

Notes from Chapter 3- Child: Beloved by the Father

If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all. – J.I. Packer

Do you know how great God's affections are for you? Do you know you are loved by Almighty God himself—and not just loved as his creature, but as his child?

For some it is easier to believe he has saved us and called us his child, however sometimes it is easier to believe he barely tolerates us at best.

Scripture tells us: we are Adopted. Chosen. Cherished. Loved. Adored. As John writes in 1 John 3:1- "See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!"

Children. Of. God. Unfathomable, but true!!!

When we think of God, we must first think of Him as *Father*. And when we think of ourselves, we need to think *beloved child*.

Oh, doesn't your soul long for that—to know, really know, that you're loved with a love that is so steadfast, so safe, so pure, so good, and so abundant that you can rest deeply in it? But the heart can both want that and refuse to believe it. We have three powerful enemies working hard to cause doubt and disbelief: the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

Identity Theft

The World

- Communicates that there is no such thing as a pure, abundant, and steadfast love of the Father
- The world is broken, many fathers are absent, abusive, or just plain apathetic. The nature of our relationship with our earthly father can greatly affect our ability to understand and trust the love of our heavenly Father.
 - God however is the perfect father!!
 - Father's love
 - Meant to be safe and pure- *His is!!*
 - Meant to be life giving- *His is!!*

- Should cause him to protect, provide, and be present- *His does!!*

Don't let the brokenness of the world eclipse your view of the love of a perfect Father!

Our Flesh

- We're prone to question:
 - Why he loves us
 - How he can love us
 - If he loves us
 - Like the prodigal son, we think "I am no longer worthy to be called your child. Treat me as one of your servants" Luke 15:19
 - Knowing our sin, we convince ourselves there is no way he could really love me, but that is the point

Don't look at yourself, look at the *Father!!* His love is based on His character, not yours. His love is infinitely greater than all your sin!! (Makes me think of the hymn: Grace Greater Than Our Sin).

Do you doubt such love can exist?? Consider this truth in Ephesians 1:3-6:
"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved"

Things to note from that passage:

- He chose you out of his abundant love
- He has adopted you!!
- He has made you His own!! And it brings him glory, praise, and joy!!

Let the truth of God's word heal the wounds and replace the doubt and fear with the deep joy of an unfathomable and unfailing love!!

The Devil

- Delights in tempting us to doubt our true identity.
- His goal: to make you believe you are still a slave, orphan, or illegitimate child
 - Lie of the slave
 - Says you have to work and work hard to secure and sustain the Lord's love. Mess up and you're out.

- Lie of the orphan
 - Says you've been abandoned and are all alone
 - No one really cares about you, provides, protects, or loves you.
- Lie of illegitimate child
 - Says you don't really belong, never did.

Which of these lies plagues you most? Listen to this next part . . . the identity TRUTH!!

Identity Truth

The only antidote to the poison on these lies is the balm of the truth of Scripture!!

First, we must answer: Is everyone a child of God? No, not in the sense we're talking about.

Every person is a creation of God, but there is a special relationship that the NT uses two terms to convey: new birth and adoption.

Reality: We *have to become* children of God

How??

Being united, through faith to Jesus, the eternal Son of God. He was sent by the Father, took on human flesh, and came to rescue his siblings (Romans 8:29). John tells us "But to all who did receive Him (Jesus), who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13). Adopted and born again. Children of God.

If you have believed in Jesus through the work of the Spirit, then you can rest confidently in the truth of your identity—beloved child of the Almighty God.

Truth about this Adoption and New Birth

- Permanent and irreversible
- Legal declaration on the part of God—His will and His Word, can't be undone
- Permanent acts of a sovereign God
- Rests entirely on the will and work of God—we can't merit salvation; we see in Scripture our adoption began before the foundations of the world. If you have been saved and see Christ as your savior and Lord, it is because He has worked to accomplish it!!
- Adoption Story example: The author mentions adopting from China, her daughter couldn't initiate her own adoption, the entire process rested on their family. So, it is with us, our adoption (salvation) rests on God, through Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit!!

“The only thing we contribute to our salvation is the sin that made it necessary!!” – Jonathan Edwards

So, child of God, rest! He has done it!! He’s paid an extravagant price to call you HIS child. “He chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight!” (Ephesians 1).

Think about that!!!

- **When** did he chose to love you? Before the creation of the world—before you did anything good or bad, he set his sights on you. (Now *THAT* is Amazing Grace!!)
- **How** has he accomplished this adoption? Through the death of his true Son.
- **Why???**- He wanted to (His will). It brings Him JOY!! And he loves you (in love).

Let those truths sink in: He wanted you, He delights in you, and He loves you!!

Identity Transformed

Child of God. Let us build our lives on that truth!!

God’s love changes and transforms us.

Children who live in the safety of their father’s love:

- Delight to spend time with him
 - o Sit with him, listen to Him, talk to Him.
 - o In that we learn we can run to him in any situation!!
 - When afraid—he’s our strength (Isaiah 12:2)
 - When sad—he’s our comfort (2 Cor 1:3)
 - When lonely—he’s present (Psalm 46:1)
 - When we’re lost—he’s our way (Prov 3:5-6)
 - When we’re anxious—he bears our burdens (1 Peter 5:7)
- Want to imitate Him
 - o We are called to imitate Jesus, the Father’s love for us creates a desire to be more like Him.
- Know how to rest securely
 - o Zephaniah 3:17- We have a father who “will rejoice over you with gladness, and “quiet you by his love”

What causes you to be anxious or frantic? So often is searching for worth. Only one thing can give your soul worth—to know you are a beloved Child of God. Bask in the love of your Father. Delight in it; sing about it; remind yourself of it. Most of all, rest in it. He loves us. Oh, how he loves us.