

Adoption

WHAT JOSEPH OF NAZARETH CAN TEACH US
ABOUT THIS COUNTERCULTURAL CHOICE

Russell Moore

“The older I grow, the more I am personally convinced that the church is our Lord’s answer to the adopting of so many precious children who so desperately are in need of a good home. Dr. Russell Moore has done the church a tremendous service by reminding us in this writing of the call of God to meet the ever-pressing needs of these little ones. Read with the intent to obey.”

Johnny Hunt, Former President, The Southern Baptist Convention; Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church Woodstock, Woodstock, Georgia

“Russell Moore shows how churches should view adoption as part of their mission. He shows what a difference it would make if Christians were known once again as the people who take in orphans and make them sons and daughters.”

Marvin Olasky, Editor in Chief, World News Group

“This is a powerfully insightful book of how adoption is a beautiful act of love and mission for the gospel. I pray that God uses this book to encourage and impact many, many lives.”

Dan Kimball, Pastor, Vintage Faith Church; author, *They Like Jesus but Not the Church*

“This book is for all who have been adopted by God. Moore illumines the beauty and wonder of our adoption in Christ and its profound and necessary implications for orphan care and the earthly practice of adoption. If you want to deepen your worship of the God who adopts and who has revealed himself to be a “Father to the fatherless,” *Adoption* will serve you exceptionally well.”

Dan Cruver, Director, Together for Adoption;
author, *Reclaiming Adoption: Missional Living
Through the Rediscovery of Abba Father*

“The Bible tells us that pure religion is caring for widows and orphans. Dr. Russell Moore challenges Christians to an aspect of Christ’s lordship that many have never considered. His remarkable way of putting our salvation into the context of being adopted into God’s family brings a new perspective on being the recipient of undeserved mercy and grace.”

Jerry Rankin, Former President, International
Mission Board of the Southern Baptist
Convention

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about This Countercultural Choice

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To the Highview Baptist Church
in Louisville, Kentucky, and the
Kingdom First Bible Study class.
I am enriched every day by memories
of the years serving with you.

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Preface

What it would mean if our churches and families were known as the people who adopt babies—and toddlers, and children, and teenagers. What if we as Christians were known, once again, as the people who take in orphans, and make of them beloved sons and daughters?

Not everyone is called to adopt. No one wants parents who adopt children out of the same sense of duty with which they may give to the building fund for the new church gymnasium. But all of us have a stake in the adoption issue, because Jesus does. He is the one who tells us his Father is also the “Father of the fatherless” (Ps. 68:5). He is the One who insists on calling “the least of these” his brothers (Matt. 25:40), and who tells us that the first time we hear his voice he will be asking us if we did the same.

I don’t know why, in the mystery of God’s plan, you were led to pick up this booklet. But,

Preface

I know this. You have a stake in the adoption issue—even if you never adopt a child. There’s a war going on around you—and perhaps within you—and adoption is one crucial arena of that war. With that in mind, perhaps there are some changes to be made in our lives. For some of us, I hope this book changes the makeup of our households. For some of us, I hope it helps to change our monthly bank account balances. For all of us, I hope it changes something of the way we say “brother” and “sister” in our pews next Sunday, and the way we cry out “Father” on our knees tonight.

Introduction

Joseph of Nazareth

What's at Stake When We
Talk about Adoption

I played a cow in my first-grade Christmas pageant, and I had more lines than the kid who played Joseph. He was a prop, or so it seemed, for Mary, the plastic doll in the manger, and the rest of us. We were just following the script. There's rarely much room in the inn of the contemporary Christian imagination for Joseph, especially among conservative Protestants like me. His only role, it seems, is an usher—to get Mary to the stable in Bethlehem in the first place and then to get her back to the Temple

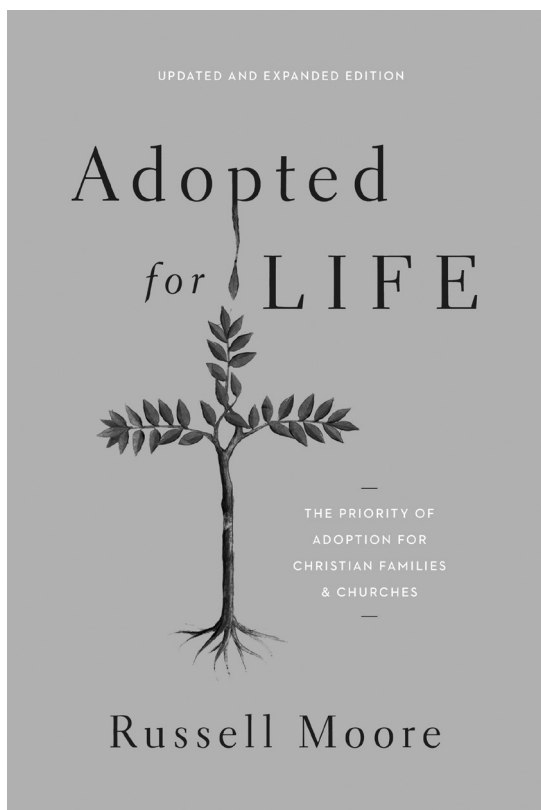
Introduction

in Jerusalem in order to find the wandering twelve-year-old Jesus.

But there's much more to the Joseph figure.

Joseph serves as a model to follow as we see what's at stake in the issue of adoption. Joseph, after all, is an adoptive father. In some ways, his situation is, of course, far different from that of any reader holding this book right now. In other ways, though, Joseph's mission belongs to all of us. As Joseph images the Father of the fatherless, he shows us how adoption is more than charity. It's spiritual warfare.

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FROM RUSSELL MOORE



"The gospel of Jesus Christ means our families and churches ought to be at the forefront of the adoption of orphans close to home and around the world."

For more information, visit crossway.org.

Joseph of Nazareth was a good and honorable man. The adoptive father of Jesus, he stood by his wife and raised her son—even when it appeared that she had betrayed him. Such is the love of adoption. But this love stands in stark contrast to what we see in our world today: on-demand abortion, unreported abuse, and widespread neglect.

Adapted from Russell Moore’s influential book *Adopted for Life: The Priority of Adoption for Christian Families and Churches*, this short volume calls Christians to seriously consider adoption for their own families and thus take a stand for children—born and unborn.

“Moore has done the church a tremendous service by reminding us in this writing of the call of God to meet the ever-pressing needs of these little ones. Read with the intent to obey.”

JOHNNY HUNT, Former President, The Southern Baptist Convention

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Russell D. Moore (PhD, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary) is the eighth president of the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. A widely sought commentator, Dr. Moore has been called “vigorous, cheerful, and fiercely articulate” by *The Wall Street Journal*. He is the author of several books, including *The Kingdom of Christ*, *Adopted for Life*, and *Tempted and Tried*.

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