

# ANNUAL OFFERING

BAPTIST CHILDREN'S HOMES

## 2024/2025 Annual Sermon

***Why create an annual sermon?*** The annual sermon is meant to be used as a gospel sharing tool highlighting the ministry of Baptist Children's Homes and emphasizing the Annual Offering and the video story that God has written through the ministry. This sermon, using the themed title (Sons and Daughters) and Bible passage (Romans 8.14-18), is very simple and provides easy to grasp truths that are central to the gospel and to our ministry of "sharing hope and changing lives." This sermon can easily be adapted by any pastor or Baptist Children's Homes staff member as you share the story (video) and bring light to this annual offering emphasis.

Below, you will find a Theme, Big Idea, Key Text, suggested outline with main points, a key statement pointing back to the verses and the corresponding point as well as supporting Scripture (KJV below; KJV optional; feel free to use discretion and church context in using a different version).

For our fellow Baptist Children's Homes Staffers, we have included some Baptist Children's Homes content that you can use to expand the message but please feel free to use this resource as the Lord leads you. If you have stories/illustrations that you feel led to use, then please use them. Feel free to elaborate on this content as the Lord leads you. All of this is meant to build up to the short 3 1/2-minute video that illustrates the sermon wonderfully and can be used as a lead-in to an invitation calling people to repentance, faith in Christ and action in the gospel mission of Christ. It also pairs nicely with an appeal to give to the Annual Offering. We have also included some guidance for an introduction as well as a closing (which is the toughest but most important part of the message) that gives a specific gospel presentation and a call to action.

The closing, after you pray, will lead the church's Pastor to offer an invitation if he so desires. We want you to have complete confidence in Christ and this message that you present.

## IMPORTANT:

**Contact Your Church in Advance:** Please make contact with your church contact at least one week prior to speaking. Make sure you understand church leadership's expectations for your time of presenting.

**Stay Within the Permitted Speaking Timetable:** It is essential that you not go over the amount of time the church has given you to present. Please prepare in advance and make the necessary adjustments to your sermon/presentation in order to be respectful of the time allotted to you.

**Do Not Give the Invitation at the End of Your Presentation:** Please turn the service back over the pastor or the appropriate church contact to lead the invitation at the close of the service. This is the role of the appropriate church leader and not you as the invited speaker.

**Questions?** Please reach out to Baptist Children's Homes Development and Communications Office at 336-474-1200 if you have any questions.

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## Sermon Theme/Title: Sons and Daughters

**Big Idea:** As sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father, we are loved, never alone and have an incomparable future.

**Text:** Romans 8: 14-17 (KJV) - **14** For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. **15** 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. **16** The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: **17** 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. **18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

### Sermon Manuscript & Outline:

**Introduction:** \*Tell a story from your childhood about being a son or daughter to your parents. This can be as simple as a story about calling out in the middle of the night to

your mom or dad after you had a bad dream; or having them support you playing a sport or childhood activity. Any story from your childhood that gives a good example of experiencing love from your parents as their son or daughter will work. If it's a funny story...you get bonus points and Jim Edminson will print it in C&C! If you don't have a good story from your childhood, then tell a story from the perspective of being a parent to your son or daughter as it points back to that relationship. If you can, relate your salvation experience to your parent's influence.\*

**Transition:** As you finish your story...say... *"I am so thankful that as sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father we are led and loved perfectly, supported constantly and our future compares with nothing else in this world. Do you realize today that...you are loved?"*

### **1. You are loved. - 14-15**

- a. God is the supreme standard of a loving, caring Father. John 3.16 tells us that He LOVED and He GAVE. As believers, God loved and he gave His Son and now we have received the Spirit of adoption. Two opposing mindsets are here in our text, the spirit of bondage and the spirit of adoption. As adopted children of God, our relationship to Him is as a child to a loving Father not an inmate to a master trembling in fear. Our Father lovingly leads us. We are all in need of a loving Father who leads us faithfully. And only through Jesus Christ...can we be adopted to God.
- b. **Support:** 1 John 4.9-10
- c. No child or resident in our care goes unloved but many come to us having never felt love. Love is the language that speaks to the heart. 1 Peter 4.8 tells us that love covers a multitude of sins. The struggle between the mindset of bondage and the mindset of adoption in our text today is painfully obvious in the children who come into our care. We can't control the fact that so many children come to us from an environment where they aren't loved but by God's grace, we can help to soothe their wounds with the love of Christ.
- d. **Baptist Children's Homes illustration/story of love:** Last year we highlighted the story of Tirrell. In that story, his foster, now adoptive father, John Steube mentioned that when Tirell came to live with them

his feet were literally bandaged from wounds to the point where he had to use a walker! John went on to say that when Tirrell came into their home he immediately put down that walker and his wounds began to heal. A Godly loving environment has a way of healing wounds!

- e. John 13.34 commands us to love one another. The love seen and felt from our cottage parents, foster families and through adoption is unlike any other! Just as we have been given the Spirit of Adoption and have been adopted into the family of God, Baptist Children's Homes shares the gospel of adoption into the family of God by showing the love of Christ to all of the vulnerable in our care.
- f. **Transition:** God's loving gift of salvation and adoption into His family cannot be denied. And when you are in a family...you are never alone!

## 2. You are never alone. - 15b-17

- a. In sending His Holy Spirit, God has given us the capacity to call Him 'Abba Father' who will never leave us or forsake us.
- b. **Support:** Galatians 4.6-7; Hebrews 13.5
- c. Loneliness is a feeling that emerges from within that oftentimes is the result of factors from without. An emotionally troubled 19th century English author (Mary Ann Evans who wrote as George Eliot) once said, "What loneliness is more lonely than distrust?" So many children come to Baptist Children's Homes feeling very lonely because their capacity to trust has been destroyed.
- d. As believers, we know that Jesus is the answer. Isaiah 41.10 ensures us when God says, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will hold on to you with my righteous right hand." What comfort and trust we can have when we realize that our Abba Father is holding our hand!
- e. **Baptist Children's Homes illustration/story:** At Baptist Children's Homes, children in our care begin to shed loneliness when they are in a home with a mom and a dad who will be there for them and will not leave them. One of the first ways we begin to lovingly communicate this

sense of belonging is when cottage families and foster families sit around a table at mealtime and hold hands and thank God for the food that is before them and the loving family around them. \*And by the way, most of that wonderful food is provided by churches just like yours through our Annual Food Roundup.\* But as families sit around a table for a meal, led by a loving mother and father, hold hands, thank God and enjoy some laughs together a child begins to understand that they are safe and they belong.

- f. When you are holding the hand of someone who is holding the hand of God, loneliness moves out and trust moves in! Are you holding the righteous hand of your Abba Father today? If not, you can.
- g. **Transition:** Being the son or daughter of the Heavenly Father, never alone in a family of love means...you can have an incomparable future.

### 3. You can have an incomparable future. - 17-18

- a. As sons and daughters of God we are heirs with Christ to a phenomenal future.
- b. Romans 8:17-18 emphasizes that as children of God, we are heirs alongside Christ to an extraordinary future. While we may experience suffering in this life, the glory that awaits us is beyond comparison. The passage encourages believers to focus on the incredible future God has promised, which far outweighs any present difficulties.
- c. **Support:** 2 Corinthians 4.17-18 says, "For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."
- d. **Baptist Children's Homes illustration/story:** Focusing on the future is so difficult when your present needs are not met. Several years ago we were introduced to a couple brothers who were living in a tent with their mom who was a drug addict. They went to school everyday just to be able to have something to eat and even took food from school to feed their mom. It was clear that the future was not even a thought for them. They were only concerned with their present. When they came into our care, the

love, acceptance and provision showed them that God not only cared about their present circumstances but allowed them the capacity to consider their future. Today, they both know Jesus as their Savior and have been adopted by an incredible family. I'll never forget a comment made by Tirrell when he said, "I feel like I have my life now!" Baptist Children's Homes aims to keep our focus on the unseen while partnering with churches to provide what is seen.

- e. **Transition:** Being sons and daughters of the Heavenly Father, never alone in a family of love, having a present Abba Father and an incomparable future with Him in heaven is the clear message of Romans 8.14-18. This year God has written a beautiful story illustrating these truths. In this story you will see how God used the Ciufu (chief-o) family in western NC to extend His hand and love to 2 brothers who were separated by 16 years and unite them into a forever family. See for yourself...
- **Video Illustration (3 1/2 min offering video)** - Through this video we can clearly see these 3 truths lived out in the lives of 2 brothers and the family who adopted them as sons. **The video can be downloaded at <https://vimeo.com/992311772>**
- **Closing:** I can't share a message that is so filled with hope and not ask if you are filled with the hope of Jesus. Do you have the Spirit of Adoption and are you a son or daughter of God? Jesus came to earth and lived a life that you can't live. He met God's standard of perfection for getting into heaven. Then He took that perfect life to the cross and died a death you should've died. He took on God's wrath against your sin on your behalf. Then He defeated death and the grave by rising to life again. By doing so, He bought the right to give you forgiveness for your sin and give you the life God created you to have. And He'll give it to you right now if you'll repent (change your mind about your sin) and trust Him alone to save you. I am certain that your pastor wants to talk to you today about becoming a son or daughter in the family of God.

Secondly, If you feel alone today, you don't have to. Simply call out to God in prayer and ask Him, as your Abba Father, to hold your hand and walk with you

through this season of loneliness. Allow loneliness to move out as trust in Jesus moves in.

Lastly, as a believer in Christ who is holding the hand of the Father, will you hold the hands of Baptist Children's Homes in praying for us?

- Close in prayer. Thank the Pastor and the church for having you come speak.
- **Reminder: Turn the service over to the church's Pastor or person in charge to close the service**