

ROMANS 8:14 - 17

If you are a believer, you are a child of God.

4 characteristics of being a child of God.

1. Your life will be characterized by a direction that is determined by the Holy Spirit. (vs. 14)

- This is a distinguishing mark of being a child of God.
- The result of a Spirit dominated life is being “sons of God”: the one must include the other.
- This brings with it “LIFE”:
 - **John 10:10 “I am come that they might have life and have it more abundantly”**
 - **John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”**
- This is the other side (the passive side) to the same coin of 13b => “...put to death the deeds of the body”

- How is your life characterized?
 - What about your job/*career* goals?
 - Are you serving your job or is your job helping you serve your Lord?
 - What about your family goals?
 - What is your greatest desire for your kids, your spouse?

2. Your life will be characterized by a new relationship with the Father. (vs. 15)

- How do you view God?
 - “fear”, “trepidation”, “a cosmic kill-joy”, “task master”
 - Love, Affection, Trustworthy, Awesome

- What does it mean to be adopted?
 - Brought into a family as an equal.
 - Given the “family” love of the Father.
 - Given the responsibilities of a true son.
 - Name change, address change, status change, etc.

- “Abba” => What a beautiful word.
 - Luther said:
 - This is but a little word, and yet notwithstanding it comprehendeth all things. The mouth speaketh not, but the affection of the heart speaketh after this manner. Although I be oppressed with anguish and terror on every side, and seem to be forsaken and utterly cast away from thy presence, yet am I a child, and thou art my Father for Christ’s sake: I am beloved because of the Beloved. Wherefore this little word, “Abba”, conceived effectually in the heart, passeth all the eloquence...that ever were in the world.
 - This is the very word used by Christ in the garden to address the Father in Mark 14:36
 - Shows that our relationship with the Father is like Christ’s.

- “Cry” => emotional
- Fundamentalists are often so afraid of being like other groups that we have made our relationship with God something completely unemotional!
- God is a God of emotion and He has given us emotions. The realities of our sin and the joy of our salvation ought to elicit emotions from within us!
- As a believer you feel that...don't you!?!

3. Your life will be characterized by an assurance that you are a child of God. (vs. 16)

- Interestingly enough we don't always feel the emotions. We don't always feel saved.
- The story of “Luther and His Kattie” – When Luther's wife dressed in black as though God had died when Luther had been depressed for several days.
- **Romans 6:11 => “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**
- You must think “saved”...emotions will come and go depending on our circumstances.
- Say with Paul in **2 Timothy 1:12 => “..for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”**
- How do I know? => Because I have the Spirit of God in me testifying with my spirit.
 - Roman Law required 2 witnesses for an adoption to be legal. God has provided two witnesses to verify to our minds that we are sons of God.
- Do you have such steadfast assurance? => Are you ready to “...give an answer for the hope that is within you”?

4. You will be characterized as one who is an heir to a kingdom. (vs. 17)

- This is conditioned by “...suffering with Him...”
- How is your perspective on suffering/trials?
 - Earthly:
 - Do they negatively affect your view of God?
 - Back to that Task Master, “Cosmic kill-joy” views.
 - Do they cause you to look at yourself in unbiblical ways?
 - “I don't deserve this!” => Remember these are the sufferings of Christ.
 - Heavenly (as one who is an heir to a kingdom):
 - **I Peter 1:6,7: “Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: ⁷That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:”**
 - In the Ancient Near East, refiners would hold gold in the fire to purify it. They test they would use to determine its purity was to check and see if they could see their reflection in the gold.
 - They would take it out and look into it, if it wasn't ready they would put it back in.
 - This is the Heavenly perspective. Christ is purifying us with trials until He can see His reflection in us.

CONCLUSION:

- Where do you stand? Have you been adopted?
 - If so is it evident in your life? (Review 4 Characteristics)
 - If not, you can move from an enemy to an heir tonight!