

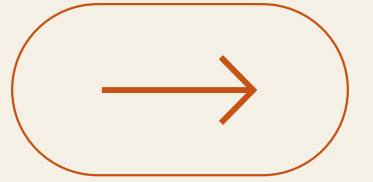
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BELOVED, ADOPTED HEIRS

Co-Mission Church Planting

Ephesians 1:3-14

Content



1. Anchor (5 minutes)

2. Add - Development (20 minutes)

2.1. Approaches to Ephesians 1:3-14

2.2. The Central Metaphor is Being in relationship with God is being adopted as sons

2.3. The Concrete Logic of Roman Adoption

2.4. Implications for the reading of Ephesians 1:3-14

2.5. Implications for the rest of the Letter

3. Apply - Implications (10 minutes)

1. Anchor



With your background preaching or studying Ephesians 1:3-14, can you summarise how this passage has been meaningful in your Christian walk?

(5 minutes)

2. Add



This seminar will be
developed in five moves:

- 1** Starts by explaining the approaches normally taken when addressing this section
- 2** Explains why grammatically, syntactically, and even the trinitarian layout supports the adoption idea
- 3** How was adoption understood in the world of the audience?
- 4** What are the implications for understanding Ephesians 1:3-13
- 5** How is the family language important in the letter?

Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8 that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, 9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12 in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the

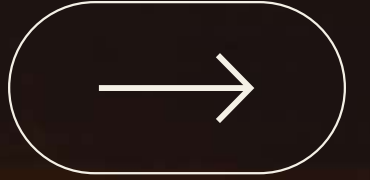
Approaches to Ephesians 1:3–14

- A** A lengthy run-on sentence, piling up lofty spiritual terms
- B** An initial doxology disconnected from the body of the letter
- C** A catalogue of metaphors related to salvation
- D** Recognises the Trinitarian foundations

Second move

The Central Metaphor is

Being in relationship with
God is being adopted as
sons



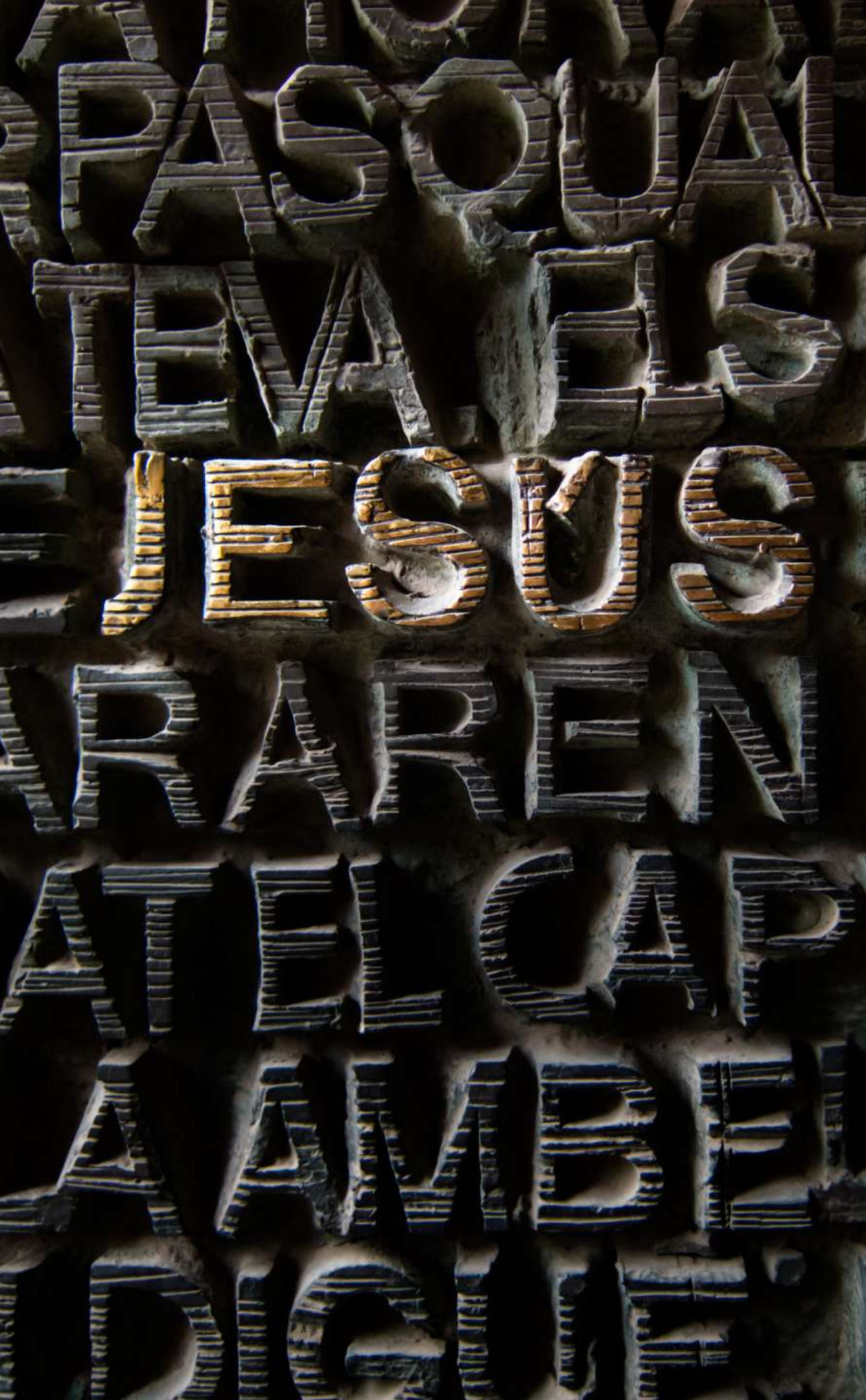


“huiothesian”

Greek noun for adoption

Ephesians 1:5

...he predestined us for adoption
to sonship through Jesus Christ,
in accordance with his pleasure
and will...



Identity & Destination

Ephesians 1:4-5

For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will...



The preposition “in” (ἐν)

Repetition 11 times

Greek sentences around being “in
Christ”



Predestination, redemption, inheritance, access and sealing

Metonymies

Conceptual sub-events within the
complex event of adoption



The Father elects, the Son redeems, and the Spirit seals

Trinity cooperatively enact adoption

The trinitarian outline correlates to
the persons carrying out adoption

Also seen in Galatians 4:1-7 and Romans 8:12-17



Will, praise, and purpose

The Father's agency

The passage is structured
around this adoptive process
initiated by the Father

Third move

The Concrete Logic of Roman Adoption



2-9% of children in upper-class families were adoptees

~ 50% - High infant and child mortality rates

~ 1/3 of roman children lost their father before puberty

A collection of ancient Roman coins, with the central one showing the profile of Emperor Nero. The coin is inscribed with "NERO" on the left and "CAESAR" on the right. The emperor's head is shown in profile, facing right, with a laurel wreath. The coins are dark and weathered, set against a dark, textured background.

Emperors distinguished as “sons of gods”

High-profile and status

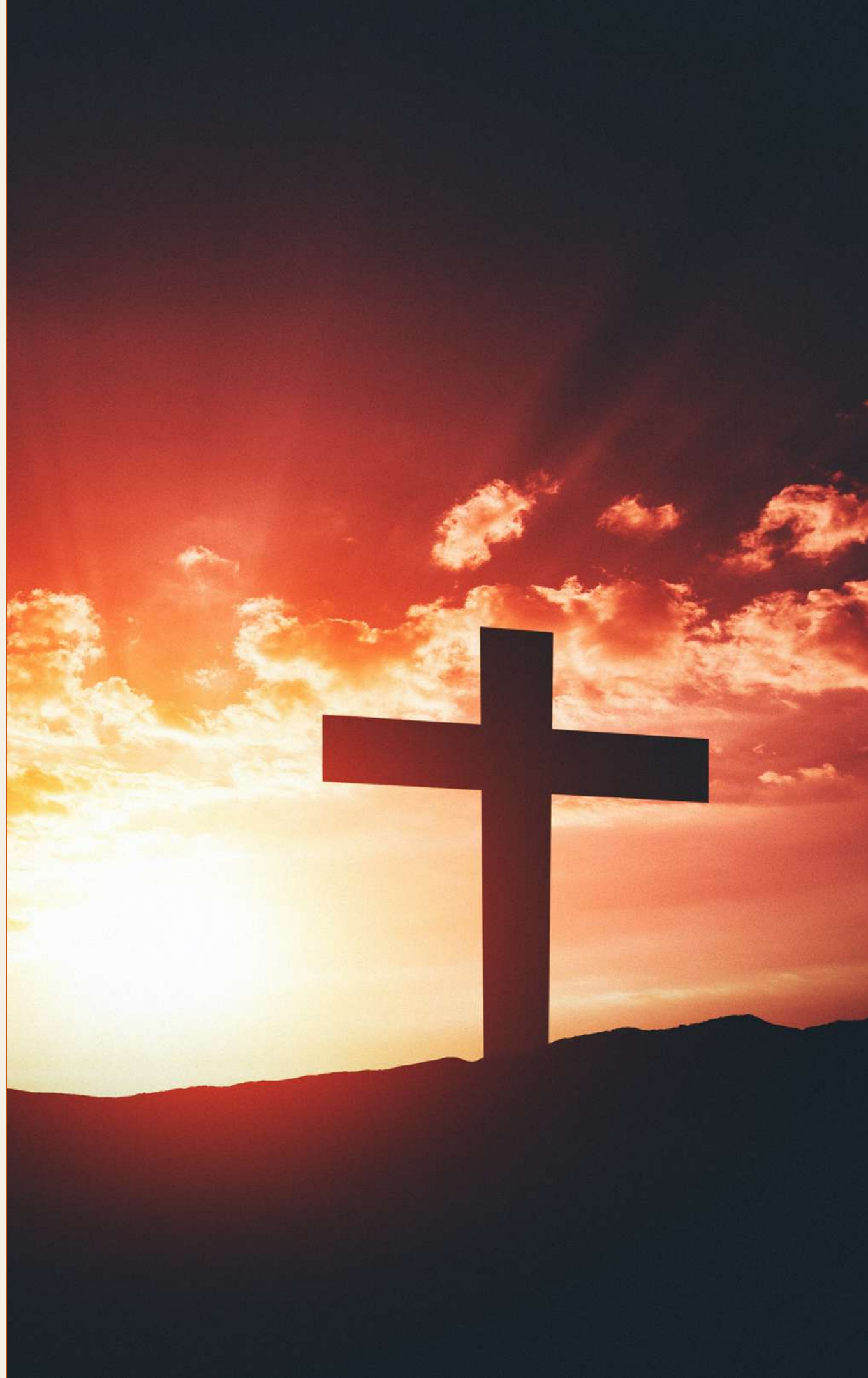
Celsus ridiculed the Christian movement, seeing it as a detestable and servile religion that only the foolish, dishonorable and uneducated



Excluded as full heirs in His family

God's intention

The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is
our Father through adoption



Implications for the reading of Ephesians 1:3-14

We are children chosen by the Father

We are children redeemed by the Son

We are children sealed by the Spirit

The Father already has a suitable heir, who He gives
“it is in Him, and His blood” to adopt unsuitable
people

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the **Ephesians**

ison, Paul addressed a serious problem at Asia: conflict between Jewish and Gentile Christians into two groups and thus that it was God's purpose from eternity (8-9). That eternal purpose had now been signers to God's covenants, were made fell it is God who has drawn those two groups by effort to maintain the unity of the church

agreement of Jesus Christ 1:1
all of God, into the saints 1:2
Ephesians, and to the 1:3
Jesus 1:4
be to you, and peace, 1:5
our Father, and from the 1:6
Christ 1:7
blessings in Christ 1:8
and be the God and Father 1:9
Jesus Christ, who with 1:10
all spiritual blessings 1:11

Implications for the rest of the letter

- C.1** A lengthy run-on sentence, piling up lofty spiritual terms
- C.2** Contrasts children of wrath with children of love
- C.3** Christ's love in allowing adopted children direct access to God as Father
- C.4-5** The "beloved children" and "children of light" are expected to live accordingly
- C.6** Paul's petitions for spiritual empowerment in 1:15-23

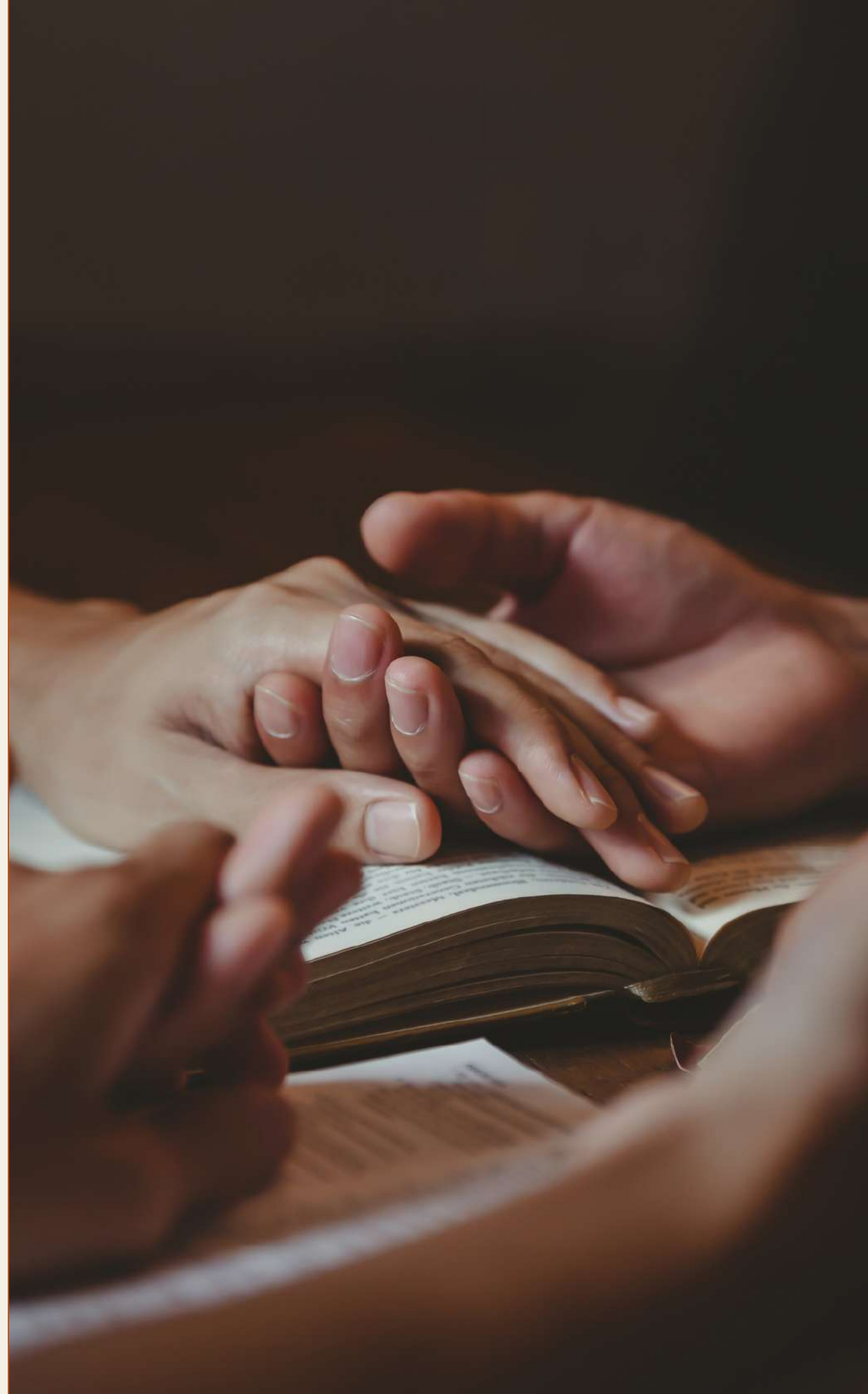
3. Apply



How is this helpful for your ministry
as a church planter?

(5 minutes)

Implications



The family framework

The primary lens for interpreting major theological themes in Ephesians. This brings vertical and horizontal balance.

Praying to God as Father

This flows from adoption, so prayer is emphasised at the beginning of chapter 1, in the middle of chapter 3, and at the end in chapter 6. Adoption motivates growing in prayer.

Discipleship

Discipleship involves postures of sitting, walking, and standing. This draws on biblical precedents like Psalm 1 and Deuteronomy.

Implications



Under the protection and responsibility of
the ultimate paterfamilias

Adopted children of the Almighty are secure and safe in the Father's household, even amidst damage at earthly homes, when people have been impacted by all sorts of destructive behaviors (Eph 4-5).

Flourishing as individuals and communities

Stems from Christ's victory and the Spirit's power in our lives as adopted children. Being part of the Father's household remains a trinitarian work.



Beloved, adopted heirs