

Galatians 4: 6 and 7; “Because You are Sons”, Message # 25 in the series – “Christ Has Made Us Free”, A Bible Study conducted by Pastor Paul Rendall on the evening of June 11th, 2014, at the church.

There are spiritual truths which sometimes we do not see too clearly when we first become a Christian; truths which will affect our whole attitude in our going about to live our Christian life. This truth that we are studying tonight is one of them; the truth that we are God’s sons and daughters through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. What does God do for us when we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, He forgives all of our sins and He imputes to us the righteousness of Christ to our legal standing. This is the doctrine of justification. But He does something else. Verse 5 says that when we believe in Jesus we receive the adoption as sons. This is more personal yet. By faith in the gospel we are brought into real spiritual union with Jesus Christ, and God deals with us very personally in our hearts, as His sons and daughters, for Christ’s sake. Tonight we want to think about this truth together. What are the two great benefits which come to us as Christians because of the fact that we are sons? These verses tell us 1st – That God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. And then 2nd – That because of this sending of the Spirit we become heirs of God through Christ. These are the wonderful truths that we want to think together about for the next few minutes.

1st of all – We want to look at the fact that, because we are sons, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. (verse 6)

“And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, Father.’” The Apostle Paul has already said to us in verses 4 and 5 that the reason that God sent forth His Son into this fallen world of sinners, was to redeem those who were under the law that they might receive the adoption of sons. This phrase, “those who were under the law”, I said to you the last time we were together, seems to have a primary reference to the Jews. But looking more closely, it also has a secondary reference to the Gentiles who have sinned without law. Even though they are not under the law in the sense of their being Jews, they also under the condemnation of the law whether they know it or not; and as such, they also need to be redeemed. Turn with me over to Romans 2: 12, and I will show this to you. “For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.”

Now, notice here, that “the work of the law” is written in the heart of the Gentile unbeliever, even though they are not under the law, and do not have the law, nor know, nor perfectly keep all of its commandments. The Jewish unbeliever has sinned “in the law”, having the knowledge of the law and all of God’s commandments. But the law of fallen human nature; the image of God in man, especially including his conscience, witnesses to him that God has great expectations of obedience. In this sense the Gentiles, who do not have the written revelation of God including the definition of all of His commandments, are a law to themselves. Their own thoughts accuse or defend them. But I want you to see by this law of fallen human nature the Gentiles cannot be justified. For “if they have sinned without the law, they will also perish without law.” (verse 12) So we must conclude, that every person, whether Gentile or Jew is under the condemnation of the law except Jesus Christ who alone has fulfilled the law. Look at Romans 3: 19-24. “Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the

law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” “Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” “But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.” “For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” So Every person who believes in Jesus has been purchased by His precious blood and set free from the condemnation of the law.

This redemption of Christ’s is received by faith when we believe the gospel. Our receiving of Christ in the gospel makes us God’s sons and daughters, not only in a legal sense of our standing, but also in the personal practical and experiential sense of God’s sending forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. It is because Christ has redeemed us that we are adopted. And it is because we are adopted that God sends His Spirit into our hearts, crying out ‘Abba, Father’. This is glorious truth indeed! The reason that this is so very glorious is that every Christian really has a personal experience of God and Christ, because of the Holy Spirit is sent into their heart. This is not to say that the Spirit has not been at work before conversion in the New Birth; He has. But that work is often very mysterious. And the Christian is not sure of this good work of regeneration and the New Birth until he or she personally believes in Jesus Christ. But they are by faith sure of their need of Christ and being saved from their sins by Him. But when a person believes in Jesus Christ they are then given the gift of the Holy Spirit. Turn with me over to Ephesians 1, verses 13 and 14. “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” Notice here, that it was after believing in Christ that the Holy Spirit was given. But He was given as a seal, showing that it was God’s express purpose to redeem that particular person, to begin a good work in their heart, and also to complete it in the Day of Christ based upon the fact that they were, and are, a purchased possession of God’s. The “sending of the Spirit into our hearts” is the same thing as being given the gift of the Holy Spirit and being sealed with Him. This is verified by Acts 2: 38 and 39. “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’” “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.” Now, here, Peter is not talking about each person who believes in Christ receiving the gift of tongues or any other ecstatic or revelatory gift. For, “Do all speak with tongues?”, he says in 1 Corinthians 12: 30. No, he is referring to the gift of the Holy Spirit who is the seal and the guarantee to us who believe that we are now accepted by the Father, adopted by Him as His child, because of the redemptive work our beloved Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now turn over to Romans 8: 1-4 and you will see what the Holy Spirit commonly does in the life of each believer when they trust in the Lord Jesus. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” “For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” You can see here what God does on the basis of Christ’s finished work. He “makes us free from the law of sin and death”; not only no condemnation, but

also “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is given to us in our being given the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are therefore able to be led by the Spirit and walk according to the Spirit. And because of Christ’s work we are covered day by day by His atonement; and we are able to learn and grow in Christ without any sense of bondage or fear if we are correctly understanding these things. What a great salvation we have! Just as Christ was sent forth by the Father into this fallen world of sinners to the great and gracious work of redemption, even so, it is the application of this great work of redemption when the Holy Spirit is sent into the hearts of unworthy and undeserving sinners. God sends Him forth into your heart, so that you might cry out ‘Abba Father’.”

Now 2ndly – We want to see that because we are sons, we have become heirs of God through Christ.

Verse 7 says: “Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” “No longer a slave,” it says. Let me ask you if you know the reality of this, that you are an heir of God Himself and all that He will give you in Christ? This begins now, in this life, after you have believed in Christ, and it will continue all the way to eternity. You are an heir of God in that you are heir of all of the good work of the Holy Spirit, who is God Himself and the Spirit of Christ. In Christ you inherit all the blessings of salvation from beginning to end, and this includes the love of the Father, the intercession of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit; God’s leading you through this life all the way to glory. Look with me now at Romans 8: 14-17. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.” “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, ‘Abba, Father.’” “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified together.” If you are led by the Spirit of God, you are a son of God. How do you know that you have the Spirit of God? When you believed in Jesus, you received the Holy Spirit and not a spirit of bondage again to fear. This is very significant. The spirit of bondage and fear is related to a person’s being convicted of their sins by hearing the law of God. It is true that this conviction of sin is also a work of the Spirit. John 16: 8 – “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in Me, of righteousness, because I go to My father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.” And Stephen’s message to the men who getting ready to stone him, in Acts 7: 51 – “You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears!” “You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your father did, so do you.” These men deserved to have the spirit of fear and bondage in relation to their being accepted by God because they did not see themselves as sinners needing a Savior; they did not having anyone tell them so.

But a true believer has not received a spirit of bondage leading to fear again. The true believer has received the Spirit of adoption whereby they cry out, “Abba, Father’. They may have known the spirit of bondage leading to fear of death and hell before their conversion, but now that they have trusted in Christ, they should no longer feel that; because they know the reality of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with their spirit that they are the children of God. Joseph Benson in his commentary on this verse says: “An assurance of your reconciliation with and filial relation to God, through the influence of the Spirit of Christ, Galatians 4:6; producing in you such confidence toward God in approaching him, as dutiful children feel toward a loving father.” “Whereby – By which Spirit; we – All and every believer; cry – The word, *χραζομεν*, denotes a vehement speaking, with desire, confidence, constancy; Abba, Father – The latter word explains the former. By using both the Syro-Chaldaic and Greek words, the apostle seems to point out the joint cry both of the Jewish and Gentile believers; who, in consequence of that assurance of God’s favor, and adoption into his family, with which their minds were filled, since they had received the gospel, felt that disposition of reverence for, confidence in, and grateful love to God,

which is here properly termed the Spirit of adoption: that is, the spirit of children.” He goes on to say: “The Spirit itself — Αὐτο το Πνεῦμα, the self-same Spirit, whereby we cry. Abba, Father; bears witness — Greek, συμμαρτυρει τω πνευματι ημων; witnesses together with our spirit — Or our enlightened and renewed conscience, by his internal and gracious operation, giving us to know and feel with assurance, gratitude, and joy, that we are the children of God — By special adoption and regeneration.” “For it is by his influence, and his alone, that we can know the things that are freely given to us of God, namely, what they are, their nature and excellence, and that they are ours, 1st Corinthians 2: 12.” “And hence this Spirit is said to be the seal of our sonship, and the earnest of our inheritance in our hearts, 2nd Corinthians 1: 22; Ephesians 1: 13-14; Ephesians 4: 30.” “Happy they who enjoy this testimony clear and constant!” You see, dear believer, you are an heir of God Himself, through the electing love of the Father, the redeeming work of the Son, and the teaching, witnessing work of the Holy Spirit by whom you are led all the way the heaven.