

WALKING IN OUR FATHER'S SHOES

1. ADOPTED AS HIS CHILDREN

- A. I think being a child of God is a really big deal. The Father Heart of God to me is Crazy Love!
- B. Recently, a frequent prayer has been asking for God's righteousness to go before me.
 - I. And that His footsteps would become my pathways. It has its origin in **Psalm 85:13**.
 - II. In my thoughts, I am imagining myself walking in the footsteps of Jesus.
 - III. And if this prayer comes to pass, there'll be fruit; healing and the kingdom will advance.
- C. Luke is two years old and has an obsession with putting on my shoes and walking around the house.
 - I. Sons it seems, have an innate desire to be like their Fathers & to do what they see their Father doing.
 - II. The need for purpose and identity are universal.
- D. Adopting our children has given me a new appreciation for our position in Christ.
 - I. As Jesus followers, we've been adopted into the family of God.
 - II. Jesus Himself said, "I will not leave your orphans; I will come to you." **John 14:18**
- E. It could seem, to the outsider, as if being an adopted son or daughter would be less significant than being a biological son or daughter. But let me assure you, from my own experience:
 - I. My children may not carry my DNA, but they were born from my heart & are no less my children.
 - II. Everything I have will be theirs. They have my full attention, affection, and provision.
 - III. We are no less God's children because we've been adopted.
- F. The significance of context in Paul's writing regarding adoption is profound.
 - I. Understood by the Roman readers of the first century.
 - II. Adoption (biblical times) under Psycho-Phoenician law stated an adopted child was a forever child.
 - III. A biological child could be disowned but an adopted child could never be disowned.
- G. There are a few things I've learned about adoption. Two of those include belonging and God's justice.
 - I. Not only is the need for purpose and identity universal, belonging is right up there too.
 - II. And in some cases even stronger for those have experienced neglect or abuse in this area.
 - III. Story. Giving Abigail a place to belong has been one of life's most gratifying experiences.
 - IV. God has given you a place of belonging – in His arms and in His family.
- H. Our inability to have bio-children didn't seem fair especially since giving so much to youth.
 - I. Injustice was having the upper hand yet as two infants separated by 3 years would be abandoned.
 - II. God's justice would prevail as He took the injustice of our various situations to create a family of 4.
 - III. Similarly, God justice is met as takes the pain of our own life, "God this doesn't seem fair."
 - IV. And He has takes the wrongs done to Jesus to be the provision to create His family.
 - V. An in the process giving us beauty for ashes, joy for mourning and celebration for despair.
- I. You are accepted in the Beloved. (If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, old things.. **2 Co 5:17**)
 - I. Blessed be the God and Father..... He made us accepted in the Beloved. **Ephesians 1:3-6**
 - II. This adoption, Paul affirms, has been predestined by the goodness and pleasure of God and it causes us to be accepted in the Beloved.
 - III. Beloved - A unique description of the Godhead that expresses the love they have for each other that flows from their own quality and state of being, that being love. Additionally, conveying an acceptance and belonging into the same love that the Father, Jesus & Holy Spirit have for each other.
- J. As we receive the Spirit of adoption, God dwells within us, making His home in us.
 - I. Jesus, "I will not leave you as orphans. I will come and make my home in you." **John 14:18, 23**
 - II. This is the ultimate expression of acceptance and affirmation.
- K. We have been adopted as God's children. We are His children. This is a really big deal!
 - I. Just because I'm created in His image and His offspring, doesn't make me His child or His heirs.
 - II. It flies in the face of universalism & is offensive to western culture that preaches sameness.
 - III. As John in his gospel eloquently conveys, as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. **John 1:12**
- L. This same John would be known as the apostle of love, the disciple whom Jesus loved, the one who would rest his head on Jesus as they dined at the last supper and would go on to say this:
 - I. John, in his first epistle, is stirred, moved and in awe and wants us to see what he's seeing, as he considers the manner of Father God's love that has been lavished upon us. **1 John 3:1**
 - II. Essentially, "Behold! Crazy love- that we should be called children of God!"

2. THE CONVERGENCE OF THE FATHER'S HEART AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- A. There is an intricate connection between the Father Heart of God and the Kingdom of God.
 - I. This connection illustrates the magnificence & significance of being called God's children.
- B. Jesus' primary revelation of God was Father. Jesus' primary message was the Kingdom.
 - I. The following scriptures allude to this connection:
 - II. "He's a good Father who wants to give you the Kingdom" **Luke 11:11-13, Luke 12:31-32**
 - III. After Jesus' sermon on the mount intro (Kingdom culture message) He says, "Be perfect even as your Father is perfect." **Matt 5**. Jesus has essentially described the Father.
- C. Isaiah prophesies of this convergence as he describes a Kingdom of Love.
 - I. A new government of Love will be established. **Isaiah 16:5 (ESV)** God is love. **1 John 4:8**.
 - II. His rule is of love. Meaning submission to His rule doesn't increase control; it brings freedom.
 - III. Submission to His rule means we have a "Yes" in our spirit to His care and direction.
 - IV. "Lord whatever you have for me- Yes", "Lord, wherever you take me- Yes."
- D. To know and receive the Father's heart we must become like children. **Luke 18:15-17**
 - I. In the same way, to receive the Kingdom we must become like children. **Matt 18:1-4**
 - II. What does it mean to become like little children? Confident dependency.
 - III. One word that could be used to describe Jesus' relationship with His Father – Dependency.
- E. As we posture ourselves as sons, relating to God as Father, it positions us to receive the Kingdom.
 - I. Sons see God as a loving Father.
- F. Revelation of the Father's Heart will propel us in Kingdom authority.
 - I. God as "Father" and being His son describes an incredible position of privilege before God.
 - II. Being a son is position of authority. We coheirs with Him.
 - III. As sons of God, we are adopted sons. We are heirs to the Father's resources.
 - IV. Paul says it this way, "And if children, then heirs and co-heirs with Christ". **Romans 8:17**
 - V. James gives further distinctive- "We are heirs of the Kingdom." **James 2:5**
- G. I received a glimpse a few years ago lying on the floor of my hotel room in Bali.
 - I. I was singing, 'Make your home in me'.
 - II. I saw the veil that had been torn, the eyes of fire, the burning heart and the fiery stream.
 - III. I saw His desire for us to look in His eyes, face to face in the Holy of Holies.
 - IV. This was a place of perfect love, perfect acceptance, and belonging – It was Crazy Love.
- H. Years later I had another glimpse of climbing on the Father's lap. (Trampoline vision).
 - I. Jesus was jumping on the Father's lap. I was invited to jump too!
 - II. Jesus said, "Do you want to know how I see? I go down really deep to spring up really high."
 - III. The secret of Jesus' fruitfulness- He only did what He saw the Father doing.
 - IV. This is how Jesus saw. He was deeply rooted in the love of His Father.
 - V. For God's children, His lap is not a place of presumption but one of intimacy.
- I. Knowing that we belong to Him causes us to run to God instead of from God.
 - I. Knowing God is deeply interested in you and wants to be close to you settles your heart.
 - II. Confidence in the Father is a big deal in the Kingdom – it's how we see things happen!
- J. Revelation of the Father's heart awakens and empowers the human heart.
 - I. There's great peace in knowing nothing we can do to earn His love or make Him love us more.
 - II. His acceptance creates confidence in His presence even in the midst of our weakness.
- K. The Father's heart is Crazy Love. Respond to His Love. Do you want to walk in your Father's shoes?

***Ephesians 1:3-6 (NKJV)** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.*

***1 John 3:1-3 (NKJV)** Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*