

Cooperating With the Holy Spirit (4)

Introduction

A. It is important to keep in mind an important Biblical truth: **Christianity is a divine relationship between persons.**

1. The primary relationship is **vertical**: the relationship of salvation God has established between Himself and a person in salvation. This relationship is illustrated in the Bible by reference to **marriage**. See Isaiah 54:5; Jer. 3:14; Eph. 5:32
2. The secondary relationship is **horizontal**: the relationship God has established between the believer, in salvation, and other believers. This relationship is illustrated in the Bible by reference to **family**. See Gal 6:10; Eph 3:15; Heb 2:11; 1 Peter 4:17

B. Both of these relationships are based upon God's desire to be to us a **Heavenly Father**. He desires that for each of us as individual believers, and He desires that for us as a family of believers.

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:18

1. *"I will"* — is the divine initiative. It is **His** choice.
2. *"Be a Father to you"* — is God's personal provision of **Himself!**
3. *"You will be my sons and daughters"* — is the **goal** God has for us each day.
4. *"Says the Lord Almighty"* — is the infinite and powerful **resource**.

C. One of the Holy Spirit's goals to bring every believer into an intimate, powerful and enjoyable **experience** of what it means to **have God as Father**.

For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." Rom 8:15

Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." Galatians 4:6

Comment: We must cooperate with the Holy Spirit in His desire to achieve His goal.

I. The Foundation of this Relationship: It is God's Redemptive Choice.

A. It is an eternal loving choice.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will ... Ephesians 1:3-5

B. It is a personal and powerful choice to apply to us His redemptive grace.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ ... For he chose us ... to be adopted ... In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace. Ephesians 1:3-7

II. The Evidence of this Relationship: The Awareness of Salvation.

A. Salvation is a reversal of relationships.

1. Before salvation Satan was our father!!!

"You belong to your father, the devil" John 8:44

2. After salvation God is our Father!

"I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters" 2 Cor. 6:18

B. Salvation is a relationship that we enter by the new birth.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope ... 1 Peter 1:3

III. The Explanation of this Relationship: Adoption.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has ... predestined us to be adopted as his sons ... in accordance with his pleasure and will ... Ephesians 1:3,5

IV. The Security of this Relationship: Divine Preservation.

"And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day." John 6:39

V. The Purpose of this Relationship: Enjoyable Fellowship with God.

"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." 1 John 1:3

Conclusion

A. For many of us the scars of childhood and family keep us from entering into this wonderful provision our Heavenly Father has made for us. The word "Father" may bring to your mind only pain, shame, anger and loneliness. It may be difficult to think of God as your Father. He wants to change all of that.

B. The Holy Spirit wants to heal you. (See I,C above.) We can cooperate with Him by asking for His help and receiving healing prayer. Please seek prayer in spite of how you feel. **God wants you to enjoy Him as your Father! He wants you!**

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