your child, living in a way that honors You.

### **Day 7: 2 Corinthians 5:11-21**

- Reflection Question: Our adoption into God's family comes with a commission to share the message of reconciliation with the world. We are called to invite others into God's family through the gospel.
- Prayer: Father, thank You for entrusting me with the message of reconciliation. Help me to share the good news of adoption with others and invite them into Your family.



# Next Step Goal

Write a new next step goal. Remember, setting a “Next Step Goal” each week is a way to apply what you’ve learned and build habits that deepen your relationship with Him. Be sure to write a SMART goal: specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

## Writing Your Next Step Goal

1. Reflect: Think about what God is teaching you this week. Ask yourself:

- ◊ What is one way I can grow closer to God based on what I’ve learned? How can I spend time with God daily this week?
- ◊ Is there a specific area in my faith where I feel God is prompting me to take action?
- ◊ Is there an act of obedience I’ve been feeling called to take, like baptism, joining a group, or serving?
- ◊ How can I practice what I’ve learned in this week’s teaching?

2. Write Your SMART Goal: Use the space below to write your goal for the week.

3. Plan Your Steps: What do you need to do to accomplish this goal? Write down any practical steps or resources you’ll need.

# Community Reflection & Prayer

## Who's your community?

1. Identify the places/spaces in your life (home, church, school, work, neighborhood, etc.). Think of all the people within these spaces you interact with. Make a list of these people.
2. Who of these people can encourage you and help you to grow in your faith? Write a list of these names.
3. Choose one of these people to ask to meet you for coffee or a meal. Share what you're learning about God.

## Pray for your community

Take 10 minutes to pray for a few people in your community. Consider reaching out with an encouraging message or prayer. This is one way of actively engaging in your role as a family member in God's household.



# Final Reflection

As you complete this workbook, take some time to review your weekly reflections. Reflect on how God's love, salvation, and adoption have shaped your journey. What did you learn from these classes?

## Challenge:

Commit to at least one practice from this workbook to carry forward after this course—whether confession and repentance, Scripture meditation, community connection, or writing next step goals. Also challenge yourself to continue reading and praying daily - not because you have to, but because you have a desire to continue to know God and experience His love. Let these practices help you continue growing in your identity and confidence in Christ.