

“The Spirit of Sonship” *“The Holy Spirit” Series – Part 7*

“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of Sonship (adoption). And by him we cry “Abba, Father.”
Romans 8:15-16 NIV

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

Paul is saying that it is the Holy Spirit who witnesses our adoption by God. In this scripture, there are two things that are important for us to realize, first, our spirit bears witness to the fact that we are sons of the King. Second, the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirits that we are sons of God. The Divine Spirit does not say that He testifies to our spirit but that He “testifies with our spirit.” How He does this is explained in Galatians 4:6:

“Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.”

Once we have committed to live for the Lord, the Holy Spirit fills our hearts with an overwhelming declaration, “that God is our Father. **(Once we establish in our hearts that God is our Father when Satan steps up the Holy Spirit testifies that we are God’s and He must step back).**”

Prior to our salvation experience, we reasoned that we were in control of our own sinful life; but God, in his mercy, has purchased us. The old life has no more right over us; God has absolute rule over our lives. The past is cancelled and its debts are wiped out; we begin a new life with God and we become heirs of all his riches. Since that is so, we become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, God’s own Son and that which Christ inherits we inherit as well (Romans 8:17 NIV)!

According to Roman law, which is what the Apostle Paul is alluding to in Romans 8:15-16, there are four main points to an adoption process. They are:

- (1) The adopted person lost all rights in his old family and gained all the rights of a legitimate child in their new one. In the most binding legal way, they obtained a new father.
- (2) The adopted child became heir to his new father’s estate. Even if other sons were born before or after, it did not affect his rights. He was co-heir with them.
- (3) In Roman law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out; for instance, all debts were canceled. He was regarded as a new person entering into a new life with which the past had nothing to do with his new one.
- (4) Finally, as it applied to the Roman legal system, the adopted child was absolutely, the son of his new father.

Further, under Roman law the adoption ceremony was accomplished in the presence of seven witnesses. Now, suppose the father died and there was a dispute over the adopted child inheriting his new father's wealth. One or more of the seven witnesses stepped forward and swore that the adoption was genuine, thus the right of the adopted person was guaranteed and he received his inheritance.

In comparison, the Holy Spirit is our witness testifying with our spirits that we are sons of the King. We too have lost all rights to our old life, we have received a new Father, we are co-heirs with our brothers and sisters, all of our sinful debts have been wiped out and we are sons and daughters of the King. Can you see why our Heavenly Father wants a personal relationship with us? He wants to be a true Father by supporting us when we are distraught, being involved in the solution of our problems, embracing us when we suffer and disciplining us when we won't listen.

Because God has adopted us, have we really accepted His adoption? The truth is an adoption is not really complete until the child receives the adopting parents and embraces them as their own. With this in mind have we as children honored Father God as our Father? Have we called Him Father with our words, yet denied Him in our actions? This could be one of many reasons why we are reluctant to enter His presence and unwilling to dialogue openly with the Lord.

Is it possible that we dread interaction with our Heavenly Father because we fear we will lose our earthly identity? We pray because we think we ought to and perhaps we're afraid of what will happen if we don't. We continue to hold onto an agnostic mindset (one who doubts the existence of God) when we should have left it at the altar when we gave our hearts to the Lord. With the help of the Holy Spirit, my assignment today is to show you that God, the creator of everything, longs to have a Divine Parental relationship with each of us.

John 16:14-15 says:

"He (the Holy Spirit) will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you." NIV

Think about it, "All that belongs to the Father is mine (Jesus') and the Spirit will take from what is mine (Jesus') and make it known to you (us)." All of the love of our Father and our Lord and Master Jesus Christ is available to us through the power of the Holy Spirit. This love transcends every earthly relationship. It is through the realization of this phenomenal love that Jesus gave up His life, even on the cross, for all of mankind. It will be the revelation of this un-earthly affection that will cause you and me to surrender to an incredibly loving and caring Father and finally cry out "Abba Father," accepting Him as our Daddy today!

God longs to hear us call Him "Father" from the core of our being. We must discontinue identifying our relationship with God by comparing Him to our biological fathers; the two are completely different. He is a Father who loves us as no earthly father can. A Holy Daddy, who longs to have His children realize this love.

In the case of our adoption process, we should allow the Holy Spirit to become our advocate with the Father, allowing the Divine Spirit to reveal in our hearts the glory and truth of our adoption. The difference between a heavenly adoption and an earthly one is that we will experience this Divine interaction throughout eternity.

When we look into the face and eyes of the Eminent one, with hearts that the Holy Spirit has filled with truth about our Sonship, and we cry out “Daddy God,” no words can describe the joy that our Heavenly Father feels.

II Corinthians 6:18

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” NIV

Galatians 3:29

“If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” NIV

Deuteronomy 14:2

“For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. Out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, the Lord has chosen you to be his treasured possession.” NIV

Ephesians 2:19

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household.” NIV

John 1:12

“Yet to all, who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” NIV

We must examine our interaction with our Loving God. Ungodly fear and legalistic disciplines can not drive us. We must continue our spiritual journey because of our love for the Father, as the Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit about our Sonship and God’s unwavering affection toward us.

Paul says in Romans 8:38-39:

“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither present nor the future, nor any power, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

As we allow the Holy Spirit to illuminate our Sonship we will transition from religiosity to true Holy Spirit led life.

- * Some of this ministry was taken from R.A. Torrey’s book, “The Presence & Work of the Holy Spirit” and from the Daily Study Bible series of William Barclay, “The Letters to the Romans” Revised Edition.

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