



The American Anglican Council's "Anglican Traditions" videos are free for anyone to use. These facilitator notes are meant to act as an aid to getting the most out of the "Fire in the Fireplace" videos and are designed for small group use. The series is divided in to a prologue and 17 lessons with each having its own study guide and facilitator notes. Many thanks to Dolly McLemore of Christ Church Montgomery, AL, whose work forms the basis for these study guides. Find other videos at www.AnglicanTraditions.com.

These facilitator notes are for Lesson 12: Five Words of Assurance

A. Adoption (See more about Roman adoption practice at end of lesson.)

Romans 8:15-17 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

¹⁵For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption (sonship). When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' ¹⁶it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

B. Sealed (Mark of ownership.)

Ephesians 1:13 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;

C. Deposit, Pledge, Engagement Ring (Signification of something more to come.)

Ephesians 1:14 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance towards redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

D. Power and Joyful Conviction (Ministry of the Holy Spirit includes joy and power not just words.)

1 Thessalonians 1:5 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

⁵because our message of the gospel came to you not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of people we proved to be among you for your sake.

E. First Fruits (If the first fruits are good imagine what the whole crop will be like.)

Romans 8:23 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

1. What rights are guaranteed through adoption?
2. What does it mean to be sealed?
3. What does an engagement ring imply?

4. Describe the power of the Holy Spirit.

5. How are we 'first fruits?'

Optional: *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Michael Green

Chapter 6 - The Spirit in the Individual

Five aspects of belonging to the Spirit (Pages 100-103)

Adoption (Page 100) "The Spirit of Jesus, entering our lives, comes to us as God's adoption present, so to speak, and enables us to call God by the intimate family name which Jesus used and which we have already considered. The Holy Spirit accomplished and applies to us our sonship, and all the privileges that flow from it: 'for if children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ' (Rom. 8:17).

Seal (Pages 100-101) "Seal is a property word. It speaks of belonging. The Holy Spirit is given us to identify us as belonging to Jesus, just as the seal on a letter or the brand on a sheep identifies it as mine. There may even be a double nuance in the assurance of ownership that is mentioned here. The seal of the Spirit is meant to assure us that we belong to Christ, and to let others also know the fact." "this word 'seal' was explicitly used of baptism, or sometimes confirmation. Paul uses it of the Spirit, without any indication of any outward sign. But in view of passages in Revelation like 7:3 which speak of 'sealing the servants of God in the foreheads', and Romans 4:11 which speaks of circumcision as 'the sign and seal of being in the right with God through faith', it is not impossible that baptism may have been in apostle's mind when he spoke of this sealing with the Spirit."

First installment (Pages 101-102) "If 'seal' is the property word, 'pledge' is the prophetic word. It looks forward to a greater gift in the future while stressing a real gift in the present. Often used in commerce for a 'down-payment', or 'first installment', it is a highly appropriated word for the Holy Spirit. He is God's first installment of the future salvation that awaits us; the part of the future we have now in the present; the pledge of the fuller life that is to come. Indeed, the modern Greeks use that word for an engagement ring, and that gives not a bad idea of the Holy Spirit's work as 'pledge' in Paul's thought. He is the heavenly Lover's engagement ring given to us. We shall carry that engagement ring with us into God's future, when we have the full wedding ring of final union with Christ."

First fruits (Page 102) "If the first fruits are good, so will the main crop be." "Christ's resurrection is seen as a first fruit from the grave and pledge of the great harvest to come when those who are in Christ will share his risen life in heaven (I Cor. 15:20,23) Paul takes comfort from the first fruits of Jewish believers that the whole nation will, in God's time, turn back to the Lord (Rom. 11:16). And the Holy Spirit is given as a firstfruit of the harvest God has in store for us (Rom. 8:23)."

Assurance (Pages 102-103) "The literal meaning seems to be that a man is so full of the Holy Spirit that he carries conviction when he speaks about Christ. Christian assurance is no merely intellectual persuasion, but

an overwhelmingly convincing experience of the indwelling Spirit welling up within us and flowing out to others. Such is the confidence that the Spirit means to give believers.”

Already.....and not yet. (Page 103) “On the one hand we can be sure that the Spirit makes us sons (Rom. 8:15). On the other, we have still to wait for our final adoption at the second Coming (Rom. 8:23). And to match our assurance, our being so full of the Spirit that he bubbles over from us, there is the other side of the picture: we also groan in the Spirit, and he groans with us (Rom. 8:26). For the Spirit’s work in assurance is to give us a firm foundation to build on, not to make us arrogant; the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’ of the Spirit’s internal witness enable us to be sure without being cocksure.”

6. Is your ‘seal’ seen by others?
7. Are you ‘bubbling’ and ‘groaning’?
8. How would you explain to others the Holy Spirit’s gifts of assurance?

More on Roman adoption: website Pilgrim Tours

https://www.pilgrimtours.com/church_history/italy/devotionals_history/Adoption.htm

PATRIA POTESTA AND THE ROMAN CEREMONY OF ADOPTION

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together. Rm.8:15-17.

In this passage, Paul is using one of the great metaphors in which he describes the new relationship of the believer to God. He speaks of the Christian being adopted into the Family of God.

Roman adoption was always rendered more serious and more difficult by the Roman patria potestas. The patria potestas was the father’s power over his family; that power was absolute; it was actually the power of absolute disposal and control, and in the early days it was actually the power of life and death. In regard to his father, a Roman son never came of age. No matter how old he was, he was still under the patria potestas, in the absolute possession, and under the absolute control, of his father. Obviously, this made adoption into another family very difficult and a very serious step.

In adoption, a person had to pass from one patria potestas to another. He had to pass out of the possession and control of one father into the equally absolute control and possession of another. There were two steps. The first was known as mancipatio, and it was carried out by a symbolic sale, in which copper and scales were symbolically used. Three times the symbolism of sale was carried out. Twice the father symbolically sold his son, and twice he bought him back; and the third time he did not buy him back and thus the patria potestas was held to be broken.

After the sale there followed a ceremony called vindicatio. The adopting father went to the praetor, one of the Roman magistrates, and presented a legal case for the transference of the person to be adopted into his patria potestas. When all this was completed, the adoption was complete. Clearly, this was a serious and impressive step.

But it is the consequences of adoption which are most significant for the picture that is in Paul’s mind. There were four main consequences: (1) The adopted person lost all rights to his old family, and gained all the rights

of a fully legitimate son in his new family. In the most literal sense, and in the most legally binding way, he got a new father. (2) It followed that he became heir to his new father's estate. Even if other sons were afterwards born, who were real blood relations, it did not affect his rights. He was inalienably co-heir with them. (3) In law, the old life of the adopted person was completely wiped out. For instance, legally all debts were cancelled; they were wiped out as though they had never been. The adopted person was regarded as a new person entering into a new life with which the past had nothing to do. (4) In the eyes of the law, the adopted person was literally and absolutely the son of the new father.

Roman history provides an outstanding case of how literally and completely this was held to be true. The Emperor Claudius adopted Nero, in order that Nero might succeed him on the throne. They were not in any sense blood relations. Claudius already had a daughter, Octavia. To cement the alliance Nero wished to marry Octavia. Now, Nero and Octavia were in no sense connected; they were in no sense blood relations; yet, in the eyes of the law, they were brother and sister; and before they could marry the Roman Senate had to pass special legislation to enable Nero to marry a girl who was legally his own sister. Nothing shows better how complete adoption in Rome was.

This is what Paul is thinking of. He uses still another picture of Roman adoption. He says that God's Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we really are children of God. The adoption ceremony was carried out in the presence of seven witnesses. Now, supposing the adopting father died, and then suppose there was some dispute about the right of the adopted son to inherit, one or more of the original seven witnesses stepped forward and swore that the adoption was genuine and true. Thus, the right of the adopted person was guaranteed, and he entered into his inheritance. So, Paul is saying, it is the Holy Spirit Himself who is the witness to our adoption into the family of God.

We see then that every step of Roman adoption was meaningful in the mind of Paul when he transferred the picture of our adoption into the Family of God. Once we were in the absolute possession of sin, in absolute control of our own human nature; but God, in His mercy, has brought us into absolute possession of Himself. The old life has no more right over us; we begin again anew life; a life with God. We become heirs of all the riches of God. If that is so, we become joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, God's own Son. That which Christ inherited, and inherits, we also inherit. If Christ had to suffer we also inherit that suffering, but if Christ was raised to life and glory we also inherit that life and glory.

It was Paul's picture that when a person became a Christian, they entered into the Family of God. He did nothing to earn it; he did nothing to deserve it; God, the Great Father, in His amazing love and mercy, has taken the lost, helpless, poverty stricken, debt-laden sinner and adopted him into his own Family, so that the debts are cancelled and that unearned love and glory inherited! The price of adoption? The blood of Christ!