

Receiving the Spirit of Adoption (Rom 8:15)

- Remember the context is the assurance of justification by faith

- I. Is this assurance of adoption mandatory to be saved?
 - A) Trusting Christ by faith and having the inward assurances are not the same
 - 1. The assurances Paul is laying out in Rom 8 are in an ascending manner, building upon each other as the apostle so often does
 - i. Remember in dealing with v.14 and “being led by the Spirit” we looked at over a dozen tests to prove if we were being led
 - a) Confirmation of one was assuring, and more assurance comes with more evidence
 - b) But not every point has to be true to be saved, and not every Christian receives these even greater assurances in v.15-16
 - ii. The Westminster Confession has a lot to say about the distinction between salvation and the assurances of it
 - iii. Luke 24:13-21- Did the 2 believers on the road to Emmaus have assurance of their salvation?
 - a) Did any of the 120 in the upper room prior to the outpouring?
 - b) Do doubts take our salvation and assurance restore it?
 - B) The assurances of salvation come by the Holy Spirit and in times of revival there is a greater pouring out of Him upon the church
 - 1. Thus one of the marks of revival is that believers receive a greater assurance of the love of God and are emboldened by the subjective experience of the outpouring of the Spirit
 - i. Just as the Spirit “comes” in new power on groups in revival, He does also in personal “revival”
 - 2. The Book of Acts certainly covers a period of great revival
- II. The Spirit of adoption
 - 1. This is “received” (passive and not active)
 - 2. It isn’t be “convincing self”
 - 3. This isn’t “take it by faith” (just believe you have it and you do)
 - i. Neither of these are assuring whatsoever
 - ii. Those that teach the “take it by faith” doctrine use:
 - a) Gal 3:1-5 & 14
 - 1) They say these Spiritual assurances are to be believed the same as justification by faith is, as with “name it and claim it”

- 2) But Gal ch 3 is obviously dealing with justification by faith and not by works, it has nothing to do with the Spirit of adoption
 - (a) We receive what we receive from God because of/based upon faith and not upon works
 - b) John 7:39 (the same is true of this context)
 - 1) These “take it by faith” people teach that we are to take in the Spirit as we take in breath or water
 - (a) But the Holy Spirit is not a “thing” or “substance” to be taken, He is the 3rd person of the Godhead
 - c) Rom 8:15- The 2nd “receive” matches the 1st (to receive that which is offered/poured out upon)
 - 1) Rom 5:5- The Holy Spirit shed abroad in our hearts
 - 2) Gal 4:6- Spirit sent into the heart
 - d) “Take it by faith” teaching has so often caused the saints of God great discouragement and self doubt when it ultimately fails
 - 1) Compare the “faith healing” movement
 - 2) Compare scheduled revivals
 - e) “Take it by faith” discourages self examination and limits awareness of lack
 - 1) How can a Christian ever be “satisfied?”
 - 2) They teach questioning self about this after receiving is lack of faith
 - (a) Read Spurgeon exert pg. 279
 - (b) Thomas Goodwin’s example of the father and son walking
4. How is the Spirit of adoption received?
- i. It is God Who gives it, when and where He deems best
 - ii. Negative:
 - a) This does not come through “agonizing” for it (Keswick)
 - b) This does not come by “tarrying for it”
 - c) This does not come through “laying on hands” today
 - iii. Positive:
 - a) If we truly desire higher assurance from God, then we need to live in obedience to God, as a child seeking a gift (1 John 2:4)
 - b) Luke 11:5-13- We need to pray for it
 - 1) Psa 42:1- Panting soul
 - 2) “Absence makes the heart grow fonder”
 - (a) Read Hymns of Wesley pg. 283-284