

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon, Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Romans 8:16–17

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 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.

Our Blessedness in God's Own Blessedness

Main idea: all three Persons of the Godhead minister believers' adoption to them in divine love and power.

Introduction: it is we ourselves who cry, "Abba, Father," by the help of the Spirit. But now v16 introduces what the Spirit Himself does. Indeed, our passage highlights what each person Himself does.

1. The Spirit Who bears witness

1. He bears witness. Not just to us, but to God (cf. v26). "This is your Father" and "These are your children"
2. With our spirit. Agreements with us that encourage and confirm.
3. That we are children of God. This is the great display of God's love to us (cf. 5:5, 1Jn 3:1–2)

2. The Father Who bequeaths an inheritance

1. Heirs. The Father bequeaths the estate upon us. Affirms that we are proper sons by "writing us into His will" as it were. Not an empty title!
2. God Himself is the inheritance. This is what the Lord Jesus prayed for to the "Holy Father" (Jn 17).

3. The Son Who bounds us to Himself

1. Took to Himself joint inheritors. What sort of heir this is that decides to take joint-inheritors? That refuses to inherit without us?
2. Submitted Himself to joint suffering. Supremely at the cross. But still, in an ongoing way, so that the desire of the souls under the altar is our own Lord's desire. The enthroned one continues to suffer, after a manner, by virtue of His union with us!
3. Aiming at joint glory (cf. v29–30). He will glorify Himself at last in His Bride, Who will exactly match His own humanity.

Conclusion: the blessedness of believers' sonship is not only love from an adopting heavenly Father, but witness of an indwelling and accompanying Spirit, as well as union with a glorified Son. That is to say that our blessedness is in the Triune God. He brings us into our blessedness by bringing us into the knowledge and enjoyment of His own Triune blessedness.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 8, verse 16 and 17. These are God's words. The spirit himself bears, witness. With our spirit. That we are children. Of god. And if children, Than heirs. Heirs of god and joint heirs. With christ. If indeed, we suffer with him. That we may also be glorified.

Together. Men so far, the reading of gods inspired and And there aren't worth. We've been hearing, of course already about how The triune god. Blesses us and helps us with respect to our adoption. The spirit of god leads us. Along the father. Of course, has Adopted us and the sun has shared, then his sonship with us.

So we have received spirit of adoption by whom we cry abba. Along with the lord jesus. But then, here in verses, 16, and 17, when we come to the administering of our adoption, we also find it given Uh, to us in triune terms. We see the spirit bearing witness with us.

We see the father who has bequeathed and inheritance upon us. And we see the sun. Who bounds us? Binds us. To himself. And so, As we ourselves begin to. As we considered last week we began to consider last week. We ourselves are the ones who are crying out, abba father.

This is a ministry of the holy spirit to us he makes us to cry. Aba, he makes us to cry father by the help of the spirit. But now in verse 16, We have the spirit's own crying alongside ours and you can see the intentional. Emphasis upon the spirit's own speaking?

When you see in verse 16, the spirit himself, Bears. Witness. Here is one of many occasions in the scriptures in which the scriptures teach us that the holy spirit is not merely a power or an animating force, but that he is a person He testifies, he speaks. We know, of course, that he loves us and That we have fellowship with him.

One of the blessings that God has given to be pronounced on his church saves the
Um, The blessing of fellowship, especially for association, with the third person of
the Godhead, the grace, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God. And the
fellowship, the communion Of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

But here he is of course, a person, he himself. Bears witness with our spirit. And
this means that he's bearing his witness in two directions. Yes, he bears witness to
us. We call Godfather and he agrees with us. It says, yes, he is your father, it is
right for you to call him.

This it is not a blasphemy, you are not being presumptuous to call Godfather. And
so the, same spirit who does the work in our hearts to make us to recognize God as
father, and make our hearts call, God our father and makes our lips call God, our
father, he then agrees with us confirms to us, that it was his work that he did.

This This was not something that man invented. This was not something that we
decided for ourselves. But that he is the one who has Who has applied Christ to us
and brought us into our adoption as children of the Father. Uh, but he's bearing
witness. Not only to us, but with us, He bears witness to God and so just as he is
attesting to us and saying this is your father as we As we call upon God.

And yes, you are his child. You are his adopted child. So also, he bears witness
with us and he confirms what he has given rise to in our own hearts. These are your
children. And so this glorious transaction, this glorious purpose, your you
remember in Titus, God, who promised before the world began?

Well, what did he promise? And to whom, did he promise it? He he promised
within himself and what he promised was the the Father promised to give the son of
people and the son promised to redeem that people for The Father unto the Father
that they might be children with him.

And the Spirit has promised that he would apply that redemption And so we see. A
parallel here to what we see in Hebrews chapter 2. That wonderful statement not
only is it Jesus's faith. That is the merit of our faith. His faith is perfect, ours. So far
as imperfect and we rejoice when Hebrews 2 puts it on his lips.

I will put my trust in him. But he presents us alongside with him. And he says there behold, I and the children. Whom God has given me our Lord, Jesus says, Hebrews chapter 2. And the Spirit also, then bears witness, with our Spirit that we are the children of God.

Jesus and glory presents us, behold. I and the children whom God has given me the Spirit bears. Witness with our Spirit, he says, indeed, these are the children of God. And so, as the Spirit agrees with us in our crying out to God, it encourages us, it confirms us, assures us.

This is the great work of the Holy Spirit. To give us assurance of faith, by applying Christ to us and giving rise to the cry, in our hearts and agreeing with the cry of our hearts. Why would you ever want to grieve the Holy Spirit? Surely then. We must learn to treat one another.

With love and kindness and forgiveness as the, the closing of Ephesians 4 urges us, too. Last week grieve this. Holy Spirit. Who is with us and who is giving us these encouragements and confirmations. Why would we quench the Holy Spirit? Why would we be reluctant to read His word or hear His word, taught to preach reluctant together or even in the In the gathering that be reluctant hearers, or unintentional

Careless hearers. Or we hear well, and we're paying attention and it's meaningful and we interact with God. And then we never think about what we heard again. We don't meditate upon. We don't keep our vows that we made to God in the midst, but in all of these ways, we quench the Holy Spirit when we do any of these things.

The Holy Spirit. Who is confirming to us that we hear God's children, who is agreeing with us? And presenting us to God and saying, yes, these are your children. So, we grieve Him in our treatment of others. So he quenches Him. And how we receive and hear His word.

Oh, we mustn't. We shouldn't. Indeed, He loves us so greatly that. This is one of the great ways that He, pours out God's love in our hearts. You remember chapter 5 and

verse 5, I hope. That our hope in God, our hope for God's glory. It doesn't disappoint us.

Many are Many times a believer can suddenly be worried, what if this hope disappoints? What if it's not true? What if it's true only for others but isn't true for me personally, You remember back to the opening verses? Of chapter 5. The hope that enables us to rejoice in the midst of our suffering.

Because of what God is bringing about by that suffering. He said, in verse 5 of that chapter, A hope does not disappoint us. Because the love of God has been poured out, you know, some old translations, they shed abroad. It's the language of the drink offering or it's just all poured gushed out.

Except for this drink offering is an exhaustible source. There's no container. It cannot be contained. And so the Holy Spirit continually pouring out into our hearts, The love of God. The Spirit. He gave to us and this is one of the great ways that he does it. Because we even with the Spirit's help, we say, abba, father.

And sometimes we say a shrinking. Haltingly uncertainly, we never say it with full faith. Not this side of glory, all of our faith, is imperfect, and yet the Spirit, who, who enabled us with what faith we do, have as measured out to us. The portion that we do have, he not only makes us to call God, our father But he bears witness with us.

And he affirms to us and even if we don't perceive that as well as we should, He affirms to God. These are the children of God. And this is the great pouring out of his love into hearts, isn't it? Another apostle, the apostle John. Who first John three says behold look.

Gaze upon don't miss its presented to you here. The greatness the incomparableness. It doesn't even say greatness in what manner? And in other words there is no human way to describe or contain or capture with words. The greatness the glory of God's love to you and what is the greatness of that love?

That you would be called. The children of God. And of course, the apostle there immediately goes and says in, that is what you are. And here in our text this

evening, This is one of the holy spirit's great ministries to us. Oh, how many have gone after other things?

Whether? Miraculous things that were only ever intended to affirm the words of the scripture and the age of the apostles, or even feeling type things. Always going after a sort of Connection to god, or Or. Tuning him in or achieving a A. A new level of spirituality. When the holy spirit's actual ministry to us.

Is much more persistent, much more continual, much more powerful. Much more loving. Remember when we were understanding that word at the beginning of verse 14 last week, those who are led by the spirit of god, it turns out to be. Not, you know, these leadings that come every once in a while but i strong persistent leading us.

Bringing us. Something that cannot be stopped and will get us to glory. And he's leading us through our life. Like a horse on a rope. Well, again here is a ministry of the holy spirit to us. You communicates that we are the children of god. So that we may know how much God loves us.

And the testimony is given within God himself. Well, that's the spirit who apparents witness. But then there's the father who bequeaths and inheritance. You remember a couple of weeks ago, when, when we were looking at verse 13 and our English translation says Um, If by the spirit you put to death, the deeds of the body, you will live.

And, There were two different ways that that if could could be read. A condition that may or may not be met is is one way. Uh, but that's not true of believers and this is addressed to believers. And you remember at that time, we said a better way to read this particular use of the word.

If is since by the spirit, you put to death, the deeds of the body, we have the same thing here. He's talking to believers, he's saying since Since. You are children. Then you are heirs. Heirs of god. And so we moved from the spirit who bears witness to the father who bequeaths and inheritance.

The air does not decide for himself, that he will be an inheritor. He doesn't decide for himself. What will he what he will inherit? What this means here. When it says is that we are heirs of god. Is that god himself? Has taken us to be his heirs. He has chosen to adopt us.

Now, this is something that when a child is adopted, he He may struggle with. If especially if he, if he doesn't know and trust and the provenance of god as ruling and overruling all things. And he might worry that he's not as much a child. Of his parents because he wasn't forgotten by the father and born out of the Out of the womb of the mother.

And yet an adopted child. What do what do parents often? The adoptive parents often? Tell them On the right. No. You we may not have biologically begotten. You we chose you? And you're every bit as much our child because we chose you. And how wonderful then for the adopted child, who has a good doctrine of the providence of god, Because he views his parents.

The biological child who has a good doctor in the providence of God, use his parents, as the one's not who chose him, but whom god chose for him. He says, god is the one who chose this family for me. God is the one who brought my parents to faith in him and god is the one who assigned me christian parents.

So that i would know myself as a christian child. So that by the means that he is appointed, he who is saving me. Brought me into that family, he chose that family for me. Now. Doesn't the adopt a child say the exact same thing about god. God is the one.

Who chose? These parents for me, who put it in their hearts to love me who put it in their hearts to choose me? And it's, because He wanted to put me. For the christian adopted child into the christian home. He wanted to put me into a home that belonged to him.

He wanted to put the label saint upon me and call me. Holy he wanted me to learn not just to do what mom and dad say. But obey my parents in the lord. Well. When the holy spirit convinces us. Makes us to cry out, arbor father, and agrees, with our spirit that we are children.

It is because the father has decided to take us as his children. He's the one who has given us his spirit and he is the one who bequeaths his estate upon us. You see he affirms that we are proper sons by as it were writing us into his will.

That's what verse 17 is saying. We're not just sons and title, it's not just word games. Some of you perhaps know, at least my own family knows. I am a Scottish lord. My wife. A couple of years ago, purchased for me titled to a tiny little couple feet by couple feet, parcel of wetlands.

But in the contract, The that got me my lordship as it were. It was clearly specified. I cannot pass on the The property to. In my will to my children or to anyone else, and i don't get a seat in the government. I don't have a vote in In the house of lords.

I don't know if. Um, In. I i don't get any of those things. It's an empty title. Well. I can, if i'm flying to the uk. Ticket us as lord and lady. And i suspect that we will be treated quite well. If i do. But otherwise, it's an empty title.

You dear. Christian do not have an empty title. When you call, father, when you call godfather, And the Holy spirit confirms to you, it says you have it in writing here. Romans 8 verse 17. So much the word of god. Every word of scripture is breathed out by god.

As if he had breathed at himself, you have it in writing. It's not an empty title. You're a true son. You're a true daughter. You're a true heir. God has written you into his will. His bequeath. Is a state. To you. And what is the estate of god? Well, it's not this pathetic little universe with all of its glories.

Because every wonder in all of creation taken together, Overall of time. Is not to be compared to god himself. He is your portion. He is your inheritance. And everything else together with him. He's given you Christ, Romans 8:32 and he will give you everything together with christ. With christ.

But he also says you are. You all things are yours because you are christ's and christ is gods. Christ belongs to go out. Indeed, god himself as the inheritance so

much that when Um, When the lord jesus is praying in john 17. It's the only place in which You find the phrase and all the Bible.

Holy. Father. And the lord jesus. Praying something. In. With respect to his person as the son about the holiness of god. The holiness of god of course you perhaps have heard. Heard it defined as being completely other than, Well, that's only with respect to the creation, isn't it? That can't be the essence of his holiness because he's holy from all eternity.

When all there is as him, It's the fullness of the intensity of his commitment to himself, has love within himself within the godhead, the adoration, and delight, and fellowship, and devotion of the father, and the son, and the holy spirit to one another from all eternity, to all eternity.

And yes, when he creates It's expressed in god, treating himself as completely other, the only living and true. God the holy holy holy god. And in that prayer, Of the holy son. To the holy Father. What does he pray? Most of all That we would be one. That we would be one with him.

That we would be in him. And he and us, as the father is in him. And he in the father, not that we could ever Share in the substance of god. That would be wicked against his holiness, ever, think that we could. But that we would be brought into that fellowship and adoration and treasuring which is why one of the great prayers that gets answered.

The one of the great prayers of jesus that gets answered for a christian at the moment that christian dies. His father, i desire that those whom you have given me would be with me where i am. That we might hold the glory of the father and the son, loving one another and as they have from before the world began, You remember in that prayer?

This is the estate of god. This is the wealth. That we come to inherit. Not just a new heaven and a new earth. Hypothetically, small by comparison. But because we are his children. This is what god has bequeathed upon us. And so we have the spirit two bears, witness We have the father who bequeads and inheritance, we have the son who binds us.

To himself. Is a problem. It's a problem with our being heirs of god has adopted children and that is because there is an only begotten son who has first, right? To that, which has been bequeathed upon us, how can it be given to us? Will be given to us because He was glad to join us to bind us to himself to unite us to himself.

We were elected in him. Before the world began. Ephesians. Chapter 1. And so, We've been considered in him from before the world began and he came. And he became a man so that we could be rightly joined to him. Properly joined to him like us and every way except without sin, and then he lived that obedient life and he died that atoning death, so that he could merit.

Our being united to him. And so, he doesn't stop at heirs of god, does he in verse 17? He says, joint heirs with christ and we have here, three verbs. The the verb for, To be an heir inherit. Joint inheritors, the verb for suffer and the verb for To be glorified passive verb for glorify.

And all of them have that prefix attached to them. Together with It's just one word. It's three little letters in the greek. That we would be heirs together with christ and sufferers together with christ and ones who are glorified together with christ. He took to himself joint inheritors. Who does that?

Especially with a great inheritance. Who takes to himself. Another one to inherit with him. Well, our lord jesus, does that Because he loved us. Indeed. He refuses to inherit. Without us. Not only did he take himself joint inheritors but this meant joint suffering? Most of all that joint suffering that only he could endure.

The suffering of the cross. You and i cannot endure. The wrath of god, if you or i were to It would take. On ending ages and we would never finish. He and a few hours. For all of the sin. And all of the guilt. Of all who had been elected in him.

All who had believed in him up until that point and who had come to faith in him? And a few hours, he suffered all of the wrath and we by faith our united to him. So that his suffering is counted for us and counted against our guilt turns away.

All of the wrath of gods of god is only favorable only propitious towards us. Which is why we have that wonderful word bro. Propitiation. Was the lord. Jesus has done that. But there are suffering now that we continue to do that. He can't do. His glorified and body. He's ascended into heaven, the dragon cannot have him.

And yet, the children of the woman remain, His bride. The church she suffers on earth. And although he is where suffering cannot touch him. He suffers with us. He sympathizes with us, he suffers with us. I'm sure i meant more and more to Pull the more he got persecuted.

Those first words by which the lord jesus introduced himself to him. Saul Saul? Why are you persecuting? And there's one who would be greatly persecuted for the rest of his earthly life. How precious for him to know. That christ was united to him in his suffering. That it was jesus being persecuted with him.

Whatever the suffering is that continues for you, dear believer. The lord, jesus suffers with you, he longs for it to end. The souls under the altar. In the fifth seal, in revelation, 6 crying out. How long o lord? Their souls. Under the altar. What does that mean? That means they're perfect and holiness.

It's not a despising of god's promise, it's not a questioning him. It's a holy and righteous crying out the way. We see so many crying out of the same sort in the psalms. How long O Lord will you hide yourself forever? Was very words that the spirit had caused to be written.

So that when the lord jesus in his earthly suffering, Would learn as he grew and wisdom and favor with god to pray. Those words. And those souls, in the old, under the altar. In the fifth seal are, are they not praying in conformity to the lord jesus? Have they not been perfected in holiness, it's his mind.

That they are reflecting in their longing for the suffering to end. Jesus suffers with us. By virtue of his union with us. And he longs. For that suffering to end. So much, so that we may be certain That not one moment, not one pang of the agony that we go through in this life.

We are believers. Not one pain. Is unnecessary unintentional, useless, it is all accomplishing. What christ is willing to be united to us in our suffering to accomplish? And we see that at the end of the verse, You see, since we are children, we are heirs heirs of god. Heirs together with christ, if indeed, we suffer together that we may also be glorified together You see all of this is aiming at glory in a few verses time when he says and we know all things work together for good to those who love god.

Why? Because the only way they came to love God or because they were called according to his purpose, and then he starts that wonderful golden chain for those who he foreign you. That is, he knew them ahead of time. He elected them ahead of time. In the lord, jesus christ for those whom he foreign you, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his son.

The predestination is under unto adoption that he might be the firstborn among many brethren Those whom he predestined these he called, this is how we have come to know his love to us. This is how we have come to love him because he first loved us and those whom he called he also justified when we trusted in the lord jesus christ, we were counted righteous with god.

Once for all there is now no condemnation for those who are in christ jesus. And those whom he justified these he also glorified And so, we know that all things work together for our good because the one who works all things according to the council of his will from our justification to our glorification.

Continuously applies christ to us until we are conformed to his image.

And so yes, we suffer together with But we will jointly inherit with him as well on the day that we are glorified. With him. Jesus in his divine person. Jesus, according to his divine nature. Can never be more glorified than he is the glory of god. We, we do not add to it.

We only see and reflect. Who and what he is. But there is a crowning glory to jesus's mediator. And it is in that last day that he describes, at the end of Ephesians by That jesus has the god man in his glory as mediator presents to himself. The bride that he is, he has perfected.

And it is his pleasure. That, in terms of his Created. Glory. He added to himself. As a creature. He would be glorified in his bride. And she would radiate with his own glory forever and ever. The the The. Um, Companion image being the one that we just read. That.

He would be the firstborn among many brethren. And glorified in how exactly we correspond to him. When God has done with his work in us, not just soul, but even body in the resurrection on the last day. That's where the apostles. Taking us next. But Jesus. Doesn't inherit without us.

And refuses for us to suffer without him. And he's chosen the day when we are glorified with him. As the climax of his mediatorial glory, The son who binds us to himself. So, do you see dear Christian?

What? In the words, fail. Marvelous. It is a marvel, awesome. Belongs to that which should strike reverential fear in us as God does. What are truly awesome. Thing your adoption is and its application to you. As the Spirit bears witness. Along with you. And the Father has bequeathed and a state and will.

Bring you into the fullness of it will bequeath that estate. Upon you. And the sun has bound. Himself to you. Blessedness of believer's sonship. Is not only love from an adopting, heavenly Father. But also the witness of the indwelling in accompanying Spirit. And union with the glorified Son. In other words, our blessedness is in the blessed triune God.

And he brings us into our blessing. By bringing us more and more into the knowledge and enjoyment. Of his own triune blessedness. God, the Holy Spirit. Continue his work. As he convinces us. Of these things.