

What will we do in Heaven?  
Part 2

What does it mean to be a child?

11/14/10

As we launch out into a series of messages on what will be doing in Heaven, it is important for us to understand that we are 'heirs' of God and 'co-heirs' with Christ. An heir, a co-heir! Can you believe that? Those are very important words. But there is one word that we should have considered first, even before we can understand what it means to be an heir we need to consider what it means to be a Child of God.

If we can understand what it means to be a child of God, then we are much more likely to understand what it means to be an heir. If we can understand what it means to be a child of God, who is destined to inherit what belongs to their Father, then we will be more capable of considering what we will be doing in Heaven.

“child”:

1. a son or daughter of human parents

I would now like to share with you something that 75% of the voters in Colorado do not understand. Are you ready to immediately place yourself in the top 25% of the best educated people in Colorado? According to Webster's dictionary, a child is

2. an unborn or recently born person

The recent Colorado ballot initiative asked us (paraphrased):

“Should the term, “human” be applied to the beginning of the biological development – thus evoking protection under the constitution?”

Now if they are a “child” of human parents, they themselves must be a “HUMAN” according to the dictionary. Therefore, we either need to call the unborn Human, or we need to re-write the dictionary.

So, we became a child of thanks to our mother and father. We become a child of God, when we are born-again, into God's family.

I. God has adopted us into his family

Every one of the verses you are about to read speaks of something very important. See if you can spot it?

“...the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship...” Rom 8:15

“...theirs is the adoption to sonship...” Rom 9:4

“...he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ.” Eph 1:5

Every time I say the word say, I want you to understand that we are referring to a child: a boy or a girl. Nothing personal ladies. This is just how people talked during the time of the Bible.

We are adopted to sonship!

Of the 5 times that 'adoption' is mentioned in the NT, every single time, it is followed by the words: “to sonship.”

Well, what else is there to be adopted to?

Isn't sonship applied and understood when we think of adoption?

For the answer to this question we need to go back to the dictionary.

“Sonship:” the relationship of son to father

I believe that the Bible is telling us that God, does adopt us, but in another way, God literally, changes us into His actual Sons and Daughters! Thus the 'relationship' is consummated and God is actually my Heavenly Father.

## II. God actually transforms us into His own children.

While adoption is certainly a beautiful picture of salvation, it is not the end of the story. Although an adopted child is welcomed into a family, that child still retains the DNA of their biological parents.

When we become a Christian, God does indeed adopted us into His family but at the bodily resurrection of the dead, we will be literally transformed into His children and at the same time retain our human DNA from our parents. Son's of God, Daughter's of God, not only by adoption but by regeneration.

But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir" (Gal. 4:4-7 NIV)

"full rights of sons"

What rights is a child entitled to:

Love, protection, provision, guidance, discipline, encouragement,

As George MacDonald explains, "The word used by St. Paul does not imply that God adopts children that are not his own, but rather that a second time he fathers his own, that a second time they are born-this time from above. That he will make himself tenfold, yea, infinitely their father"

## III. God actually Father's us.

Just about any man is capable of becoming a father. Most men are happy to be involved in the actual process. ☺

But would you agree that just because a man is physically capable of creating a child, it does not make him a good father? Why? Because there is so much more involved in being a good father than just creating children.

Unfortunately, most people feel fatherless and have never experienced the "full rights of sons." Without a father, the boys grow up feeling abandoned, alone, confused and wondering how masculinity will be confirmed on them. Without a loving father, the girls feel abandoned, confused and wonder who will protect, cherish and nurture them?

Even when the father is present, many of these factors may remain when he is detached and confused himself. So let's take a look at the kind of fathering God offers to us.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him" (Luke 15:20 NIV).

### My Heavenly Father...

1. Watches out for me

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him..."

No matter how far you are away from Him, He is watching for you.

2. Cares for me

"Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

Why would He be looking and longing for you, unless He cared?

3. Loves me

"...his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him;"

"I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness.

#### 4. Pursues me

“...he ran to his son...”

Notice that it is not the son “running” to the father, but the father is pursuing his son.

“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.” Psalm 139:7-8

You can run from the love of God but wherever you end up, He will be there loving you!

#### 5. Holds on to me

“...threw his arms around him...”

When our children were little and we would walk across a busy street, we would hold hands but I can assure you, that it was I who was holding onto them much more than they were holding on to me.

“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand.” John 10:28

#### 6. Cherishes me

“...threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

This is the kind of Father you have.

This is how he feels about you.

This is the purpose for which Christ came