

# Christmas Adoption

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Now, Lord, as we continue in our series, will you bless us now as we come to this amazing passage in Galatians? Speak to our hearts.
- Speak to our lives. Speak to our situations. Speak in a way that we can't ignore you. And grant us grace and hope and love.
- Use your unworthy servant to preach this passage for Jesus. In his name we pray.
- Amen. Galatians chapter 4, verses 4 through 7.
- Father, so you are no longer a slave but a son. And if a son, then an heir through God.
- [ 1 : 2 9 ]     That is the word of the Lord. Thank you. Please be seated. Amen. Amen. Thank you.
- Again, praise team. Thank you so much. I looked up with the help of my AI assistant.
- Some information. I guess I'm not saying not so much stats, but the results that we know sociologically of a fatherless home.
- Fatherless home. Listen to this. Emotional and behavioral problems. That's mental health problems. This is the children now. The children are experiencing this.
- Without a father in a home. This is what many children experience. Poor academic performance. Substance abuse. These are higher levels of this. Higher levels of criminal involvement.
- [ 2 : 3 2 ]     We've been hearing about that for many, many years. Teenage pregnancy goes up. Lower self-esteem goes up. Unresolved emotional issues.
- In particular, daughters may struggle with unresolved issues such as anger, sadness, or confusion. And lastly, perceived abandonment. A deep sense of loss and rejection.
- These are all the results of a fatherless home. What if both parents are missing? What if a child is truly an orphan?
- I can only imagine what being adopted is like for such children. To be loved and welcomed into a family as if you were born into it.
- It's probably the most beautiful beginning of a new life. You are giving a new name, a new family name. You are made an heir. All that belongs to the family now belongs to you.
- [ 3 : 4 3 ]     When I visited Haiti many years ago, I never forget our team went to several orphanages. And I remember how the children ran out to us and kept touching us, holding our hands, wanting to be picked up, wanting to be seen and held.
- I'll never forget it. It's seared into my consciousness. All the while, many of them, not all of them were wondering if we would choose them and take them home with us.
- It was heartbreaking because we were just visiting the country. I could only wonder what it would be like to bring home an adopted child at Christmas.
- What a Christmas gift to your family and to their child. But we don't have to wonder, do we? At the first Christmas, the living God brought his spiritual adoption plan to fruition.

You could say all of history had been preparing for that moment and what was to come. Christmas actually sets the stage for the God of glory to adopt sinners into his family.

[ 4 : 59 ] Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. Christmas. If fatherlessness hurts children so much, if being an orphan wounds children so much, what do you think it's like to be a spiritual orphan, to not know the living God as your father?

What are the consequences of that? And they're universal. Everybody experiences the consequences at some point of what it means to be a spiritual orphan.

But at Christmas. But at Christmas. At Christmas. At Christmas. At Christmas. At Christmas. At Christmas. At Christmas. The Alpha and Omega Adoption Services.

Is at work. At work. Are you celebrating your adoption this Christmas? Or are you still a spiritual orphan?

In need of a family. In need of a father. Paul, in this wonderful book of Galatians, one of the great books, if you can say this, of the New Testament, because the gospel is so clearly portrayed here.

[ 6 : 34 ] He's declared in verse 29 that all who belong to Christ by faith and adoption are now, as he says, offspring. That is, children of Abraham and heirs according to promise.

Now, God had promised Abraham so many descendants that they could not be counted. We who believe in Jesus are God's kept promise to Abraham.

So, in that passage, Paul begins to explain how we become children of Abraham. But even more important, how we become children of God.

First of all, God's Christmas adoption was timed. And, Sandy and I were on the verge of adopting a little boy when somehow she got pregnant.

With our youngest daughter, Joanna. I had a plan. She had another plan. I don't know what happened. But I remember there was a process. We were actually engaged with Bethany Christian Services.

[ 7 : 33 ] We were beginning to pursue the idea of adopting a little boy. We had three daughters. Hey, why not bring a little boy into the family? And here's the thing I found out.

This is important. I didn't, you know, I don't know the problem. We couldn't just walk into Bethany and say, give us a baby. Who knew? There was paperwork.

There were interviews. Home visits. Did I say paperwork? Tons of paperwork had to be filled out. And, of course, they wanted some money. It was a process that once we had finished, then at just the right time, we would have been matched with a beautiful baby boy.

We even had a name picked out for him. We would call him Micah after the Old Testament prophet. Do you know what Micah means? Who is like Yahweh? Who is like the Lord? I love that name.

I want to name even my daughter that, but she wouldn't, Sandy wouldn't go for it. We got Micah here somewhere. I think people get the desire to adopt children from the fact that we're all made in the image of God.

[ 8 : 42 ] That's where we, that's where we get that desire. We're made that way. But notice this. There was a timing thing here. When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son.

Or, the Amplified says, but when in God's plan, the proper time had finally come. The Holman Christian standard says, when the time came to completion.

If you have the NIV, it says, but when the set time had fully come. The timing. In every translation of the Bible, the timing is being emphasized here.

What about timing? First of all, theologians speak of something called the covenant of redemption. The covenant of redemption. Green Rudel talks about this. Theologian Green Rudel talks about this.

He says, it is an agreement among the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in which the Son agreed to come as a man, be our representative, obey the demands of the covenant of works, I put it in there, that's the covenant with Adam, on our behalf, and pay the penalty for sin which we deserve in order to gain our redemption by giving the Son a people for his own possession.

[ 9 : 56 ] So, when we talk about timing, we got to understand there was a plan. And the Trinity, without any input from you, came up with this plan. And it's kind of a misnomer, but an eternity past.

God, the Father, Son, Holy Spirit, put together a plan. Secondly, many see this phrase as showing how God is Lord of history in the fullness of time.

That time in history, in that region of the world, was a time of what was called historically the Pax Romana. It means the Roman peace. Rome had conquered the entire area, even into Africa.

But they did it by the sword. It was peace by the sword because Rome was brutal. But Rome was also brilliant.

Travel was safer and easier. Roads were plentiful with soldiers patrolling them to hinder bandits. Sea travel was easier. Even a mail system was put into place.

[ 11 : 04 ] But here's the most important thing about that era, in my opinion. There was a common language. To be a citizen of the Roman Empire, you had to speak Koine.

It was a type of Greek. Koine Greek. The language of the common people. Everybody spoke it. You may have had your own personal dialect in your country.

But everybody spoke Koine, or you couldn't do business in the Roman Empire. It was that, and particularly that fact, that allowed the message of the gospel to spread like wildfire.

Coming out of Jerusalem, where they spoke Aramaic, it wouldn't have flown very far. But they all spoke Koine. They all spoke this Greek dialect.

So everybody could understand the gospel. Now, just in case you don't understand what I'm saying here. It wasn't that God was sitting back in heaven waiting for us to get our act together.

[ 12 : 12 ] Waiting for Rome to conquer what was left of the Greek Empire. And waiting for Israel to go through their ups and downs.

It wasn't just that he was waiting passively. No, no, no, no, no, no, no. What this is teaching us is that God is Lord and Master of history.

History is his story. It was moving according to his plan. Nations came, and nations went. Nations had power. Nations lost power.

Nations conquered. Nations were conquered. But all in the plan. The fullness of time was that point where God brought history to the point where it was time to send the Son.

Daniel said it so beautifully. All the inhabitants of the earth are counted as nothing. And he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

[ 13 : 16 ] And none can stay his hand or say to him, what have you done? That's called sovereignty.

Who's in control? Jesus came and said it in Matthew chapter 10. Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground.

That's fall to the ground in death. Apart from your heavenly Father. But even the hairs on your head are all numbered by God.

So fear not, therefore. You are of more value than many sparrows. The hairs, ladies. The hairs of your head.

God knows them by number. What does this tell us? Those two passages show us that nationally on a world scale and personally, God reigns over all.

[ 14 : 21 ] All of this says that Christmas should remind us that God has loved us for all eternity. And is master over our times, our nations, and even our particular moments.

What does that do for us? I hope it gives you joy and comfort. There is a divine timing at work in history and also in your life.

Timing. Timing. Not your timing. Divine timing. So that should move us to pray, right?

To pray to our heavenly Father with knowing these truths that how, so that we can deal with our fear and worry about the future and even the present. God moved history to have you.

Think about that. God moved history to have you as his child. That's why Romans 8.28 is so true.

[ 15 : 28 ] And we know. Note how it begins. Do you? And we know that for those who love God, all things work together for good.

For those who are called according to his purpose. That's true because of what we just saw. God is Lord of history and is Lord of your moments.

Are you celebrating yet? Christmas begins the final stage, point two, in God's adoption process. The stage is set.

You do know all adoptions are personal, right? In other words, I mean that you can't send someone to do it for you.

You have to go in person to another country, to another place to get your child. You have to be seen. You have to be examined. You have to be looked at. And then you get the privilege of looking into a baby's eyes.

[ 16 : 33 ] And he or she is put into your arms. And the joy that experience. I can only imagine. I've never adopted a child, but I've been adopted. But in this process, the text says that God sent his son.

God, the son, came in person to get us. And he didn't come like, sorry kids, but I grew up as a kid.

He didn't come like so many kids when their parent tells them to do something. I'm going. You're just always in my, I can't do nothing.

I'm trying to, you know, he didn't come like that. Even though his coming was to a horrible death. And to deal with people like us.

If anybody had the right to be upset about doing their father's will, it was Jesus. But he wasn't.

[ 17 : 41 ] For the son came in joy. He's sent, but he comes in joy. To achieve the final steps of our Christmas adoption.

He is born of a woman. I'm just reading the text. You can hope you have it in front of you. God sent forth his son, born of a woman. Now, why does he say that? Isn't that how everybody enters the world?

Born of a woman? But he goes out of his way. The apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, points out that Jesus was born of a woman.

Why say something so obvious? It must mean something, right? One, it means that the son already existed before he came. He was sent.

We're not talking about Jesus at this moment. We're talking about the eternal son of God. The second person of the glorious trinity existed with the father before all time, for all eternity.

[ 18 : 50 ] Never. There was never a time when the son did not exist. He is sent. Now he is born of a woman. Mary, a teenage virgin peasant girl, is influenced by the Holy Spirit in order for the embryo of the son of God to be placed in her womb.

Remember how the angel Gabriel confronted Mary with this news in Luke 1? And Mary said to the angel, remember, how will this be since I am a virgin? You know, they didn't believe in that kind of thing either.

There was a natural process for a woman to have a child. And Mary was just inquiring biologically.

They weren't stupid people. Biologically. Hello. That ain't going to work, doc. And the angel answered her, hold it. Let me explain. Let me explain. The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

The power, the power, the power that said, let there be. And there was. The power of the Most High will overshadow you.

[ 19 : 59 ] Therefore, the child to be born will be called holy. Allow me to just, holy, holy, holy. Holy Spirit, the Son of God.

Nothing sexual here. This overshadowing was used in the Old Testament to talk about how God's glory cloud would come up, would overshadow the temple or overshadow the tabernacle.

It was, I wonder if she actually saw glory. I don't know. But it wasn't like this dark cloud came upon her. It was the glory of God that came upon her.

Nothing sexual. But because of this, listen, miraculous conception, not miraculous birth. The birth was normal.

The conception was a miracle. Okay? You got it. I see you with me. And in that process, the eternal Son of God, who always was unchangeable, all-powerful, all-glorious, takes on human nature and takes a name.

[ 21 : 10 ] Jesus of Nazareth. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. But for those of you who are Aladdin fans, phenomenal cosmic power, itty-bitty living space.

That just hit me. No charge for that. Fully human. Fully deity. But not sinful.

No sin. Born of a woman. That's why they had to be said. Next, the Son of God was born under the law. Why would he have to say that? I mean, come on. In order to adopt us, he had to be born under the law.

Why is that important? All of humanity had broken God's law. And therefore, we're all guilty of cosmic treason. And you know what the punishment for treason is, don't you?

In any country in the world, the punishment for treason is death. The punishment for treason against the kingdom of God and the king of that kingdom, the supreme living God of all heaven and earth, the judge of all the earth, the punishment for sin is still death.

[ 22 : 19 ] Death, physical death, and then sadly eternal death was the only verdict. Unless, unless, but unless, unless another person lived under the same law and kept it perfectly on our behalf.

That's what you call righteousness. Righteousness is keeping the law. That's what it means to be righteous. You keep the law. But we've all broken it. But there came one. Born under that law.

And he is righteous. He is righteousness. You need to hold on to that. Especially when you fail. Hold on to that.

That Jesus is your righteousness. The son of God is your righteousness. Not you are your righteousness. You see, that's, see, that is the orphan mentality to believe that I am my righteousness.

In other words, God will judge me if he exists. God will judge me according to how good I am. You see, that's orphan mentality. And it will get you nowhere.

[ 23 : 36 ] Nowhere good. Another part of that orphan mentality that Christians, God's children fall into is simply this.

God, though he's my father, but he will only bless me if I do right. And every time I do wrong, then, see, I won't get blessed. Or if I forget something, I won't be blessed.

Now, there's some truth in there, too. Right? God blesses righteousness. He blesses when we obey God. Hello. That's a good thing, y'all.

But here's the beautiful thing. It's not your righteousness. If left to yourself, Ethan, you would never obey him. Why does anyone carry?

Why do you have a desire to obey the Lord? It's because Christ is your righteousness. Listen to this. He's done something in you.

[ 24 : 34 ] 1 Corinthians 1, 30 and 31. And because of him, God the Father, you are in Christ Jesus. Trinity at work. Listen to this.

Who became Christ, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption. He became to us.

Where is your righteousness? It's in him. He is righteousness to you, applied to you, for you. So therefore, let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.

Never brag about the good you have done. I, you know, I've seen people do that in prayer. Public prayer.

I've seen people basically brag about their righteousness. Family, never, ever brag about your righteousness.

[ 25 : 36 ] But brag about Jesus. And what he has done for you and in you and through you.

Boast in the Lord. You can't pat yourself on your back. For if not for Christ in you as your righteousness, you would not be able to obey God. You get no credit.

And yet God still blesses you and praises you. But you get no credit. Ephesians 2 is right.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing. It is the gift of God. Not a result of works. So that no one may boast.

For we are his workmanship. His workmanship. His workmanship. Created in Christ Jesus. To do good works. Which God prepared beforehand.

[ 26 : 35 ] That we should walk in them. Who gets the glory here? Christ is our righteousness. Because he was born under the law for us.

So Jesus said. When you have done all that you were commanded. Luke 17. 10. Say. We are unworthy servants.

We have only done what was our duty. That dirty word duty. And yet that's a glorious word. It means what we ought to have done. Now let's get final point.

Here's this. God's Christmas adoption brings several benefits. Why did Jesus come this way? In this manner? It's because we lived.

We're trapped in. And enslaved. In the orphanage of the law and sin. Enslaved is what his work of redemption. Implies.

[ 27 : 41 ] That's what the word says. To redeem those who were under the law. So that we might receive adoption as sons. He redeemed us.

The son. In this stage. Of. His Christmas adoption. Of the people of God. Had to redeem us. There was something wrong here.

Redemption implies enslavement. And verse 3. If you had your Bible in front of you. Says. We were children. We were enslaved.

To the elementary principles. Of this world. That's a tough thing. To identify. People. Scholars have argued. About what this means. But I. I think it's clear. These elementary principles.

That enslaved us. Seem to be a reference. To the created order. As one writer puts it. The original powers.

[ 28 : 38 ] At work. In the world. Which fallen human beings. Turn into idols. And worship. As gods. What are these elementary principles? Things like money. Sex. Sexuality.

And power. Basic stuff. That all people understand. That all people. Crave. After. Desire.

But what happens is. We were enslaved. Because we thought. Those things would give us life. We thought. Those things would make us. In some case. Better than others.

Those things. Would make. Life. Worth. Living. And keep. Life. Worth. Living. And so. We became enslaved. To them. And began to worship.

Money. Sex. Sexuality. And power. We still do it today. There's nothing new. We don't make idols. Little. Teak. Little statues. But we all worship. At the same. Feeding trough.

[ 29 : 34 ] Of idolatry. Basic principles. Worship. We bow down.

And we sell our souls. For money. For sex. And sexuality. And power. Still do.

And other things. Those are the big three. I think. But God exposes them. As false gods. They don't give us. The power. We seek.

They don't give us. The life. That we really want. When we get them. Just ask P. Diddy. When we get. So much.

We're not happy. And satisfied. We got to go further. We got to have more. We're trapped. We're enslaved.

[ 30 : 32 ] And the law pronounces judgment. Or as it says. You die. You're dead. No hope for you. But. Jesus comes. To redeem us.

He. What that means is. He buys us. Out of the slave market. By paying. A ransom. You can't leave. The slave market.

Unless. Without a price. But the problem is. You can't pay it. Because you and I. Are trapped. In that world. We're trapped. Just trying to get a piece.

Of the action. We're trapped. Trying to find. Some meaning. And purpose. And identity. And security. Apart from God. Which means we have to make it ourselves. We're trapped.

And so. Who's going to pay the ransom? We broke. And our credit stinks. In heaven. If you had a. If you look at your credit score in heaven. It would be zero, zero, zero.

[ 31 : 32 ] Somebody. With perfect credit. Come on, Darrell. Somebody. With perfect credit. Somebody. With real coin. Has got to come outside of us.

To get us out of this mess. That's what Paul is saying. You've been redeemed. Peter will tell us in 1 Peter chapter 1.

By the precious blood of Christ. Like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. You've been redeemed. Not with. He says. Not with perishable things. Not with money. Not with power.

In the sense of earthly power. No, no, no. You redeemed. You were set free. By the coin of heaven. Which is the blood of Jesus. The only coin that's accepted.

In the kingdom of God. Is the sacrifice of the son of God. You've been bought out of slavery. With that ransom. So that you might be adopted.

[ 32 : 31 ] Christmas. All of that. He says. All of that. To get to the big point. And he had to. That Christmas.

The coming of the son. And the fullness of time. To redeem us. But so that God. Might make us. His. Children. Let's speak.

Let's speak. Let's speak. Let's speak. Let's speak with the text. That God might make us. Sons. That's not a typo. Ladies. You've heard me say this before. So forgive me for repeating myself. Sons in that culture.

Were the ones who got the inheritance. Girls. Didn't get the inherent. In that culture now. They were not the ones who inherited. I don't care when that boy was born.

Sometimes they would even adopt. Bring somebody else into the family. To make them the heir. Because it needed to come through. In that culture. Boys. So ladies.

[ 33 : 29 ] When God calls you sons. He is meaning. That you qualify. For the father's inheritance. Just like the males. You're not being left out.

That's what Paul is saying. That would have been. Striking in that culture. Everyone would be like. What? The women too? Yes.

In him you also. When you heard the word of truth. The gospel of your salvation. And believed in him. Will seal with the promised Holy Spirit. Who is the guarantee.

Sons. Of our inheritance. Until we acquire. Our possession of it. To the praise of his glory. God has said. I am giving you.

An inheritance. You say. Well what could the inheritance be? What would God give us? An inheritance. Right? You know. You were given inheritance. You leave your house.

[ 34 : 28 ] You leave some land. Some do re mi. You know. You leave that for the kids. We understand that. But what would the heavenly father. The God of glory. And creator of all things. Leave to his children. If he were to die.

Which he cannot. Let me tell you. Remember in the Old Testament. The God promised land. To all of the tribes of Israel. Remember that?

But there was one tribe. That didn't get land. No beach property. No mountain. Side property. They were the priests. The Levites. The Levitical tribe.

The Levites were told. You get none of that. But then God said. It's because I am your inheritance. You get me.

And then Peter comes along. In 1 Peter 2. And says. We are a kingdom of priests. To Christians. We are a kingdom of priests. The adopted children of God.

[ 35 : 30 ] Are priests. Which tells me. That whatever else we get. Whatever blessing God gives us. In the new heavens and new earth.

The most important inheritance. That you and I get. Is him. We get the living God. We get the father, son, holy spirit. We get the wealth of the universe.

We get to call him father. And the peck says. We. The spirit of God works in us. So that we cry. Abba. Father. Abba. Is that intimate turn.

Something like daddy. We get an intimacy. With the living God. That is our inheritance. And is. And is forever. Eternal life. It begins now.

And goes into eternity. He will always be your father. He will always have his arms. Open wide to you. You. Child of God. Who been adopted.

[ 36 : 27 ] By the great divine adoption agent. Jesus Christ himself. You. Will always be. Have an open door. To the heavenly father. Always.



Do you know what always means? Yeah. He will never. There will. Mark. There will never be a day. Never.

Be a day. Where he will not own you as is. Never. But. But. But. But. But. But Pastor Kevin. I messed up last week.

You don't know man. Maybe I do know. But okay. You're unique. I understand. You're. You're. Person. Okay. You did. Yeah. You messed up. Oh really. You did that. Yeah. You messed up.

You messed up. You messed up. You messed up. You messed up. But who's your daddy? Who's your daddy? If your daddy's the living God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 37 : 27 ] Oh yeah. There may be consequences for your screw up. But he's already handled the ultimate penalty. He's already taken care. He'll never turn you away.

He may. He may. He may have to spank you. Like a good father would. He may have to talk to you a little bit. Take you. Take you over here to the side. And ream you out in love of course. And show you. Hey this is what you did wrong now.

Come on now. This is. You know what. You know what I told you. And you did. You said. And you did something else. Now listen now. Pay attention here. He may have to do that. That's okay. That's what a good father does.

And then. He'll put his arms around him. And say Jesus. Your big brother paid for that too. And I'm your father.

And I'll never turn you away. You're mine. Mine. Mine. Mine. And I don't share. Because. That's why he sends the Holy Spirit into us.

[ 38 : 26 ] So that the Holy Spirit applies. Our adoption to us. So that it becomes personal. That's why the Holy Spirit cries. Abba father. But guess what. Go back to Romans 8. 26 and 27.

You'll find out that we also cry. Abba father. So the Spirit works in us. Applying the adoption to us. So that it becomes personal to us. He cries out first for us.

Abba father. So that then we get the idea. We begin to realize. Oh that's right. We really. He really is Abba father. And so we cry. The intimacy. By the Spirit.

And the father. And the son. So that we would know God for real. Do you know him. Brothers and sisters. Do you know him as father. Well.

I've gone. Longer than probably I should. And I'm going to wrap this up. With some application. Some more application thoughts. Okay. First of all. Remember this.

[ 39 : 24 ] Your Christmas adoption. Has been signed. Sealed. And delivered. We're his. Okay. So what does that mean. How can we think about that.

First of all. Draw near to God as your father. Trust the work of Christ. That you are forever in God's family. Never to be kicked out. Never to be disinherited. Always draw near. When you screw up.

When you mess up. When you sin. Don't run away from father. Run to him. Open door. Prodigal. Open door. He'll meet.

He may meet you in the street. As you're running. Run to him. Second. Here's another thing to think about. If we've been. If we've been adopted. By the heavenly father.

Should we consider. Adopting and fostering. And befriending. Hurting kids in our community. Just a thought. Some of you right now.

[ 40 : 17 ] Are thinking about fostering. Maybe even adopting. Amen. Amen. Some of you can't do those things. But you can still befriend hurting kids. In our community.

You can do it through GLAAD. You can do it through. Every Valley Leadership. Run by Elder Ron Lowe. You can get involved in different ways. To care for hurting children. We're applying.

What it means to be adopted. That's all I'm trying to say. Right. How can we express. Our adoption. How many kids are available. For adoption.

In Hamilton County. How many kids. Are in the foster system. I heard of one church. One year in Alabama. They emptied out the county. Of foster kids.

I'm not saying. You have to do that. But think about. How can you express. Your adoption. Here's another one. Take your vows. At covenant baptism. Seriously.

[ 41 : 15 ] When. When kids are being baptized. In front of us. And we turn around. And talk to the church. And ask you to take vows. Take them seriously. Teach Sunday school.

Maybe. But maybe. But certainly. You can encourage. All of our covenant children. To walk with Jesus. Take a moment. Don't just run out the door. Fellowship. With your brothers and sisters.

You see a child. Encourage them. We did that today. When our children sang. We encouraged them. Didn't we? That's part of our covenant. Baptism vows. That's part of our responsibility.

To do so. Teach Sunday school. If you can. Answer their questions. But more than anything. Pray for them. And let them see Jesus in you. Last thing I want you to think about.

Testify publicly. As often as you can. To the Christmas grace of God. That has caused him. To adopt you. Just. You know.

[ 42 : 13 ] We see those commercials. About hurting children. And they break my heart. Some of them. Are orphans. Or just hurting. Sick children.

You just. You know how. You got those commercials. Look around. Your neighborhood. They're spiritual orphans.

That's worse. That's the worst place. A human being can be in. You hear what I'm saying? The worst place. A human being can be in.

Is not having God as your father. Because that means you're lost. And there's no hope. Let your heart break for them.

Pray for the spiritual orphans. That God has sent. Into your life. Pray for them. Pray that God would have mercy on them. Pray that God. Make yourself. At God's disposal.

[ 43 : 11 ] To do whatever. He wants you to do. To love these dear ones. And to speak to them. The words of life. That they too may have. A heavenly father. A little boy.

Stories told. A little boy. Who got lost in Colorado. While hiking with his parents. He. He was. He happened to be deaf. And his parents gave him a whistle. That he wore around his neck.

To blow. If he got separated from the group. Or needed help. You know. He blew the whistle. He got lost. Turned around. He blew the whistle. But no one could hear it.

No one could hear the whistle. Because. They were hiking near. These rapids. And so. If you've been near rapids. The sound of the water. Can be deafening. And they couldn't hear. The whistle.

That he blew. Thank God. They did find him. The next morning. Praise God. He spent a horrible night. Scary night.

[ 44 : 08 ] In the dark. All alone. Not knowing. If his parents would find him. Hoping they would. But he didn't know. Terrified. As you can imagine. But they found him.

And one of the officials. Told the boy's mother. It's always easier. To find lost children. He said. The reason is. They don't try to save themselves.

Like adults do. They sit. And wait. For the rescue team. To find them. And that's why we found your son. Be a child today.

Be a child. Don't try to save yourself. Let Jesus rescue you. And make you. An adopted.

Son. Of the living God. Merry Christmas. Father. Hear our cry. Help us to walk.

[ 45 : 06 ] In the adoption. That you've given us. And Lord. If there's anyone here. Who has never known. Your adoption. Father. They're still living. As spiritual orphans. Still trying to make.

Their way in the world. And make. Their living. Their way. And. And Father. It's not going to work for them. Even if it does work. A little bit. It's still not enough. Would you please draw them.

Somebody. Maybe today. In this room. Who needs a spiritual father. Who needs you. Please take them out of the orphanage. And bring them into your family. Into your life.

Through Jesus Christ. Your son. We pray. Amen. Elders. Will you come.