

**Trinity Sunday
May 31, 2015**

"Children of the True God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit"

ROMANS 8:14-17

Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. ¹⁵ 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." ¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷ 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.

Laverne spent most of her life believing in religious philosophy and the occult. She began each day consulting her horoscope to get direction for her life. Then at the age of fifty she was led by the Holy Spirit to believe in Jesus as her Savior and accept the Bible as God's Word. One day Laverne told her pastor that she found a contradiction in the Bible. She pointed to one verse where it said that Jesus raised himself from the dead, and then to another verse that said the Father raised Jesus from the dead. Joyfully her pastor directed her to verses in Romans and Peter that said the Holy Spirit raised Jesus from the dead. This helped her to believe there are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and yet only one God.

How often we see Father, Son and Holy Spirit working together to bless us. Genesis one says that God created the heavens and the earth. Then it goes on to say that the Holy Spirit hovered over the waters. And John 1 says that Jesus, The Word, made all things. Is there a contraction? Not at all. Father, Son and Holy Spirit were involved in creation. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are involved in bringing you to faith.

Today on this Trinity Sunday we direct your attention to these words from Romans 8 that assure us that we are children of God, the True God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. First we will see how we are led by the Holy Spirit. Then we will see how we are loved by God our Father. And then we will see ourselves living as heirs with Christ.

Led by the Holy Spirit

As children of God we are led by the Holy Spirit. "Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." You and I were born into this world not wanting to be led by God. We were stubborn and proud and resistant to God's love for us. I think of how stubborn the calves were on the family farm. We children had the responsibility of feeding the calves. Believe me it was not always easy for a child to put a rope around the neck of the calf and lead it to a pen or stall. It seemed they always dug their feet in and resisted. I was that way once in my life and so were you. We resisted the Lord's love for us. We resisted the Holy Spirit leading us. But then by God's grace and mercy our resistance was overcome and we were brought to saving faith in Christ. 1 Corinthians 2 says that without the Holy Spirit we will consider the things of God to be foolish and nonsense.

To appreciate even more what the Holy Spirit does for you, picture yourself sitting in

a room. Surrounding you on all four walls are posters and banners that say you have the power to make yourself acceptable to God. One poster reads, "Believe in yourself." Another says, "Find the champion in you." Another says, "Do your best and hope in luck for all the rest." Another says, "I'm OK! You're OK!" Everything posted on the four walls and ceiling of that room fuels this person inside of you that firmly believes that God will accept you and love you based on your performance.

The Holy Spirit leads you to see the truth about yourself. Jesus said he convicts the world of sin. He shows you that sin is much more than just the really bad things people. He opens your eyes to see that even your best efforts and best intentions are tainted by sin and fall short of God's glory.

Martin Luther once found himself in that room of despair and doom. Everything he ever learned in his life was like posters on the wall telling him over and over again that he could drive the evil out of his heart by trying to do better. In one of his hymns he wrote, "Deep and deeper still I fell, Life had become a living hell, So firmly sin possessed me."

The Holy Spirit led you out of that room of despair and doom. He led you into a new room where you could see posted on the walls all the great things Jesus did for you. You see him showing kindness and love to his parents, you see him healing people, you see him living the perfect life you could never live. You see him stumbling under the weight of the cross bearing your sin and the punishment for that sin on his shoulders. You see Jesus praying his heavenly Father. You see Jesus shedding his blood at the cross and crying out "It is finished!" You see him rising from the dead and even showing the nail marks in his hands to his disciples. You see a poster that shows Jesus saying, "Come to me and I will give you rest." Your eyes see these blessings in Jesus that make you a dear child of your God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not leave you alone. He keeps showing you again and again all the things Jesus has done for you. He does this to bring you a peace this world cannot give.

Loved by God the Father

Because you are led by the Holy Spirit to trust in Jesus to be forgiven and saved, you are now a dear child of your heavenly Father. "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.'" When we read these words, how can we not think of Jesus' story about the lost son. This ungrateful and rebellious son demands his portion of the inheritance from his father. He goes off to a distant country where he spends the money in wild living. His life reaches such a low that he finds himself feeding pigs, even longing to eat the food the pigs ate. But then he comes to his senses. He thinks of his father's hired servants with plenty of food to eat. He hatches a plan to go home, apologize to his father and offer to be one of the hired servants. Instead of accepting this wayward son as a servant, the father accepts him home as his son. He puts sandals on his dirty and worn feet. He dresses him in his finest robe. He puts a ring on his finger and calls for the feast of all feasts to celebrate the return of his son. Instead of a hired servant or slave afraid of his master, this boy enjoyed the privilege of being a son under the constant love of his father.

You know what it is like to be close to your heavenly Father. Your wonderful Holy Spirit

keeps testifying to your spirit, your new person in Christ, that you are dear child of your heavenly Father. This past week I overheard a man say that he was an atheist. There was something so sad about the way he said that with such pride and conviction. I wish I had the opportunity to talk to him about Jesus.

Here I am no better than the lost son, and no better than the man who confesses to be an atheist. By God's amazing grace the Holy Spirit leads me to know Jesus and leads me to be a dear child of my heavenly Father. Then the Holy Spirit keeps testifying to me and to you that we are dear children of our heavenly Father. You know how moms and dads, and husbands and wives, keep saying how much they love each other. The Holy Spirit keeps telling you how much your heavenly Father loves you and cares about you. Ephesians 1 say of our heavenly Father, "In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will."

The wonderful Holy Spirit so overwhelms us with the undeserved love our Father has for us that we are led by the Holy Spirit to cry out, "Abba Father." I want us to remember this word this morning. So let's say it together- "Abba." Abba is an Aramaic or Hebrew word similar to our word "daddy." The Greek word for crying out is "krazo." It is one of those words that sounds like it means. Think of your children crying out to you for help. "Daddy" or "Mommy" can be spoken in dozens of different ways depending on the situation that needs help. The child in great danger screams and the parents respond immediately with the adrenal rushing. The child who simply wants more milk has a different way of using the name of "daddy" or "mommy." So we call to our heavenly Father in so many different ways depending on the problem we are going through at the moment. Jesus tells us that whatever we ask the Father in his name, he will hear us. Here it says the Holy Spirit who keeps reminding us we are children of our heavenly Father also leads us to cry out "Abba Father."

Living with Jesus

So as a child of the true God, you are led by the Holy Spirit to believe. You are also loved by the heavenly Father, and you live with Jesus. "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." We live with Jesus. Jesus is our head. We are his body the church. He is the vine and we are attached to him as branches to the vine. In spite of the serious drought facing us, the vineyards in this area are lush with new growth. Branches are growing from the vines and grapes will soon be hanging on the branches in large clusters.

You are co-heirs with Christ. He reigns in his kingdom as King of kings and Lord of lords. You reign with him. In my opinion the last book of the Bible, the Revelation, is one of the most comforting books of the Bible because it tells us that no matter what life throws us at us, we live and reign with Christ. It even pictures for us living and reigning with Christ that goes on for a thousand years. That means that in this life and for all eternity there is not a time when you are not with Christ.

Oh, to be sure we also suffer with Christ. Stand up for Jesus as a could soldier of the cross and the world will heap scorn and abuse on you just as it did with Jesus. Take your

stand on the Bible as Jesus did and you will be labeled and people will say with disgust and disdain, "Oh, you are one of those!" In the deepest and darkest hours of life we are always reigning with Christ. They can sever our head from our body as they did with the Apostle Paul but they cannot sever us from love of God that we have in Christ Jesus our Lord. The Holy Spirit does not let us lose sight of that love. Later in this chapter Paul will confess: "Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." You are a coheir with Christ. Your Coheir prayed the night before he died, "Father I want those whom you have given me to be with me where I am and see him glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world." Yes, you are dear children of the true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You have been baptized in the name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. You are so blessed, so very blessed. Amen.