

Sermon Outline

“Christ in an Orphan-Making Culture”

Romans 8:15 – Dr. Russell Moore – September 19, 2010

Introduction

Our Cry (verses 15-16)

1. In the 1st century, “Abba” would be a baby’s first word. It means “daddy” or “papa.” Oftentimes we sentimentalize this word and imagine the soft and affectionate cry of a child for his father. However, the context in which this word is used is one of fear and spiritual warfare. The cry is more like a primal scream of a child who is under attack, “Daddy, where are you?”
 - a. The enemy is constantly accusing us and telling us that because of the guilt of our sin we are not God’s children. The enemy of our soul wants to enslave us again in fear, fear that we are not accepted and loved by God.
 - b. Because of the accusations of our enemy and the remaining sin in our hearts, we often view ourselves through the lens of our sin. But that is not how Jesus views us. The Lord sees ALL our sin as judged, crucified, cursed, punished and buried in his death. And he sees us as raised and united with him as his beloved sons and daughters.
 - c. Our struggle and warfare with indwelling sin is evidence that we are born again, that the Holy Spirit lives with us and that we are adopted.
2. We have received a new identity. The gospel says that we are not abandoned as orphans but are adopted as sons and daughters who are loved, received and cherished by God the Father.
3. And how do we know this? The Holy Spirit witnesses with our spirit (v. 16) that we are sons and daughters. In the midst of our battles with our heart and sin, we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

Our Mission

1. The mission of the church is to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel to the marginalized of society. James 1: 27, *“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction...”*
2. Christians are all called to have a heart that is open and willing to help, support and serve those who are orphans (as well as the widows). Not every Christian is called to adopt, but we are all called to care for widows and orphans and ask the Lord how we are to be involved.

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3. God is calling some Christians:
 - a. To adopt children and bring them into your home,
 - b. To provide foster care,
 - c. To provide practical help to families who have adopted children or are in the process of adopting,
 - d. To give financially so others with lesser means can adopt, and
 - e. To pray for those who have adopted or plan to adopt
4. The greatest thing we can do as a church is to proclaim that the unity and mercy of the gospel of Jesus Christ has welcomed us in as sons and daughters and then to demonstrate the gospel in genuine love for the outcasts of society.

Fellowship Starters

1. Why is the cry of "Abba! Father!" not merely sentimental but the cry of faith of an adopted son or daughter in the midst of a fallen world?
2. Are there particular sins in your life (past or present) that tempt you to doubt and question God's adopting love for you? What does the gospel say to these sins?
3. Dr. Moore shared that the Lord sees all our sin as judged, punished and buried in Christ's death. And Jesus sees us as raised and united with him as his beloved sons and daughters. How does your new identity in Christ encourage your heart and transform your hopes and your ambitions?
4. Dr. Moore stated that a people received by the gospel will want to display and demonstrate the gospel. In what ways is the Lord calling you to demonstrate care for the widows and the orphans (see James 1:27)?