Ephesians 1:5 KJV
Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

…adoption was a kind of will. The adopted son became owner of the property, and the property could pass to a person that was by natural birth outside the family only by his being adopted. The adoption will was irrevocable and it was made in public. The term son and heir are interchangeable. The will of an adopter is irrevocable when it was duly executed. A adopter could never put away an adopted son. He may put away his real son on good grounds, but the adopted son has a stronger position than a son by birth, according to Greek and Roman law. There is the truth of the teaching in the Church epistles that shows that sons may be adopted but children may only be born. The two, adopted sons and children by birth, are complementary, but they must be understood separately before the full force of the whole truth which they combine to give can be comprehended.

The adopted son became as much a member of the family as if he had been born of the blood of the adopter, and he was invested with all the privileges of that family. And it was by this means of adoption that the succession was continued among the Caesars….

Adoption proper where according to Roman law the father had absolute control over his family having the same rights over his children as over his slaves. By this the child was deprived of the right to own property, and the father could inflict any punishment he thought fit, even to the extent of death penalty. He could sell his child into slavery or do with him as he liked.

In the case of the adoption of a son a legal ceremony took place in which the father went through the process of selling his child as a son to the *potestas* of the adopter. In other words, I have a child, under Roman law you want my child to be your son. You want to adopt him. So a legal ceremony takes place in which I go through the process of selling my child to you. This is what the scripture talks about when it says "bought with a price." My child is passed over completely to the *potestas* of the adopter. That is where I have a child who is not of legal age.

Now, there's another kind of adoption, when I have a child who is of legal age, and that's called adrogation. When the child to be adopted grows up to be an adult, he was adopted by the form called adrogation. The law demanded that the adopter should be at least 18 years older than the adopted. And the effect of adoption was fourfold:

(1) A Change of Family — The adopted person was transferred from one gens to another.

(2) A Change of Name — The adopted person acquired a new name, for he assumed the name of his adopter and modified his own name by the termination *ianus*. Thus, when Caius Octavius of the Octavian gens was adopted by Julius Caesar, he became Caius Julius Caesar Octavianus.

(3) A Change of Home.

(4) New Responsibilities and Privileges — While the adopted son may have suffered many losses, there were…these were far more than counterbalanced by his gains, for he received a new capacity to inherit. In the case of the adopter dying intestate (that is without a will), the adopted son acquired the right of succession, the right of dominion, lawful authority, the absolute power of authority in the family.

In Galatians Paul writes of "the child differing nothing from a slave," and goes on to say

"Thou art no longer a slave but a son." Paul also alludes to *tutelage* in Galatians where we have such phrases as "kept in word," "tutor to bring us to Christ," "under guardians and stewards," and "children held in bondage."

So far as the ceremony was concerned, the difference between the transferring of a son into slavery and his becoming a member of a family was very slight. In one case the adopter says: I claim this man as my slave. In the other: I claim this man as my son. The form was almost the same—the spirit that differed.

The apostle here in Ephesians uses as an illustration the Roman practice of legally adopting a child, and thus, not only bequeathing to him the material possessions of the one adopting, but also gives him his civil status. Thus, God takes a believing sinner, regenerates him, and by means of this makes him his child, a born one. Then he takes this child and places him in a legal position as an adult son, *huios*. We thus become joint heirs with Christ, having been raised to a civil status as adult sons in which we become heirs of God inheriting jointly with Christ all that he possesses as an heir of God by virtue of his sonship and work on the cross.

When a slave was appointed heir, although expressly emancipated by the will which gave him the inheritance, his freedom commenced not upon the making of the will, nor even immediately upon the death of the tester, but from the moment when he, the officially adopted son, took certain legal steps, which were described as entering upon the inheritance….

Now, the word "adoption" as I have taught you at length and told you everything I know about it, simply means He placed us.

And the word "children" in that verse — is the direct object of the adoption. It's adopted sonship. Really something.

And as you work this some interesting things manifest themselves: we are children of Abraham the Word says by adoption. Number two, Jesus Christ paid the price for our adoption. Number three, we are free born, free (not born)…freed slaves, emancipated slaves. Number four, we as sons of God are accepted by God by irrevocable adoption. Number five, we are born of seed.

When I put this all together, my heart stands in utter amazement, appreciation. And it is so big that God did such a wonderful thing for us, His sons and daughters today, that we were called like in Abraham, adopted him in Christ, we are freed slaves, freed *doulos*, *doulos* that are marked, but we are free. And He has irrevocably adopted us and in addition put seed in us. Five things He's given to every born-again believer. Wait until that hits you someday. Then you'll wonder why you're ever long-faced like a cow [audience laughter] or down in the mouth about anything, about anything. Then you'll see that the only reason we could ever be is either we do not know the Word or at the moment we are not believing what the Word says. Otherwise we would not be down; we'd always be up. For even in the midst of hell, Thou art there, the Word says. So in the midst of all the opportunities with which we could be confronted we still are what the Word of God says we are and we have what the Word of God says we have. And He put us into five major relationships with Him, predestined us. And He did this by Jesus Christ, and He did it to Himself.

> **Ephesians 1:5 Literal translation according to usage**
> And in love He marked us out beforehand unto Himself, even placed us as His adopted sons by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will.