
ENABLE 3.3

Work of the Spirit - Adoption into God's Family
Small Group Session Eleven
Week Beginning 4th February



The Spirit of Adoption

ENABLE is all about exploring the wonderful 'means' that God has given us as disciples to help us serve Him with the whole of our lives.

God does not leave us alone to wait for Jesus' return. He sends his Holy Spirit to come and make His home in us. So far in this series we have been exploring the work of the Holy Spirit when he comes to us.

We first saw that He is the one that gives us life and a new birth. We then saw that He is the one who shows us Jesus and makes Jesus known to us.

These are both wonderful blessings that we do not deserve. They flow from God's grace, mercy and love. But in grace, mercy and love God's blessings keep on flowing. This week we are exploring the third work of the Holy Spirit - He enables us to be called a child of God.

This the work of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption. He makes His home in us and moves us to know that Jesus' Father in heaven is our Father also.

Belonging to an earthly family can be a wonderful blessing (and at times a real challenge)... but imagine, for a moment, what it would be like to not belong to a family at all - to not know your mother or your father. Maybe that is your lived reality - it certainly is the reality for many.

According to Jesus, that is the spiritual reality for all of us. Then God reaches down from heaven and draws us close in his Son. He adopts us into His family, gives us the right to be called His children. It is this intimate, embracing, spiritual work of the Holy Spirit that we are looking at this week.

“In love He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will.”

Ephesians 1:5

Adoption into God's Family

Abba Father

Spend a bit of time thinking about what it might feel like to be adopted - for some that might be your actual experience. You might know a family who have been working through the process of adoption or you might have adopted someone yourself. The 2022 John Lewis Christmas advert featured an idealised picture of adoption (you might want to take a look <https://bit.ly/482qw1M>) although we know the reality is very different.

What do you imagine it feels like the first time the adopted child comes to live in their new home?

Now read Romans 8:15-16

What do we learn from these verses about the work of the Holy Spirit?

Imagine an older adopted child maybe calling their new parents 'Mum' or 'Dad'. I don't imagine it would come naturally, it might feel very awkward or unreal. Imagine what it would be like the first time the child said 'Dad' without feeling self-conscious or awkward. It would be a wonderful moment because of what it signifies about the relationship - trust, closeness, warmth, intimacy.

Do you feel able to call God father - if you do, why / if you don't, why not?

What did it feel like the first time you were able to call God Father? How does this 'closeness of relationship' with our heavenly Father challenge the way our culture can think about the Christian faith?

Calling God Father signifies much more than a name, it is about our relationship with God and is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus prayed, He prayed 'Abba Father' (Mark 14:36) and amazingly we now have that same relationship with God that Jesus has.

So What?

Let's explore what this close relationship with God is like in practice - our experience of it. What does it mean to relate to God as Father in your day to day life? (It will be a little different for each of us because we are all different.) The following verses might help for a start - Romans 5:5, Romans 15:13, Ephesians 2:18

How might the way we talk about our relationship with God help others? How might the way we talk about our relationship with God be unhelpful for others?

How might we help one another to grow in our depth of relationship with our heavenly Father (not necessarily in our depth of feeling or emotion?)

Now spend some time praying in response to everything you have seen in this session.





Spring Term Timetable

Introducing ENABLE - Central Meeting
7:30pm Thursday 11th January

Prayer Meeting Week
7:30pm 17th/18th January

Small Group Session 3.1
The Work of the Holy Spirit: New Life
Week beginning 21st January

Small Group Session 3.2
The Work of the Holy Spirit: Knowing Jesus
Week beginning 28th January

Small Group Session 3.3
The Work of the Holy Spirit: Adoption into God's Family
Week beginning 4th February

Half Term Break - Week beginning 11th February

Prayer Meeting Week
7:30pm 21st/22nd February

Small Group Session 3.4
Being Filled with the Holy Spirit
Week beginning 25th February

Small Group Session 3.5
Resisting the Holy Spirit
Week beginning 03 March

Small Group Session 3.6
Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Week beginning 10 March

Prayer Meeting Week
7:00pm Trinity Church - 20th March

support and
encouragement
to live for Jesus