

### **What is the status of little ones born to Christian parents?**

1) It is helpful to begin with the fall in Adam and therefore to think of them as fallen image bearers of God; note, they are His image bearers, though marred and fallen, and they need restoration in the image of God.

2) Christ is their Lord. Jesus is universal Sabbath king and covenant Lord; He is their Lord for He is Lord of all families and persons on earth (everyone is in His kingdom, Mat 13.38). No one makes Him his or her Lord. Therefore, we call our children (as little ones, teens, and adults) to *acknowledge* Jesus as their Lord by faith (by confession of faith and repentance). In this way, we call them to become the children of Abraham by faith.

3) The gospel promise, the overture of grace of the new covenant, belongs to them. It is for them in its proclamation to all families (to all men, women, and children) of the earth. In calling them to become children of Abraham by faith, we call them to own the gospel of the new covenant that comes to them in the free offer.

4) The gospel of God's love is for them and to them in the gifts of the sunshine and the rain. In the context of God's invitation to fellowship that He gives in creation (Ps 19.1-6), we call the little ones to confess, "God made all things, God made me, and all things," to receive the comfort of His love in the Scriptures (Ps 19.7-14), and to claim the Lord as "my rock and redeemer" (Ps 19.14).

### **Applying the covenant theme as overarching the NT, we can ask the following question: what place does the NT have on behalf of children born to believing parents?**

The NT belongs to the children of believing parents as an overture of grace in its proclamation to all men, women, and children to the ends of the earth to the end of the age. In the NT, they have the gospel of the new covenant readily available to them. It is near them so if they believe in their hearts and confess with their mouths that Jesus is the risen Lord, then they have salvation and become the children of Abraham by faith.