

## Instructions

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you and pick 3-5 questions to discuss, which pertain to your group's unique needs and style.

## Series Synopsis

Easter is here and spring has sprung! There are signs of new life all around us. So how do we continue to live into the hope of Christ and the promise of the coming Kingdom now? How do we continue in hope with our changed hearts and changed lives when the world remains largely... unchanged? Join us this spring as we explore how to live in freedom, joy, hope, and peace now through a study of Galatians and a focus on the only thing that really matters... our faith in Christ working through love.

## Message Synopsis

We are no longer slaves but adopted as sons and daughters of God through Jesus Christ. We have even received his same spirit, that makes us cry out "Abba Father" as a child of God. This is the radical, amazing, life-altering power of Jesus Christ who calls us, claims us, and includes us in his family. In Christ, the identities that used to define and divide us no longer matter; no longer slave or free, Jew or Gentile, male or female... all are one in Christ Jesus. Sometimes we can become so concerned by different identities, labels, groups, and camps of the world that we miss this revolutionary thing God does through Christ. That is, he completely redefines how we ought to relate to one another as one family. Sometimes it is easy to take for granted the radical grace and hospitality of our own adoptions as sons and daughters of this promise. So how can we model this hospitality today? How can we see Christ at work in unexpected people and places?

## Key Scriptures

*Galatians 3:23-4:7*

## Questions Related to This Week's Message

1. What does it mean to you personally that you have been adopted into the family of God?
2. What does this new identity change for you? Do you cling to any other identity in your life more tightly than "child of God"?
3. Where do you have immediate opportunities to practice such hospitality and welcome?
4. Where do we as a Church draw lines or divisions in the sand that maybe we shouldn't, or should reevaluate?

## Video & Related Questions

**Video: "God Planned Your Adoption"** (3 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgCVW3ygvqM>

1. Take a moment to discuss this video freely. What stuck out to you? What bothered you? What questions did this raise for you? Even consider where and why your mind wandered as you watched, as it might reveal something of your heart or something of significance in the message.

2. What does it mean to you that God planned your adoption? If it was planned, is there any way you could earn or deny it?
3. How does your answer to the last question challenge your ideas about the family of God? Who is included? Who is excluded?
4. Why do you think Paul uses the term “adoption” to represent our relationship with God instead of claiming that we are His natural children?
5. What is significant about being God’s “children” compared to being his friends, servants, disciples, the “bride of Christ,” or other type of relationship? What unique aspects of relationship does this reveal?
6. For us to practice Christian love and hospitality toward others, we first have to make the decision to do so. Sure, some people are easy to love, but loving everyone (especially our enemies) is a choice. Who do you need to “plan to love” this week? How can you prepare for it ahead of time? And how can you prepare to love the people you haven’t even met yet?

## Family Discussion Guide

Whether your children are biological or adopted, the topic of adoption can be a hard one. Either they are faced with a concept in which they have no experience whatsoever, or it can hit painfully close to home and raise questions about their worth and identity. Use your discretion, but perhaps the best way to talk to your kids about this passage is simply to talk about the parent/child relationship.

Express the love you had for your children before they were born, the desires you have for them as they grow (character related – don’t lay on any unhealthy or controlling expectations!), the identity and authority they have as part of your family, and the gifts and inheritance they will one day have (not just material, but the spiritual gifts, talents, and character traits that you are passing along to them). Talk about how you provide for them, how you teach them (even discipline them) and help them grow, how you nurture and protect them. Then take it a step farther, and tell them about God’s love, that He cares for them in the same way, loving them before they were born, desiring good things for them, that they have an identity and authority in Jesus, and that they have gifts and an inheritance with God. Tell them how God provides and teaches (and disciplines), nurtures and protects.

Also talk about what it means to be a child. Ask your kids to help with this part. What does it mean to be a child? How can you rely on your parents? After they’ve shared, give some other examples. Does a child have to worry about “adult” things? Does a child have to work to earn their parent’s love and delight? Should a child be afraid to approach their parent or ask them for good things?

Now tell them how we can rest and find joy and fullness as children of God. Find Scripture to reveal God’s character through his Word. Matthew 6:25-34 tells us not to worry or be anxious. Zephaniah 3:17 says God rejoices over us and Luke 12:32 says He is pleased to give us the kingdom. Hebrews 4:16 says we can approach the throne of grace with confidence. Hebrews 12:6 tells us God disciplines those he loves. Luke 11:11-13 says God gives good gifts to his children who ask. What other Scriptures come to mind that you can share about God’s love and blessing for his children?