

## Adoption

Pastor Kent Priebe

Two and a half years ago, Pastor Kent's family adopted Abigail. Since then, the spiritual truths of God adopting us into His family have become far more real to Kent and his family.

Abigail means "father's joy." Her name is a reminder that God our Father delights and finds joy in adopting us into His family as his loved children.

The Bible likens salvation to adoption. John 1 tells us that when we receive Him, we are born of God. We are born again, adopted into God's family.

By being adopted as sons and daughters of God, three things are now true.

**1. We are adopted by God as our Father.** Romans 8:15 says, "The Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" We can call God "Daddy." The word Abba implies that we can have intimacy, closeness, and a loving relationship with God that is based not only on His power and might but on His kindness, compassion, and His extravagant love.

**2. We are adopted into a new identity.** "The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children" (Romans 8:16).

The day Abigail was adopted she had legally different status than she had the day before. As a result of adoption she had a different last name, her birth certificate changed, her passport changed, and the Alberta government was no longer her guardian. By her adoption she received a new identity.

Similarly, when we are adopted by God, we are no longer the same person. Our legal status was 'slave to sin;' after adoption we are free and forgiven. We were part of the domain of darkness, now we are citizens of heaven. We were alienated from God, but now he is our Father. Now we carry the family name – Christian. We are children of God.

Now the Spirit produces evidence that we are God's children. Instead of desiring sinful thoughts and behaviors, we hate sin. If you are tolerating sin or living with sin in your life – that is not a good sign.

**3. We are adopted into an inheritance.** As children of God, we will receive the fullness of an incomprehensible inheritance. God himself as our father will be our inheritance. When we meet Jesus face to face, we will share in His glory, and we will receive new bodies and eternal life. We will rule with Christ and inherit the Kingdom of God. The bible assures us this inheritance will not spoil or fade.

Because we know God will provide an inheritance in the future, we can trust in His provision for our lives here and now, and we do not have to worry. Although we know in this life, we will suffer pain and troubles, we know that our suffering is temporary. Suffering is the path to sharing in Christ's glory. Let our future inheritance raise up in us faith and trust and dependence upon God, day by day.

Before you believed in Jesus, you were a spiritual orphan separated from God by your sin, destined for hell and a life without God, and with no inheritance. Jesus' death on the cross tells us that we are wretched, broken, sinful, evil, flawed and imperfect. In short, we are totally messed up and need a Saviour.

But Jesus' death tells us something else. We are more valuable than we can imagine. We are worth so much to God that He sent His Son Jesus to die for us.

It's only by Jesus' death and resurrection that we are adopted. Remember that when you take Communion.

# sermon study guide

## IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What are you most thankful for this past year? Why?
2. Have you ever adopted a person or pet? Alternatively, have you ever been 'adopted' by a family, relative or other? What was it like?

## UP – PURSUE GOD

Read *Romans 8:13-17* in 2-3 translations.

3. What does it mean to be adopted into God's sonship? What benefits come with this?
4. From *Romans 8:14,16-17*, highlight the proofs that we are children of God. What are the implications and our responsibilities as adopted children?

## OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. We are co-heirs with Christ, infused with His Spirit, and have unrestricted access to God. Do you believe it? What step(s) can you take to better live as a co-heir with Christ today?
6. As an adopted member of God's family, you have a new identity and a new role. What is your part in working in God's family business? How can you demonstrate this in your community group and neighbourhood?

### *For Personal Reflection / Prayer:*

Jesus thinks you are worth dying for. Read Matthew 26-28 and reflect on His death and resurrection, knowing Jesus is thinking of you. How may you better live your life in the light of how Jesus values you? Ask God how to live a life that is worthy of Jesus' death.

## THE WORD (NIV)

### **Romans 8:13-17**

<sup>13</sup> For if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.

<sup>14</sup> For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. <sup>15</sup> 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." <sup>16</sup> The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. <sup>17</sup> 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.

### **John 1:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— <sup>13</sup> children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

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