



***“See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don’t recognize that we are God’s children because they don’t know him.”*** 1 John 3:1

Every time I hear a father call his little one, and hear the child respond, “Daddy, Daddy,” I am moved as I watch the child run into their father’s arms. I see the father’s heart filled with love for his child and the child expressing great joy as they embrace. Being part of a family is an incredible blessing!

The meaning of the word ‘adopt’ is defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as **“to take by choice into a relationship—especially: to take voluntarily (a child of other parents) as one’s own child.”**

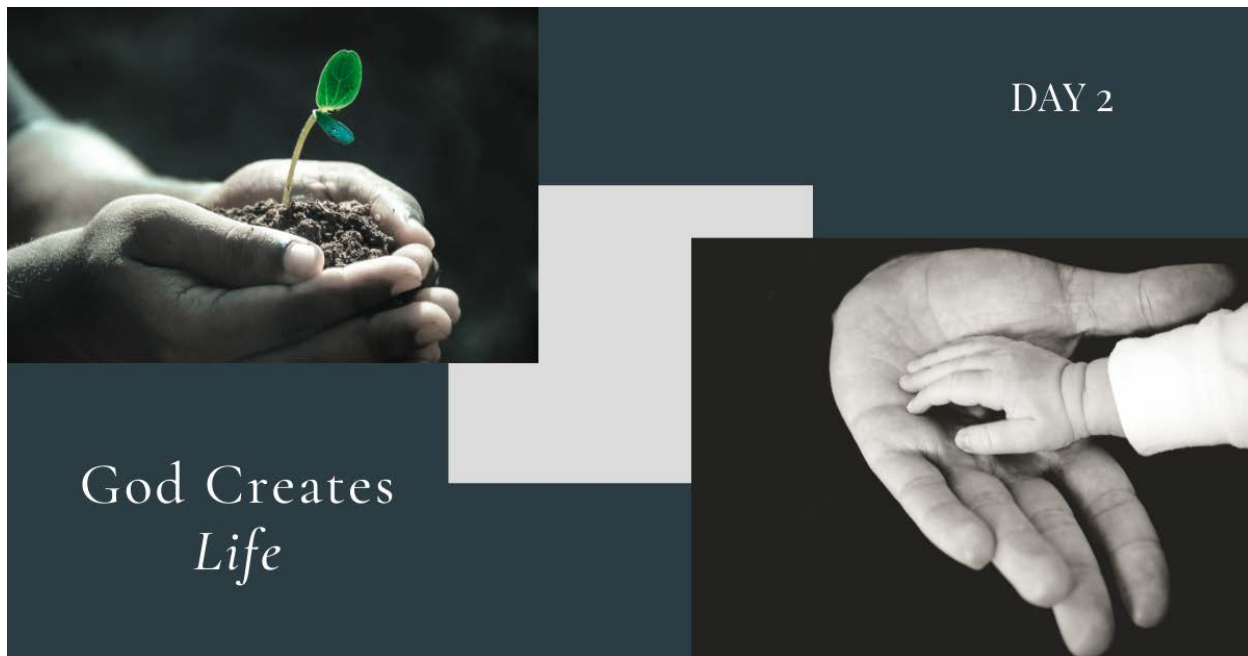
In the book of Ephesians, Paul talks about God’s heart for adoption and his desire to adopt us into His family. In fact, God chose us before the world began. Paul describes God’s intent as follows, **“God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.”** Ephesians 1: 5 To think that God loves us as he does his own son!

And as God’s sons and daughters, we are to do the same things we see the Father doing. Like Jesus stated, **“So Jesus explained, “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself. He does only what he sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son also does.”** John 5:19

If God has a heart for adoption, shouldn’t we have the same heart?

**PRAYER:**

Father God, thank you for our relationship, for loving me, and for adopting me into your family. Lord, help me to follow in your footsteps, to be compassionate, and to have a heart for adoption. Amen.



***“You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,  
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.  
You saw me before I was born.  
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.  
Every moment was laid out  
before a single day had passed.”*** Psalm 139:15-16

God knows how we came into being. He knows how we live our lives today and how we will impact the lives of others tomorrow. He created us with purpose.

***“God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.”*** John 1:3-4

Previously, we talked about God’s heart for adoption. Adoption comes in many forms, including embryo adoption.

#### What is Embryo Adoption?

Families who add children to their home through the process of IVF often find they have more embryos than they know what to do with. Once their family is complete, a couple may place their remaining embryos to be adopted by another family. This is a beautiful gift for an adoptive family who, without the donor family’s kindness, may never have had the opportunity to become pregnant and have a family they can call their own.

For those of you who may be pondering the idea of placing your remaining embryos for adoption: God knows you. He knew that if He gave you more than you need for your own family to be complete, that you would have a heart of compassion and bless another family with an incredible gift.

#### **PRAYER:**

Father God, thank you for creating me, for giving me a life with purpose. Help me to value my own life and the lives of others. Amen.



This simple picture conveys a powerful message. Sometimes we dream about things in our lives and how we want them to play out. However, when things do not go quite the way we imagined, we often find it hard to let go. But God's answers offer us hope! God often has a bigger and better plan than we can ever hope or imagine. When we trust God, we open ourselves up to new possibilities.

***"For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."*** Jeremiah 29:11

In 1 Samuel chapter 1, we read about Hannah. She was extremely distraught because she desperately desired children of her own but could not conceive. To make matters worse, she was reminded regularly of her inability to conceive. (1 Samuel 1:6)

One day, Hannah went to the temple to pray, knowing God had the answer. She promised the Lord that if He would give her a son, she would honor God by giving him back to God. Hannah found favor with God that day, and Samuel was born. God was with Hannah and He helped her have the grace to keep her promise, as her son Samuel had a divine purpose.

**Have you ever found yourself in a position like Hannah, desperately desiring a child, praying God would answer your heart's cry?**

Today, there are all sorts of ways to have a family. Many seek the help of a fertility clinic, and while it has some wonderful answers, it also produces a lot of questions:

*What do you do with your remaining embryos after your family is complete?*

*Am I being irresponsible by not having them all myself?*

*Is donating them to another family an option?*

*What will people think of me?*

*Can I live with knowing that someone else is raising my child?*

All these thoughts and feelings are natural. The fact that you are thinking about it so deeply just goes to show what a good parent you are!

Remember, God knows *all* things. He knew what you would struggle with and how you would feel. God has a good plan, and we can be rest assured that He knows what He is doing. It is bigger and better than we could ever imagine! So listen to His plan and allow Him to lead you.

**“I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.”** Romans 15:13 (ESV)

***“Take delight in the Lord, and he will give you your heart’s desires. Commit everything you do to the Lord. Trust him, and he will help you.”*** Psalm 37:4-5

**LET’S PRAY:**

Father, thank you that I can trust you. Thank you that you have my wellbeing and the wellbeing of those I love in your care. Help me to follow your plan for my life, and that I would know peace.

Lord, I pray for all those that desire to have a family. You declare in your word that it is a blessing. Please help those who are struggling with infertility to find hope and an answer that meets their needs, brings them joy, and gives you glory. Amen.



God knows that building relationships is a worthwhile pursuit—adding value to our lives. He knows it is not always easy, that is why He took the time to encourage us in His word.

***“Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other’s faults because of your love. Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace.” Ephesians 4:2-3***

#### **The Value of Open Adoption for the Child**

Right from the beginning, God said He created us in His image. It says so in the first chapter in the Bible. ***“Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us.” Genesis 1:26a***

When God created Adam and Eve, they were designed in His likeness. He gave them a life filled with opportunity, and the freewill to embrace the life they had been given. Not unlike donor families who create embryos like themselves and donate them to an adoptive family. Knowing our origin and learning about our makeup helps us navigate our destiny. And gives one a sense of clarity. Likewise, knowing who we are in Christ shows us our value as God’s children!

**Open adoption provides the child with a greater sense of understanding of who they are as a person.**

#### **The Value of Open Adoption for Embryo Donors**

***“For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.” Ephesians 2:10***

Each little life that is adopted is a masterpiece. Like a work of art, they move from the home of the artist to the home of the art lover—desired, loved, cared for, and valued. While the artist is no longer responsible for their masterpiece, they still appreciate the care and attention the art lover provides their creation.

**Open adoption provides the donor family with a greater sense of peace, knowing their embryos are loved and taken care of by the adoptive family.**

#### **The Value of Open Adoption for the Adoptive Parent**

God is an advocate of relationships. That is why He gives us so much instruction in His word on how to effectively relate to one another.

***“Do to others as you would like them to do to you.” Luke 6:31***

***“Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.” Hebrews 10:24***

**Open adoption provides the adoptive parent with insights and appreciation of the donor family that they might not otherwise have. Thereby, increasing their level of comfort and their ability to connect with their adopted child/children.**

**LET'S PRAY:**

Father, thank you for loving us! Thank you for teaching us the value of relationship. Help us to value the contributions that each life can give, and recognize the masterpiece you have created in them. Help us to relate to each other in positive and healthy ways that we may spur one another on as it says in your word. Amen.





I would like to leave you with a verse and some closing thoughts to ponder. ***“And we know that God causes everything to work together<sup>a1</sup> for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.”*** Romans 8:28

What a wonderful thought, we have a designed purpose, we are called to love.

What do you see as your designed purpose in relationship to adoption? Which of the following roles best describes your heart?

- Parent with remaining embryos
- Potential adopting parent
- Person who would like to help

Whatever role you see yourself in, the Bible is clear about how you should proceed. ***“And do everything with love.”*** 1 Corinthians 16:14

The Bible describes love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7, ***“Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud<sup>5</sup> or rude. It does not demand its own way. It is not irritable, and it keeps no record of being wronged.<sup>6</sup> It does not rejoice about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out.<sup>7</sup> Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.”***

Following is a little acronym about love and what it might look like for those wanting to get involved with embryo adoption.

**Listen** – Listen to the Holy Spirit. Let Him guide you on what you should do. The Bible says the Holy Spirit leads you into all truth (John 16:13). He will let you know what you should do and when. And if you are a little nervous initially, be at ease, it is perfectly normal. Remember, God is there for you.

**“For I hold you by your right hand—I, the Lord your God. And I say to you, ‘Don’t be afraid. I am here to help you.’”** Isaiah 41:13

**Observe** – See what ways you can get involved. Is God calling you to bless another family with your remaining embryos? Or is He calling you to adopt embryos and provide them the opportunity at a chance of a full and happy life? Or perhaps God is calling you to get involved by praying and supporting the blessing of embryo adoption.

Value – Whatever role you find yourself in, value the moment. Appreciate the people involved that are making this happen. That includes yourself; the experience will be a blessing.

Encourage – Take a moment to reassure those involved. If you recall the story of Esther, she was getting nervous about speaking up, and Mordecai sent her a message. ***“If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?”*** Esther 4:14

In other words, this was her moment. Mordecai wanted her to consider she may have received the blessings of a good life so that she could have an impact. A moment in time that would make a difference.

Please take a moment to consider: Is there something you could do to make a difference? Is God calling you for such a time as this?

**LET’S PRAY:**

Father, thank you, for your Holy Spirit who helps me understand my role and purpose in life. Thank you for the reminder to love. Help me to make a difference. Amen.