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Sermon Notes

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Adopted Children of God, Part 2

Romans 8:14-17

"The reason why so many poor souls have so little joy in their hearts, is that they have so little light of Gospel knowledge in their mind. The further a soul stands from the light of truth, the further he must needs be from the heat of comfort." William Gurnall

"Here joy enters into the saints; in heaven, saints enter into joy." Thomas Watson

"My brethren, when God first began to love you, He gave you all that He ever meant to give you in the lump, and eternity of time is that in which He is retailing of it out." Thomas Goodwin

"God is ever giving to his children, yet has not the less. His riches are imparted, not impaired." Thomas Watson

"God has made His children, by adoption, nearer to Himself than the angels. The angels are the friends of Christ, but believers are the very members of His body!" Thomas Watson

I. The Highest Honor of the Gospel

A. Every Spiritual Blessing

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!

B. Central Question of Existence: Am I A Child of God??

II. Am I a Child of God?

A. Those Who Receive Christ by Faith

B. Those Who Are Led by His Spirit

vs. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

C. Those Who Cry "Abba, Father" by His Spirit

vs. 15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

D. Those Who Receive the Internal Witness by His Spirit

vs. 16 *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God*

E. Those Who Suffer With Christ by His Spirit

vs. 17 *and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him*

TWO TYPES OF SUFFERING UNIQUE TO CHRISTIANS: temptation, persecution

III. What Are My Privileges As a Child of God?

A. Eternal Life

Sons of God cannot die!!! Life itself is the first privilege of a child of God

vs. 13-14 *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, 14 because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

B. Title

A royal family member bears the honor of the title. British royalty make much of their titles of honor... God makes more of the title of "Child of God"

1 John 3:1 *How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!*

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*

Hebrews 2:11 *Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.*

C. Love Relationship with the Father

God has not merely justified us coldly, as some judge discharging a correct ruling. He lavishes Himself on us, revealing Himself to us, and pouring His love into our hearts

vs. 15 *you received the Spirit of adoption. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

Romans 5:5 “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit whom He has given us.”

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

D. Free Access to the Throne

A royal son or daughter has freedom to run into the throne room of God anytime to speak to their Father, the King!

Esther had to wait till invited, then her life was in jeopardy if the King did not receive her. We will always be received!!

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

E. Discipline

A royal prince or princess must be trained from an early age how to carry him/herself like royalty. True sons or daughters therefore receive royal discipline if they misbehave. Illegitimate children are ignored and left to their own devices... they are disowned and NOT DISCIPLINED

Deuteronomy 8:5 Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the LORD your God disciplines you.

Hebrews 12:7-8 Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? 8 If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons.

F. Provision

Royal children get to eat from the King's table every day. God does not leave His children without provision.

Psalm 37:25 I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

Matthew 7:9-11 "Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to

give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

G. Protection

Royal children are the apple of the King's eye, and anyone who touches Him will regret the day bitterly! God's puts all His power and name around His children to keep them from harm... but NOT from trials and difficulties... rather from ultimate spiritual ruin!!

John 17:11-12 I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name-- the name you gave me-- so that they may be one as we are one. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

Psalm 91:11-16 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone. You will tread upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent. "Because he loves me," says the LORD, "I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation."

H. Fellowship with the Royal Family

God has MANY sons and daughters, as numerous as the stars in the sky... a multitude so great that no one could number them. We have a rich heritage of fellowship with all the royal children who have walked the earth before us, those who live now, and those who will come after us.

We are all one family, called by one name... and what a privilege that is!!

Galatians 6:10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith.

Psalm 16:3 As for the saints who are in the land, they are the glorious ones in whom is all my delight.

Hebrews 2:11 Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.

Hebrews 11:39-40 These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

I. Freedom

Royal family members are free! The move through the Kingdom not like serfs working the land, not like slaves serving in the galley... but like royalty, like sons and daughters of the King!!

1. From Law

vs. 1-2 Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.

Galatians 5:1 It is for freedom that Christ has set us free.

Sons don't need to pay taxes in the Kingdom like commoners do! It's their realm!!

Matthew 17:25-26 "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes-- from their own sons or from others?" "From others," Peter answered. "Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him.

2. From Sin

vs. 2 the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death

Romans 6:18 You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness

3. From Fear (of condemnation)

vs. 15 For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

1 John 4:18 There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We no longer serve God in craven fear like a slave, wondering at every moment if He's going to strike us dead! Rather, we have total freedom to serve God as sons and daughters. Free from fear of condemnation... but NOT free from the fear of the Lord that is the beginning of wisdom!!

Also freedom from fear of earthly catastrophe:

"How can you make a child of God afraid? Bring him word that his estate is ruined, 'Yet my inheritance is safe,' he replies. Your wife or child or dear friend is dead, 'Yet my heavenly Father still lives!' Tell him, 'You yourself must die!' He will answer 'Well, then, I go home to my Father and my eternal inheritance.'" Robert Leihgton

4. From Final Corruption and Death

vs. 19-21 *The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.*

J. Immense Inheritance

vs. 17 *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.*

Revelation 21:7 He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.

1. Throne Itself

2 Timothy 2:11-12 Here is a trustworthy saying: If we died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him.

Revelation 3:21 To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.

Revelation 22:5 They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

2. Kingdom

James 2:5 Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

1 Peter 1:4 an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-- kept in heaven for you

2 Peter 3:13 But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.

3. Possessions

Luke 16:10-12 Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches? And if you have not been trustworthy with someone else's property, who will give you property of your own?

Hebrews 10:34 You sympathized with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions.

K. Glory

Royal children share the royal glory... the radiance of all the majesty that the King can bestow... shimmering bright silk cloaks, shining gold crowns, perfectly white linen robes. So also they bear all the honor and prestige that the royal family deserves

vs. 17-18 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. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

Incredible Privileges!!!

Eternal Life—Title—Love Relationship with the Father—Free Access to the Throne—Discipline—Provision—Protection—Fellowship with the Royal Family—Freedom—Immense Inheritance—Glory

IV. What Are My Responsibilities As a Child of God?

vs. 12 “Therefore, my brothers, we have an obligation.”

A. Imitating the Father's Nature

1. Holiness

1 Peter 1:14-16 As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

2. Love

Matthew 5:44-45, 48 Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous... Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

B. Bearing the Father's Name

As a child of God, you carry God's name with you... His reputation rides with your behavior

Isaiah 43:6-7 Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth--⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made."

Jeremiah 15:16 When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

C. Obeying the Father's Commands

1 John 5:3-4 This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world.

1. Love for God

2. Love for brothers

1 John 5:1-2 Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well.² This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands.

3. Countless other commands

D. Doing the Father's Work

Jesus lived constantly to do the will of the Father. So must we.

God has assigned to each of His children the role of taking His name to the ends of the earth. This must be our constant passion

John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

What work? The work the Father is doing in the world, that same work the children of God must do

John 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.

E. Facing the Father's Enemies

A child of God must bear the reproach and disgrace of the head of the household! Just as Jesus did

Romans 15:3 For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

Matthew 10:25 If the head of the house has been called Beelzebub, how much more the members of his household!

V. Summary

The immense blessings of adoption... adopted into the very family of God!!

A. Are You a Child of God?

- Have You Received Christ by Faith?
- Are You Led by His Spirit Daily to Put Sin to Death?
- Do You Call God “Abba, Father” by His Spirit?
- Have You Received the Internal Witness by His Spirit
- Do You Suffer With Christ by His Spirit: Temptation & Persecution

B. Do You Understand Your Privileges As a Child of God?

Eternal Life—Title—Love Relationship with the Father—Free Access to the Throne—Discipline—Provision—Protection—Fellowship with the Royal Family—Freedom—Immense Inheritance—Glory

C. Are You Fulfilling Your Responsibilities As a Child of God?

Imitating the Father's Nature: Holiness and Love
Bearing the Father's Name
Obeying the Father's Commands
Doing the Father's Work
Facing the Father's Enemies

King Alfred and the Cakes

[James Baldwin]

King of the West Saxons in England during the Ninth Century

Called "King Alfred the Great" because of his great wisdom and effect on English history... protecting England from Danish conquest... also emphasized literacy and education among common people

Fierce Danes had invaded from across the sea... they began winning battle after battle on English soil

Alfred's army was defeated and scattered and Alfred himself donned the disguise of a common shepherd and fled alone through the woods and the swamps

He came at last to a clearing, to the tiny hut of a poor woodcutter and his wife

Tired and hungry, he knocked on the door, and begged the woodcutter's wife to give him some small morsel of bread

She took pity on him and allowed him to come in...

She said "Yes, I will give you some supper if you will watch the cakes I am baking now on the hearth. I want to go milk the cow. Watch them carefully and be sure they don't burn while I am gone."

Alfred sat down to this humble task and began to tend the cakes... but after a while the cares of his situation as king, and the threat of the Danes consumed his mind, and he stopped tending the cakes.

The woman came in, noticed the cakes were burned to a crisp. Her anger flared and she said:

"You worthless, lazy, good-for-nothing man! I gave you a simple job to do, and you couldn't even do that! Now none of us will have cakes to eat!" Alfred said nothing and only hung his head in shame.

At that moment, her husband came in, and immediately recognized the stranger in their home was none other than King Alfred. He spoke quickly to his wife... "Hush! Don't you realize who this is? This is King Alfred himself!"

The woman was immediately afraid for the tongue-lashing that she'd given him... but he chuckled and reassured the woman

“You were right to scold me,” he said. “I told you I would watch the cakes, and then I let them burn. I deserved what you said. Anyone who accepts a duty, no matter how small the duty or how great the person should perform that duty faithfully. I have failed this time, but I shall not fail again. Now I must leave. My duties as king await me!”

Soon King Alfred successfully drove out the Danes from England. But the lesson of the burned hearthcakes stuck with him!