

Sunday April 7th sermon: "We are Led by the Spirit of Christ -- The God of All Comforts (Pt 52)"

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

Romans 8:14-17; John 11:41-42

In Romans 8, Paul taught that those who belong to Christ are not of the flesh, but of the Spirit, which dwells in each of us.

If Christ is therefore in us, our bodies are still dead, subject to the corruption of sin and death, but our spirits are alive, because Christ's righteousness has been imputed to us!

And if we are led by the Spirit of God, we are the sons of God!

The Holy Ghost is in us, animates us, moves us, prompts us, guides us into all truth, convicts us, inspires us, and comforts us! Thereby, we are led by the Spirit of God as His Own sons!

Before, we were in the grip of a spirit of bondage unto fear, a spirit of doom and impending judgment for our sins, and death and hell.

But Christ, by His dying for us, has delivered us, we who through fear of death were all our lifetimes subject to that spirit of bondage.

But having saved us, we have been given the Spirit of Adoption, that is, the Spirit of Christ, the natural perfect Son, that Spirit that now leads us as though we were natural sons, the adopted sons of God our Father.

By that Spirit dwelling in us, we can now cry, Abba, Father!

We are knit to God through Jesus Christ by His Spirit dwelling in us, and leading us, more and more, to behave and think and act like Christ, the well-beloved Son.

This provides us a closer bond than can ever exist between natural sons and their earthly fathers, and thus we partake of Christ as regards our sonship, even though by nature we were not God's children.

Consider those prayers of Jesus to His Father and to Ours. None of us can know the burdens Christ bore, and how He rested in His Father's love, and drew His work and purpose and hope and assurance by constant communion with His Father.

One of Christ's most beautiful prayers was before the tomb of His dead friend Lazarus. Christ was being criticized for not saving His friend's life, and allowing him to die. Everyone knew that, while Christ could heal anyone, once they had died, it was too late. They did not perceive the true glory and power and authority of the Lord Jesus as God's Son, but here He would reveal it to them!

So Christ prayed aloud, thanking the Father for hearing His prayer, and that He knew His Father always heard Him, but prayed aloud now so that His disciples might know this truth.

So too, we who are Christ's, by the Spirit of Adoption, can proclaim that we know that God our Father hears all our prayers, just like He hears Christ's prayers for us!

Paul next declares that the indwelling Spirit of Adoption 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!

Were it not true that the Spirit of Adoption bears witness to our spirit, that we are God's children, then our knowledge of that relationship would be non-existent.

We all know that we are not the children of President Biden, or Elon Musk, or Governor Reeves, or Ernie Slobodnick, or any other such father. We are perfectly clear about it, that we are not their sons. None of those fathers have protested to us that they are our father, like God has protested to us that He is our Father!

Nor have any of their natural sons welcomed us as sons! Nor has the spirit of any of them come to us to make us their sons!

In fact, none of those men have any idea who we are!

Viewed in this light, God's Spirit bearing witness to us that we are His children, is very startling, but quite clear. It is a truth recorded in God's Word to us, and is the solemn promise made to us, and so we believe it.

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

We inherit with Christ! This union of the creature with the Creator is astounding, and that moreover, we should inherit with Christ, the only natural Son, Him Who is perfect and well pleasing to His Father!

How could Paul make so astounding an assertion?

He has spent eight chapters carefully laying down just how God has brought this to be! He has made clear the whole scheme of redemption of poor lost sinners, our perfection by the death and obedience of Jesus, and the deliberate, intentional power of God operating in us by the Holy Ghost!

At the Lord's Table, we celebrate Christ's death for us, the engine that drives God's embracing us as His sons! Jesus died to make us children of God, and to lead many sons into glory with Him!