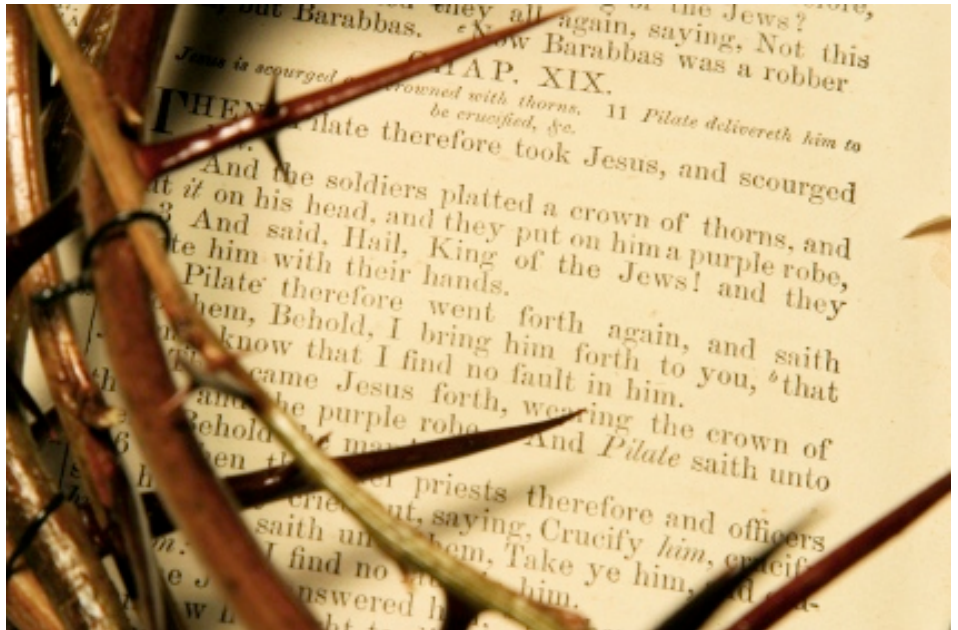


haven

THE HAVEN
NEWSLETTER



September 2009 / The Adoption Option

Hosea 2:23 - "I will sow her for Myself in the land. I will also have compassion on her who had not obtained compassion, and I will say to those who were not My people, You are My People!" and they will say "You are My God". One of the more excellent and powerful themes of the Bible is that of adoption. Not convinced? Let me give you a short lesson of famous people in the Bible who were adopted. Some of you might have heard of Esther, the Queen who was adopted by her cousin Mordecai. Or perhaps a few of you have heard of Moses, who was adopted by the princess of Pharaoh. And just a few of you might have heard of Joseph - who adopted a son named Jesus!!!!

If I have your attention now, let me describe an even greater example of adoption in the Bible. In the passage cited above and in many others, we are told that the Israelites were adopted as God's chosen people. (Ezek 16, Ps 146, 68, 82, etc). In the words of the prophet Hosea - "Those who were not my people" became "My People". The same theme is stated in the New Testament. For example in Eph 1:5 we read (speaking of God) "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will." Paul also writes of adoption in Gal 3 and Romans 8 and other places.

In one very real sense when we share the Gospel with lost people we are inviting them into a family - God's forever family. To become the child of God is an exciting thing - the Apostle John taught in his Gospel "to as many as received Him (Jesus) he (God) gave the right to become children of God...who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh...but of God." There is a lot more to that passage that I could focus on, but for this letter I would like yall to see the impetus on God as the intender or acting agent. It is God who chose us - and we receive what God has already done for us through Christ. So our adoption as spiritual children is determined by the loving intention of the Lord himself. It is not done on the basis of our being the right "color" or the

Which way will you go?



2009

There are only two simple things that we are all called to do: Love the Lord our God and our neighbor as well. Some of those neighbors are very different and very far away. The American retirement ideal is not for the Christian. The Apostle tells us in Hebrews that our rest is in heaven. Until the day he calls us home, let us be faithful serving in every opportunity that the Lord opens for us. Sometimes we seek and find what He would have us do and sometimes we hide and hope it goes away. Which way will you go?

right "person" or having the right "bloodlines" or some other silly or evil notion. God is not a respecter of persons. Therefore His family crosses every line - racial, caste, and economic status, circumstantial or any other. The family of God is growing on every continent in the world.

One of my many aggravations over the Church Growth Movement is the idea of homogenous churches. Some idiot figured out that people like to be with people just like them, same color, race, etc. So let's start churches based on this heresy and let's call it a strategic development. I see, what used to be racism is now strategic. Nice move CGM folks!

The reality is that before the throne of Heaven - John tells us in Revelation 7 will be a throng beyond counting, of every tribe and language. If you don't like dealing with people outside of your narrow boundaries now, you will truly hate Heaven. And that reality probably points to your own shaky status with God in the here and now. First John makes it quite clear - if you hate your brother who you do see - then how can you love God whom you cannot see? It was a rhetorical question - you do not love God if you hate your fellow Christians.

But since the theme of physical adoption is so prominent in the Bible, then it is perhaps time we as Christians take this seriously. The UN said in 2008 that there were 132 million orphans in the world. Sit back and think on that one - 132 million. The US (up until the current administration) was and still is one of the richest nations in the world. As I have said many times, as a middle class American I am stinking Bill Gates when I go to Manila! Americans of all stripes adopt about 10,000 babies from overseas each year. Several thousand are adopted here in the US. Let's just do the math - uh let's not. It is overwhelming to think of how many kids have no home. In some places in the world the orphanage itself is a nightmare yet it is still better than the situation for the kids on the street.

Reasons (and responses) people give for not adopting-

- 1) I wouldn't be a good parent - Everyone has to learn. With the Lord's help anything can be done.
- 2) There is a chance one might bring an ancestral evil spirit into the family! This one is just stupid on the face of it, but even if you buy this wouldn't the same reasoning preclude witnessing to pagans?
- 3) Adopted children are always bitter over being adopted. (Heard this from a Christian last summer). This is also patently false. Some adopted children are bitter - some are not. I believe you see the exact same phenomenon among non-adopted children.
- 4) We don't have the money! This is one I hear often - I more than understand. We didn't, don't and most likely won't have the "money" in the future, and yet here we are with 8 kids of whom five are adopted. This is God's business and unlike the government - God funds that which He commands!!!
- 5) Some of the older children will cause grief because they have been abused - Count on it. This is where you count the cost and remember what you are without Christ - and how can anybody put up with you? (How the Lord puts up with me is always puzzling!) The Lord will show mercy - but it might be hard and He will use it to change you into the image of His son. Count on that as well.

Reasons people ought to adopt -

- 5) It is a Biblical command - this ought to be enough for us right here. James 1, the above mentioned Psalms and so many other verses cry out to us for the care of the "widow and the orphan".
- 6) Children are a blessing of the Lord - just try and get out of this one! Yes I know that they are blessings sometimes and other times you are driven out of your mind. That of course crosses the line between natural and adopted children. Someone asked me in the midst of our struggle last summer if we would do it over again. I asked him - "Where does the Scripture command us to only take care of the well-adjusted widow and orphan?" If bad behavior rules us out as un-adoptable - then in light of our earlier discussion and my entire life - God wouldn't take any of us into His family would He?
- 7) It is an amazing testimony to our world of God's overwhelming love and mercy. When we take in those who are unwanted, we send exactly the right message that all Christians should be showing to their "unwanted" friends, families and neighbors. You will be amazed at the witnessing opportunities that arise out of adoption as well. Long before we actually picked up any of our adopted children, we had the blessing of sharing the Gospel with many people who just couldn't understand why we would do such a "crazy" thing.
- 8) Adopting children doesn't make you a Christian. Believing the Gospel does. But adopting has been and always will be something that marks you as a Christian. Be a blessing and open your home to those who need one. The Lord will help and His name will be glorified as you serve Him!

Giving Opportunity!

Thanks so much for so many of you responding to our need. We have caught up some, but are still in need for the coming months. I truly hate to ask, but I will encourage y'all to pray and see what you can do to help get us over the top.

Prayer Requests

1. Thanks for praying as the Lord is continuing to work in our family and there is some good news. The girls are doing well. Gabe is home from his deployment and preparing to get married to Shaina. Scott is in the process of joining the Marines. Joey is still a concern. Keep praying and we are thankful for your time and concern.

2. Pray that our extended family would believe in Jesus. Pray for my Step-mom's niece who was kidnapped by her mother and taken to Indonesia. Pray for my youngest brother's marriage and family. Both my father and stepfather have finished their radiation treatments but there are other complications. My father and my stepfather are both recovering well from the cancer treatments and my dad's ankle is healing. My mother's cancer has not responded well and she has to try something different to head the problem off. Please continue to pray for my brother Mark who works for Bank of America and whose job situation is up in the air. And for Terri's mom who needs to sell her trailer.

3. Pray for many friends who are sick with different conditions. Pray for Lori, Liz H, Sherry C, Rebecca G, Sheila H, Josh H, Jinjae, Sherry, Jim C and my dear professor Gordon Lewis. Pray for another dear professor Jim and Ossie Andrews whose daughter Julie's situation is chronically painful.

4. Please pray for several whose marriages have been damaged and destroyed by sin and/or cultic beliefs. Pray for Bruce, Mike, Brad, Jeannette, Michael, Pam, Mike, Leah, Tim, Rachel, Greg, Karina and many others.

Calendar

Sept 8,15,22,29 – Home Bible Study – The Gospel of Matthew
Sept 7,14,21,28 – Horizon College Bible Classes
Sept 1 – Living Hope Baptist Church Aurora, CO – World Religions
Sept 4-6 – Denver Psychic Fair

Oct 6,13,20,27 Home Bible Study – The Gospel of Matthew
Oct 5,12,19,26 – Horizon College Bible Classes
Oct 2-3 – International Society of Cult Awareness conference
Oct 9-11 – Colorado Springs Psychic Fair

Nov 3,10,17, – Home Bible Study – The Gospel of Matthew
Nov 9,16,23 – Horizon College Bible Classes
Nov 7 – Gabe and Shaina's Colorado wedding reception.
Nov 21 – 1:00–8:00 P.M. Haven Ministries Annual Party!!!
Nov 30 – Dec 11 – Parliament of World Religions in Melbourne, Australia. This is a huge event. I went to the Chicago Parliament in 1993 and talked to so many people from every religion and every part of the world. Check the website for my report from that event. Please pray that we can raise the money (five of the staff are planning to go Lord willing!) and for a safe trip and an incredible time of ministry.
Dec 15 – Last Home Bible Study for the year – The Gospel of Matthew

Keep checking back for more events.

We are trying still to raise money for the Uganda trip and now have a marvelous opportunity to minister at the Parliament of World Religions in Melbourne, Australia this coming December. Please pray and consider the wonderful opportunities you can share in!



5. Pray for many we have witnessed to like Jonathan (Gnostic). Also pray for Sister WHO and Kamela from the psychic fair. We met many at this years People's Fair who were Buddhists and Hindus, Eckists, and others. Please remember our long time requests for Hindus (Lee and Meg), Mormons - (Elders Robert, Rollins, Lane, Roebucks, Adam, Cheryl, Sandra and many more). Jehovah's Witnesses (Jonathan, Bruce and Bianca and lots of others). New Agers (Tim, Zach, Denver, Ian, Fausto, Jason, Anuttama, Sukkacitto, Adam, and Wiccans). Muslims like Abdul and others. Please continue to pray for Evan (who has dramatically stepped backwards) and Stephanie who need to grow in their faith and take it seriously. Also, please pray for many promising conversations we had at the Cesnur conference in Utah - which was a very cult-friendly event and therefore we were not welcomed but still had great conversations.

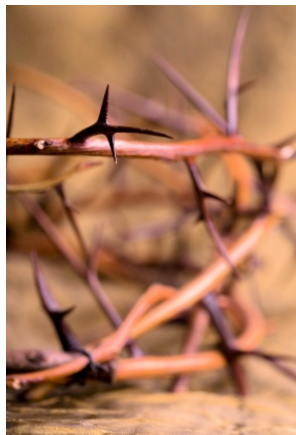
6. Please pray for our missionaries & interns with Haven. Pray for Mark and Rose, especially Rose who is now being lined up for a kidney transplant. Pray for Mark as he still considers the best time to retire from the Denver Police Dept. and go full time with Haven. Pray for Jeff and Sandy who still have pressing issues with their family's health and spiritual state. Also please pray for Rita Dominguez, who is counseling and discipling women in the church. Also please pray for Jim and Barb Choury, who have now expanded their ministry into several churches.

7. Pray for our military sons and daughters. Gabe is stationed at Camp Pendleton until his next deployment. Pray for his fellow Marines, Matt and Chris C, Dan W. and for Soldiers Josh P., Nick G, Carlos and Matt R. Please check out the events calendar for other events where we would need prayer.

Thank You!

The Haven Newsletter

Bill Honsberger
Writer



Non-Prophet Update

During the Liberal/Fundamentalist controversies of an earlier generation, conservative Christian scholar J.G. Machen asked his liberal peers to at least be honest enough to admit that they had invented an entirely different religion with only the pretence of being "Christian". One would think the same question might be put to Brian McLaren, Rob Bell, Doug Pagitt, Leonard Sweet and the rest of the emergent "conversation" Since y'all affirm the divinity in all things like Hindus, chant mantras like Buddhists, and deny virtually all the cardinal Christian teachings, affirming sin as a "lifestyle" - then why do you still hang on to that whole "Christ" thing? BTW Brian - when you go to Ramadan this fall to be with your Islamic brethren - why don't you affirm the divinity of all things with them? Oh yeah - "Shirk" - might cost your head. One way to have a conversation...

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