

Safford Church of Christ

3888 S Hwy 191, Safford, AZ 85546

24 November 2013

Topics

A.M. Bible Class: The holy Spirit & Prayer

Romans 8:26

A.M. Lesson: Taming the Tongue

James 3:1-12

**P.M. Lesson: Suffering & Glory of God's
Servant**

Isaiah 52:13ff

Wednesday: Special Thanksgiving & Prayer

Meeting. We want to encourage each one to have some thing to share, or someone that you are especially thankful for, a scripture reading or favorite song you would like to have sung. Thanksgiving is a family day a time for rejoicing. Even if you do not ordinarily attend on Wednesdays please come and join in on the celebration. Thanks, Ken.

Pulpit Evangelist

Ken Knowlton: 428-3494

Elders

Ben Atchley: 428-2246

Greg Briggs: 428-8756

John Cunningham: 428-0895

Sunday Bible Class	10:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship	11:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship	6:30 P.M.
Wednesday Evening Class	6:30 P.M.
Thursday Ladies Bible Class	10:00 A.M.

How Are We "Heirs of God?"

Neil Short

In our Sunday morning classes, we have wrestled with the following verse. It is not clear to some of us what the meaning is of being an heir of God and a joint heir with Christ.

... and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him (Romans 8:17, NRSV).

I spent much of this week studying the question. I know there are many verses in the New Testament that talk about being children, children by adoption and having an inheritance. I made it my goal to find some clarity about what these passages mean. In this article I will share with you my findings.

Obviously, the first action to take when trying to understand a verse is to carefully read a good chunk of surrounding context. Next, one should read a larger context and consider the verse within the context of the entire writing within which it appears. Whether or not one has come to some understanding of the meaning of the verse, the study is enriched by comparing the thought with similar thoughts appearing in other writings of the same author and then in the larger context of the New (or Old) Testament and the Bible in general.

Romans 8 is central in a very large discussion that spans chapters 2-11. The over-reaching theme is a focus on the function of the Law, its value to believers, its weakness according to the flesh and its strength in the Spirit. Romans 8 resolves tension that was created in chapter 7. "Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death (7:24)? It creates new tensions that are resolved in later chapters. Unfortunately, Romans 8 is usually treated like a collection of random proof texts in a lonely chapter in the middle of a sea of unrelated mini-sermons. The scope of this article is strictly an attempt to understand being an heir of God.

Paul picks up the theme of chapter 6 by observing that people are flesh and are drawn to satisfy the desires of the flesh. Believers set their minds not on the flesh but on the Spirit (vs. 5). He makes a very strong point that believing is not enough to belong to God. It is required that the believer set his mind on the things of the Spirit. The Spirit enables the believer to behave in ways that please God rather than the flesh. Paul reuses a metaphor of putting to death the body in order to live according to the spirit (vs. 10). Then, he says, we will

experience the resurrection just like Christ was also raised from the dead (vs. 11)! What that means is, if a person believes he is saved but still lives according to the flesh, he does not belong to God and he has nothing to look forward to with respect to the resurrection of the mortal body [to immortality].

If we are led by the Spirit, we are children of God (vs. 14). We actually experience the Spirit, not in some miraculous manifestation, but in finding strength [of the Spirit] to make real life changes for righteousness. It is such an experience that we are able to cry (an expression of strong emotion) "Abba! Father" (vs. 15)!

So, because we are children, we have an inheritance.

Ah! But according to Paul, receiving that inheritance is a process. It's not an instantaneous thing (again, verses 10-11). Further, one must suffer with Christ in order to receive the inheritance. (For a study on what it means to suffer with Christ, consider Philippians 3:10; Acts 9:5; Hebrews 13:3; 2 Corinthians 1:7). Clearly, in Romans 8:17, the inheritance is the resurrection in verse 11. In verse 23 we read that we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. See? While our names are on the will, we still wait for it with patience (vs. 25). This understanding is enhanced by vs. 29 in which Christ is called "the firstborn within a large family." Christ's title of "firstborn" always refers to the fact that Christ was the first to experience resurrection as an immortal. We anticipate the same kind of resurrection. Paul uses nearly the same language in Galatians, showing that, while we are children, we still have not fully received the inheritance.

And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. My point is this: heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves, though they are the owners of all the property; but they remain under guardians and trustees until the date set by the father. So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has

sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God. (Galatians 3:29-4:7)

News

A bunch of homeschooling (and related) families are hosting a "Christmas Celebration" for the seniors of the families' church families. The event will be on Monday, December 16, 2013. 12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M. at the First Baptist Church of Safford, in the fellowship hall. All the seasoned citizens within the Safford church are invited. Lunch and entertainment is complimentary. R.S.V.P. Laura at 928-830-4368 or just show up! Visit with Gloria Short for more details.

Back issues are posted at <http://saffordchurchofchrist.org>



Prayer List:

Healing: Jerry Robinson's mother Norma. Mike and Sandy Cavasos, Ben Atchley, Faye Atchley, Nicolas and Annie Self, Jonda Gardner, Dave Morse, Richard Tuey.

DECEMBER 2013

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3 Jerry Robinson's birthday	4 Singing Night	5	6 Nysha Atchley's birthday	7
8	9	10	11	12 Corbin Wilson's birthday	13	14 Singing: Northgate Church of Christ 6:30-7:30 Ken and Diane Cocke anniv.
15 Potluck	16 Clay and Kathy Cocke anniv.	17	18	19	20	21 Dec. Solstice
22	23 Sandy Cavasos, Jessica Cavasos, Brian Martin birthdays	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day Mary Reitz' birthday	26 Kwanzaa begins Neil Short's birthday	27	28
29 Kennedy Kescoli's birthday	30	31 New Year's Eve				