

### Introduction

One of the things that I really want to do when I get married and have kids is naming them. I have joked in the past about naming my first born Mephibosheth. The principle is important but, in this case, not the name. I have always found Mephibosheth an interesting person. He was the son of Jonathan. Jonathan was the best friend of David. David and Jonathan made a pact to love each other to the very end. Jonathan died living up to his bargain. Years after Jonathan's death, David had remembered his oath of love to Jonathan. He realized that this oath should be carried out to any member of Jonathan's family. Here comes Mephibosheth. He is only briefly mentioned throughout Samuel. He was born with lame feet and couldn't walk. His servant had to carry him. He thought of himself like a dog. But David saw other things in him. Whenever David saw Mephibosheth, he saw the son of his best friend. He never saw a crippled man; except when he did evil in the sight of David. It is of interest in those times that the writer of Samuel calls him the grandson of Saul, not the son of Jonathan. The thing that strikes me is that David saw Jonathan in Mephibosheth and loved him as if he were Jonathan. In the same way, God sees Jesus in us and loves us as if we were Jesus.

The principle that I have learned over the years is this: When you have children, name them after an important Bible character or a man of character and constantly remind them of the name you have given them. That is, if you call him David, tell him the stories of David and how he triumphed (even how he failed and was restored) and how he was called a man after God's own heart. Call your daughter, Ruth and continually tell her the stories of how Ruth was loyal and faithful to God and people. If we always are reminding them of something great in their name they will invariably live up to that name. This is the great privilege that John sets before us today: we are children of God! To bear the name of the child of God should set us on a path that is higher than we are. To bear the name of the child of God, and to be reminded that is what we are ("and such we are!!!!"), will cause us to move closer to that name and the character involved in that name. That is the outline of today's message: The Privilege of the Christian, the Possibilities of the Christian, and the Purity of the Christian. Sound good? Let's pray.

Our Father, we do thank-You for such a high calling; a calling that Paul spoke so fondly of; a calling worthy of forsaking all else for. Thank-You and forever, thank-You. Today, show us Your Word and Truth that we might be set free to live a life that is higher than we are. Shine into our lives with Your Words and teach us to pursue You. This moment, Father, we asked that You be blessed in this room. Amen.

### 1. Privilege (1-2)

1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. 2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

#### a. Paraphrased:

How great is the love of the Father. This love He has given to us in an overwhelming manner. He has called us children of God! More than in name for we are the children of God! Now ain't that just great news?

b. Paternal

There is a difference between paternity and fatherhood. To be an offspring of someone brings a responsibility to that someone; that responsibility is to provide for their physical well-being and is called paternity. This is how God is to the world. He created them and by that act is responsible for their well-being. This is why James and others tell us, He causes the rain to fall on the just and the unjust. It is a matter of God providing for His creation. However, fatherhood is something totally different.

c. fatherhood

Fatherhood describes intimacy and fellowship. This is the essence of 1 John. God wants to have an intimate fellowship with us. He wants to be known as Abba, Father. Not as The Omnipotent One. He wants us to have the freedom to come to Him even when we fail (remember 1 John 1.9). He wants us to come to Him with our joys and our woes. He wants us to cry with Him and rejoice with Him. He approached us, by the work of Jesus in dying for our sins, that we might have this relationship with Him.

He hasn't called us to a paternal relationship but has called us to a father and child relationship. This is the privilege we have. In the Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Galatians Paul is quick to remind us that we have been adopted into God's family. This is the deliberate act of God to bring us into that privileged position. This, says John, is not only true on paper, not only true when we enter heaven, but is the solid truth today: we are the children of God. What a privilege.

2. Possibilities (1-2)

There are also great possibilities that come from this privilege (we will talk about the responsibilities next).

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a. We shall be like Him when we see Him

John is letting us know that this life is only the beginning. In his gospel, John points out that eternal life is knowing God and begins the moment we accept Christ as Saviour. Here he wants us to know that we don't stop there. When Jesus returns we shall be like Him.

b. What John is not saying

i. We shall look as Jesus looks

(1) We won't have the nail scars in our hands and feet.

(2) We won't have the spear scar in our side.

(3) We will not have the scars from the crown on our head.

ii. We shall be god

\* We shall be like Him our text says, in context, this doesn't mean we shall be god.

c. What John is saying

- i. In context, John is reminding us that we shall be like He is when we see Him.
- ii. We shall be pure, even as He is pure.
  - (1) no one can see God unless he is pure (Matthew 5.8)
  - (2) we will be restored to our original creation state:
    - (a) we shall attain to the full humanity that God had intended us to have.
    - (b) We shall be as Jesus was when He walked the earth: the perfect man.
- iii. The good news of the gospel is that we shall be restored to that original state of perfection where there is no more crying or tears, pain nor sorrow. A place where God and man have true and perfect fellowship never to be marred again by sin.

### 3. Purity (3-10)

3 Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. 4 Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness. 5 But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin. 6 No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him. 7 Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. 8 He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. 10 This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

- a. This should cause us to desire to live up to that name.
  - i. Such a great privilege and possibility should cause us to live up to that standard that we shall be and that we are even, currently, called to live: pure  
I know a man, a teenager back then, who was waiting for something to happen. He was a very good athlete. His life was the epitome of success in the world of track and field. He was considered a top candidate for the Olympic long-distance team. He was breaking the four-minute mile at the age of 17. When asked to do something that would damage his body, he would flatly refuse. Pizza? No! Drugs? No! Whatever the offer the response was always no, if it would damage his body. His goals and desires were on a higher plane. He knew that Olympic gold was awaiting him at his journey's end. If he stuck to it, he thought, he would become the first to break the 3 minute 50 second barrier. And he would have if his hopes weren't dashed. I am not too sure to this day what had happened to him. But at 18 he stopped running, evidently the prize at the end of the race wasn't worth the effort this side of the tape. What used to be an athletic body is today an overweight wreck. He is 6' 5" and weighs about 300lbs. What happened: it wasn't worth it anymore.
  - ii. As our quote states: The man who knows that God is waiting at the end for him will make life a preparation to meet Him. This means that all those who hope in Jesus will keep themselves from sin.
    - (1) put away things that defile
    - (2) aim for purity and righteousness
    - (3) live to be a Christlike example to a dying world.
  - iii. John tells us what our lives would not be like: that is steeped in sin (the Gnostic belief of doing whatever because the flesh doesn't matter).
    - (1) He lets us know that sin is the deliberate (but sometimes ignorant)

breaking of the law of God. It is choosing to obey self rather than God. (Bumper sticker: Trust Lust)

(2) He lets us know what sin does to us. Sin undoes the work of Christ. To sin is to do what He came to undo (Hebrews 9.26).

(3) He tells us why there is sin. When we take our eyes off of Jesus, when we forget that we are children of God, when we forget that Jesus is ever with us; we will sin. When we remember that we are in the continual presence of Jesus, sin will decrease.

(4) He lets us know where sin came from. Sin came from Satan. Every time we sin we are siding with the enemy of God and choosing to follow the principle's of Satan in our attempt for pleasure.

(5) He re-assures us that sin has been conquered. It is conquered because Jesus has risen from the dead and that same power to overcome is ours as we remain pure in Him. When we live like Jesus, Satan has no hold on us, just as he had no hold on Jesus. If He lives in us, then our life will be His life in us and we will live even as He lived.

iv. If Jesus were our goal our lives would be

(1) transformed just as Paul's was as we learn from Philippians 3.

(2) more meaningful for we are living to the hope that is within us.

(3) more hopeful for we would want to see Jesus when He comes and not shrink in terror at His coming

28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

(4) more powerful for the Holy Spirit could really work in us.

(5) more fruitful for the Spirit would produce His fruit in us.

(6) more loving for we would do as God would do (Matthew 5.43f)

(7) more because it is in God.

## Conclusion

With all this in mind: Our great privilege as children of God, the possibilities that come from it, and the purity of life that it calls for; I want to ask you know to speak to God and ask Him to be number one in your life. Tell Him you want to pursue only Him and ask Him to purify you. Seek this week an area of your life that needs transformation, meaning, hope, power, fruit, love and ask God to help you become more like Him. As you struggle through this area you will begin to see the bad characteristics leave and be replaced with the good character of God.

Pursue God.

Let's pray.

Father, bless Your name. Thank-You for calling us Your children, for giving us such a holy and high calling, for granting us a great privilege. At this time, Father, we commit our entire life to You and ask You to be blessed in our actions, draw us close to You. For Your Kingdom's sake, Amen.

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