

CHILDREN OF GOD

Intro: When we hear the word children we have a fondness, a strong emotional feeling and attachment for this word. We often think of the physical ties that we have (our parents, our children). For the Christian it should make us think of another tie, the spiritual. The apostle John expresses these deep feelings we have in 1 John 3:1 “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.” In our study today I want us to notice some things about being a child of God.

I. THERE MUST BE A BIRTH.

A. John 3:1-7 “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: ² The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. ³ Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. ⁴ Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? ⁵ Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

B. This birth has two elements (water and Spirit). This is baptism.

1. Spirit

a. The Spirit effects in us a spiritual life.

b. Tit. 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” Power of Spirit to make a new life in us.

c. The Spirit uses the Word of God to create a new life in us.

(1) 1 Pet. 1:22-23 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:* ²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.”

(2) Jam. 1:18 “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”

(3) When God’s Word goes into our hearts it has the power to produce a begettle resulting in our repentance, baptism and a new life.

(a) Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

(b) Jam. 1:21 “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”

2. Water

a. Heb. 10:22 “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with

pure water.” (cf. Tit. 3:5 “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;” washing of regeneration is the washing of water).

- b. Acts 2:38 “Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
 - c. Acts 8:38-39 “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
 - d. Acts 22:16 “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
 - e. 1 Pet. 3:20-21 “Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. ²¹ The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:”
3. The new birth is baptism in water as directed by the Spirit which effects in us a new spiritual life.
 - a. Eph. 5:26 “That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”
 - b. Rom. 6:3-4 “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” we go into the water an old man and come out a new spiritual man.
 - c. Gal. 3:26-27 “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
- C. There is only one way to come into the family of God.**
1. 2 Cor. 5:17 “Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”
 2. Gal. 3:26-27 “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
 3. Rom. 8:14 “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

II. THERE MUST BE A FAMILY RESEMBLANCE.

- A. 2 Pet. 1:3-4, 6 “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that *pertain* unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: ⁴ Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust... ⁶ And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness;”
- B. Eph. 5:1 “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;”
 1. The word followers is from the Greek word *mimetes* (mimhthv”).
 2. We get our word mimic from it.

3. It means an imitator.
- C. This resemblance (imitation) is in our actions.**
1. Gal. 5:16-26 “*This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. ¹⁸ But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. ²⁴ And they that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.”
 2. Col. 3:1-2,5-10,12-14 “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. ² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth...⁵ Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: ⁶ For which things’ sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: ⁷ In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. ⁸ But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. ⁹ Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; ¹⁰ And have put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:...¹² Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye. ¹⁴ And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”
 3. We have put off the old man to put on the new (birth, creature). No longer conformed to this world but to Christ.
 - a. Rom. 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
 - b. Rom. 8:29 “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”
 - c. Eph. 4:22-24 “That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; ²⁴ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

III. THERE MUST BE FAMILY LOVE.

- A. Rom. 12:9-10 “*Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. ¹⁰ *Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;” **Dissimulation means without hypocrisy or sincere.**
- B. Eph. 4:1-3 “I Therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, ² With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering,

forbearing one another in love; ³ Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” **(giving over our rights to others).**

- C. **1 The. 4:9** “But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.”
- D. **Heb. 13:1** “Let brotherly love continue.”
- E. **John 13:34-35** “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”
- F. **Paul’s description of love. 1 Cor. 13:4-8a** “Charity suffereth long, *and* is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, ⁵ Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; ⁶ Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; ⁷ Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. ⁸ Charity never faileth:”
- G. **This love will show itself in:**
 - 1. compassion, sympathy, mercy, etc.
 - 2. kindness, gentleness.
 - 3. forgiveness.
 - 4. service to others.

Conclusion: We have been given a great opportunity to become the children of God (John 1:12-13 “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name: ¹³ Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”). Have you become a child of God? The only way is to be born again, then having that family resemblance and family love.