

Sunday April 21st sermon: "Comfort in Our Baptism into Christ -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 53)"

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

Romans 6; Romans 8:17-18

All those that have trusted in Christ are made sons of God by the indwelling of the Spirit of Adoption. That Spirit then bears witness with our own spirit, that we are the children of God!

That Spirit within us convinces us of what God has promised us, of what Jesus did to make it happen, and that every other truth that the Holy Ghost and God's Word tells us, is so!

Therefore, our spirits are prompted to agree, that all these things are true, and we are indeed God's children by adoption. This is that supernatural faith that the Spirit gives to us when we are first converted, and that faith is vouchsafed to us forever into eternity!

And the consequence of our being God's children, is that we are now His heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ, His natural Son!

Paul continues in Romans 8 to explain the union of Christ and His people in suffering, death, and glory: "since we suffer with Christ, we will also be glorified together with Christ."

This suffering can be seen in several modes – vicarious suffering in our baptism into Christ's death, practical suffering in this fallen world, and persecution on account of our identification with Christ.

Because we have been united with Christ as God's sons, we share with Christ in His humanity, as does Christ with us. We are all brethren with Christ in the royal family of God!

All who trust in Jesus have been baptized into Christ by the Holy Ghost, and therefore baptized into His death and into His resurrection. Therefore, they have been baptized into Christ's suffering and glory!

This union with Christ is firstly, vicarious and by imputation. We died with Christ at the cross. This was not our physical death, but rather spiritually and legally, a death to sin and the law's punishment. We then rose with Christ spiritually unto new life in and with Him!

We were baptized into Christ by the Spirit of Adoption, and therefore we are Christ's, and we have "put on Christ."

We are joined with Christ in His dying, and in His resurrection, and in His inheritance. This all has profound implications upon our lives in this world.

Since we are thereby dead to sin in Christ, we ought not to continue in sin any longer, even though there is no longer any judgment left for our sin. Christ has taken away our judgment by dying for our sins in our place. The penalty for the broken law lies fully executed against us, but only in Christ, Who took our place in that judgment.

Even as we died with Christ, we are also raised spiritually with Christ unto new life in Christ.

Thus, because we have been joined together with Christ by the Holy Ghost, we suffer with Christ, and we are glorified with Christ.

Since we were justified by faith in Christ's death, and raised with Him to new life, we have been changed, set free from sin and its penalty, and also from its grip. We are no longer enslaved to sin, but have been set free to serve God in righteousness.

We are therefore to yield our bodies as servants of righteousness unto holiness.

When we were servants of sin, we had no righteousness at all! This is a teaching that most believers are unaware of, and some are greatly opposed to it!

We all assume that even in our darkness and sin, surely we did some noble, right, and just things.

But Paul disclaims that false notion! There is none that does good, no not one! No one seeks after God! No one can please God! In everything a lost man does, there is sin against God.

But now that we are made free from sin by our union with Christ's death, and have become servants of God, we will have fruit unto holiness, and in the end, everlasting life!

Paul summarizes all this more concisely in Ephesians 2, where he describes our deadness in sin, and the wrath we were under, until we were given new life by the Holy Ghost. This took place by grace, and in union with Christ's resurrection from the dead!

We were dead together with Christ, we for our crimes, and He bearing our sins as our substitute. Then we were made alive together with Christ.

Already, we are seated with Christ in heavenly places! Forever more, we shall come to know the exceeding riches of God's grace to us in Jesus Christ!

None of this was by our works, but rather by God's grace to us. He gave us the faith to trust in Christ in the first place.

But because of all this, our works have changed. Christ works in us good things, which God before ordained that we should walk in them! These works are not our own, but rather wrought by Christ in us and upon us.

Our baptism into Christ creates a union between all the saints and God. This is that union that Christ prayed for the night He was betrayed. It is

not a union primarily that we must strive for, though we ought always to strive for unity in the faith with our brethren.

Rather, this union is principally fulfilled by our union in Christ's death and resurrection. We are all one in Christ and with the Father and Spirit also!

Christ's prayer was answered by His suffering and death to save us, and by His victorious resurrection from the dead, all wrought in us by the Holy Ghost's power!

God has greatly comforted us all by this union, purchased by the blood of Jesus. It is a union wrought wholly and only by the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost upon us and in us and through us!

We are one with God by Jesus Christ, and always will be!