

Sunday March 17th sermon: "God Gives Us the Spirit of Adoption --  
The God of All Comforts (Pt 49)"

Preached at the Lord's Table at Grace Bible Church in Greenwood, MS,  
by John Pittman Hey

Galatians 3:26-4:6; Matthew 18:1-14

After His resurrection, Christ made explicit what He had previously mentioned during His ministry: that all people who trust in Jesus are the children of God. God provides for us as our Father, and He promises us a rich, kingly inheritance with Christ!

Our sonship came about because Christ was incarnate in human flesh, so that He could die in our place, and for our crimes, which were laid upon Him by the Father. Hebrews tells us that this made us Christ's brethren, and we were given to Him by the Father, with the assignment to save us by His dying for us, and then to lead us into glory as God's sons.

Our God embraces His people as sons, with inheritances, and honor, and happiness, and privilege, and unrestrained joy, all of which is far more than we could expect! This is an astounding comfort that God has bestowed upon His loved ones!

Paul makes clear in Galatians how we become sons of God: by being joined to Christ by faith, baptized into Christ by the Holy Ghost, put into union with Christ.

Thus we are all one in Christ! His identity as God's Son subsumes our personal origins as to our identity as God's children. Being one with Christ makes us joint-heirs with Him.

There has always been an infinite love between God the Father and Christ the Son, as equal persons of the Godhead, loving and delighting in each other.

Being in Christ, we now partake of that eternal and infinite love between Father and Son! This is the unity in love that Christ prayed for in John 17, that we all may be one together with Christ, and with our Father!

We are entangled in the love between the very persons of the Trinity!

God also has promised us ultimate perfection in Christ. We have been declared without fault, justified, because of Christ's blood shed for us. But one day, as God's sons, when we are raised in perfection by Christ, we will be like Him, because we will finally see Him as He is.

This is all because, being in Christ, we are Abraham's seed, and heirs to God's promises through Abraham unto His seed.

We are not only children, but grown sons! Once we were under the law, under tutors and governors, to lead us to Christ, until the emancipation ordered by the Father.

That took place when Christ came to redeem us from the law and its punishments, and when we received it by trusting in Jesus to save us.

Our Elder Brother has redeemed all the children of God by being made a curse for us, we who were formerly under that curse of judgment for our crimes against God. Christ paid the just punishment from God for our sins that were laid upon Him at Calvary.

Our Lord Jesus was always a Son -- holy, just, perfect, beloved and in His humanity, obedient to His Father.

We were none of those things, we were not natural sons of God. But Christ has perfected us before God, and we are brought into the family of God. We are not perfect in ourselves, but perfect in Christ.

By this great salvation, we have all been made sons of God, adopted through Jesus Christ, having been given the Holy Spirit of adoption as sons, whereby we cry, Abba Father!

The Holy Ghost is implanted in our hearts, the Spirit of Christ, always the Son, is given to each of us who trust in Him!

And so we cry Abba Father!

When an earthly father adopts a son, that son is still alien to the father, because he's not his natural son. Thus, that man cannot knit himself and his new son together in spirit. That is why adoptions can go bad, with mockers insisting to the son, "he's not your real father!"

But God our Father has an unfair advantage! His Holy Spirit is given to His adopted sons! That is why we can embrace God as our Father! We are knit together as one by the indwelling of the Spirit of Adoption.

What a great evil to try to alienate children from God their Father! Jesus warned against such attacks, declaring that all who do such things would be better drowned in the sea with a milestone about their necks!

God has convinced us we are His sons by giving us the Spirit of His Son, knitting us together with Christ and with our Father in a miraculous way, that cannot be compared with the relationship of earthly fathers and their adopted sons.

These truths provide the Lord's people with great comfort from God, that we are His adopted sons, and are sealed forever by the Holy Spirit of adoption, which urges us on to treat and love Him as our Father!

We love those words by James Deck:

“Abba, Father,” we approach Thee  
In our Savior’s precious name.  
We, Thy children, here assembling,  
Access to Thy presence claim!  
From our guilt His blood has washed us,  
’Tis through Him our souls draw nigh,  
And Thy Spirit too has taught us  
“Abba, Father,” thus to cry.

Once as prodigals we wandered,  
In our folly, far from Thee;  
But Thy grace, o'er sin abounding,  
Rescued us from misery.  
Thou Thy prodigal hast pardoned,  
"Kissed us" with a Father's love;  
Welcomed us with joy o'erflowing,  
Even to dwell with Thee above.

Clothed in garments of salvation  
At Thy table is our place;  
We rejoice, and Thou rejoicest,  
In the riches of Thy grace.  
"It is meet," we hear Thee saying,  
"We should merry be and glad;  
I have found My once-lost children,  
Now they live who once were dead."

"Abba, Father," we adore Thee,  
While the hosts in heaven above  
E'en in us now learn the wonders  
Of Thy wisdom, grace, and love.  
Soon before Thy throne assembled,  
All Thy children shall proclaim  
Abba's love as shown in Jesus,  
And how full is Abba's name!