

Romans 8:14-17

Indeed, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ For you did not receive a spirit of slavery so that you are afraid again, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we call out, “Abba, Father!” ¹⁶ The Spirit himself joins our spirit in testifying that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ Now if we are children, we are also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, since we suffer with him, so that we may also be glorified with him.

Dear people of God who worship the Triune God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen

I would classify myself as someone with a fairly simple mind. Most often, I’m not one of those people who are always looking deeper and deeper to find some of life’s most hidden secrets. In fact, I would have to say that I accept many things at face value. The way I see it is that there have many people smarter than myself who have done their homework and have found the answers to some of life’s most difficult answers. I trust most often that what they are telling me is true. For instance: How many of you know about men like Sir Isaac Newton or Albert Einstein? These very smart men were able to discover things that I can’t even begin to truly understand nor would want to fully understand, yet their theories on Gravity and Relativity are very important to our world as we begin to understand how this world works. I wouldn’t even pretend to understand these theories, but on the other hand I trust that they are true and understand the basic principles.

As we look at the mystery of the doctrine of the Trinity we might feel at times like the person trying to understand the theories of Science or other things. How in the world can we understand and comprehend that the God of the Bible is three distinct person – Father, Son and Holy Spirit, but only one God. The three person are all equal and are working together for the salvation of God’s people on this earth. We as feeble minded people will not and cannot mentally understand this great teaching, but we can understand through the eyes of faith how wonderful our Triune God is as our perfect God has put together the perfect plan to save the lost souls of this world. So today on this celebration of Trinity Sunday let us use these words from the letter written to the Romans and mediate on the great and comforting teaching of the Triune God using the theme:

Sermon Theme: Let Us Worship The Triune God

- 1. Our Father has called us to be his Children**
- 2. The Son has made us heirs of heaven**
- 3. The Spirit testifies that we are heirs of heaven**

1. Our Father has called us to be his Children

What is interesting about this text is that we can see the distinct workings of each of the three persons of the Trinity. In the very first words of our text for this morning Paul writes about the work of God the Father when he says, **“Indeed, those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.”** As we hear these words we are reminded of the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer when we call on the name of our heavenly Father. We are as our text says, **“sons of God”**. We are sons and daughters -- children of our God. And if there is any question whether we are in God’s family or not, Paul writes very clearly, **“The Spirit himself**

joins our spirit in testifying that we are God’s children.” What does this mean? This means that the faith in our hearts allows us to see that all God has done for us is true and for our benefit. It allows us to see the benefits and the joys, which are only given to those who are children of God. The joys of life, eternal life and forgiveness for all our sin have been given to us.

When we think of the work of our heavenly Father, we can use the picture of an earthly family to try and understand what our Father does for us. As we just said before, being part of a family also brings us blessings. Just as we have the blessings of security and safety, which are provided by our earthly parents, even more we have the blessings of having an eternal Father who cares for us and watches over us. We have a heavenly Father that we can go to as our text says and call him, **“Abba, Father”**. As we think of our own families it’s hard sometimes to picture the perfect household. This side of heaven there is not perfect family or perfect father. There is no household where mom and dad are always working together for the benefit of the family. There is no perfect household where all jealousies, selfishness and sinful pride are gone. There is no perfect household where love and patience and kindness are always present. There is no perfect household where when the child goes to talk to his mom or his dad, they always find attentive ears. As hard as we may try we cannot be the perfect parents nor have the perfect family, but thanks be to our God that he has allowed us to be a part of his perfect family.

In his family we can come to him in prayer and personally talked to him and know he is listening. Just think what it means to know that whenever we have troubles our Father is listening. Not that half listening where dad is listening to the news on the TV and reading the paper while you are trying to talk to him with your greatest problems. God assures us that no matter how great our troubles are, we have a Father who knows the answers and is always listening. And that no matter what we have done, and no matter what we face we are still a part of his family. As the perfect Father he accepts us with all our faults and all of our sins. In fact he tells us we have received the **“Spirit of adoption.”** We are not originally part of God’s family. God has adopted us into his family.

Just think for moment what this means. How many of you would want to adopt a child into your family who had a criminal record a mile long who had just gotten out of jail and was convicted of some of life’s most terrible crimes? Who would want to adopt into your family a serial killer? The answer most likely is none of us would want to adopt this type of person. But one look into our hearts shows that we our hearts are very bad and that we are lost and condemned creatures. We are children who do not deserved to be adopted into God’s family. Because of our sinful nature we have done everything possible to hurt God.

Thank goodness we have a Father who had a plan for bringing us into his family. In his perfect love he loved us enough to send his one and only Son. And for any of us who have children, we can begin to realize what kind of love it took for our heavenly Father to send his only Son to suffer and die for us as sinful people. He loved us enough to sacrifice his own Son in our place. It is this love which leads us to take a look at the second person of the Triune God, God’s Son Jesus Christ.

2. The Son has made us heirs of heaven

Paul tells us that since we are children of God that **“we are children, we are also heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.”** We are heirs of all the blessings that our heavenly Father will give to his children. As we think of an earthly heir, we think of a sibling or child who is waiting to receive the inheritance from their parents. We think of a person receiving money or other important items because they are an heir of the family inheritance. With that picture of an heir in mind, we can think of what it means that

we are heirs of God's inheritance. Imagine what kind of inheritance the God of the universe has. This inheritance means that we are **"fellow heirs with Christ."** As a child in God's family, we receive all the benefits God's own Son receives. We have received the gift of life. We have received eternal life in heaven. We have received full and free forgiveness. All these are ours because of the love of our heavenly Father.

But this blessing did not come without great cost. It was won for us by the blood of God's own Son on the cross of Calvary. Just think of what Christ endured to cover our sins. He was the one who was sent to this earth to appease the wrath of his Father. He did this through his perfect life on this earth. This is so important when we think about the fact that none of us has come even close to God's demand to be perfect. Jesus did this for us. Jesus made us heirs by enduring suffering, ridicule and mocking from those who lived on this earth. Think of the pain and suffering he endured as he lived on this earth to be our Savior.

God now drops a bombshell on us. He tells us this to warn us, but to also reassure us that nothing can remove us from His family. God warns us all that as heirs we will also be heirs of the suffering, which Christ also suffered. As followers of Christ we may be mocked, suffer ridicule or bodily harm for proclaiming and living for our heavenly Father. All these sufferings are things we will endure so that one day we may also share in the glory of heaven. All these things that we endure for Christ are tests for our faith and are opportunities for us to show our love for our heavenly Father. But sometimes we forget what gives us the strength to live and follow our Savior. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that brings us to faith and keeps us in the faith. It is also the Holy Spirit who lets us know over and over that we are in God's family and heirs of heaven.

3. The Spirit testifies that we are heirs of heaven

What does Paul mean when he says that **"those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God?"** Well, when we see the words **"Spirit of God"**, we can see God is talking about those in whom the Holy Spirit has found a home. The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in those who are led by the Spirit. In other words he is talking about Christians. This is the first and foremost part of what it means to be a part of God's family. God's family is made up of those whom the Holy Spirit has led to believe that Jesus has died for their sins. The Holy Spirit has worked faith in the hearts of all the children of God using the tool of the gospel found in God's Word and in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

So what did we do to get into God's family? We did no more to get into God's family, than anyone of us sitting here this morning did to get into the family they are now a part of. None of us could pick and choose which family we were going to be born into. In the same way, none of us could ever ask to be in God's family, and we most certainly never deserved to be in God's family because of our sinfulness and disregard for God's laws. But the Holy Spirit has come to us and told us about the blood of Christ. In this way, through faith God's family has been given to us as a free gift.

As we think about all that our Triune God has given to us, the picture of being in God's family is one that most certainly can bring us eternal comfort and security. There is nothing that can separate us from the love of our heavenly Father. Through the work of God's Son we are freed from the punishment of our sins. Through the work of the Holy Spirit through God's Word and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper we have been brought into this family and are now heirs to the eternal riches that God alone can give. May we always appreciate and thank our God for making us sons and daughters of his family and heirs to his eternal reward in heaven. May we always trust and believe in the mystery of our Triune God, even though we may not truly understand how it can be. Amen