

18.9.21 evening Saturday evening Communion Service

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Date: 18 September 2021

Preacher: Reverend Thomas Davies

[0 : 00] Good evening. A warm welcome to the service this evening. Those who are in the building, still some who are online as well. Again, it's good for us to come together to worship God. Just one or two intimations. First of all, to remind you that tomorrow the services will be at 11 and 6. The service in the morning will be the service where we celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And the evening Thanksgiving service will be at 6. Both will be led by Thomas again. And we are very much appreciative of the ministry yesterday evening and we look forward to what God has to say through him tomorrow again. So 11 o'clock in the morning, 6 o'clock in the evening, and then we'll have an after church fellowship here immediately after the evening service. The final thing to say is that the session is open.

Come in, come in. Whatever my family or associated deal, they'll cause things to be late. It runs from me.

Final thing to say is that the session is open and would be very much delighted to meet with anyone who knows the Lord, who trusts the Lord, who hasn't yet professed faith in Christ.

So for those who may want to come forward for the first time and profess faith in Jesus and take the sacrament, then be encouraged to come forward and speak to the session. We'll be in the room three on my left, the prayer meeting room. And perhaps for some who may have once been at the table and drifted over the course of time, still the invitation goes out to all to come to return to the Lord. So the session will be as constituted and we'll be happy to meet with any who want to profess faith for the first time or for the first time in a while.

So that's all, Thomas. So again, it's lovely to have you and we pray that God will bless you as you preach here.

[2 : 32] Thank you. Thanks so much, David, and thank you to you all for your warm welcome. It's so nice to have the opportunity to be with you as we gather to worship together. Our opening item of praise this evening is the hymn Be Thou My Vision. So we're going to sing this hymn together to God's praise.

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, be thou my one.

O Lord of my heart, be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart, be thou my Bu thou my zeit, be thou my Sinne, O Lord of my heart, be thou my glory, thou my heart, be thou my lothart, be thou my soul, o Lord of my heart, be thou my sight, thou my heart, be thou my inches, all recogn us.

Method Me opening, O Lord of my heart, be thou my heart, be thou myadow, be thou my soul, o Lord of my heart, thy lei F church, your mercy, my heart, be thou my mine, be thou my heart, become us, my heart, be thou my shield and my heart, I bow thing, wohl my light, life, thou my heart, I thank you, my heart.

Praise thou me heavenward, O power of my power. Riches I heed not, nor man's empty grace.

[4 : 55] Thou mine inheritance now and always. Thou art the only first in my heart.

High King of heaven, my treasure thou art. High King of heaven, after victory won.

May I reach heaven's joys, O bright heaven's sun. Heart of my own heart, whatever we fall.

Still be my vision, O ruler of all. Amen. We'll pray together in Gaelic.

Welcome to Gaelic game, Jenna McKoornii1.

[6 : 10] All over eat, pobre gold stone, or a PE amour who is the Father of And I was like, I'm not going to do anything.

I was going to do something like that. I was going to do something like that.

I was going to do something like that. I was going to do something like that.

I was going to do something like that. My heart is going to do something like that. I'm going to do something like that.

I've been lucky in a day. napaksite Luigi , January 10, substance abuse gehen One just, the Sargin Anian eru estimated that Piton heard that the god knows won't be, I don't know a bit but the people■■■■ games because it was free in town.

[7 : 52] and eighty■■ has made it in the public.

Amen. We're going to sing together now in Gaelic from Psalm 63.

Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[10 : 05] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Our reading this evening is from Luke's Gospel and chapter 15.

[11 : 56] Luke 15, and we'll read from verse 11 to the end of the chapter.

We're going to be continuing our wee mini study in the middle of Romans chapter 8 tonight, but I want us to read from this chapter in Luke before we turn to Romans later on.

Jesus continued.

He went to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything. He kissed him.

The son said to him, Father, I've sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. But the father said to his servants, quick, bring the best robe and put it on him.

[13 : 51] Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found.

So they began to celebrate. Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on.

Your brother has come, he replied. And your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound. The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him.

But he answered his father, look, all these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends.

But when this son of yours, who has squandered your property with prostitutes, comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him. My son, the father said, you are always with me and everything I have is yours.

[14 : 50] But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found. Amen.

This is God's word and may he bless it to us all. Well, before we turn to Romans, let's sing again, this time the hymn, How Deep the Father's Love for Us.

How deep the Father's love for Us. How vast beyond all measure.

That he could give his only Son to make our riches treasure.

How great the pain of searing loss. The Father turns his face away.

[16 : 03] As wounds which mar the Chosen One. Bring many sons to glory.

And upon a cross, my sin upon his shoulders.

Asshamed I hear my mocking voice. Call out among the scoffers.

It was my sin that held him there. Until it was accomplished. His dying breath has brought me life.

I know that it is finished. I will oppose in anything.

[17 : 07] No gifts, no power, no wisdom. But I will oppose in Jesus Christ.

His death and resurrection. Why should I gain from his reward?

I cannot give an answer. For this I know with all my heart.

His wounds have paid my ransom. For this I know with all my blood. I know with all my blood. It is filled with all my heart.

It is filled with all my heart. As we turn to God's Word, let's just pray for a moment. Father, we just pray for your help as we turn to your Word.

[18 : 04] that we would see more and more of your goodness and love towards us in your son and that you would be at work in us all by the power of your spirit.

Amen. Well, I'd like us to turn to Romans chapter 8. As I mentioned yesterday evening, we're going to do a very short, I suppose, study in the middle section of Romans 8 over the course of this weekend.

And so last night we were looking at the verses 12 to 14. We were thinking about mortification of sin. Tonight we're going to think of the verses that come after that, 14 to 17.

So let me read these words for you from Romans 8, 14 to 17. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you've received the spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

[19 : 13] The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. And if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

Very often in life, we're all prone to be worried about what other people think. That, I think, can be something that affects everyone. I think it can be particularly prominent in an Ireland culture like our own, because everyone knows everyone.

I remember once I was coming back from a football match in Carloway. The pitch is just a wee bit up the road from the manse, and we'd been up watching a game, and I was heading back along the road. And I was taking a football with me, because the kids had been playing football.

And so I was just sort of dribbling the ball along the road, as you do on the pavement. And I was nearly home, and I don't know what happened, but I kind of stopped, and I put my foot on the ball, and instantly I was on the ground.

And so I put my foot on the ball, I'd fallen over, hurt my leg, I really hurt my shoulder. My shoulder's never been quite right since. But I didn't think about my shoulder, I didn't think about my leg, I didn't think about why I'd fallen over.

[20 : 35] I got up straight away, and the only thought going through my mind was, did anyone see me? So often in life, we're worried about what people think.

And sometimes we can be worried about what God thinks. And maybe you sometimes feel crippled by that. You think, what does God really think of me?

What does he really think of you? And sometimes we're left wondering about that. And I want us to think a little bit more about that tonight, because I think this passage helps us to see more about what God thinks of us, and particularly about what God wants in relation to us.

And so as we think about this, we're going to ask three very simple questions. I'll pop them on the screen. What does God want to do with you? What does God want to say about you?

What does God want to give you? And I think the answers to all of these are actually found in our passage. These are crucial questions for all of us, because these are the questions that are going to lead us to the very heart of what God thinks of us, and of what God wants for us.

[21 : 52] And it's crucial that we recognize this, because so many people have misconceptions about what God thinks of us, and what God wants for us. So some people might think that God wants to restrict us, so that our lives are going to be spoiled or hindered if we become followers of Jesus.

Others think that God wants to burden us, so that, you know, if we're going to follow God, well, yeah, you can do that, but you're going to have to meet a whole load of expectations. Others think that God wants to dominate us, so we've got to make sure we fall into line, and make sure that we never muck up.

So often people think that what God wants for us is really not that good, and I think that's what leads so many people to the conclusion that they're actually better off without God.

Maybe you're tempted to think the same yourself. Well, I want us to look at these questions, because they will help us to see what God really wants for us.

So our first question is, what does God want to do with you? And I think behind that lies another question, which is very relevant to the passage that Paul sets before us in Romans 8.

[23 : 08] So the kind of sub-question I want us to ask is, does God want to make you a slave? And I'm asking that because I think that's the answer, that's the question that Paul suspects is in the minds of his readers, that they think that God wants to make them a slave.

And we can easily see why, because people do the same today. People dismiss Christianity as a big long list of do's and don'ts. People will sometimes say, you know, well, live your life first, have lots of fun, do the nice stuff, and then maybe become a Christian and make sure you do it before you die.

And some people will view God with suspicion, just like Eve did way back in Genesis 3, when the serpent deceived her. It's so easy to think, you know, that God kind of wants to make us slaves who are restricted.

Is that what God wants? Absolutely not. That is not what God wants. God does not want to make you a slave.

So what does God want to make you? Well, the answer is about as far removed as possible from being a slave.

[24 : 21] Because God wants to make you his child. That's what verse 14 sets before us so clearly.

All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you've received the spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

Now, Paul here is talking about what we call the doctrine of adoption. This is maybe something that you've been maybe familiar with for a long time. But it is such a wonderful thing to stop and think about to make sure that we grasp just what is being said.

I want you to think of God. And I want you to think how massive God is. So God is the creator of everything that exists. I don't know if you've ever gone on one of these websites or one of these books that kind of shows you the scale of the universe.

You see the earth and then you see the sun. And then it gets bigger and then you see the big stars. And by the time you finish, like, earth is smaller than a pixel on the screen or whatever it may be. You see how utterly massive the universe is.

[25 : 27] God is bigger. Because it's simply his creation. You think of how vast time is. How far back it goes. How far into the future it goes. Our minds can't stretch that far.

God's just holding it in the palm of his hand. He's the ruler of all. He's the one who's holy, righteous and almighty. He's the one who is unapproachable in his glory and splendor.

The one whose very presence makes mountains shake. God is bigger, stronger, holier and more awesome than we could ever imagine. God is absolutely huge and you are absolutely tiny in comparison to him.

But yet what does he want to do with you? He wants to make you his child. He wants to adopt you as his very own beloved child.

And that's reminding us that alongside all these great attributes of God, his holiness, power, wisdom and strength, alongside all of these things is the fact that God is a loving, adopting father.

[26 : 39] And that's telling us that at the core of who God is, is a father's heart. And that's one of the many wonderful things that's revealed by the doctrine of the Trinity.

The doctrine of the Trinity is that God is three in one, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God has always been three in one, always been Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

One of the things that that teaches us is that God has never, ever, ever, ever not been a father. God didn't become a father when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

He didn't become a father. Jesus didn't come along sometime later after God the Father had initially existed. God the Father has always been Father to God the Son.

And so that's telling us that at the core of who God is, is a father's heart. And a key part of the Holy Spirit's work is to reveal and apply that paternal instinct of God to us.

[27 : 47] The Holy Spirit, he comes to dwell in our hearts as we are adopted into the family of God. Now just try and think of, think of that. Think of the best elements of a parent's instinct.

I know when I say that there are so many examples in life of parents not being what we wish they were. But putting that to our side for a moment, try to think of just the best elements, the best elements of what a parent should be.

You think of protectiveness, compassion, delight, tenderness, commitment, care, provision, encouragement, guidance, and absolute unconditional love.

These verses are telling us that if you can get a glimpse of those qualities in your mind, then you're seeing a little bit more of what God is really like.

But what is even more amazing is that all of that has been applied to us in these verses. Now when you look at verses like that, our attention can always be drawn to the big words like slavery and adoption and all that kind of stuff.

[29 : 01] But the coolest words are the coolest words of the little ones. Because look at the little words. You, you, we, our, we, we. All of this has been applied to you. Paul is teaching us that we are his.

That we've been adopted as God's children. And in verse 15, Paul is reminding us that that should shape the way we approach God.

He's saying that we've not received a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear. Now what on earth does Paul mean there when he says that? Well imagine being one of these Roman Christians.

So Paul's writing to Christians in Rome. Imagine you were living there. You would have a lot of reasons to feel afraid. So there would be a fear about how they're going to meet their needs. Especially for those who were poor.

There would have been a fear about how maybe their families might have reacted. If not their whole families had become Christians. Or their community. Or their workplace. A fear of what might happen if they can't conform to the expectations of the Roman religious cult.

[30 : 11] And there's the threat of persecution. Always unsure what might happen. So imagine you became a Christian in Rome. No doubt at the start there would have been a great sense of joy.

You'd have thought, wow it's amazing. I've come to know Jesus. And you were baptised into the church. And it would have been wonderful. But not long after that it would have been so easy to fall back into fear.

And the same is true for us. Maybe you can think back to times when you were first converted. Or times when you first became a member of the church. Or whatever it may be. Where everything seemed to be great. But then worries and fear started to kick in.

Whether that's work or family or circumstances or pressure. Or whatever it might be. There's always stuff pulling us back into a state of fear. And sometimes we can drift back to the point where we become afraid of God.

Now when I say that I'm not meaning fear of God in the good sense. So the Bible talks about fear of God in the good sense. That's like a reverence and a respect for God that we all want to have. What I mean more is actually just being afraid of God.

[31 : 18] In the sense of being scared of what he's going to do next. And people do that. People can develop the mindset that God is going to be awkward.

Or hostile. Or difficult towards us. And it's actually easier to think like that when we might realise. I've sometimes heard people say.

Don't pray that God will humble you. Because you know. He might really really hurt you in the process. Or don't pray thy will be done. Because you know.

God might answer your prayer with something that you really don't like. Or that might be really awful. Or we might think to yourself. Well I can't. I can't come back to God. David mentioned at the start.

You know. There's sometimes people who've maybe drifted away. Who might think. I can't come back to God. Because he's just going to hammer me for all the stupid things I've done. And the mistakes I've made. Or we might think. You know. I can't make a stand for God.

[32 : 15] I can't become a member. Or I can't live openly as a Christian. Following Jesus. Because it might bring bad consequences. And God might actually just want to teach me a lesson through it all.

Anyway. It's so easy to think like that. But behind all of these fears. Is the idea that God is a cruel slave master. And if we think that God is like that.

That you know. If you don't match up. He's annoyed. But if you do match up. He's impressed. If you think of God like that. Then our spirit.

Our mindset. Is going to be one of slavery. It's going to lead us back into a state of fear. Where we think. You know. The Christian life is going to be horrible. And God probably wants it that way. Because we deserve it anyway.

And that's just the way it should be. Paul is saying. You have not received. A spirit of slavery. To make you fall back into fear.

[33 : 14] You have received the very opposite. The Holy Spirit has come into your heart. As the spirit of adoption. And that means. That your view of God.

Must not be. Of one who's a brutal slave master. That you've got to tiptoe around. Your view of God. Must be of a loving father.

That you can run to. No matter what. And that's emphasized by the word cry. In verse 15 there.

That's a fascinating word. Because. It doesn't just mean to speak. It means something much more intense. Than that. It's the word that's used to describe. Blind Bartimaeus' shout.

When he said. Jesus son of David. Have mercy on me. And it's the same word. That's used to describe. Jesus' dying moment on the cross. He cried out again. With a loud voice. And yielded up his spirit.

[34 : 11] It's a word that's showing us. That when Paul tells us. That we can come to God. Saying Abba Father. As you can see. In verse 17. I think it is. 15 it is.

It's not just like. A kind of gentle word of affection. Sometimes you can think. You know. We go up to God. And it's like. Abba Father. You know. In a really sort of gentle. Soft. Kind of way.

And there's nothing. Wrong with thinking that. Except. That's not what's been described here. What's been described here. Is a desperate plea. And a cry of anguish.

That means that you don't just say. Abba Father. When everything is going. All lovely. And smooth. And warm. And easy ozzy. In the Christian life.

Which it never does anyway. But you can think it's like that. You know. It's the good solid. Sort of Christians. They can go to God. And say. Abba Father. Rubbish. It's the ones who are just. Struggling.

[35 : 10] And say. Abba Father. Please help me. It's a cry of anguish. In other words. You can say. Abba Father. When you're feeling at your lowest. Not.

Just for those moments. When you feel at your strongest. Christ. Paul is telling us. That when we face circumstances. That are going to pull us back.

Into a state of fear and alarm. The Holy Spirit is saying. No. Don't slip back. Run. To Abba. Run to your father. And that's why.

Whatever happens in the week ahead. You want to just run to your father. You get an email. That sends a shiver down your spine. At work. Run to your father. You get a. Someone gives you grief.

At school. Run to your father. You. You. You say something. You wish you hadn't said. And you're full of regret. Run to your father. You get bad news.

[36 : 06] Run to your father. Whatever it is. The Holy Spirit is saying. Run to your father. And the reason you can run to your father. Is because. He's your father. You've been adopted.

As his precious. Beloved. Child. Child. And I can prove to you. That this is what you should do. Because there's one other place. Where this phrase.

Abba. Father. Appears. We've said. We've seen it in Romans. We've seen it in Galatians. But there's another place. Where it. Appears. It appears in Gethsemane.

On the lips of Jesus. Where he fell on the ground. And prayed. That if it was possible. The hour might pass. From him. And he said. Abba. Father. All things are possible.

For you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will. But what you will. The garden of Gethsemane. Was that when Jesus felt. At his most strong.

[37 : 06] Most solid. Most together. No. Because when he was at his. Weakest. In the moment of Jesus.

His greatest. Fear. And anguish. He ran straight to his father. And he said. Abba. Paul is telling us. That as Christians.

We should be doing exactly the same. So what does God. Want to do with you. He wants to make you. His child.

And if you're not. Yet a Christian. Or thinking about it. Or unsure. Please. Please. Make sure. That you recognize. That this is what God. wants for you.

This is what God. Wants you to become. He does not want to give you. A long list of do's and don'ts. He doesn't want to transform your life. For the worst. And he doesn't want to make. Next week. And the week after.

[38 : 02] And everything else. Boring and dull. He doesn't want to do anything like that. He wants to make you. His child. And. You've got to ask yourself.

What on earth. Would make it. Worthwhile. To say no. To that. Our second question. Is what does God. Want to say.

About you. And. That's. You know. When we worry about. What people think of us. That is. Immediately follows on. To think. You know. What. What people would say. About us. And that can often be.

A source of fear. And worry. And grief. In our lives. If you think about God. What does God. Want to say. About you. Maybe even.

Pick one word. Pick one word. That God. Would say. About you. What would it be. Well. I look at myself.

[39 : 01] And I find. And I think. I think so easily. Well God. Would have every reason. To say. Something like. Disappointing. Sinner.

Failure. Because God. Has every reason. To say. These things. About me. And. I'm sure. Many of you. Feel. Exactly. The same. These verses. Are telling us. That. If God. Could only. Say. One word. About you. As a Christian.

Do you know. What it would be. He would say. Mine. He'd say.

You are. My child. That's what. Verse 16. Is telling us. It says. The spirit. Himself. Bears witness. With our spirit.

[39 : 58] That we. Are children. Of God. God. In other words. The Holy Spirit. God. The Holy Spirit. Is declaring. His testimony. About you. And is saying.

This. Is God's. Child. Now. I think this is. Amazing. And. To help us see. How amazing it is. We're going to go back. To a very obscure. Verse. All the way back.

In Deuteronomy. So. Go to Deuteronomy 19. Where it says. A single witness. Shall not suffice. Against a person. But any crime. Or any wrong. In connection. With any offense. That he's committed. Only on the evidence.

Of two witnesses. Or three witnesses. Shall a charge. Be established. Now. What on earth. Has that got to do. With adoption. And Romans 8. And everything. That we're looking at tonight. Well. This version. Deuteronomy. Is setting forth. A principle.

That there needs to be. Two witnesses. In order to prove. That something. Is true. And that principle. Is echoed. Elsewhere. In scripture. Right through. To the New Testament. And it means. That God.

[40 : 54] Is always concerned. About confirming. That something. Is true. One witness. Is not enough. There has to be. Confirmation. From a second. Source.

And so. When we come to faith. In Jesus. What this means. Is that. We don't. Just rely. On our own. Testimony. We don't.

Just rely. On what we say. Or what we've. Experienced. Ours. Isn't the only voice. Because there's another.

It's confirmed. By the voice. Of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit himself. Bearing witness. With our spirit. That we are.

Children. Of God. As verse 16. Tells us. God. That means. That every time. The devil tries. To undermine.

[41 : 51] You. As a child. Of God. And to call. Into question. Whether God. Really loves you. Whether you're really. Part of his family. Whether you're really. Saved. Do you know. What you can do. You can call.

On the witness. Of God. The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit. Himself. In other words. Your status. As a child of God. Has got the backing. Of heaven.

The Spirit. Himself. Is bearing testimony. For you. And what that means. Is that this testimony. Of the Holy Spirit. Is where we. Find.

Personal. Assurance. As Christians. Now I doubt. There's any Christian. In here. Who has not. Struggled. At times. With assurance. We all do. We think to ourselves. Has God.

Really saved me. Have I really. Come to faith. Has a change. Really taken place. Is Jesus. Really my savior. Is God. Really my father. And often. We can compare ourselves. With other people.

[42 : 47] And think you know. Well I haven't had. The right experience. Other people. Have had. You know. There's been more. More of a dramatic. Change in their life. They can point to something. Much more definite. Than I can. They seem to be different.

I don't have. The same experience. As them. I don't have. The same knowledge. As them. People seem to understand. Far more than I do. And I seem to muck up. Far more often. Than everyone else. It's so easy. To think like that.

And as a result. We feel. Insecure. And cold. Anxious. And lacking. Assurance. And if that's you today. Then these verses.

Are saying to you. Do not be afraid. Do not fall back. Into fear. Listen. To the testimony. Of the Holy Spirit. Who is bearing witness.

To God. The Father. And saying. This is my child. You are adopted too.

[43 : 41] And it's an amazing reminder. That God wants to pour. His fatherly assurance. Into you. That's why I wanted to read. From Luke 15.

Where we have the amazing. Parable. Of the lost son. He came back to his father. And he said. I'm not worthy. To be called your son. And so after that long journey back.

You know. He thought. He thought. You know. Well. I just get back to my father. I know I'm not going to be a son again. Like before. But. But even if I can just be a slave. It'll be better than where I am. Just now. And so he finally gets back.

He says. Father. I've sinned against heaven. And against you. I'm not worthy. To be called your son. What did the father do? He got a robe.

And a ring. And he killed the fattened calf. In other words. He did everything he could. To pour assurance. Into that boy.

[44 : 37] That he was still his son. He was not a slave. And never would be. He was always. Always a son.

The father. In the parable. Wants to give his dear child. The deepest assurance. That he's not a slave. He's a son.

And that's what God wants you to have too. That deep assurance. That he is your father. And that you are his precious child.

That's why God the Holy Spirit. Is testifying to you. And he's testifying with you. Saying. God is your father. And that is what. This again is where we've got to recognize.

That this is where we find assurance. We don't find assurance. In terms of. You know. Dramatic experiences. Or lightning bolts. Or writing in the sky.

[45 : 35] Or whatever. Or any of that kind of stuff. So often. We're plagued by doubts. By thinking. We don't have the experiences. That other people have. And you know. We're not this. And we're not that. And other people seem to be so much better than I am.

But. Ultimately. The big experiences. He says. That you may or may not have. Are totally irrelevant.

Compared to what God. The Holy Spirit. Is saying. And he's saying. You're a child of God. The key place.

To find assurance. Is to listen to what God is saying. And what God is saying. In these verses. Is that if you can look into your heart. And see.

Nothing more than a cry. That says. Father. I need you. Then that's the clearest sign of all. That he's made you his own. So often.

[46 : 36] We are weak. So often. We stumble. So often. We fail. And muck up. But our own. Abilities. And achievements. Mean nothing. In terms of our assurance.

Our assurance. Lies in the fact. That God looks at you. And says. My child. And as a result. We can look back to him. And say. Our father.

And this is why. This assurance of adoption. Is not. Confined. To. The super Christians. So often. It's easy to think like that. That there's kind of super Christians.

Who have this really. Close knowledge of God. And seem to have a far better level. Of spiritual experience. Than anybody else. And we so often. Think of these super Christians. And all we seem to know.

Is that we're not one of them. Well the super Christian. Doesn't exist. There's no such thing. God does not reserve this. For the elite. God wants to give assurance.

[47 : 32] To the weak. To the ones. Who come to him. With a cry of anguish. Now none of this means. That we won't lack assurance. We will. And we do.

Often lack assurance. But it's telling us. What to do. When that happens. That we need to come back. To the fact. That God. The Holy Spirit. Is bearing witness. With our spirit. That we. Are.

Children of God. So what does God. Want to say about you. He wants to say. My child. And again.

Anyone who's not yet a Christian. Or not sure. That is what God. Wants to say. About you. As well. But until you put your faith.

In Jesus. He can't say it. But he's not the one. Saying no. Just like.

[48 : 33] The father. In the parable. Of the lost son. He is waiting. He's looking. He's calling. So what does God.

Want. To do with you. He wants to make you. His child. What does he want. To say about you. He wants to say. You're mine. Last question. Very briefly. What does God. Want to give you.

Well the answer to this. Is in verse 17. If children. Then heirs. Heirs of God. And fellow heirs. With Christ. Provided we suffer. With him. In order that we may.

Also be glorified. With him. Here Paul. Takes us. To the next. Logical step. Of the privileges. That are ours. Through union with Christ. If we are united. To Jesus.

Then we are adopted. Into God's family. That means. That means. That if we are adopted. Into God's family. Then like Jesus. We are children of God. If we are children of God. Then we are therefore.

[49 : 29] Also. Heirs. To all. That God. Wants to give. His son. So what does God. Want to give you. He wants to give you. An inheritance.

Now what does that mean. Well. It's easy to sometimes think. You know. Oh well that. That sounds really complicated. God's inheritance. What would that mean. Well. Sometimes one of the best things to do. To understand. A passage in the Bible.

Is just to keep it really simple. Because it actually is really simple. Because. An inheritance. Is just simply. When somebody wants to give. The best. Of what they have. To their children.

If you think about. You know. Your life. And maybe the wealth. Or. Possessions. That you've built up. You think about. What you want to pass on.

To the generations. Coming after you. You don't want to pass on. The failings of your life. You want to pass on. The benefits. Of everything. That you've achieved.

[50 : 28] If I said to my children. So. I'm working on my. I'm working on my will. I'm going to give you my tax bill. I don't think that they would be. Too delighted. At all. And. I don't want to give my children.

My tax bill. I want to give my children. The best. Of what I have. And. I think. That this is part. Of what's been. Conveyed.

By the beautiful. Biblical doctrine. Of inheritance. God the father. Wants to share. The very best. Of everything.

That he has. With his son. And so you think. Well yeah. Obviously. God wants to share. Everything. With Jesus. His perfect son.

But the. Amazing truth. Of the doctrine. Of adoption. Is that God. Wants to include. You. In that too. And so.

[51 : 24] All the blessings. Of being in God's family. Of enjoying. God's presence. Of enjoying. Fellowship. With him. Of enjoying.

His creation. Of the joy. Of being. With God. The splendor. Of his kingdom. The security. That he brings. The peace. That he provides. That passes. All understanding. All the incredible stuff.

That's true. About God. He just. Wants. To pass it on to you. And give you. A share. In it. God. And that's why. The Bible.

The Bible. Has a really important word. To describe this. It's the word. Glorification. Because. It's just. So glorious. What God. Is promising. For all.

Who trust. In him. And that's why. If we are Christians. Our status. Of God's children. Means that. Even if we have to. Suffer. Now. It'll seem.

[52 : 19] Tiny. In comparison. To what God. Has waiting. For us. And that's why. Paul. In the very next. Verse. In verse 18. Says. I consider. The sufferings. Of this present time.

Not worth. Comparing. To the glory. That is to be revealed. To us. And so. That's. That's our questions.

If we. If we go over them again. What does God. Want to do. With you. He wants to. Adopt you. As his child. What does God.

Want to say. About you. He wants to. Testify. That you. Are his child. And that he. Is your father. And God. The Holy Spirit. Is doing. That very work. And what does God. Want to give you.

He wants to give you. His best. He wants you. To share. In all. That he is going. To give. To his son. Jesus. Christ. He wants you.

[53 : 13] To share in that. As well. And all of this. This brings us. To two. Really important. Conclusions. On the one hand. In all of this. We are reaching.

The heights. Of the amazing. Theology. Of the gospel. Because here. We see. What God. Is really like. We're seeing. The nature of God.

As the perfect father. Here. We are seeing. The astounding. Provision. That God has made. To secure. Our salvation. And our adoption. Here. We are able. To marvel. At our union.

With Christ. That what he's going. To get. We are going to have. Because we're united. To him. Here. We see the power. Of the Holy Spirit. Indwelling us. And transforming us. And here. We see the glory.

Of eschatology. Of all that God. Has planned. For the future. And the blessings. That are ours. And no matter. How much we think. About these things. Will only ever. Scratch. The surface. Paul is taking us.

[54 : 07] To the very heights. Of Christian theology. In these verses. But yet. At the very same time. At the very same time. As he takes us. To the heights. Of theological wonder.

We are also being taught. The most basic. Truths. Of life. As a Christian. Because all of this. Is reminding us. That step one.

For you and me. As a Christian. Every day. Is to look to God. And say. Father. Father. And no matter.

What. A week. Or a month. Or a year. Might bring in our lives. God grant. That we all. Just run. To our father.

And cling to him. At every moment. But I want to just conclude. With a final. Thing.

[55 : 03] I want to turn. These questions around. And I want to ask. What do you want to do. With God.

What do you want to say. About him. What do you want. To give him. To give him. And I hope.

That when I ask. The question. What do you want. To do. With God. I hope. Your answer is. I want him. To be my father. And I want.

To be his child. When I ask. What do you want. To say. About him. I hope. That. That your answer.

To that. Is that I just want. To say. He's my father. And that I want. To live my life. As his child. And what do you.

[55 : 59] Want to give him. Well. I hope. Your answer. To that question. Is. My all. And.

If those. Are your answers. To those questions. If that's. What you want. To say about God. You're my father. And if that's. What you want. To give God. Your all.

And if you want. To just. Live every day. Of your life. As his child. If that's the answer. If that's your answer. To those questions. There's. There's a brilliant. Brilliant way. For you to show.

That that's your answer. How do you show it? Well. You go and sit. At your father's table. Because there.

When you take. The bread. And the wine. You're saying. To God. I want to be your child. And you're saying. To God. You're my father.

[56 : 56] Through my saviour. Jesus Christ. And you're saying. To God again. I want to give you. My all. And. That's one of the. Amazing things. About the Lord's Supper.

Because. In the Lord's Supper. God is saying. Something to you. He's saying. How much he loves you. As his child. And you're saying. Something to God. You're saying. Father. I love you too. And I want to live for you.

And whether you're going. To the Lord's table. For the hundredth time. For the first time tomorrow. I don't mind. If those are your answers. To those questions. Then it's the place for you.

Amen. Let's pray. Father. Father. We thank you. So much.

That you are our father. Lord Jesus. We thank you so much. That you are our brother. And our savior.

[57 : 54] And Holy Spirit. We thank you so much. That you are the spirit. Of adoption. And we pray. That you would take us. All together. To be part of that family.

Both tomorrow. As we sit at your table. But also. For the rest of our lives. As we live. For you. Our perfect God. We pray.

That it will be true. Of us all. Amen. We're going to conclude. Singing from Psalm 103.

A sing psalms version. Of Psalm 103. Singing from verse 12. To 22. This is one of the many examples. Where the psalms are so good. Because they say.

In like four verses. Far more than I can say. In my last 40 minute sermon. So there's so much. In these verses. That just captures. What we've been trying to say. Tonight. As far as east is from the west.

[58 : 50] So far as love. Has borne away. Let's stand. And sing. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. The Father loves his child, so God loves those who fear his name.

For he remembers we are dust, and wealthy knows our feeble frame.

[60 : 07] Each human life is like the grass, and like a meadow flower it grows.

Its bliss will never be recalled, once over it the tempest blows.

But everlasting is God's love for those who fear him and their seed.

For those who keep his covenant, and carefully his decrees.

God's kingly rule is over all. In heaven he has set his throne.

[61 : 31] O you his angels, praise the Lord. Strong ones by whom his will is done.

O praise the Lord, you heavenly host. His servant to perform his word.

Praise God his works throughout his realm. And you my soul, O praise the Lord.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all. Amen.