

## Princes and Princesses – First Peter 1:14

### I. Introduction:

- A. I no longer feel the same way, but when I was a child I had a silly dream; a wish.
1. I dreamed about trading places with the eldest son of Elizabeth II, the Queen of England.
  2. Remember, I am a Canadian and my parents were loyalists.
  3. My father was born in England and both my parents had lived in the most British city in Canada.
  4. Charles, the eldest son of the royal family and heir apparent to the throne, is only a few months older than I am, and I often pictured myself living in his shoes.
  5. At the time, I thought Queen Elizabeth was one of the most beautiful women in the world, and being one of the richest didn't hurt my dream at all.
  6. Of course, I know better now, and wouldn't want to be a part of that family for all its wealth – even to be the owner of one of the greatest stamp collections on earth.
- B. That was when I was eight or nine years old.
1. But then when I was about fourteen, my dream, somewhat modified, became a reality.
  2. I was adopted into **the** royal family. I became a child, not of the Queen, but of the King.
  3. When I received Christ as my Lord and Saviour, to me gave He power to become a son of God, having given me faith to believe on His name (**John 1:12**).
  4. I received the Spirit of adoption, whereby I can now cry, **“Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:6)**.
  5. And today, **“the Spirit itself beareth witness with my spirit that I am one of the children of God” (Rom. 8:16)**.
- C. In **verse 14**, Peter rephrases a point he introduced earlier, this time calling his readers **“children.”**
1. He says, **“as obedient children, don't conform yourself to your prenatal lives; to your pre-adoption days.”**
  2. Not only do you have a different sir-name, you have been given a new character to match that name.
  3. You are children of Jehovah.
    - a. And **“as your Father who hath invited you to Himself...**
    - b. **as your Father is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.”**
  4. This evening, without getting into the details, let's briefly notice of some of things with which Peter prefaced his exhortation.

### II. Peter has already reminded us of **HOW** we became children of God.

- A. Assuming you are one of God's children, at its root, it is because of the Lord's mercy and grace.
1. You didn't write a letter to Buckingham Palace expressing a desire to become a part of the royal family.
    - a. You weren't permitted to show up at the royal gates demanding admission.
    - b. You didn't push past the King's Guards with their bright red tunics and tall bearskin hats.
  2. **Verse 3** says: **“according to his abundance mercy (He) hath begotten you.”**
  3. As we saw in an earlier lesson, before you were born, the infinite and timeless God, **chose to begat you.**
  4. Before creation itself, Jehovah determined to bring you into His Spiritual world of grace and glory.
  5. All of the Lord's children were **begotten** in **God's eternal heart** and **will**. It was His choice not ours.
- B. And then at some point after your physical birth...
1. Maybe it was in your teens, maybe before that as an adolescent, perhaps as a young adult...
  2. You were **“born again, not of corruptible seen, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever” (verse 23)**.
  3. **“Verily, verily, (Jesus) said unto us, Ye MUST be born again,”** and by God's grace every one of His children, indeed, were born from above.
  4. None of us crawled through a palace window and began sleeping in one of the Lord's beds.
  5. **“We were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God”** Himself (**Jn. 1:3**).
  6. A new heart, he gave us, and a new spirit He put within us; taking away our stony heart (**Ezek. 36:26**).
  7. Praise God from whom this highest of all blessings has come!

C. Not only has the God of all life given us spiritual life, He has **declared** us **His heirs** and **joint heirs** with His especially begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

1. **Galatians 4:4** – *“When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem us who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.  
a. And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father  
b. Wherefore we are no more servants, but sons; and if sons, then heirs of God through Christ.”*
2. The people to whom Peter was writing, including you and me, God’s children today, *“are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people.*
3. *Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people (the children) of God.*
4. *At one time we were people who had not obtained mercy, but now we have obtained the mercy of the Lord” (II Peter 2:9-10).*

D. How did any of us become children of God? By His grace and power.

1. *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost” (Titus 3:5).*

### III. Peter has also already mentioned some of the **BLESSINGS** of this family relationship.

A. Of course it goes without saying that **in the new birth** there is **new life – spiritual life**.

1. *“And you hath (God) quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1).*
2. *“Verily, verily, (has Christ said unto us) He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24).*

B. With that divine life, which has been given to us through Christ, come multiplied special benefits.

1. For example, even though we are strangers in our Pontus and Galatia, we are always welcome in the palace.
2. We may come boldly to the throne of Grace – to the throne from whence our salvation originated.
3. *“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us (so that we might be called children of God), shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”*
4. Because we have been begotten and regenerated by the Lord, God is our Father in contrast to those whom Jesus said were of their Father the devil.
  - a. *“Wherein in time past we walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of air, the spirit that now worketh in the **children of disobedience**.*
  - b. *Among whom also we all had our conversation in time past... (Ephesians 2:2-3).*
  - c. *“For because of these things cometh the wrath of upon the children of disobedience” (Eph. 5:6).*

C. I delight in Peter’s use of the pronoun **“our.”** He speaks of **“our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

1. As brothers and sisters in the Lord, we have an equal share in **“OUR Lord Jesus Christ.”**
2. And we have a Father who cares for His children – unlike our former Father, the devil.
  - a. *“If you call on the Father” he will listen (verse 17).*
  - b. And our Father which is in heaven, is available at all times, when we are concerned enough to turn to Him.
  - c. **I Corinthians 1:3-4** – *“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation.”*

D. From there Peter goes on to mention a couple of other blessings.

1. We have been begotten unto a **lively** or **living hope** by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
2. *“Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus” (II Corinthians 4:14).*
3. And then there is that **legacy** which has been bequeathed to us as children of God.
  - a. *“To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you.”*
  - b. This inheritance will be shared only with people born again and adopted into the royal family.

#### IV. Into all these blessings Peter inserts the words “as... children...”

- A. As **royal children** there are **royal responsibilities**.
1. If you stop and think about it, there are responsibilities in just about every kind of relationship.
    - a. Business owners have responsibilities to their customers.
    - b. And as employers, they have responsibilities to their employees.
    - c. As employees, there are responsibilities to our employers.
    - d. Parents have responsibilities, as do children.
    - e. As church members we have the responsibility of assembling ourselves together among other things.
  2. And as children of God there are things we owe to our heavenly Father.
  3. In fact, we owe these things to all the members of the royal family, including our brothers and sisters.
  4. But, tonight I’m not going to dig into the details of those duties and debts.
  5. Peter begins with a generalization, and I’m going to try to restrict myself to **verse 14** with only a glance at **verse 15**.
- B. *“As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance.”*
1. The first thing I notice here is the kind and loving way in which our duties are brought to our attention.
  2. Peter doesn’t slap our faces with evidence of our disobedience or with the things we’ve neglected.
  3. He begins by assuming something which we should all assume, but rarely do.
- C. **God’s children** are **obedient** by **nature**: *“as already obedient children... here are things to remember.”*
1. We **were** children of **disobedience**, but now, as God’s children we live in the royal palace.
  2. True salvation involves a regenerated heart; a new heart with a variety of new components.
  3. We were taught the other day that when the **Demoniac of Gadara** was saved, he behaved differently.
    - a. He sat clothed and in his right mind, not his former wrong mind, and he was ready to follow his Saviour to the ends of the earth.
    - b. But he was also obedient, returning to his village to share with them the message of the Lord, as Christ directed him.
    - c. Obedience to God was a new aspect of his heart; it was a part of his new character.
  4. We were also reminded recently that when **Saul of Tarsus** was born again, one of the first things he said was, *“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”* And he did it.
  5. We saw this obedience in a couple other illustrations last week.
- D. Regenerated people, those who have been adopted into God’s family, are by nature obedient people.
1. It isn’t a new skin we put on; it is a new heart which we live out.
  2. And that is one of the criteria we might apply to ourselves as a test of our family relationship.
  3. Obedience is a part of our new life in Christ. *“Old things are put away, behold all things are become new.”*
  4. I wouldn’t lie to you, telling you that Christians never sin, or that they are always obedient to the Lord.
  5. God’s greatest saints, whether Peter, Paul, Moses, David or Abraham, were nothing more than sinners saved by grace and living in sinful flesh.
  6. But when God said, *“Be ye holy,”* they yearned to be holy, or more holy than they were the day before.
  7. When **Nathan rebuked David** for his sin, the earthly king melted before the Lord.
  8. After his meeting with Christ, **Zacchaeus** became a new man with a desire to obey the will of the Lord.
  9. These people were genuine children of God.
- E. Conversely, that professing Christian, who lives in constant disrespect of the Father and His will, shows that his nature is not royal; he is not a child of this family.
1. When that professing Christian will not bow before the words of Peter or the rebuke of Nathan, it is proof that there is no spiritual life.
  2. When that professing Christian can’t stand to be around other royal children, we must wonder if they share the same royal blood.
  3. If he refuses to listen to the will of the Father, then we should assume he isn’t one of the children.

- F. I am not a grammarian; I have no PhD in the use of the English language, so I may be totally wacky in this:
1. But isn't the verb in "*as obedient children... BE ye holy,*" something called a "*state of being verb?*"
  2. Peter isn't **commanding** us to be holy, he is telling us simply to "*be holy.*"
  3. He doesn't give us a list of tools with which to become holy, he simply says "*be holy.*"
  4. He prefaces the instruction of **verse 15** by simply reminding us that **we are** "*obedient children.*"
  5. He is saying, "*wipe off the lense, and let the light of the glory of God shine through?*"
- G. There will **always** be the **need to hear** the Apostolic **exhortations** to obey the Lord.
1. We will always need to be reminded to obey the Lord in specific things.
    - a. "*Pray without ceasing;*" "*assemble yourselves together;*" "*love one another as dear children.*"
    - b. "*Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.*"
    - c. We need to hear such things.
  2. God often sends his prophets to remind us of our responsibilities as children.
- H. But sometimes we simply need to be reminded that obedience is a part of our new nature.
1. Princes and princesses behave like their divine King.
  2. True princes and princesses love to reflect their Royal Father through loving obedience to His will.
  3. "*As obedient children, don't fashion yourselves to your former lives.*"
  4. "*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation.*"