

Heirs with Christ Romans 8

Introduction

- Adoption process with Bentley
 - Took a leap of faith to foster a dog
 - Never had a dog before
 - Always wanted a Labrador Retriever
 - Went to the humane society and fell in love with a yellow Labrador that we have named Bentley
 - As we were contemplating whether to adopt a dog it reminded me of the decision to have kids
 - This will change our life
 - Can we really make this work?
 - Are we ready?
 - I think we got things backward in regards to having kids before having a dog, however if we would have had a dog first we probably would have not had kids!
 - Part of the adoption process is that humane society provides a microchip for your dog that enters the dog into a database.
 - The purpose of the chip is that if your dog gets lost or runs away, then the chip can be run through the database and tell exactly who the dog is and who the dog belongs to.
 - The chip gives the dog an identity
- Sermon Series, “All In: The Family of God”
 - Discuss what it means to be a co-heir with Christ-an inheritance as Christians
 - Just as Bentley’s microchip identifies him as belonging to the Fallon Family, so the Holy Spirit acts as the microchip to identify us as a child of God.
 - If we get lost or on the wrong path, it is the Holy Spirit that guides us back home to the Father.
 - When we don’t know what to do, or where to go, it is the Holy Spirit that leads us back home to the Father.
- **Romans 8**
- What exactly does it mean to be co-heirs with Christ?
 - First, it means we have an unique identity
 - Second, it means we have new life
 - Third, it means we have a secure inheritance to put our hope in

An Unique Identity

- **Romans 8:1**
 - Complete change of tone from how Romans 7 ends.
 - Paul appears to condemn himself because he finds it impossible to do what is right.
 - The weakness of his humanity continues to draw him to sin.

- It's not necessarily his desire, however he finds it impossible to be perfect.
 - How Paul begins Romans 8 is not only important to Paul's identity, but to all of us .
 - Our life can be defined by something other than our sin.
 - If in fact, we have put our faith in what Jesus has done on the cross, our identity has changed.
 - God no longer identifies us by our sin, but by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.
 - We are co-heirs in the righteousness of Christ, not because we are good enough, but because of God's grace bestowed upon us through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Story of Bentley adapting to living in our home
 - Bentley is about 7 years old
 - We are told that he lived the majority of his life outside
 - Now, he lives in our home
 - Living in our home requires a different set of rules, mainly not peeing in the house!
 - Just because Bentley has a microchip that says he is a Fallon, it isn't the only thing that changes his identity. He also has to learn a different way of life.
 - We love Bentley, so when he does pee in the house we don't disown him, however we show him that what he has done is not acceptable, and then we take him outside.
 - When Bentley gets hyper we tell him to sit. "You can't teach an old dog new tricks." Bentley has to learn a new set of rules to live in the Fallon house.
 - First we crated Bentley when we were not at home. He hated the crate to the point that he busted out of the crate, however he showed enough responsibility to behave in the house outside of the crate. Now when we leave, Bentley doesn't have to stay in the crate. He's learning a new way of life!
 - Forgive me for relating your relationship with God to a dog, however the example fits for explaining our new identity with God.
 - Our identity with God requires more than just our faith. It requires us learning "new tricks" or a new way of life.
 - **Romans 8:14**
 - The Holy Spirit is important to our new identity as a child of God
 - It is the Holy Spirit that leads us toward a new way of living
 - We no longer live for selfish gain, we live for God
 - **Romans 8:28**
 - We find that our identity as Children of God provides us with a new purpose
 - It is now God's will that defines our life, not our own will

- If we continue to aspire for God's will in our life, the Holy Spirit will transform us from the inside out.
- As a Child of God, you have a unique identity
 - Grace that covers our sin-not an excuse to sin, but an invitation to a new life!
 - A new way of life fulfilled by the will of God

New Life

- What kind of life does the Holy Spirit give us?
 - Example of Sign on our Wall "The Fallon Family: Est. 2008"
 - On November 8, 2008 two people became one family
 - It is a day that changed both Amy and My life
 - Some for the worst, but mostly for the better!
 - That's why the vows include "for better or worse"
 - The word "helper"
 - **Genesis 1:18, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a *helper* fit for him (ESV)."**
 - Equal as helpers
 - In those weaknesses we balance each other out
 - **John 14:16, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another *Helper* (ESV)."**
 - Working in unity together
 - Empowers us to do things we can't do on our own
 - Romans 8 relates "weakness" to sin
 - **Romans 8:26**
 - Sin weakens the flesh; it weakens us from living in obedience to God in our own strength
 - The kind of life that the Holy Spirit gives to us is to help us in our weakness.
 - *Help* does not mean that the Holy Spirit is interceding on our behalf to help us accomplish our will, but to accomplish the will of God
 - **Romans 8:27**
 - The *help* is a unified effort of us working alongside the Holy Spirit.
- The truth about our identity in God, is that God already put his identity in us when we were created
 - The image of God
 - God has already chosen us, to complete the adoption process, we must choose God.
 - So when we choose to put our faith in God, God is just reclaiming what it already His.
 - To be a child of God is for our identity to be defined by our faith and obedience to God the Father as we work in unity with the Holy Spirit. This is the new life!

A Secure Hope

- To know that we have a *Helper* should give us hope!
- **Romans 8:24-25**
 - The hope that Paul is referring to is something beyond what we can see in this life and on this earth.
 - We have something to look forward to!
 - Our purpose in life is more than what we can see today!
- How do we benefit from this hope today?
 - **Romans 8:15**
 - “Abba, Father”
 - Personal, intimate relationship that identifies us with God
 - Comes with a promise
 - **Exodus 4:22-23a (ESV)**, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son,’ and I say to you, ‘Let my son go that he may serve me.’”
 - Israel’s inheritance was the Promise Land
 - **Galatians 4:4-7 (ESV)**, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.”
 - A Christian’s inheritance is Salvation, Heaven
 - The hope for us today
 - **Romans 8:31b &37**
 - Fear no longer has to rule our hearts, because God has overcome the world. We have a promised future.
- How else do we benefit from this hope today?
 - **Romans 8:16-17**
 - “provided that we suffer with him”
 - Part of our inheritance is suffering as Christ suffered
 - “Wait, how is this benefit of hope?”
 - Let’s first discuss how we suffer as Christ suffered
 - Temptation
 - Jesus was tempted by every kind of sin and yet he did not give in to the temptation
 - We don’t have to live in fear of sin, despite our weakness to it, if we allow the Holy Spirit to work in our life, we can be more than conquers over sin.
 - Sin does not have to rule our life

- There is hope in knowing that we can overcome temptation!
 - Rejection
 - Jesus chose the will of the Father instead of the will of humans
 - Despite all the good that Jesus did, he was still rejected and crucified.
 - Jesus was willing to experience rejection because his hope was in something beyond what he could see in the present moment
 - The cross did not conquer Jesus. Instead he overcame the grave through resurrection.
- **Romans 8:18**
 - Suffering is necessary in this life because we must overcome the desire of sin that weakens us.
 - Although it may not be pleasant, the suffering pales in comparison to the hope that we have through our inheritance as Children of God.

Conclusion

- What does it mean to be a co-heir with Christ?
 - It means we have an unique identity
 - It means we have new life
 - It means we have a secure hope
- Here is the challenge
 - As co-heirs with Christ we need to understand that God has not only extended his grace to us, but he has also entrusted that we extended that same grace to others
 - The Spirit helps us in our weakness
 - How are we helping others? Not, how are we judging others.
 - Notice that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us.
 - How are you interceding for others?
 - Being a co-heir with Christ means that my inheritance is equal with your inheritance
 - I don't inherit anymore than another Christian
 - God is not judging us based on our righteousness
 - He is judging us based on the righteousness of Christ
 - We have to work together as helpers and partners as fellow inheritors
 - As co-heirs with Christ we need to understand that we are not only defined by the grace that God has extended to us by also through the cooperation we share with the Holy Spirit in our transformation.
 - How are you working with the Holy Spirit to be transformed?

- How are you growing in your faith?
- Are you sharing in the sufferings of Christ; resisting temptation and living for God's will?
- How we respond to these two challenges will define us as a church.
 - I believe we are in a critical time that will define whether God's will can be accomplished
 - We need to grow in God's grace, but we also need to grow in our faithfulness to God.
 - We are the Family of God. Let's work together with the Holy Spirit so that God can be glorified!