

Weekly Devotional - The Family of Faith 7-21-21

For those who are led by the SPIRIT of GOD are the children of GOD. The SPIRIT you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the SPIRIT you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by HIM we cry, "Abba FATHER." The SPIRIT HIMSELF testifies with our spirit that we are GOD'S children. Now, if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of GOD and co-heirs with CHRIST, if indeed we share in HIS sufferings in order that we may also share in HIS glory. [Romans 8:14-17 NIV]

Being a part of the family of GOD is the greatest blessing bestowed upon believers and one that should drive us to our knees in humble adoration. We can never do anything to deserve it. It is GOD'S gift of Love, Mercy, and Grace to us.

As we look at Romans 8:14-17, four major points are apparent. First, the HOLY SPIRIT Leads us [8:14] - "For as many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, these are the sons of GOD." Secondly, the HOLY SPIRIT Liberates us [8:15] - "For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the SPIRIT of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, FATHER'." Thirdly, the HOLY SPIRIT Assures us [8:16] - "The SPIRIT HIMSELF bears witness with our spirit that we are children of GOD." And fourthly, as GOD'S children we are Heirs and Joint Heirs [8:17] - "And if children, then heirs; heirs of GOD and joint heirs with CHRIST, if indeed we suffer with HIM, that we may also be glorified together."

The family is the foundational institution of society ordained by GOD. [Genesis 2:20-25, 4:1]. Born-again believers are told that we are members of GOD'S family. This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of GOD, but the children of the Promise are counted as offspring. [Rom. 9:8 ESV]

See what kind of love the FATHER has given to us, that we should be called children of GOD; and so we are. The reason

why the world does not know us is that it did not know HIM. Beloved, we are GOD'S children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when HE appears we shall be like HIM, because we shall see HIM as HE is. [1 John 3:1-2 ESV]

How does anyone become a part of the family of GOD? A person must, first, hear the Gospel (the "good news" about JESUS CHRIST); then, confess his or her sins to GOD; thirdly, place their faith and trust in JESUS CHRIST. A person is at that moment born into GOD'S Kingdom as HIS child and becomes an heir with GOD for eternity.

"For by Grace you have been saved through Faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of GOD, not of works, lest anyone should boast." [Ephesians 2:8-9]

Believers are referred to as children born into GOD'S family who need to grow and mature in our faith [Eph. 4:11-16]]. GOD'S infinite Grace and Mercy are revealed in Eph. 1:5-6, which says HE redeems sinners, whom HE has "adopted as HIS sons through JESUS CHRIST, in accordance with HIS Pleasure and Will to the praise of HIS glorious Grace, which HE has freely given us in the One HE loves." As children of GOD, what do we inherit? Nothing less than the Kingdom of GOD [Matt. 25:34; 1 Thess. 2:12; Heb. 12:28]!

Ephesians 1:3 tells us that believers are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in CHRIST. These spiritual blessings are infinite, eternal, and reside in CHRIST, and by GOD'S grace we are given these blessings as HIS children. As earthly children we eventually inherit what our parents leave behind for us after their death. But in GOD'S family, believers are already reaping the rewards of our inheritance by having peace with HIM through the sacrifice of HIS SON on the cross. Other rewards of our inheritance include the gift of the indwelling of the HOLY SPIRIT at the moment we believe in CHRIST [Eph. 1:13-14], which empowers us to live for HIM in the present, and

the knowledge that our salvation is secure for eternity [Heb. 7:24-25].

But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.” [Joshua 24:15]

May we always have a mind through which CHRIST thinks; a heart through which CHRIST loves; a voice through which CHRIST speaks; a hand through which CHRIST helps; and be a vessel through which CHRIST lives!

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