

Sunday Evening. June 16. 1974.

Lesson. Ephesians 2.

TEXT
SEREMIAH 3 v 19

As the holy doctrine before us is the doctrine of spiritual adoption, I want this evening initially to make several statements relating to the whole subject of adoption. What is adoption? It is a voluntary act whereby as I would judge, in love, a man, a husband ^{and} wife together voluntarily take one who is a stranger and place that chosen one in a position to enjoy the status and privileges and blessings of a member of the family. When we consider this as translated to spiritual experience and terms of holy theology, it is so much higher, more wonderful and beautiful to expound than anything from nature.

I do not wish to be repetitive, but it is desirable to take up the point 'adoption'. Spiritually it means that God in amazing love divine is not only taking strangers, but aliens, rebels, foes, whose nature is enmity against Him, by an act divine, (only this can accomplish it in all it comprehends) and placing those erstwhile foes, dead in trespasses and sins, in the position and status divine of sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty.

A word I cannot begin to comprehend is; "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." Whoever in the Chapel can contemplate being raised to so high a status in the Kingdom of God's grace as to be joint-heirs with Christ? The dimensions before us completely overwhelm. So it goes to prove that if we are the Lord's, the privileges and blessings and what is in store for us, the heritage, or inheritance surpasses all we can contemplate, - also what we shall be made. It is a divine act of God to accomplish, to take a poor unregenerate person, and by His own gracious act in pursuance of the act in eternity and in the Covenant of Grace place them in the position and status of His own sons and daughters. This involves a tremendous amount of exposition and vital sacred experience. When one is adopted as a child into a family, and as the Lord adopts His children, that act puts them among the children. It has nothing to do with you as to goodness, righteousness, merit. Before you were born an act of God in His amazing electing love put you among His children, and

put you in the bonds of the everlasting Covenant, and bound you up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God. He put you among His children.

I will make a few positive remarks. These adopted children who are placed in that status by electing love, must have a being, they have to be born, to come into this world. If you muse on this it will give you to understand the sacredness of human life. It is God's province absolutely, the whole matter of life, when it is given and when you die. This will stop all the suggestions of the devil and all the mockery of this modern age if you recognise the sacredness of God-given life. It has particular relationship to divine decrees. I always think of a remark made to the dear wife of one of our old ministers. The gist of the dialogue was, one said to the matron; "How many children have you had?" On being told she said; "You did not have one too many." The last one was to be a servant of the Lord. That member of a large family was the one to be God's servant. This has emerged from the point that those embraced and separated by God's electing love and in the position of children, intimately related to God in Christ must have a being. How sacred and solemn is Christian marriage! As these must have a being, and there are mysterious circumstances, so there are those who may find a particular influence divine on their souls and some revelation of the purposes of God in the birth of a child. Nothing can erase it or make it negative. If the Lord has given a sacred revelation of His divine purpose it will stand. It is not for me to ramify but there are outstanding things in relation to birth and the coming into the world of those who are heirs of glory. There are those, blessed be God, who by His wisdom escape the great tribulation of living for many years in this dark sinful world and go from womb and breast to glory. They have a being.

So if you contemplate, God's decrees fixed on one in the Covenant of Grace must have a being. You feel an awesomeness as you look on a babe if you fear God. Why was the child born? At a moment in time life was given to the babe. They are born; they may not be wanted; there may have been a vast amount of rebellion, but they are born, and it may well be that a prophecy has gone before on them. It must be rare indeed for the first and second birth to be almost simultaneous, but there are cases. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. It was an

amazing case: it is Scriptural. So it would seem that when God gave him mortal life He quickly gave spiritual and divine life. I should pause to mention that there are a few in Zion who never knew when they were born again because they were so young. This is congruous with Scripture. The scribes and Pharisees and the elders were angry because the children cried "Hosanna to the Son of David." The Lord's answer was conclusive. "Have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" - Sucklings, still held in your arms and nourished by the mother. What a miracle to think at an early age the ^{Lord} has been pleased to breath divine into a soul! I will make an inquiry. Are any of the dear friends here to night in that condition, that they were born again when young and they never remember it? They never remember a time when they did not love and fear God. This is not an overstatement. Whether it is a babe or a suckling or you who are older, you must be regenerated; that is to say, to be placed in a status spiritually of sons and daughters, in filial relationship with God in Christ. You must have His nature because adopted children of the Lord bear His Name; and not only have His nature, no filial union would be possible if you had not had imparted to you the nature of Christ. And when is His nature received? First in regeneration. The Holy Ghost remains in the people of God as the Spirit of regeneration and sanctification. It is ~~an~~ amazing, the influence and power is on you permanently. It effects the new birth and remains and energises the properties of new life in Christ. We are inclined to view the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of regeneration. He remains in the souls of His people as the Spirit of regeneration and sanctification. That is why you get a constant surge of new life in your soul. That is why you feel very often as if you would take your body and put it off. It is because He is in you as the Spirit of regeneration and sanctification. You are taught to put off the old man. It is because the Spirit of God dwells in you as the Spirit of regeneration. As He comes to us as the Spirit of regeneration He gives the principle that is so vital and necessary to filial relationship, which is holiness. The status of adopted sons and daughters means union, oneness, communion. It would not be possible without the principle of life. A living soul, quickened by the Spirit, blessed by God, and there is a blessed potential for oneness and communion. So this is tantamount to saying a regenerated sinner is the offspring of the Lord. Your soul's

new heavenly birth declares and proves that you are spiritually His offspring. Grace is an immortal principle and seed. So that is the first blessed thing to state.

The next is, if I go over the table with you briefly, you will well second in your spirit the truth that when one is regenerated and receives the Spirit of holiness, (they do not know it) they have a God-awareness and a self-awareness they never had before. We could use the term,,- they become conscious of the self, and that means they know what they are. There must be a law work; a spiritual application of the law. They must be brought under condemnation and fear that they will perish, yet they are sons and daughters of the Lord. The second vital point is, they know nothing at all as to comfort and joy in the knowledge of filial relationship with the Lord until the Holy Ghost, who is the divine Revealer removes the veil. When He does they with open face behold the glory of the Lord. These things are so real, wonderful and blessed. You may go about for ten years with a veil over your face. When He removes it and for the first time you behold the glory of the Lord, it is not consuming glory; it is redeeming glory. It is the Shekinah glory, and this was always propitious from above the mercy seat and between the cherubims. The Lord could be approached; it was not consuming, but saving glory. When the veil is removed you behold the glory of the Lord. "But we all, with open face,- without a vail,- with open face,- which is faith,- beholding as in a glass,- this blessed gospel.- the glory of the Lord.." Have you over the past few days seen a little of the glory of the Lord? I should have to stop preaching if I did not see it. To see this is wonderful. "Beholding as in a glass,- this is where the truth and principle of adoption vitally flows.- are changed into the same image." You not only bear His Name. He calls you His people. My people. He calls you 'son or 'daughter'. You will get it in the spirit of adoption. There will be a time in your life when He says to you; "son" or "daughter", or as in the Canticles, "My love". There is not only this; it is being made like Him; partaking of His nature. You are changed to the same image. "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." "changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." So you bear His name and have imparted to you His nature. How wonderful!

When Christ is revealed to a soul,- what shall I say concerning it? What do you think I ought to say, because this is your experience? I will say this. When Christ is revealed you will enter into the love of espousals because He casts His eye of love on you. You know He loves you and you are betrothed to Him in righteousness. I would think that some of the sweetest days ever a child of God spends on earth are the days of espousals; Christ and you. He flourishing His beauty, casting a look of love and compassion on you, and you went after Him in the wilderness. Wonderful days! Young people in their teens are in this, and they put their hands on their breast and say;

"But I am jealous of my heart,
Lest it should once from Thee depart." (92)

For several months there is hardly a service but they get a look, a sip, or a feel of love in their souls. Fear is gone,- that is, slavish, craven fear; no unholy boldness. There is a blessed expectation, an irresistible drawing. "Draw me, we will run after thee." "The King is held in the galleries! He displays His beauty to His waiting, watching, loving people. This is one of the best of times for a minister to preach.

Sons and daughters. You bear His Name, have His nature, you are in union, you have communion, and by electing love and regenerating grace and sanctifying grace He has put you among the children. He has put you in in this sense. First, among all the living family of God in all ages. In this sense you are one with all God's saints in glory, all on earth, and all in the womb of the Covenant. There is nothing more wonderful than this next to marriage with Christ: one with all in heaven, and all who love the Lord in sincerity on earth, it does not matter what their colour. Dear old Mr Adams of Brixton is one of my choice remembrances,- a dear man of God. You are put among the children, one with them; joined; a mystical body, and with those in the womb of the Covenant. You are among the children, and this means the Lord will lead you, guide you, and you will want to be one with them, not to sit at the back. You say; "Lord, put me among the children by the constraining power of the Spirit;" so through these precious waters you must go. It is wonderful.

What is the greatest thing of all? When the Lord reveals the beauties

of His face and grants forgiveness and peace. You will say; "My Father" because the Father will smile on you from heaven: there is no barrier. How wonderful to be put among the children! This is the sweet, holy doctrine of adoption. The Lord speaks to them; they have all the privileges and blessings of children, He their Father. They have an inheritance divine, the forgiveness of sins, holy peace, divine protection. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." The Lord cares for you, as you care for your children, and far more. And think of the provision! What? What is my inheritance as a son or a daughter? All things are yours. "For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's." Think of it! Amen.

not corrected by Mr. Tyler.