

Title: Becoming Children of God: Living as Sons and Daughters of Our Heavenly Father

Sermon Summary: This Father's Day sermon explores what it means to be adopted into God's family through faith in Jesus Christ. The message emphasizes that becoming a child of God is not automatic but requires receiving and believing in Christ. Drawing from John 1, Romans 8, and Matthew 5, the sermon challenges believers to examine whether they are truly living as God's children, led by the Holy Spirit rather than their sinful nature. The pastor stresses the importance of balancing grace and truth, just as Jesus was full of both. He encourages fathers to not only provide materially for their families but to lead them spiritually, teaching them about suffering, integrity, and faith. The sermon culminates in the powerful truth that believers are called to be like their Heavenly Father—gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love—even toward their enemies. True freedom comes not from following religious rules but from surrendering to the Holy Spirit's leading and allowing God to transform us from within.

Key Points:

- We become children of God through receiving and believing in Jesus Christ, not by natural birth or human decision
- The Holy Spirit dwelling within us is the evidence that we belong to God's family
- Jesus was full of grace and truth—we must embody both, not choosing one over the other
- Fathers are called to both feed and lead their families, especially in spiritual matters
- The family table is a place for teaching about suffering, integrity, honesty, and faith
- Christians are called to be salt and light in the world, not hiding their faith but living it openly
- We must love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us to be like our Father in heaven
- God is gracious, compassionate, slow to anger, and abounding in love—we are called to reflect these attributes

- True richness comes from having Jesus, not from material possessions
- Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot please God or truly belong to Christ

Scripture Reference:

- John 1:11-14 (The Word became flesh; receiving Christ gives us the right to become children of God)
- Romans 8:1-17 (No condemnation in Christ; living by the Spirit versus the sinful nature; adoption as God's children)
- Galatians 3:22-29 (Faith in Christ makes us sons of God and Abraham's seed)
- Matthew 5:3-16, 43-48 (The Beatitudes; being salt and light; loving enemies; being perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect)
- Hebrews 12:14 (Without holiness no one will see the Lord)

Stories:

- Personal reflection on learning to hug from his mother and how it represents teamwork, family, and belonging
- The pastor's experience with his father's mannerisms, including the "lead foot" tendency that ran in the family
- Teaching about the family table being a place for both feeding and leading, recalling lessons learned at his own family table
- His college baseball injury that resulted in a broken ankle and foot infection, and the disappointment when school insurance wouldn't cover it, yet God still provided
- "The Rich Family in Church" - A powerful true story from 1946 about a poor family of four (a mother and three daughters) who sacrificed for an entire month, eating only potatoes and working extra jobs to save money for a special Easter offering for a "poor family." They saved seventy dollars and gave it joyfully, only to discover they were the poor family the church had been collecting for. Feeling ashamed, they initially struggled with their poverty until a missionary spoke about needing one hundred dollars to put roofs on churches in Africa. They gave their eighty-seven dollars, and when the missionary said "you must have some rich people in this church," they realized they were the rich family because of Jesus. The story illustrates that true wealth is found in Christ, not material possessions.