

Grafted Branches Can Bear Just as Much Fruit . . .

By God's plan, a child can become a cherished member of the family through adoption, and the family tree adds a small branch. That child is "grafted" into the family. But this new branch need not be viewed as inferior. A grafted branch can have just as much strength and bear just as much fruit as any other branch in the family. In fact, a grafted tree can have just as much strength and bear just as much fruit as any other family tree . . . maybe more. This is all according to God's plan, and that is why those involved in adoption need to know God's heart, for He says,

*"I know the plans I have for you . . .
plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future."
(Jeremiah 29:11 NIV)*

Q: "How do we tell our son he was adopted?"

- Why should we tell our child?¹
 - Adoption is good; therefore, positive attitudes about adoption should be developed early.
 - Being truthful reinforces the values of honesty and trust.
 - When a child is told early in life, adoption becomes an accepted part of family life.
- What should we tell our child?²
 - Develop positive attitudes involving warmth, comfort, pleasure, security, and love in association with the word adoption.
 - Begin setting the stage with adoption stories, as well as with the child's own personal story.
 - Explain the details of the story and answer all questions honestly.
 - Be prepared to talk about emotions and feelings.
 - Watch your wording of adoptive terms.

*"The lips of the righteous feed many,
but fools die for lack of sense."
(Proverbs 10:21)*

What an Expectant Mother Needs to Know about Adoption³

- Adoption can provide the most stable environment for her baby.
- Adoption can be an answer to prayer for countless childless couples.
- Adoption is biblical—Moses was adopted.
- Adoption agreements include provision that all birth expenses be paid by others.
- Adoption gives many birth mothers the opportunity to get an education and a job and to marry at some future time.
- Adoption (open adoption) allows the child's mother to have meaningful contact with her child and with the adoptive family at agreed upon times.
- Adoption can be the greatest gift of sacrificial love by a birth mother on behalf of her child.
- Adoption is often the answer to the question, "What is in the child's best interest?"

*"Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."
(Philippians 2:4)*

Understand God's Concept of Adoptive Love

- **Adoptive Love Is . . .**
 - **Selective** . . . It makes a conscious decision to love. (Ephesians 1:5)
 - **Extensive** . . . It extends beyond family bloodlines. (John 3:16)
 - **Creative** . . . It provides a new identity. (2 Corinthians 5:17)
 - **Legal** . . . It includes the guarantee of a child's inheritance. (Romans 8:17)
 - **Redemptive** . . . It gives freedom to the one in fear or bondage. (Romans 8:15)

Key Verses to Memorize

*"Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert."
(Isaiah 43:18–19)*

Key Passage to Read and Reread

Romans 8:15–18

Should You Consider Adopting a Child?

• **Don't Adopt . . .**

- if you secretly feel that an adopted child is second best to having a birth child
- if you are looking for a child to fill your emotional needs
- if you feel it is your moral duty to help a homeless child
- if you are seeking your identity through parenting
- if you fear dealing with inherited weaknesses
- if you cannot talk openly and honestly about the adoption
- if you and your spouse are not in complete agreement about the adoption
- if you are attempting to save your marriage
- if you have unrealistic expectations of yourself and others
- if you are uneasy about the biological history being revealed

*"Every way of a man is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the heart."
(Proverbs 21:2)*

Should You Consider Adopting a Child?

• Do Adopt . . .

- if you have a happy, stable marriage that is flexible enough to include another person
- if you can truly love and accept a child who is not born to you
- if you and your spouse are ready for a lifelong commitment to love a child sacrificially
- if you are realistically prepared to accept the bad times along with the good times
- if you are prepared for tension you may experience if you conceive a child after adopting

*“By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established.”
(Proverbs 24:3)*

Related Topics . . .

- Abortion Prevention:
Not a Choice, but a Child
- The Blended Family:
God’s Recipe for Success
- Infertility:
Building Hope from Broken Dreams
- Parenting:
Steps for Successful Parenting
- Pregnancy . . . Unplanned:
I’m Pregnant?

HOPE FOR THE HEART’s *Biblical Counseling Library Quick Reference* provides immediate, concise, biblical truths for today’s problems.

For more comprehensive help, refer to our *Biblical Counseling Keys . . .*

Adoption:
A Child Born in the Heart.

If you would like more information, call 1-800-488-HOPE (4673) or visit www.hopefortheheart.org.

For prayer encouragement and biblical counsel call 1-866-570-HOPE (4673).

1. For this section see Kay Marshall Strom and Douglas R. Donnelly, *The Complete Adoption Handbook*, rev. and updated ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 138-9.
2. Strom and Donnelly, *The Complete Adoption Handbook*, 139.
3. Frederica Mathewes-Green, *Real Choices: Offering Practical, Life-Affirming Alternatives to Abortion* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Books, 1994), 128; Sylvia Boothe, *No Easy Choices* (Birmingham, AL: New Hope, 1990), 43-56.



HOPE
for the Heart

*Together . . . Changing Minds.
Changing Hearts. Changing Lives.*

P.O. Box 7, Dallas, TX 75221

Scripture taken from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*.
Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.