

Week Beginning: 29th September 2019

Worship Series: #1 Epping

#2 Newcastle

I CAN
RELATE
TO THAT ...

living sharing growing



lifegroups
live life abundantly

Theme Verse

And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

Galatians 4:6

Remember This Week

Nothing of the relationship Jesus had with the Father has been withheld from you. Nothing! You are an heir of his power, his authority, his character, his rule. You are a full heir of his affection and intimacy. God is your loving, caring, all-embracing Father who delights in you and feels enormous pride when he sees his character reflected in you.



For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:13-16

Almighty God, you are our Father in Heaven. You created us and know each of us intimately. Pour your Holy Spirit out on us as we gather around your Word, so that we might come to know you more intimately and learn to trust you more completely. Empower us to always live as your children, bringing glory and praise to you. Amen



1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What are some of your best memories of being a child?*
4. *What are some traits or characteristics that you have inherited from your parents?*
5. *What would you put as the top three qualifications on a job application for a Father?*

What makes us who we are? Is it our genes, the traits and characteristics we inherit from our parents? Or is it the environment around us and the everyday experiences we have that form and shape us? Science calls this the question of 'nature versus nurture'. Children are often like their parents, a fact that can be embarrassing or encouraging depending on the circumstances. But what about adopted children - who do they resemble? God's answer is clear - as adopted children of the Heavenly Father, created in his image, you are a full heir of his and called to resemble him completely. He wants you to fully live in the intimacy, freedom, spontaneity and affection of the relationship he has given you and to relate to him that way. So today we explore the beauty and love of living as a son and daughter to the Father.

Read Galatians 4:4-7

6. *What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?*
7. *What does it mean to you to be a child of God?*
8. *What is the difference between being a biological child and an adopted child?*

In this passage, Paul uses the Greek word '*huiothesia*', translated as '*sonship*' to describe how God adopts us. This particular word is a legal term describing the full legal standing of an adopted male heir in ancient Roman culture. It implied that the adopted son stood to inherit all of the Father's estate and afforded him all the rights and status of the eldest Son of





the family. It was not just adoption into the family, but into a position of responsibility and privilege, of power and authority.

9. *What does it mean to be a 'co-heir with Christ'? What things do we inherit?*
10. *The kind of adoption God offers us is one where there is no distinction between us and Jesus. We have access to everything Jesus did. How does that change your life?*

Despite being granted access to all of who God is, his power and authority, his very presence alive in us through the Holy Spirit, we often fail to recognise or take advantage of the fullness of our new position. This is part of the role of the Holy Spirit, to help us to grow in our new life as children of God, to 'sanctify' us and mould us into the likeness of Christ. To give us a 'family resemblance', as it were. When we look at Jesus, we can see all that God wants us to be. All the love, power, wisdom and authority Jesus displayed is what God offers us.

11. *What do you think are some of the things that stop us from accessing the fullness of our lives as children and heirs of God?*

Read John 5:19-20

Jesus says, 'the Son can do nothing by himself; he can only do what he sees his Father doing...' Jesus only ever acted in the will of the Father. When he did so, the Father was there ready to bless his work and honour the Son.

12. *How can we know what the will of the Father is? How do we 'see' what the Father is doing?*
13. *Sometimes we think that if God loves us, his will for us would not include suffering? Would you say this belief is reflected in the life of Jesus? In what ways did he suffer?*
14. *Jesus was tempted by Satan in the desert to use his power for his own benefit, to relieve his own hunger. How are we tempted in similar ways today?*

Don't forget that while we are 100% completely God's children, adopted through Christ, we are still children. One of the roles of a father is to help his children to grow into responsible adults. Most of us would agree that it would not be good parenting to let a child play unsupervised with power tools, they are likely to hurt themselves or someone else. Yet the same tools in the hands of someone willing to listen to the guidance of their father can build and create wonderful things. God's power and authority can be harmful if we are too immature to use it correctly.

15. *What are some ways you have seen people misuse God's gifts or his Word? What happened and what was the end result?*



Our adopted status is won for us by Jesus and comes to us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the presence of God within us on a daily basis. If we remember that we take God with us wherever we go and that as his children, we reflect some of who he is to the world around us, it can change the way we live and interact with others. He will make us more like Christ and we will see more of God's work both in and through us.

16. *What is one thing you will do each day to remind yourself that you are a child of God?*
17. *What is something in your life that the Holy Spirit might want to work on or remove that stops you from resembling your Heavenly Father? How might you work with the Holy Spirit to speed up this process?*



- * Praise God for his steadfast and consistent love that protects and keeps you. Thank Jesus for his steadfast commitment to living the will of the Father. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the courage to live boldly as his children in this world
- * Pray for those who struggle with their own identity and purpose, that they may find themselves in the arms of their Heavenly Father.
- * Pray for each other - for patience and endurance as the Holy Spirit makes us more like Jesus and for confidence to live as children of God and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven!

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, you are the Father's beloved child. Amen.

