



Adopted and Adaptive: The Role of Biculturals in World Redemption

My wife Janie and I are the proud parents of two adopted daughters: Heather and Joelle. It was back in 1982, that we had our first experience with adoption. As first-time parents, we were extremely concerned about how and when we would tell our first daughter Heather that she was adopted. The people at the adoption agency recommended that we purchase a particular children's book entitled *Why was I Adopted?* by Carol Livingston. They suggested we place this book visibly on a shelf or table and read it to our child from time to time as she grows up. By doing this, Heather would always know that she was adopted. We would not have to endure the tension and apprehension of deciding when, where, and how to "break the news" to her, as if it were some dreaded, highly contagious, terminal disease or something.

When I was growing up, I feared perhaps I had been adopted. I didn't look much like either parent, or my brothers, or sister. One day, when I needed a copy of my birth certificate, my mother said she couldn't find it. I felt sure that my suspicion had been confirmed. Even though I had been just as cared for and loved as the other children in my family, I felt that being adopted meant something unfortunate and pitiful and that people felt sorry for you.

However, as I read *Why was I Adopted?* I was surprised and pleased that adoption was portrayed as being something extra special. In fact, the author warns the adopted child not to be arrogant toward others who haven't been granted such a privilege. For my wife and me, who for ten years had wanted and tried so hard to have children, adoption is just that special, and Heather and Joelle are both extraordinary gifts from God.

Our experience with adoption serves to illustrate a point that I think is important—God often has a positive view of the very things we ourselves and society view as our weaknesses, liabilities, and stumbling blocks. Paradoxically, these things may be, in God's eyes, the very means to fulfilling a unique function and calling he has for us.

For an example, we will look at an adopted child in the Bible. His name is Moses. Most of us are familiar with the life of Moses and the role he played in leading the children of Israel out from beneath the oppressive foot of Egyptian rule. When we open the book of Exodus we see that Moses was born a Hebrew, an oppressed and enslaved minority in the land of Egypt. As an early attempt at population control, Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, enacted an ordinance that called for the extermination of all male babies born to the Hebrews.