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**Date: May 18, 2025**

**Speaker: Sam Rainer**

**Series: Home is Where the Heart Is**

**Message: Healthy Homes**

**Reflect:**

- All families have quirks. What is one funny or endearing “family tradition” (from childhood or now) that shapes who you are?
- Think of a time you felt fully welcomed or “brought in” (team, dorm, friend’s home, etc.). What made that moment memorable?

**Encounter:**

- Read Ephesians 1:4-6 aloud. What verbs does Paul use to describe God’s action toward us, and what do those words tell us about His initiative in adoption?
- Sam talked about Joseph adopting Jesus and the fact that God adopts us through Christ. Compare Matthew 1:18-25 with Ephesians 1:5. What similarities and differences do you see between Joseph’s role and the Father’s role?
- Romans 11:17-24 speaks of Gentiles being “grafted in.” How does that image expand our understanding of blended families in Christ and connect to the sermon’s emphasis on grace over DNA?

## Transform:

- Where might God be inviting you to mirror His adopting heart—through mentoring, fostering, hospitality, or reconciling strained family ties?
- As a church family, what practical steps could we take this summer to support single-parent homes or blended families within driving distance of us (10,000+ in our area)?

## Related Passages:

<b>John 14:18</b>	Jesus' promise "I will not leave you as orphans" frames adoption as His mission of presence and rescue.
<b>Romans 8:15-17</b>	Explains the Spirit of adoption, crying "Abba, Father," grounding identity and inheritance.
<b>Psalms 68:5-6</b>	God is "Father to the fatherless... sets the lonely in families," showing His heart across Testaments.
<b>James 1:27</b>	Pure religion cares for orphans and widows—bridging theology with tangible action.
<b>2 Corinthians 6:14 &amp; 1 Corinthians 7:12-16</b>	Guidance on unequally-yoked marriages, echoing the sermon's counsel to spouses.
<b>2 Timothy 1:3-7; 3:14-15</b>	Highlights generational faith transfer through one faithful parent or grandparent.

## Interesting Facts and Tidbits:

- **Greco-Roman adoption:** In Paul's day adoption was primarily about securing an heir, not rescuing an infant. An adopted child received the full legal status of a natural son

—including inheritance and the father’s name—beautifully mirroring the gospel’s promise (cf. Rom 8:15).

- **Joseph’s legal line:** By adopting Jesus, Joseph legally rooted Him in David’s royal lineage (Matt 1), fulfilling messianic prophecy even though there was zero DNA overlap.
- **Olive-tree grafting:** Ancient farmers grafted wild branches into cultivated trees to invigorate them—a reversal of normal practice (cultivated into wild). Paul flips the metaphor (Rom 11) to underscore how radical God’s grace is.
- **Timothy’s “spiritual single-mom” story:** Lois and Eunice disciplined Timothy despite an unbelieving father (Acts 16:1; 2 Tim 1:5), showing how one sincere parent can influence generations—exactly the sermon’s encouragement to single parents.

### **Additional Discussion Questions:**

- How does viewing family through a cultural lens differ from viewing it through a gospel lens? Give concrete examples.
- Sam called adoption “spiritual warfare.” In what ways do you see Satan attacking families today, and how can believers fight back?
- Share a modern story (news, personal, or historical) where sacrificial love crossed racial or family lines. What gospel echoes do you hear in it?