

Introduction:

- Last Wednesday we looked at the importance of fathers in our lives. Father's help establish our identity.
 - If you did not have a father, or you had an abusive or absent father, please do not despair.
 - There is healing for your heart and a pathway for you to receive a father's love.
- Your Heavenly Father loves you and I want to help you to be transformed by His amazing love and your relationship to Him.

I. What is An Orphan Spirit?

- A. The orphan spirit refers to a spiritual condition in which some Christians profess outwardly to know God as Father, but experience an internal contradiction to that belief. Deep down they struggle to comprehend that God really loves them. The Bible indicates that when father's and children's hearts are turned from each other, a curse can result (Malachi 4:5-6.) An orphan has no name, no family, no rights, no inheritance. An orphan has to succeed on his own, make his own way and make a name for himself. An orphan strives to gain approval and acceptance.
1. By "orphan," I am referring to a sense of abandonment, loneliness, alienation and isolation, or any combination of the four. Some have felt these for so long they think it is normal.
 2. It began immediately in the Garden of Eden at the fall of Adam and Eve. It carried over to Cain and resulted in the murder of Able—thus creating more abandonment, loneliness, alienation and isolation. Sometimes a son's choices create these for themselves. Gen 4:7 God actually lets Cain know that sin was crouching at his door.
 3. IE. The story of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32) is the story of two sons with an orphan spirit. The younger son spends his inheritance in pursuit of pleasure. The older son works to earn his father's love not realizing he already has his father's favor. The younger son represents people who run from God and the older son represents many people in the church who believe they are close to God but in reality do not know God. Both sons live as orphans with a poverty spirit. The younger son does realize the error of his ways, but the older son continues to try to earn his father's favor through works.
 4. I believe the emotional, physical and spiritual ills of society can be traced to people feeling alienated from God and their biological fathers. Orphaned men have a hard time connecting to their spouses, their children, those in spiritual authority and their supervisors, and they have a hard time accepting and loving themselves. Orphaned women struggle with the same issues.
- B. How do I know if I have an orphan spirit? Here are some symptoms:
1. Fear - always expecting the worse. This comes from getting very few, "Good job!" Therefore you know you will never be good enough. You will always be expecting the worse.
 - a) Also closely connected is fear of failure-results in 'don't try' or 'try to hard'
 - b) Insecurity - is the feeling of lack of self-confidence, fear of what others think of you, or feelings of inferiority.

- c) Anxiousness - lack of peace in your inner space, worry.
- 2. Shame - you feel bad about yourself. Always putting yourself down. To skinny, to fat, to dumb, to short, etc.
- 3. Poverty - fear of lack. Fear of not having enough. (millionaires struggle with this). IE. Heidi Baker described the difference between the orphans who are new to her ministry and those who have been there for a while. The 'newbies' are always stealing, hoarding, gathering while those who have 'become sons' know there will be enough. Their security causes them to act differently.
- 4. Abandonment - fear of being left alone. Comes by being abandoned, death of parent, divorce. "Nobody loves me. I don't really matter." Also from words and actions of others that create relational distance. Causes relational withdrawal, performance, depression.
- 5. Unworthiness - results in trying to earn love. Perform to get love.
- 6. Rejection - fear of not being accepted. Again trying to earn love/relationship.
- 7. Rebellion -
 - a) IE. Many parents make the mistake of shaming your kids into a certain behavior. We make them feel bad about not trying, not doing, in order to get them "to do." When they don't...they feel like failures, they feel they have let us down because they are not good enough.
 - b) So you have fear, shame, unworthiness, and rebellion (I'll show you!) How many adults do you know like that? How many of you still struggle with these things?
- C. An orphan spirit is person who lacks emotional identity and seeks to earn his identity through his/her efforts (performance). Their symptoms include a critical spirit, being defensive, unable to take correction, feeling abandoned and blames others, angry and full of rage, control. Those are all self-protect modes of operation.
 - 1. Are you seeing how complicated this is getting?
 - 2. Are you seeing the layers?
 - 3. All stemming from an orphan spirit.

II. What Must I Do Now? What is the way out?

- A. Acknowledge the uniqueness of the relationship you have with the Father.
 - 1. *"So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, 'Abba, Father.'"* (Romans 8:15, NLT)
 - a) You received. Gr. "To take to ones self." What was it that you received?
 - b) IE. You received God's Spirit - the breath of God. *"who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee."* (2 Corinthians 1:22, NKJV) *"In Him you also trusted,...having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,"* (Ephesians 1:13, NKJV)
 - c) You received the Spirit of adoption/sonship! Now you can say, "My Father!"
 - 2. He becomes Abba Father
 - a) Abba - Aramaic for Daddy. Comes from Aleph and Bet-Aleph - strength, progenitor, symbol of an ox in a yoke. Bet, symbol of a house.

- b) Abba Father - Strength is in the house. "Daddy's home!"
- B. What does it mean to be adopted by God?
1. Gk. huiothesia – a legal act that is done in public where a child is brought into one's home and made son of that house. huios - Gk for son.
 - a) It was determined by the Father accepting a child into his home as a son of the house.
 - b) Adoption is the legal action by which a person takes into his family a child not his own with the purpose of treating him as and giving him all the privileges of his own natural child. An adopted child is legally entitled to all rights and privileges of a natural-born child.
 - c) *Spiritually speaking our adoption began in the heart of God. It is the result of Grace! We do not deserve a thing and it's not a bad thing to be reminded of that fact! Adopted by the Grace of God!*
 2. It means God wants us! The whole process rests in the hands of God who has set out to adopt us. His mercy and compassion, His loving kindness moves Him to take us as His children. I belong! I have a place!
 - a) And I am under the loving care of a very loving Father. I have the right to enter into this loving relationship. This relationship with Father is diametrically opposed to the spirit of bondage. Ro 8:15
 - b) Adoption emphasizes more exactly the Father - son relationship against the judge-prisoner relationship. It is not so much the judge setting the prisoner free as it is the Father restoring the (wayward son Lk 15:22ff).
 3. It means we have a new family. The family of God. God is now our Father!
 - a) We are brought into a new family and relationship where we now have privileges and responsibilities as a member of that family.
 - b) We are joint heirs with Jesus Christ. We all share in God's Kingdom.
 4. It means we now have a new name.
- C. Receive the Father's love. The only way to break this orphan spirit is for people to be filled with a sense of the Father's love for them in Christ, which then enables them to become mature sons who serve God out of knowledge of His undeserved grace instead of trying to earn the Father's love through performance.
- D. *"This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."* (Matthew 3:17)
- E. Heal the heart. You can't cast this out. It must be love penetrating the heart through relationship!

Conclusion:

- The Father never intended us to live as orphans without a Father and without a home.
- Are you ready to embrace the full inheritance that the Father in heaven has for you now on earth? Adopted children know their emotional identity, walk in their God given destiny and embrace the eternal resources that God has for them.
- Let's start taking off some layers tonight. You are not an ogre smelling like onions.
- Invitation