

Introduction

1. Luther loved this Epistle: "My Katy".
2. The true gospel gives us Assurance.
3. Here God tells us an assuring truth.

1. IN WHAT SENSE ARE BELIEVERS GOD'S SONS?

- 1) In a moral and spiritual sense. The natural man is a "son" only by creation. Morally he is a son of the devil: John 8:44 The believer is God's son:
 - (i) by new birth
 - (ii) by adoption
- 2) Explanation
 - (i) New Birth gives us a nature like God's
OBSERVE: God has no unholy children
 - (ii) The Act of Adoption gives us a right to regard ourselves as God's children: John 1:12-13
ILLUSTRATION: a Birth Certificate is a legal document
APPLICATION: We need to use this against Satan.
- 3) The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of Adoption in the hearts of the children of God: v.6:
 - (i) He is a Spirit of bondage to those who come under conviction of sin
 - (ii) And of assurance to those who are in the favour of God
OBSERVE: It is a work of God in the soul of a believer by which he is enabled to see and recognise the work of God in himself.
APPLICATION: This is a blessed experience.

2. WHAT BLESSINGS DO BELIEVERS HAVE AS SONS?

- 1) We are lifted higher in Christ than we were at first in Adam: Hebrews 2:9:
 - (i) redeemed by God's Son
 - (ii) righteous in him
 - (iii) not liable to falling away
 - (iv) his Bride
- 2) We are lifted above angels, who are ministering now to us as God's people: Hebrews 1:13-14
- 3) The Lord Jesus Christ calls us his "brothers": Hebrews 2:11f
 - (i) he took on our nature
 - (ii) he is not ashamed to own us so
ILLUSTRATION: "I am ashamed to call them sons".
- 4) We are loved by a Fatherly love in God:
 - (i) there is a general love – to all men;
 - (ii) and a separate love – to God's children.
This proved: 1 John 3:1: "what manner"!
This is love on a lofty scale. See Ephesians 3:17-19.
- 5) We are heirs of God's glorious Kingdom:
 - (i) So in Ephesians 1:3-11: "inheritance"
 - (ii) 1 Peter 1:4: "reserved in heaven".
- 6) An inheritance comes by a Last Will and Testament. So God gives to us if we are believers: "I do bequeath a safe and an eternal place in heaven with me to all who believe in my Son Jesus Christ".
APPLICATION: How rich we are!

3. HOW SHOULD WE BEHAVE AS GOD'S SONS?

- 1) With love to all: Luke 6:35
The world has love – but only for its own.
We are to love, forgive, show kindness.

- 2) Desire the same character as God.
ILLUSTRATION: "like father, like son".
A child wants to be like its father.
It should upset a child to offend its parent.
- 3) Study to be holy: "Be ye holy..."
This is a thing of the heart first of all.
It is a precious thing to know a holy person.
Better still to BE a holy person.
- 4) Have a posture of fear: 1 Peter 1:17
This is a part of godliness – fear in case we offend God – fear of grieving the Spirit.
ILLUSTRATION: a lady in Edinburgh ("Sabbath")
- 5) Not to be Afraid but to trust God.
Which parent would neglect a child?
The heavenly Father is a perfect parent.
(i) to bless us
(ii) to correct us
- 6) Keep a good conscience before God.
This is the best way to keep the favour and smile of God.
ILLUSTRATION: would we not be glad to have a friendly smile from the Queen?

CONCLUSION

We should be proud of such a Father who has chosen us for his children.

<p>PSALM</p> <p>63: 1 – 6</p> <p>31: 19 – 24</p> <p>89: 15 - 18</p>
