

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON PAUL'S LETTER TO THE CHURCH IN ROME

THE SPIRIT GIVES YOU A NEW STATUS

Romans 8:14-16 "For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God. The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by Him we cry, "*Abba*, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."

Your status is your rank or social standing. It is determined in part by your family of origin as well as your academic or work accomplishments. There is, however, another status you have. It is far more important and precious than your social status. It is not earned. It is a gift. The Spirit of God brings you into this status. The Spirit leads you to become God's child.

"But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "*Abba*, Father." So, you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir." (Galatians 4:4-7)

As you know, adoption makes you a member of a family. Through faith in Jesus, you have been adopted by your heavenly Father into His family. You have this new status through the redeeming work of Jesus. As you read in Galatians 4, with this new status you are entitled to all the gifts, blessings, and benefits that come with your status as a daughter or son of God. St. Paul says, as a result of God adopting you, you are an "heir" receiving the greatest gift of all any parent could give, eternal life. And, of course, only your heavenly Father can give you this gift.

The Holy Spirit through God's word and the Sacraments affirms to your spirit that you are God's child. This Spirit given affirmation is important, especially when Satan, the world and your sinful flesh tempt you with doubts about this special God given status. Their goal is to take your eyes off of the forgiveness of sins you receive through your faith in Jesus Christ. They want you to believe you are unworthy of your adoption status. They don't want you to believe that you are God's heir. (Galatians 4:4-7)

At all time, but especially during times of temptation, the Holy Spirit urges your spirit to cry out, “Abba Father.” And, your heavenly Father, out of His unconditional love for you, as His daughter or son yearns to hear this plea from your lips.

Prayer: Abba Father! Amen.

Children of the heavenly Father Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven Such a refuge e’er was given.

God His own doth tend and nourish; In His holy courts they flourish,
From all evil things He spares them; In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord His children sever;
Unto them His grace He showeth, And their sorrows all He knoweth.

Though He giveth or He taketh, God His children ne’er forsaketh;
His the loving purpose solely To preserve them pure and holy.
(LSB 725)