

WELCOME 6th October 2019 – 17 Pentecost '19 C

Galatians 4:4-7 & Hebrews 1:1-3

Good morning! Welcome to worship today! Special welcome guests & visitors! It's our privilege & joy to serve you in worship. Glad we all made it through the time change this morning...Welcome to daylight savings!

It's the old debate: "nature or nurture" "genetics or environment" What makes us who we are? Children are often like their parents, a fact that can be embarrassing or encouraging depending on circumstances...But often, we take on the worldview, attitudes or behaviours of those with whom we keep company...the world beyond our bloodline. So what if it's not "either/or" but "both"?

God sent (Jesus) to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir. – Gal 4:5-7

The fullness of the relationship Jesus had with the Father is yours. The Father holds nothing back! You are an heir of his power, his authority, his character, his rule. You are a full heir of his love, pleasure and intimacy. God is your loving, caring, all-embracing Father who is delighted when he sees his character reflected in you & sees you share with others what he has so freely given to you.

We'll experience & celebrate that together today...

Let's pray...

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, you are our Father. You created us to be like you & you know us inside & out. Pour your Holy Spirit through us as we gather among your people around your Word. Draw us deeper into your heart so we know you intimately & trust you completely. Let the world see your life & love in us, bringing glory & praise to you...through Jesus Christ. Amen

17 PENTECOST '19 C – I CAN RELATE TO THAT: A SON TO A FATHER

FAITH CHAT:

1. What is one thing, characteristic, or trait, you inherited from your father?
2. How would someone's experience of an earthly father influence the way they see God as Father?

I found this on the internet...I make no claim to originality or how clever it is...I thought it was funny/fitting. Top 10 things a father will never say:

10. Take my wallet & enjoy your shopping trip. 9. No child of mine is going to live under this roof without tattoos. Now quit complaining. Let's get you inked! 8. Here honey, you can have the remote. 7. Well, how 'bout that? I'm lost! Looks like we'll have to stop & ask for directions. 6. Your Mother & I are going away for the weekend why don't you invite a few friends over for a party while we're gone? 5. Why do you need a job? I make plenty of money for you to spend. 4. Hey, let me hold your purse while you try that on. 3. Let's watch a chick flick tonight instead of the Grand Final. 2. Honey, I know you're tired. You stay home & relax. I'll go to Parent/Teacher Interviews. AND the Number 1 thing you'll never hear a Dad say: 1. When I was growing up, we had it really easy! It's said that every stereotype has some whiff of truth...So I hope you maybe saw yourself or a father you know in there somewhere & are able to laugh along with him...Speaking of Dads

This is my dad (mom too) from many years ago...Yep, there's a physical resemblance But there's a lot I absorbed in terms of attitude, beliefs, way of seeing the world... his faith (apple doesn't fall far from the tree) not all of it is admirable, dad wasn't perfect I make no pretense to perfection...We are different in many ways too...I'm not a cut out copy

Which is different from what we just read: *The Son radiates God's own glory & expresses the very character of God*...- Heb 1:3 That's not the 1st time the NT says that about Jesus: *For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.* – Col 2:9 *In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, & the Word was God...* So the Word became human & made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love & faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one & only Son. – Jn 1:1 & 14 Jesus once told his disciples: *Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father!* ...Don't you believe that I am in the Father & the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who *lives in me* does his work through me. Just believe that *I am in the Father & the Father is in me.* – Jn 14:9-11

And it's exactly that closeness the Father intends for you/me through Jesus the Son: God sent (Jesus) to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could **adopt us as his very own children**. And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

Paul points to a massive contrast & tells us on which side God wants you. There's 2 options...you can be a slave or a child. I'm going to use the word son more frequently today, not to exclude women but to point to a specific legal understanding Paul lifts up for the Galatians & 1st century ears & then we'll work it into our context. 1st ...slaves...Everything a slave does is out of a sense of duty or obligation & it's based in what? Fear – threat – reward or punish – performance. For many people that's how they live out their working lives. You call it a job not a vocation. The only thing that matters is output – performance – ROI/KPI/quotas/goals – publish/perish. Some describe their family that way. Mom or dad lived out a taskmaster sort of relationship w/ the rest of the family. I know a heap of people who put their hand up as followers of Jesus & live their faith that way ...burden of duty/obligation & that's all they've ever known. That's why Paul calls the law slavery...because it's bondage to an image of the Father that simply isn't real.

But then there's sons/daughters/children...Child lives not from duty/obligation but freedom Gal 5:1 "*For freedom Christ set you free*"- child lives from a baseline of delight – joy – love – forgiveness – hope - purpose – destiny...All that is only possible because in Christ you & I have been adopted by Christ's death/rez/rule into that relationship...Here's where it gets cool...

Paul uses a very specific Gk word here. This English trans says, "*adopt us as his very own children*" other trans "*adoption as sons/sonship*" *huios* & it doesn't just mean "adopted" like we usually think "adopted" - taking a child that is not in your genetic family bloodline & giving them your last name & raising them in the love & closeness of your family "as if they were your own." Huios means that they become part of the bloodline. In the 1st cent Gk world when a father huiosianed a son it meant that this son now enjoyed all of the authority, position, power & privilege of the eldest blood son...**AND** they look nowhere else for family linkages...No ancestry.com or old history. Why? What's the 1 thing a slave will never have? No matter how trusted respected valued appreciated loved? The estate. The inheritance. The full rights & responsibilities of the family.

God sent (Jesus) to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could **adopt us as his very own children**. And because we are his children, **God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts**, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. **And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.** – Gal 4:5-7

You see... By Christ's death/resurrection we are adopted into Jesus' relationship w/ the Father. We gotta stop thinking all Jesus does is produce a "get out of hell free" card...that all Easter does is book our ticket to heaven...so much more! **God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father."** No one on earth has the right the privilege the authority the joy to call God "Daddy" except those of us who have been granted the Spirit of the Son. That relationship is deeper & more permanent than any earthly relationship because the Father releases His Spirit into our lives so that our very nature is transformed giving us the position, authority & power of the Only Son. ***All of you who were baptised "into" Christ have put on the family likeness of Christ.*** – Gal 3:27 JBP "Put on Christ" ... "been put on BY Christ" that Christ comes to live in you by his Spirit so that he wears you like a skin suit...Gal 2:20 - ***My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me & gave himself for me.***

By Christ's death/resurrection we are adopted into Jesus' relationship w/ the Father, & within that relationship among Christ's family we are made new each day until we fully reflect the Son in all we are...because the Father has given to us all the Son already has.

In the parable Jesus tells about the 2 sons...younger goes off & blows his inheritance on wild living & the older stays home & lives as if he's a slave...At the end when the father is throwing a massive party to celebrate the restored life the younger son enjoys in his father's household & the older son won't come to the party because he has disowned his brother & scarcely can talk politely to his dad...at the very end, dad says to the older brother, 'Look, dear son, you have always stayed by me, & everything I have is yours...' – Lk 15:31

When I was at the Crosslink Gathering last month, one of the Bible Study leaders noted all those places in the gospels where Jesus gave various "authority" to his followers...to preach heal cast out demons forgive sin...Then he asked us to find the place in the NT where Jesus took back that authority he had given those early followers...Don't waste your time...you won't find it...Jesus never takes it back...

The fullness of the relationship Jesus had with the Father is yours. The Father holds nothing back! You are an heir of his power, his authority, his character, his rule. You are a full heir of his love, pleasure & intimacy. God is your loving, caring, all-embracing Father who is delighted when he sees his character reflected in you & sees you share with others what he has so freely given to you....live out what is already yours in Jesus Christ.

FAITH CHAT: "Everything I have is yours." That's what the Father says to you. How freely do you live believing this is true?
Why?

But in the fullness of that relationship of love... "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, & no mind has imagined what God has prepared for those who love him." 1 Cor 2:9

Let's pray with that in mind...Father, fill us with the Spirit of your Son. Let our lives radiate with his presence and his power. All of your promises are true for us in Christ, so we trust your Word for our satisfaction and your grace for every day...through Jesus we pray...Amen.