



Adoption

A Place for Truth

Jeffrey Stivason, editor



ALLIANCE OF CONFESSING EVANGELICALS

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FROM WRATH TO LOVE

An Interview with Joel Beeke¹

Jonathan Master:² What does the New Testament mean when it talks about “adoption” by God?

Joel Beeke:³ The Bible talks about being adopted into the family of God, and being invested with all the privileges that belong to that family. A child adopted into a household should have all of the same rights, love, and privileges as children who are biological. In a similar way, when the New Testament speaks of adoption as sons of God, it means that through the blood of Christ, our elder brother, we are reckoned as children of God. Christ’s righteousness is imputed to us, so God judicially, forensically, can bring us into His family.

JM: Now, is it true (as some people will use the term) that *all people* are God’s children? If so, how does that differ from what you’re talking about when you describe adoption?

JB: All people are God’s children only in the sense of creation. He’s the Father of us all in that sense. But when it comes to re-creation, being born again, adoption is something that accrues to us when we are reborn, and the fruit of that is immediately faith and repentance and justification. We really can’t say that everyone is a child of God in a saving sense—that’s only for the children of God who have been born again, brought to faith and repentance. They are the ones adopted into the family of God.

JM: What are the benefits for understanding adoption in terms of our sanctification? How important is it for me, now born-again, to understand my adoption in order for me to live the Christian life?

JB: Once you understand that you’re not only justified (forgiven of your sins and having a right to eternal life), but also that you are

adopted into the family of God, then just like a child who's very grateful you want to please your Father, to live for Him. Sanctification is simply a living out of one's adoption and sonship.

There was a Puritan named Thomas Brooks who said "If you're a holy person, then you are made from a child of wrath to become a child of God and a child of love. From an heir of Hell you've become an heir of Heaven. And from a slave you've become a son." Once you realize that, you see, living wholly and solely to God just becomes something you desire to do. You grieve over every sin you commit, because every sin is really a contradiction of belonging to the family of God.

JM: Would you say that, in your counseling situations, people who are Christians don't understand the doctrine of adoption very well? Do you think it is something that requires further preaching, further explanation?

JB: Absolutely. Adoption and the intercession of Christ are probably to two most neglected doctrines of the Bible, even from a Reformed theological perspective. They've been so undermined and marginalized, yet they are actually primary doctrines. Some of the Puritans even argued that adoption could be regarded as a summary of all the benefits of salvation. Adoption is really the apex of salvation, and the Puritans argued that from Ephesians 1:5: "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children."

JM: It seems in the New Testament that adoption has both a present aspect and a future aspect, a hope of an inheritance to come (such as in Ephesians 1).

JB: Yes, and in eternity that adoption will be fully realized, with no need for sanctification. The curious thing about adoption is that it has got one foot into justification and the other in sanctification. Adoption is the immediate fruit of being justified, as we are brought into the family of God. Yet just like a child, we have to live out through the ups and downs, the obediences and disobediences. One day it will be perfect; we'll be perfect sons and have a perfect relationship with God forever.

SONS OF THE SON

An Interview with David Garner⁴

Jonathan Master: When it comes to the doctrine of adoption, why is it important to understand the specific background and meaning of the terms that are used?

David Garner:⁵ Paul does not choose words randomly. We believe that the Bible is entirely written by the Holy Spirit, and that the human authors are entirely guided by the Spirit (2 Pt. 1:20, 21). But even in the choosing of particular terms, it's important for us to understand their historical usage in order for us to understand what analogies, connections, and theological points the authors of Scripture are making by selecting those terms.

The term for adoption, *huiothesia*, is a fascinating term, rich with significance in imperial Rome. A Roman emperor, if he looked at his biological offspring and saw no qualified heir, he would adopt someone who was suitable in order to preserve his lineage. In other words, the notion of adoption in Paul's day was one of exaltation. In a sense, adoption was better than biological sonship because of the excellency, respect, and character associated with the one who was adopted. What's remarkable is that this is the term Paul uses for us, in view of the wonderfully glorious, all-satisfying work of Jesus Christ on our behalf; He makes us exalted sons.

JM: Along the same lines, how are the benefits we see in Greco-Roman culture paralleled in our own adoption as sons of God?

DG: To put it simply, the exalted function of adoption in first century Rome, when taken with the analogous way Paul uses it to describe the Gospel, drives us to Christ. As we look at the corruption and alienation caused by the Fall, we realize there's nothing excellent or

good about us. And yet adoption unveils for us the amazing depth and scope of God's amazing grace. He not only brings us into His kingdom as slaves or paupers or servants—which would be glorious in its own right—but actually gives us this exalted status as sons in His home. We are His covenant children; He is our God and Father.

JM: You've mentioned this already, but could you continue to draw out how adoption is connected to holiness?

DG: One of the things that's a bit confusing due to our western mindset is that we see adoption primarily as a legal and relational reality. While it is clearly those things, biblical adoption drives to the heart of our motivation for obedience. We are conformed into the image of Christ, both calling *and* enabling us to holiness through Christ's life-giving Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). The Father has made us His children, and because of that we are able, even compelled, to delight in obeying Him as His sons.

JM: It sounds like, if you were talking at a pastoral level with someone about the Christian life, you would tell them it is vitally important for them to understand their status as a son adopted by God.

DG: I certainly would. As we probe the depths of adoption, we are drawn to the glory and sweetness and splendor of Christ; we see the scope of His love and the efficacy of His work in ways that are gripping and life-changing. I would point someone to this status of adoption, though I would do so by pointing them to their union with the resurrected Son of God.

JM: While those of us in western society can understand the relational aspect of adoption, it seems that the inheritance aspect is disconnected. Could you explain a little more how adoption is tied to inheritance, particularly in the context in which Paul was writing?

DG: I would want to first tie it to our understanding of the covenantal structure of Scripture. The promise to Adam for obedience in the Garden was a relational status that exceeded the blessing of Eden itself. That covenantal structure continues through Scripture: the very goal of obedience which was failed by the First Adam was met

by the Second. What Christ attains for us is the full bounty of the glories and inheritance that God has set aside for His people.

We are not only co-heirs with Christ in His suffering, but also in His glory (Rom. 8:17). All of the glory that Christ attained in His life, death, and resurrection is given to us. And why? Because we are given Christ Himself. The Spirit is given to us as a pledge of that inheritance right now, and we will realize that inheritance in full on the last day (Eph. 1:13, 14).

JM: There are those who would argue that the Christian, understanding the richness of his or her own adoption, should naturally support adoption at a human level. Is there a legitimate connection there?

DG: I am struck by the courage and humility shown by those families who pursue orphan children (whether in the U.S. or abroad), bringing them into their homes and making them their own children. It is a vivid picture of grace and kindness and mercy, which surely resonates with Gospel reality. But I think the teaching which Paul has for us here takes us to an even richer understanding of adoption than the human sense. I don't think we are going to perceive the fullness of adoption by viewing it through our particular 21st century lens. Rather, I think we should look at the whole of our lives and identity by virtue of what God has given us in Christ Jesus. What we'll find, then, is an even greater motivation not only to adopting orphan children but for the exercise of faith in all areas of our lives.

THE SECURITY OF GOD'S FAMILY

Jeffrey Stivason⁶

In Isaiah 41:5-13, God teaches Israel about their spiritual security by contrasting it with the insecurity of the idolater. Idolaters are like orphans; they are fatherless and helpless. But the people of God, having been adopted into the family of God, enjoy a loving Father in whom they enjoy peace and security.

In verse 5 Isaiah says, "The coastlands have seen and are afraid." That raises an obvious question: What have they seen? If we skip ahead to chapter 44 we find our answer: the nations have seen the advent of Cyrus. They watch his power and might, and are terrified. What is their response? They run to the gods of their own making. But in running to their idols, they were really running to each other. They are rallying themselves because that is all they have! There is nowhere else to turn. As it says in chapter 41, verses 6 and 7:

Everyone helps his neighbor and says to his brother, "Be strong!" The craftsman strengthens the goldsmith, and he who smooths with the hammer him who strikes the anvil, saying of the soldering, "It is good"; and they strengthen it with nails so that it cannot be moved.

Now, think of it. This is a description of nations! Nations! Yet, they are nothing but spiritual orphans afraid in the dark. I couldn't help but think of the State of the Union speech that our President delivered in January 2012:

This nation is great because we built it together. This nation is great because we worked as a team. This nation is great because we get each other's backs. And if we hold fast to that truth, in this moment of trial, there is no challenge too great; no mission too hard. As long as we're joined in common purpose, as long as we maintain our common resolve, our journey moves forward, and our future is hopeful, and the

state of our union will always be strong.⁷

Many things may change over time, but the natural man will display the same self-confidence no matter the age. "Yet," says our heavenly Father to His people, "things are different for you." In verse 10 he says to them that they have no need to anxiously look about seeking for help. Why? Because, says God, "You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you." And then, "I will strengthen you, surely I will help you. Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

This also raises a question: What is the difference between the godless nations and Israel? After all, does not God Himself, in v. 14, call Israel a worm? In Job 25:6 (albeit from the lips of Bildad) the same comparison is used to illustrate the question: "How can a man be just with God?" The worm describes unjust men. This only serves to highlight the question. If the nations are lacking in justice and Israel is an unjust worm then what is the difference?

We are given something of an answer in the text. God upholds the right hand of Israel with His righteous right hand (vv. 10, 13). But the warmth of this expression does not relieve the tension. How can a righteous God take the hand of an unrighteous people? We need to think ahead to Isaiah 59:16-17. The prophet tells us that God "saw that there was no man, and was astonished that there was no one to intercede; then His own arm brought salvation to Him, and His righteousness upheld Him. He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head..."

The point of this text is clear: salvation is of the Lord. But this text has a striking way of putting it. Look at the end of verse 16, "Then His own arm brought salvation to Him, and *His righteousness upheld Him.*" Now, we might expect the text to say that God's righteousness upheld His people or them but this text says that God's righteousness upheld Him. What does that mean?

We might put it like this: if God's people were to be at peace with Him they would need to meet the righteous requirement of His law. But for that to happen they would need to be righteous themselves.

And, of course, they failed to meet that requirement. What is more, God saw that they had no intercessor, no mediator, no kinsman redeemer to plead their cause. If they were to be saved God would have to come among them and He would have to meet His own righteous requirement on their behalf.

Now we are in a position to understand Isaiah 59:16. God's own arm brought salvation because His righteousness upheld Him in the face of His own righteous requirement. He alone can meet His standard. But the question that comes immediately to mind is how does this help us? How does God's righteousness help us? Yes, God is able to live up to His own standard of righteousness but where does that leave me?

Look at Isaiah 61:10. The prophet writes, "I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with the garment of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness..." The image is beautiful. Our God comes clothed in a robe of His own righteousness that He might clothe His people in the same.

Clearly the prophet is looking ahead to Jesus. We are found in Jesus, not having a righteousness of our own derived from our obedience to God's law, but that which is through faith in Christ (Phil. 3:9). Christ not only upheld God's righteous standard but took the curse of disobedience upon Himself for every breach of it that in Him we might be found to have a righteousness not our own.

It is through the righteousness of Christ that God takes us by the hand and speaks to us as a Father:

...fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand (Isa. 41:10).

The people of God have no need of idols; they have a Father. And what better picture of security is there but a father holding his child's hand? Such is the security of every believer in God's family.

THE RICHES OF ADOPTION

Stephen Untbank⁸

In the treasure chest of the Gospel, many have argued that our adoption really is the brightest and most beautiful of gems contained in all that Christ accomplished for us. But even taking a closer look at that particular gem we see that adoption itself has many different facets which, when examined and turned in the light, gives us even greater awareness and delight in our God who saves.

The puritan Thomas Watson remarked that “we have enough in us to move God to correct us, but nothing to move him to adopt us.” This is true enough, but when seen against the backdrop of Imperial Roman adoption practices, I think we can see with even brighter clarity the beauty of his statement. In fact, Paul most likely intended this contrast to be seen in that he only used the metaphor of adoption when writing to churches under the rule of Roman law (Gal. 4:5; Rom. 8:15, 23; 9:4; Eph. 1:5).⁹ It was during Paul’s own lifetime where adoption among Roman emperors actually became the norm. An emperor, rather than allowing the crown to succeed to one of his own biological sons, would instead adopt a man not related to him whom he thought to be better equipped to lead and rule the empire.

This purposeful and intentional practice to bypass one’s own biological son in order to take someone who is not your son, making him to become the rightful heir of the Roman empire, has clear Gospel implications—implications which Paul no doubt made use of. For instance, Paul makes it abundantly clear that our sonship under God is not by right or something inherent in us. In Galatians 4 he tells us that before becoming believers we were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. It was only later when “God sent

forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons" (Gal. 4:3-5).

He says the same thing, just more sharply, in his letter to the Ephesians. Before salvation all people are "sons of disobedience" and "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. 2:1,3). But the grace of the Gospel in Jesus Christ is that "in love [the Father] predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ" (Eph. 1:5).

What we see then is that Paul describes our salvation through the metaphor of adoption. On the one hand, we see quite clearly how God forsook His own Son on the cross in order to adopt a people otherwise not His own. But on a deeper level we also see an ironic beauty in Paul's using this metaphor. If in the Roman kingdom the emperor would adopt a son because his own son was unfit to rule, in the Heavenly Kingdom God would adopt unfit and unqualified people to become sons through the forsaking of the most qualified and glorious Son. What grace!

And the fullness of that beauty still awaits us as we look forward to the consummation of our adoption. Paul never separates our adoption as God's sons from our union in the Son. In Romans 8 Paul is unpacking the current reality of our union in Christ, namely our sufferings and failings in a fallen world. In fact, Paul connects our current sufferings as part and parcel of what it means to be adopted in Christ. "You have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs— heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."

Do you notice that last line? Our adoption now is evidenced by enduring suffering with him, with Christ. We tend to highlight and focus on all the wonderful blessings we receive in Christ, but Paul reminds us that one of those blessings, one of those riches we receive as heirs now, is suffering. But notice he doesn't end there. Our suffering now as children of God and fellow heirs with Christ is used by God and is pointing us forward to the fullness and consummation

of our adoption, namely our glory and reign with Christ. "Do you not know that we are to judge angels" (1 Cor. 6:3)?

Indeed Paul goes on to say that in our suffering we "groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons." In other words, we're still looking forward to the fulfillment of what has already been inaugurated now, the day in which suffering will end and we will be fully "conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom. 8:29).

Thomas Watson was right, we certainly don't have enough in us to move God to adopt us. But Paul is clear (and a bit more profound): "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things"(Rom. 8:32)? Our salvation in Christ has secured for us wonderful blessings, but perhaps our adoption in Him is the richest of all.

SOME THOUGHTS ON
BELONGING TO GOD'S FAMILY

*John Gerstner*¹⁰

The Devil's Family

We have a problem when it comes to being adopted into God's family: we are born into another family, and our first father does not want to put us up for adoption. As a matter of fact, this father does everything he possibly can to keep us where we were born, seeing to it that nobody takes us from him. Who is this father? It is the Devil, as Jesus makes plain:

Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot bear to hear my word. You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires (Jn. 8:43, 44).

But it is worse than that; *you are not even being held against your will*. Jesus says, not only that your father is the Devil, but that "your will is to do your father's desires" (v. 44). Translation: you are chips off the old satanic block. So in spite of the horror and indignation you feel when you are told your true parentage, you really, inwardly, enjoy it. You may not enjoy some of the things that go with it, but being chips off the old block you really are little devils yourselves.

If you think I am exaggerating this, I assure you that it is impossible to exaggerate the depravity with which we come into this world. It is impossible to exaggerate the way in which we resemble our hellish father, who so completely dominates us that we actually come to like it. This is where David Hume may excel John Calvin, for he could describe depravity better even than the great Genevan. Hume wrote that basic human nature serves the flesh, and that all its intellectuality is merely a process of rationalization by which it tries to justify its carnality. He would have taken the Bible's proposition

about a "mind set on flesh" sitting down (Rom. 8:7), thinking it obvious and almost redundant.

This is a magnificent description of *fallen* man (though Hume was apparently unaware of redeemed and regenerated men). We want to be where we are. But suppose for a moment that we do consider leaving our Devilish father and actually accepting the invitation of the heavenly Father to join His family. What chances do we have of actually achieving such an unlikely goal? Even if we have a desire to turn to our heavenly Father (which no mere fallen son of Adam ever does have), we would not be able to do anything about it because Satan is too powerful for us. He is the strong man who has us bound. Even if we should try to get out—which we do not—we could not possibly escape.

George Whitefield, the great eighteenth-century Calvinistic preacher, used an expression about prostitutes, calling them "the Devil's castaways." Whitefield meant that these poor persons who sell their bodies are so despicably depraved that even the Devil does not have a use for them, and so casts them away. As one story goes, the shock of that expression reached a sinful woman, and through it she was brought to conversion.

It is interesting that George Whitefield's heresy was used for the conversion of a precious soul. What was the heresy? It was the idea that the Devil has any castaways. It is a gripping metaphor, and it indeed arrests attention, but it is untrue just the same because there is no such thing as a Devil's castaway. The Devil does not cast them away; he holds them all. The only thing you ever have is the Devil's "snatch-away," a person ripped from the Devil by Someone who is more powerful than he.

Becoming a Child of God

At this point, some might say, "I remember the time when I heard the Word and came running. Even the Devil couldn't hold me back!" But you know full well that the Bible tells you otherwise. We judge truth by the Word of God. So if anyone says he has come to God at the invitation of Jesus Christ, what he must realize is that when

he came running *he had already been delivered* from being a son of the Devil. He was no longer the fallen son of Adam that he had been a moment before, but was already a new creature in Christ Jesus. That is the person we are talking about, even though he might not have realized at first who it was who came running.

The New Testament passage which is perhaps as much of a classic text on this theme as anything else is John 1:11–12:

He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...

Unfortunately, many people stop at that point and thus give the impression that the one who comes on their own power to Christ has a right to be adopted as a child of God. But the rest of the sentence continues: "... who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God."

When you come to Christ, it is not Christ who exercises the faith. You are the one who exercises faith, and you are the one who comes. But when you come running, and when you are given a title to be called a child of God, it is because you have first been born of the Spirit of God. If you come to be called a child of God, it is because you have first been drawn by Him. In the immortal words of Augustine: "I called upon thee O Lord, and I realized that thou hast already called upon me."

There are those, however, who claim that we do not *become* children of God, but rather are God's children already. Adolf von Harnack (1851–1930), one of the greatest church historians of all time, championed the doctrine of universal adoption. Harnack wrote a book at the turn of the twentieth century entitled *The Essence of Christianity*, in which he said the great message of Christianity was "the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man." According to Harnack, God is the Father of all men without qualification, and all men, therefore, because they are the children of a common Father, are brothers and sisters of each other. In other words, "We have all been adopted into the family of God. We are all children of God."

John Murray wrote a precise dissertation on adoption which I recommend.¹¹ He points out rightly that there is not a single verse in the New Testament that alludes to men in general as being in the family of God.

This is the reason I think it is such a wicked thing—let me get myself into real trouble here—it is a wicked thing to force everybody in our schools to pray, "Our Father, who art in heaven." Unless they believe in Jesus Christ, which is no prerequisite for attending an American public school, they have absolutely no right to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven." If they want to say "Our father, who art in hell," they would be justified in that. But this notion, which has no substance to it—that God is the Father of all men and that He looks happily upon mankind as His children—is a diabolical trick from the Devil himself.

Why is this so diabolical? Because on the one hand, God must be infinitely furious that the children of Satan presume to call themselves the children of God. On the other hand, by deluding with false assumptions, the Devil binds his children even more closely to himself. Those under his roof are lulled into perfect satisfaction with their current, fatally-fallen condition.

Adoption Now, and Ahead

There is nothing in Scripture to indicate that we can ever be children of God, save by faith in Jesus Christ. But through faith in Christ, we are taken into God's family and given the privilege of calling God "our Father."

Imagine that! We are enabled to stand before the presence of the living God, before whom—if we ever thought for a moment of being judged on the basis of what we are—we would flee into the bushes, covering ourselves, hoping to hide ourselves, praying that the rocks would fall upon us. But instead, we now come running, crying, "Father!" All this comes and could only come by the blood of Christ. It is for this reason, without presumption but with humble and yet bold faith, that we say, "Our Father, who art in heaven... "

When it comes to adoption into the family of God by Christ, I think

it important to note that this is different from the way we adopt children into a family in this world. In this world we adopt children and take them into our family as they are. They may be model children; they may be little hellions. If they are not as we wish they were, we hope that we will be able to shape them to our family style.

God takes no such risks. He does not take us as we are and hope we will change; He makes us over again so that we really are in His image. You will remember in that great golden chain of Romans 8:29, that we are "conformed to the image of his Son"—this is really just another way of talking about adoption.

It is true that when we come into God's family, which is the Church, we also become more and more like Christ who died for us. But the difference is that God first changes our heart and thereby begins to remake us into the image of Christ.

Romans 8:23 brings out another important aspect:

And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as *we wait eagerly* for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

John 1:12 clearly says, just as Ephesians 1:5 also says, that we were predestined to adoption as children through the love of Christ. That adoption is a part of the whole scheme of salvation; it is an eternal matter from the divine aspect. But you have an interesting reference to it in Romans 8:23 as something yet anticipated, something that we do not presently possess. We wait for an adoption referred to as the redemption of our body, and the implication is clearly that this is part of the completed act of divine adoption into God's family.

This leads me to note something about theological language. We have the basic data of divine revelation scattered through the sixty-six books of the canon; God designs that we theologians should put the various strands of truth into one systematic whole. But in the process of doing that we sometimes become more exact than Scripture. For example, adoption is an act. For the Christian it is an act which has already taken place. "But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of

God," indicates the time in which one is taken out of the family of Satan and actually brought into the family of Jesus Christ. Still, to be faithful to all biblical language, we must add that our adoption is not quite complete.

It is most interesting that our waiting for adoption should be in reference to the redemption of our bodies. Although our bodies, souls, sanctification, and glorification have been purchased, not all has been given to us yet.¹² The Scripture itself says, "We wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies ." It would be wise for us not to set the clock forward, not to push, not to demand God give us all the benefits of redemption right now.

I remember hearing J. I. Packer in London once. He was talking about the way God gives the gift of adoption, and he told how he was on his way home to Bristol with a box of candy for his children. That box of candy was going to be theirs entirely; their father had no right even to a piece of it. But when he got home and gave it to his children, he did not let them eat it all at once. They were going to get it over a period of time, piece by piece.

I suggest that this is the way God gives to us. We have redemption full and free, body and soul. The guilt has been taken away completely. But the redemption of our bodies is something for which we wait, and with eager expectation.

NOTES

1. The original interview may be found online at AllianceNet.org/placefortruth/column/theology-on-the-go/theology-on-the-go-adoption.

2. Jonathan Master (PhD, University of Aberdeen) is professor of theology and dean of the School of Divinity at Cairn University. He is also director of Cairn's Center for University Studies. Dr. Master serves as the Alliance's editorial director, as well as co-host of the Theology on the Go podcast.

3. Joel Beeke (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary) is president and professor of systematic theology, church history, and homiletics at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI. He is also a pastor of the Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, editor of *Puritan Reformed Journal*, and editorial director of Reformation Heritage Books.

4. The original interview may be found online at PlaceForTruth.org/blog/david-garner-podcast.

5. David Garner (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary) is vice president of advancement and associate professor of systematic theology at Westminster Theological Seminary.

6. Jeffrey Stivason (PhD, Westminster Theological Seminary) is the pastor of Grace Reformed Presbyterian Church in Gibsonia, PA, and editor at Place for Truth. He has been serving the Lord as a minister of the Gospel since 1995 and has planted two churches during that time.

7. "State of the Union 2012: Obama speech full text," *The Washington Post*, Jan. 24, 2012.

8. Stephen Unthank (M.Div., Capital Bible Seminary) serves at Greenbelt Baptist Church in Greenbelt, MD, just outside of Washington, DC. He lives in Maryland with his wife, Maricel and their two children, Ambrose and Lilou.

9. Trevor Burke, *Adopted into God's Family: Exploring a Pauline metaphor*, (IVP Downers Grove, IL 2006), pp. 61.

10. John H. Gerstner (1914-1996) was a professor of Church History at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, as well as a noted author and theologian in the Reformed tradition. This chapter has been adapted from a message he delivered at the 1980 Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology.

11. John Murray, *Collected Writings of John Murray*, Vol. 2: Systematic Theology (Banner of Truth, 1977), 223–234.

12. This has an interesting relevance for those who believe in "faith healing." To argue that because God heals our diseases and has purchased our total redemption, therefore, we should be absolutely healthy (and if for some reason we are not, there is a real question whether we believe in Jesus Christ as the redeemer of our total person) is an error.

MEDIA

The Bible Study Hour *Preparing you to think and act biblically.*
Clear biblical preaching that serves as both a model to pastors
and a stabilizing source of biblical truth for lay people featuring
James Boice. TheBibleStudyHour.org



Every Last Word *Teaching the whole Bible to change your whole life.*
A rich diet of expository preaching to help people grow and
apply God's Word to everyday life with pastor, author, Christian
college president Philip Ryken. EveryLastWord.org

Mortification of Spin *A casual conversation about things that count.*
Culturally relevant and often controversial topics
taken on in funny, thoughtful, and unpredictable ways
with Carl Trueman, Todd Pruitt, and Aimee Byrd.
MortificationofSpin.org



No Falling Word *Preaching the Word of God into today's world.*
Proclaiming and applying the Gospel from the center of one of America's largest
cities, hosted by Liam Goligher. NoFallingWord.org



Theology on the Go *A brief conversation about an eternal truth.*
Pastors and theologians join Jonathan Master and James Dolezal
to discuss weighty topics in a thoughtful and accessible way,
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Dr. Barnhouse & the Bible *Making God's Word plain.*
Scholarly exposition of God's Word that is concise and
captivating, with one of the most widely acclaimed American
preachers for half a century, Donald Barnhouse. DrBarnhouse.org



The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals is a coalition of pastors, scholars, and
churchmen who hold the historic creeds and confessions of the Reformed faith
and who proclaim biblical doctrine in order to foster a
Reformed awakening in today's Church.

PUBLISHING



reformation21 *Encouraging biblical thinking, living, worship, ministry, and constructive cultural engagement.* Providing an authoritative, Reformed perspective on historic matters and current issues to inform, inspire, and challenge Christians. reformation21.org

Place for Truth *Exploring the depths of what we believe.* Thoughtful yet accessible biblical, systematic, and practical theology, as well as church history exploring the importance and relevancy of what we believe. PlaceforTruth.org



CT **The Christward Collective** *Where doctrine and life meet.* Like Calvin, these younger contributors wed theological study to an all-in-life experiential godliness, applying biblical truth to a very contemporary culture. ChristwardCollective.org

The Shepherd Leader *Shepherding to the Chief Shepherd's glory.* Tim Witmer provides regular insight and on-going coaching material for church leaders. His system contextualizes biblical principles for the specific ministry roles and needs found in today's Church. TheShepherdLeader.org

Meet the Puritans *Where the dead still speak.* Sharing the theology and piety of the Puritans to reconnect Reformed Christians with their heritage, introduce evangelical Christians to this heritage, and give the world the answers this heritage provides. MeetthePuritans.org



Daily Devotionals from James Boice and Matthew Henry. Two devotionals sent daily to complement your time in the Word. ThinkandActBiblically.org and MatthewHenry.org

Reformed Resources *60 Years of Reformed Resources.* Thousands of audio on both CD and MP3, video, book, booklet, and e-book resources from trustworthy authors and Alliance speakers. ReformedResources.org

EVENTS

Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology and Regional Events *Sound doctrine, boldly preached.* The oldest, continual, national Reformed conference in North America, and regional events including theology and Bible conferences. AllianceNet.org/Events



Reformation Societies *Encouraging, Emboldening, Equipping.* Encouraging, emboldening, and equipping pastors and church leaders for the work of biblical reformation in the church. ReformationSocieties.org

The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals is a coalition of pastors, scholars, and churchmen who hold the historic creeds and confessions of the Reformed faith and who proclaim biblical doctrine in order to foster a Reformed awakening in today's Church.



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