

## **Those Led by God's Spirit are His Children**

'Three boys were playing together. One of them said, "My dad owns the grocery store and I can get food for nothing". The second said, "So what? My dad's a doctor and I can get well for nothing". The last one answered, "Well, listen to this. My dad's a preacher and I can get good for nothing".'

"Good for nothing"? Or, "Good, for nothing"? Well, we'll give that third boy the benefit of the doubt and say that he's not "good for nothing", but rather that he is, or can be, good, for nothing; that is, at no cost. But, if we're Christians, then we know that that boy was good, or becoming good, not because of anything his preacher father did, but rather, all thanks to, totally, what his Lord and our Lord did on the Cross of Calvary, and Christ's subsequent sending of Holy Spirit to all who believe and trust and obey Him. The key here is, what does it mean to "believe and trust" in Him?

In today's reading from Romans 8:14, we come across the statement, "For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God". Verses 15-16 further explain: "you received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His Own children. Now we call Him, "Abba, Father". For His Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children". So this makes clear that people who are *not* led by the Spirit of God are *not* children of God.

It's often bandied about by usually well-meaning people that everybody is a child of God. No, this is not true. These scriptures, and many others, make this crystal clear. It is true that all people are creatures made by God, made in His image. But to be adopted into *His* family, well, that is entirely up to Him. It is entirely His prerogative. But He is not haphazard in whom He selects to adopt into His family. Absolutely not. He has made the requirements perfectly clear and exceedingly simple. And all, that's *all*, who fulfill those requirements are assured, guaranteed, that they will be adopted into His family. And as Romans 8:17 declares, "since we are His children, we are His heirs". Since God owns absolutely everything, because He made it all to begin with, this means that we co-own everything with Him. Is this not a concept that is just about impossible to wrap our heads around? Truly, as adoptees into His family, we become Christ Jesus' younger sisters and brothers. As Lord Jesus is the Crown Prince, as it were, though He and Father God are one, He is in reality King of the Universe, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Since our Savior has rightfully assumed this position due to His crucifixion and resurrection, as His little brothers and sisters, we are all princes and princesses. As such, we are to once again, or perhaps in actuality for the first time, exercise true dominion over this earth as God intended from the very beginning when He created Adam.

This is a reality that most of us have barely the foggiest notion of what it actually means. We have truly grown up in this

world, having been taught mountains and mountains of malarkey, passed off as the truth of the universe. As humans are born into this world today, and have been for nearly all the eons of our existence, we're fed from the moment of our birth lie after lie after lie. So that we have little to no idea at all of who we really are, whose we are, what our purpose is, and why we're alive. Those of us who are born into families with parents were fully led by God's Spirit, have a big leg up on the multitudes of us who aren't so blessed. And it is our rightful and legitimate life's vocation to continually mature from our birth as infantile beings incapable of accomplishing anything by ourselves, into adult humans made in God's image, bearing the royal crowns of our high calling as the lords, the rulers, the administrators, of the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus on this earth.

Because we truly have no real, truthful idea of what this world is actually all about, and its genuine condition, our Savior graciously gave us Holy Spirit to be our constant companion, leader, and teacher. Thus, it is only as we are led by Holy Spirit, and we persevere and follow where He leads us, that we truly continue living into, day by day, what we are already declared to be—His children. So, according to God's word spoken through Paul, we have to follow Holy Spirit. The question then for believers is, do we follow? Consistently? Do we even know when Holy Spirit is leading us? Speaking to us? Do we even make any meaningful, serious attempt at hearing Him? Do we put in the ef-

fort and discipline to learn God's ways, hear His voice, and follow Him? I dare say that the vast majority of people in this country who claim to follow Holy Spirit have no idea what they're saying. Hosea 11:7 says, "They call Me the Most High, but they don't truly honor Me". They assert they faithfully attend church, or always do what they think is right. What?? What they think is right? How would they know what is right and what is wrong? Without putting in the time to daily, seriously read the Bible, listen to faithful Bible teachers, and personal study, how can anyone even pretend to know anything about God or His will about anything? Without doing even the first thing that God commands, calling themselves Christians is at best misleading and at worst, an out and out lie.

Need an example? They're everywhere! But just consider all the folks who claim that God blesses sex outside of marriage, or worse, between the same gender, or even worse, with animals, or worse of all, with children! Why is it that the movie Fellowship went to see last Sunday, *Sound of Freedom*, is being scorned by many secular reviewers? This film, telling the true story of Tim Ballard who rescued children trafficked into sex slavery, is the latest Christian, truth-telling movie to take this country by storm. It's initial, limited, week-long run, even here locally at Ronnie's, has been extended another week, while it's being released into another 1,500 theaters nationwide. Even today, Ronnie's will screen it 16 times, compared with just 4 times I think it was last Sunday!

So why is this film being spurned by the world? Because the

world doesn't want the truth to come out! Because the world wants to keep this "sin", a truly gross sin, from being revealed as sin. Because the "approved" narrative these days, the approved "truth" from the current powers that be running our country, is that not only is any form of sex between adults healthy, fine and dandy, but even with children. In other words, what the Bible defines as lust is not a bad thing at all. Rather, it's to be celebrated, flaunted, and satiated in any and all ways desired. If you hadn't noticed, in just about any area of our supposed "mainstream" culture today, as Isaiah 5:20 warns: "What sorrow for those who say that evil is good and good is evil, that dark is light and light is dark, that bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter". What a tragedy is Dylan Mulvaney, who claims he is now a woman. To say nothing of Caitlyn Jenner, and Lia Thomas, and all those taking a stab now and then at supposedly running our federal government. How much they need prayer!

So why are we in this mess? The short answer is because the Church, the Ekklesia, has been asleep at the wheel of our culture. Alarm bells should have woke up the churches when our public schools began to replace the Bible with other textbooks in the early 1800s. Yes, that long ago. But it came to a head, as I've said before, with 1925's Scopes Monkey Trial. It precipitated the ending of teaching the Bible's true account of creation in public, replaced with the teaching of evolution as the accepted, "scientific", rational explanation of our origin as a "species". You see,

if we're not created by God, then we have no divine purpose. Even if God actually exists, then since He didn't create us, we don't really have to pay any attention to Him. We can do just as we please. If life is not from Him, if life therefore is not in any way sacred or special, then we can without any compulsion, figure out ways to cull our species, eliminating "useless humans" who are crowding this precious planet and wasting its scarce resources.

This alteration in worldview was gradual. Scopes was in 1925. But "suddenly" in 1962, "mandatory" prayer in schools became illegal. And in 1963, Bible reading and saying the Lord's Prayer became illegal. Our society has been going down the drain to hell ever since! No one then could have imagined how depraved things would get, nor how rapid. Yet, with more and more people having tasted the "forbidden fruit" of wanton sin, not only do they not want to stop, they want to force everyone to join in. But the church has finally woken. And the prayers for America, for Israel, for Europe, for the rest of the world, are rising up to God like never before. Will He hear? Will He answer? Why you bet your bottom dollar He will! We just read in Psalm 65:5: "You faithfully answer our prayers with awesome deeds, O God our Savior. You are the hope of everyone on earth". If we but follow Holy Spirit, trust and obey, He will lead us. As we just sang, "Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine, Nor ever murmur nor repine; Content, whatever lot I see, Since 'tis my God that leadeth me". Make that hymn your ear worm today, and follow Him!!

