

**“Waiting Eagerly for Adoption”:
Orphan Sunday 2023
Sermon Notes**

➤ **Everyone on planet earth *goes* through suffering, but only the heirs of God *grow* through suffering**

**The key is learning how to groan on the pathway to glory...*

(Exodus 2:23-25; 6:5-8; Judges 2:18; Psalm 5:1; 22:1; Ezekiel 9:4-6;
Matthew 5:4; Mark 7:34; Acts 7:34; 2 Corinthians 5:2, 4)

1. Creation groans like an expectant mother (vv.18-22)
2. Christians groan as heirs to a family fortune (vv.23-25)
3. God’s Spirit groans to help us bear the family likeness (vv.26-30)

Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of November 12th-18th

Getting Started

1. How much proximity have you had to orphans over the course of your life? Have you ever visited an orphanage, welcomed a child into your family through adoption, opened your home to foster care, or simply provided hospitality to a child at-risk or in need? If so, share with the group. If not, why do you think that's so?

Digging Deeper

2. If you are a Christian, how often do you reflect on the fact that you were once an orphan? Consider Paul's words in Ephesians 2:1-3 and 2:11-12. The Bible commands us to “remember” this reality. Why?

Open Your Bible to Ephesians 1:3-6...

3. Read carefully through Ephesians 1:3-6, Galatians 4:4-7, and Romans 8:12-17. These Scriptures bear witness to the fact that all three persons of the Trinity are involved in our adoption into God's family. How? What are the inseparable operations of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in our adoption?

4. If regeneration is where we come alive in God's *delivery room* (Titus 3:5) and justification is where we are declared righteous in God's *court room* (Romans 4:4-8), then adoption is where we're brought home to God's *family room* (Romans 8:12-17). Compare and contrast these precious doctrines with one another. How are they similar? How are they different?

5. Jesus instructs us to pray to God as “Our *Father* in heaven” (Matthew 6:9). Do you? There are many biblical ways to address the 1st person of the Trinity in prayer (God, Lord, Sovereign One, etc.), but do you regularly pray to God as your “Father”? If you do, share your experience with the group. If you don't, why do you suppose that is?

6. Hebrews 12:3-11 highlights the importance of the formative and corrective discipline of God the Father in our lives. What strikes you (excuse the pun!) in these verses? Why is God's fatherly discipline so vital in our Christian lives according to this passage? Can you point to a time in your walk with the Lord where your heavenly Father took you 'out to the woodshed', so to speak? If you're willing, please share with the group.

7. 1 Timothy 3:14-15 and 5:1-2 speak of the church in familial categories. How many specific examples of family-type language can you spot in these four verses? In what ways do you see clear evidence of our church operating like this? On the other hand, in what ways do you think we have some growing to do?

8. Have everyone in your group take a look at the following link: <http://bethesdaoutreach.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Twelve-Ways-to-Love-the-Orphan.pdf> . Close your time together by reading and seeking to apply the article: “12 Ways Ordinary People Can Love Orphans”. As you consider these 12 applications, what do you believe is one practical and concrete step you, your family or our church family can take toward the care of the fatherless?