



Romans 8 Pt. 4: Children of God

Romans 8:14-17 *“For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. 15 The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to 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.*

This set of scriptures is exactly why I don’t put much value in commentaries. Who has the right view on scripture? The famous men who have famous commentaries did a good job. We can uncover a lot about the Bible in their work. Yet, they are men trying to understand God. I feel it’s far more important to let the Spirit speak to you through the scriptures first. What do you think it says? If you’re unsure, then search commentaries for clearer understanding. Many times, commentaries come to different conclusions like right here in Romans 8:14-17. I think there is a lot here. Let’s attempt to unpack it.

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. He is the Son of God. Yet, Jesus is one of the Godhead. Meaning Jesus is the Son but He is no less God. God the Father did not create Jesus. To know this is important. Hebrews 2:7 is another controversial verse. *“You made them a little lower than the angels; you crowned them with glory and honor.”* However, we need this verse to understand our Bible study today. The word sons can be translated angels. There is an argument on what this word definitely means. Yet, it’s clear if you read Hebrews 2:7. We are sons of God. But we are lower than angels because

Jesus came down to be equal with humans. This word sons could also be translated as family. Another verse confirms this thought. Ephesians 1:5 “*God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Jesus Christ. This is what he wanted to do, and it gave him great pleasure.*”

We share in the inheritance with Jesus as adopted children. Yet, we are not Gods Son or equal with the trinity. This is hard teaching. So many people have interpreted these types of scriptures the wrong way. Here we also have another controversial word: Abba. Some have translated it daddy father. Others claim it’s “father” father. What is clear is that’s it’s an intimate usage of the word. It’s pappa or father but with the loving meaning a child would bring. Many commentaries or scholars tend to look at the word. What is the best translation? Yet, words in many countries have more than one meaning or intent. Paul calls us children of God. To know Paul is to know he is clever with his words. It’s by no mistake that children cry out Abba Father. Right after this we have Paul saying the Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are his children. That’s the word play but in reality, Paul is setting up the real intent of the words Abba and children.

Let’s talk about the “if” word. Verse 17 says “if” we are children. Paul loves to begin with an argument to prove a point later. In the first few verses of Romans 8 he says *according to the Spirit*. Then we see *according to the flesh*. He does this to establish who we are in the Spirit. This brings us forward to verse 14 “*For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.*” Finally, I want you to see that the “if” statements make the argument complete. If you are the Spirits children. Then God accepts you as His adopted children. Notice the word adoption. We are not the son but we are family. Again, Abba resembles being a child as the word son resembles family. Paul is not using these words by mistake.

It's all about words to Paul. Now we have the last word “heir.” Again, it depends on the use of it. Jesus shares in God. He shares in the kingdom. That is what the trinity is: sharing of the Godhead. Yet, because of Jesus’ sacrifice, we are able to share too. If you’re a child of God then you have been adopted into the family of God. The trinity? It’s a yes and no answer. We are not God. We are created beings by

God. Yet, if we are accepted into the Christ then in the name of Jesus we sit at the right hand of God. It's not literally but figurately. That is confirmed in Romans 8:34 "*Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*"

The writing is amazing. We are not at verse 34 in our study today. But all the words used today are the backbone to what Paul will say in verse 34. There is no condemnation. Christ died and was raised to life. He is at the right hand of God doing what? Jesus is interceding for us. Jesus will do that for us if we are in Him and His co-heir. Then we are considered children of God in the Fathers sight. This brings me to Galatians 2:20 "*I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me.*" What makes Romans 8 so good? It's the words. I recommend you now go back and read all the works of Paul. The words we have studied today are woven throughout Paul's writing. Sometimes the meaning he was driving at becomes clear while using Romans 8 as a template.

To end this week's study, I want to illustrate the last statement. It's a somber reminder of what Jesus did and what Christians can look forward to. John 15:18 "*If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first.*" We know what it's like to be laughed at because we go to church. Have you been mocked for being a Bible thumper or goody two shoes in the eyes of unsaved people. Yes, some will die for their faith like Stephan the martyr. Paul wants you to know that as children there is a glory to be had. Glory is all about display. A smiling face and good disposition. A positive attitude and hope in goodness. Christ always looked to the Father and looked to the glorious future. As children (in Christ) we are adopted son and daughters that will inherit that glory if we have the Spirit of God within us.

John 1:14 "*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*"