

**June 11, 2006**  
**Trinity Sunday**

*"You Are Children of a Triune God"*

---

### **ROMANS 8:14-17**

---

**B**ecause those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. <sup>15</sup> For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. <sup>17</sup> Now if we are children, then we are heirs-- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

"Children of a Lesser God." That is the title of a 1986 movie about a teacher at a school for the deaf who fell in love with a hearing impaired young woman working as a janitor at the school. "Children of a Lesser God." What a strange title for a movie and strange way to speak about God. Are children born with hearing losses or physical or mental handicaps the creation of a lesser god who does a poor job of creating people? The evolutionists is quick to point out that children born with problems are evidence that God is not in control of creation and the world as Christians claim.

Are you the product of what one famous scientist Stephen Jay Gould called "a chance configuration of atoms in the slipstream of the universe?" Do you ever look at yourself and wonder whether God dealt you a bad hand when he made you and or when he allows bad things to happen to you ? Is your life run by luck or chance or a giant roulette wheel or lucky stars? On your worst days, Satan loves to whisper in your ear and loves to suggest to you that you might very well be the child of a lesser god.

When you look at the words just read to you from Romans 8 and ponder them carefully, you realize how blessed you truly are. You don't believe you are lucky. You believe you are blessed. People will not hear you say, "I can thank my lucky stars." You are special children, children of a mighty God, the Lord God almighty. You are a living, walking, breathing miracles of his love because by his grace you believe that he is one God and three persons even though you cannot comprehend this. You joyfully remind yourself every day, "I am baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. I am not the child of a lesser god, or a god who is not in control, or a god who turns things over to luck or chance. This morning we want to use these words from Romans 8 to remind you that "You Are Children of a Triune God."

### **You are led by the Spirit**

You are a special creation of God because you are led by the Spirit of God. "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." That is so amazing because I am born into this world not wanting to be led down a path where God will bless me with his love. The verse previous to this says, "For if you live according to the sinful nature or sinful flesh, you will die." I was born into this world with sin inherited from parents that makes me a creature of habit who wants to follow a well worn path of sin and self justification and self improvement and independence that will ultimately lead to eternal death and destruction.

This past week I visited one of our members, Lorenz Heinze. We were talking about being creatures of habit and I made the statement that even engineers get into certain routine habits. He mumbled something under his breath that probably reflected many years of engineering at Lockheed. He said, "Goat tracks." I assumed that was a term he used in engineering to describe how we get used to certain patterns and paths the way goats and sheep follow certain trails in the mountain. I was born, and you were born wanting to follow a well worn path of life where sin is not taken all that seriously. On this well worn path we foolishly believe that if we have failed God in some areas, we can make it up in our places. That's the path of destruction. "There is a way that seems right to man, but the ends thereof our death."

The Holy Spirit leads us on a new path, a new way. Picture in your mind the Holy Spirit leading you blinded folded into a room. He takes off the blindfold and shows you on the wall of that room all the things you have done wrong in your life. It is a horrible place to be when you come to see yourself for what you truly are. He even shows you the end results of sin, eternal death and destruction in hell. It is terrible room that fills us with fear and leads us to cry out to God for help, "Lord have mercy on me a sinner."

Then The Holy Spirit leads you to another room. He opens your eyes to see scenes on the walls around, scenes from the life of Jesus, whipped, beaten, bleeding, dying on the cross, crying out in anguish, and making full payment of all sin. The Spirit helps you see Jesus obeying his mother and father perfectly, helping people who are sick, speaking in love and compassion even to people nobody cares about. That's my Jesus living the perfect life I could never live, living it for me and giving it to me as a free gift. The Spirit leads you and leads me to see an empty tomb and we hear the words of the angel, "He is not here. He has risen as he said." We see him hold out his hands to the disciples and show them the wounds and our eyes are open to see and our hearts are opened to believe this is more real than anything around us.

My dear Christian the Holy Spirit is not finished with you. He takes you by the hand and leads you to another room. He lets you hear the promises and descriptions of the place that Jesus has prepared for you, where your God, your Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit will wipe away all tears from your eyes. And then he leads you into a room, a room filled with promises, like little "post its" on the wall. You live your life on these promises, sustained by them every day. You rejoice to hear "Fear not I am with you..."

### **You can cry "Abba Father"**

The Holy Spirit who leads you to see the blessings you have in Jesus also leads you to pray to your heavenly Father the way a child might cry out for help to its father or mother. "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, *Abba*, Father." There was a time when you were a slave to fear. You were chained to the fear of whether or not you had been good enough to make yourself acceptable to God. The Holy Spirit freed you from the prison and put you into a whole new life where you are now a child of God. You now have the exalted position of sonship that allows you to run to your Father and say "Daddy." That is what the Aramaic word "Abba" means, "Daddy."

A good way to understand this amazing change of circumstances is to reflect on the story Jesus told about the lost son. The son did everything wrong. He took the future inheritance and spent it all in wild living. One day in the depth of despair he remembered how good the hired servants had it at his father's home. He went home with the hope he might ask his dad if he could be a hired servant. I don't care how many times you have heard this story. You can never, ever exhaust the sheer comfort and joy of that homecoming. The father welcomes him with open arms, places his robe on his son, and gives him sandals for his feet, makes a feast for him, and even puts the ring on his finger. Imagine for a moment what it must have been like to wake up in your father's house instead of sleeping with the pigs. You feel the ring on your finger. Your father wants you as his son, with all the full rights of a son.

Now ponder with me for a moment what a glorious privilege is yours as God's children with the full right of a son. In Roman times, the son would have special coming out celebration at about the age of eighteen. He would shave his face for the first time. His father would put the robe on his son. He would tell all the people who had gathered, "This is my son. This is a citizen of Rome. He now has the full rights of a son." "Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us that we should be called... I am going to stop here and repeat this. I will pause and you will finish it for me. ..that we should be called...the sons of God. Another favorite verse, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."

Slaves in the Romans Empire had few rights. If they worked hard, they risked being sold for more money. If they did not work hard, they risked being

beaten. If they tried to run away and were captured, they were crucified. Jesus put himself under the law, became our slave in our place, to redeem us from the law and set us free. He paid the ransom price for our freedom. He took us from chains of darkness and put us into the best room in the house, the room of this high and lofty position of sonship with our heavenly Father.

Now we have the privilege of crying out to our heavenly Father, the way a child cries out for its daddy. We cry out, "Abba Father." Romans 5 says because we are justified we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and direct access into the grace in which we stand. Access. The other day I was walking past a garage and it was completely filled with junk up to the rafters. I thought to myself, "That person cannot even get access to anything in that garage." Not so with you. You are children of a Triune God. You have direct access to your Father in prayer. The Holy Spirit keeps witnessing to you that you are a child of God. Even when your life gets full of junk and burdens of this life you can literally run through the junk and get directly to your Father through Jesus. Jesus said, "Whatsoever you ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you."

### **You are coheirs with Christ**

It is great to be a child of God, to have access to the Father 24/7 in this life. But the best is yet to come. The Holy Spirit who leads you to Jesus and keeps witnessing to you that you are child of God, also keeps reminding you of what you have coming in the future.

Look at how rich you are. Look at the inheritance that is yours. "Now if we are children, then we are heirs- heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

We are not just heirs of God, we are also co-heirs with Christ. If a person leaves behind a 100K dollars for two children, each child will receive 50K. I have never heard of someone leaving behind an inheritance that is jointly owned. That would be a formula for disaster. Not so with the inheritance you have as a baptized child of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You and Jesus share the same inheritance. The glory that he spoke of the night before he died is going to be shared with you. You will share it with others who believe in Jesus. We may have to suffer for the name of Jesus, but that's OK. As the next verse in this chapter says, "The sufferings of this present life are not worth comparing to the glory that will be ours."

Father, Son and Holy Spirit. One God. I am baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Led by the Spirit, crying out to our Father for help, coheirs with Jesus. How could it get any better than this? Amen.