

Notes: A resolution on this subject was referred for further study by the 2013 General Assembly to the Board of General Superintendents (BGS), and a study committee was appointed by the BGS. Any further amendments (beyond what has been recommended in this resolution from the BGS) would be required by *Manual* paragraph 27 to again be referred to the BGS for review by *another* study committee of theologians and ordained ministers.

ARTICLE OF FAITH IX – JUSTIFICATION, REGENERATION, AND ADOPTION

Board of General Superintendents  
*Manual* 9.2, 9.3 (Article of Faith IX)

RESOLVED that *Manual* paragraph 9.2 (Article of Faith IX) be amended as follows:

9.2. We believe that adoption is that gracious act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer is constituted a [son] child of God.

FURTHER RESOLVED that *Manual* paragraph 9.3 (Article of Faith IX) be amended as follows:

9.3. We believe that justification, regeneration, and adoption are simultaneous in the experience of seekers after God and are [obtained upon the condition of] received by faith, preceded by repentance; and that to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

(Luke 18:14; John 1:12–13; 3:3–8; 5:24; Acts 13:39; Romans 1:17; 3:21–26, 28; 4:5–9, 17–25; 5:1, 16–19; 6:4; 7:6; 8:1, 15–17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17–21; Galatians 2:16–21; 3:1–14, 26; 4:4–7; Ephesians 1:6–7; 2:1, 4–5; Philippians 3:3–9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:4–7; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 1:9; 3:1–2, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 9–13, 18)

REASONS:

1. The rationale for such a change is not so much predicated on the sensitivities of perceived sexist language that excludes female believers who have been adopted by God into His family (although that perception may very well exist) so much as several modern English translations refer to “child [or children] of God” when specifically referring to the doctrine of adoption.
2. To cite two biblical examples:
  - a) “So you should not be like cowering, fearful slaves. You should behave instead like God’s very own children, adopted into his family—calling him ‘Father, dear Father.’” (Romans 8:15, New Living Translation)

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51

b) “He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will.” (Ephesians 1:5, New Revised Standard Version)

3. The other reason for the change is for the sake of continuity as the phrase, “a son of God,” to refer to believers appears nowhere else in the Articles of Faith.
4. Clarify and simplify the language.