

The Mystery Doctrines: Baptism of the Holy Spirit; the New Spiritual Species & Roman Adoption; the Royal Family of God; the Protocol Plan of God

4. THE MYSTERY DOCTRINES

1. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit:

- 1) This is the salvation ministry of the Spirit through which the believer is placed into union with Christ, referred to as positional truth. He is identified with Christ retroactively in His spiritual death, physical death, and burial. This means the power of the sin nature has been broken. He is identified with Christ currently in His resurrection, ascension, and session which means he is in an eternal relationship with Christ.
- 2) Retroactive positional truth is the subject of Romans 6:1-5 and current positional truth is discussed in Colossians 3:1-4.

2. The Church Age believer is described as a new spiritual species:

- 1) This mystery eliminates all racial distinctions between Jewish and Gentile believers and those that exist among the Gentile races. In addition to race, the new spiritual species removes cultural, social, and sexual distinctions.
- 2) This mystery is the subject of 1 Corinthians 12:13 and:

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek [racial/cultural], there is neither slave nor free [social], there is neither male nor female [gender]; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - If anyone is in Christ, he is a new spiritual species; the ancient things [the sin nature & spiritual death] are gone; behold they have become and will always be a new species.

3. The Believer is adopted into the Royal Family of God:

- 1) Adoption was a ceremony in the Roman culture by which a person was brought into a royal family as an adult son.
- 2) This concept is used to convey the mystery doctrine that when a person believes in Christ he is placed into the royal family of God as an adult son and recipient of equal privileges and equal opportunities associated with royalty.

Romans 8:16 - The Holy Spirit Himself testifies with our human spirit that we are children of God,

v. 17 - and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellows heirs with Christ ...

- 3) Those adopted become royal aristocrats as sons of God:

Ephesians 1:5 - God predestined [**divine decree**] us to adoption as **sons** [**υἱός, *huios***] through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will.

- 4) The adoption spoken of here is illustrated by the ceremony common in Roman society:

Synopsis of Roman Adoption. The Romans raised their children in a very strict atmosphere designed to make them adults by age fourteen. If a young boy properly responded to authority, at the appropriate time he was given all the privileges of Roman citizenship.

If a boy showed slow development and tended to reject the authority of the system, then his father sought a replacement. Thus, their system of primogeniture was flexible in that it allowed them to seek a strong replacement for a weak son. They could go to the plebeian class and select a young man who showed promise and a willingness to advance in the authoritarian system of Roman aristocracy. If he advanced as expected, he was adopted into the patrician family and became heir apparent to the father's place as head of the household.

The natural-born son became the responsibility of the adopted son. He was to be cared for and provided for. However, he did not have the natural privileges which would normally have been his had he shown positive volition to the system. In this way, the Roman society was able to remain strong and vibrant for centuries. The flexibility of their system of primogeniture allowed them to replace weak natural-born sons with strong adopted sons. The result was that quality people maintained control of the patrician class. (p. 10)

When the patrician class was strong and healthy, prosperity trickled down to the lower classes. The openness of adoption allowed everyone an opportunity to rise above their station in life. All that was required was a willingness to adjust to a system of discipline and authority.

When the day came to become a full citizen, the young man was given a new name, a new robe (toga virilis), and a signet ring. These were indicators to society that this young man had demonstrated his abilities in the area of leadership and authority orientation. He had been trained under the discipline of the schoolmasters; now he was a new species, ready to serve his new father.

Called *adrogatio*, the ceremony is very eloquently described in the opening pages of Lloyd C. Douglas's novel *The Robe*.¹ (p. 11)

4. The believer is indoctrinated into the protocol plan of God:
 - 1) Protocol is a rigid, long-established code, prescribing complete deference to superior rank and authority, followed by strict adherence to due order of precedence, coupled with precisely correct procedure.
 - 2) God has a way of doing things. His way is the right way and the only way of doing things: a right thing done in a right way is right.

¹ Joe Griffin, "Synopsis of Roman Adoption," in *The Doctrine of Adoption* (St. Charles: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 1989), unpublished notes, 10-11.

- 3) The believer is placed into a divine power system where he learns God's plan which functions on precisely correct procedure.
- 4) This procedure requires the believer to function in God's system which has as its purpose to glorify Christ through the policy of grace and under the authority of the sovereignty of God.
- 5) There is a system of order and a system of precedence in the plan of God.
- 6) The protocol's system of order is complete deference to superior rank. This is the believer's orientation to life through recognition of God's authority revealed in the Scripture.
- 7) Precedence is based on the modus operandi of the humanity of Christ in the dispensation of the Hypostatic Union: the prototype divine power system.