

# How Does the Spirit Bear Witness That We Are Children of God?

Tim Conway | [illbehonest.com](http://illbehonest.com)

**Question:** Ok, third question... This also comes from the same guy, David Hopkins. He kind of squeezed two questions in there, and I granted it because I think it's a good question. He says, "Also, how does the Spirit bear witness that we are children of God?"

## **Discussion:**

**Tim:** Now, of course, that comes from Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." Let me tell you this, The witness is varied. Let me explain. Right there in the context of Romans 8:16, the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we're children of God. That's 8:16. If you go back to 8:15, you know what you find? We don't have a spirit of slavery, we have a Spirit of adoption, by Whom we cry "Abba, Father."

Now think about that, by the Spirit we cry, "Abba, Father." You want the witness of the Spirit? People wonder this all the time, what is the witness of the Spirit? How can I know I'm a child of God? Well, every true child of God has been given the Spirit of God as a guarantee of their inheritance.

What is the witness of the Spirit? I'll tell you one witness of the Spirit. By that Spirit, that Spirit prompts all of God's true children, being a Spirit of adoption, it prompts us to cry "Abba, Father."

What do I mean by that? You know as a Catholic, God was distant. God was far away. God was angry. Christ was angry. Mary was happy. You'd go to her. She's the mediatrix. You know, she was loving. She was approachable. God was mean. God was far. Or He was kind of unknowable. Or He was just a "big guy upstairs," or you've seen some of Michaelangelo's deal with an old man reaching off a cloud, or just some kind of Santa Claus figure or something.

But do you know what happens when a person is truly born again? And the Spirit of God, the Spirit of adoption comes in? Suddenly, God is not distant. He's close. He's dear. There's intimacy. "Abba, Father." You Christians, don't you talk to Him that way? Father. It's like, all of a sudden - I don't know why I just think of Craig riding his motorcycle, all of a sudden a dog runs out, "Father!" Or you know, you cry out right away. There's this natural impulse as a Christian to cry out to your Heavenly Father. With me a lot of times it's "Lord." But a lot of times I'm addressing Him as "Father" too. You know what? There's that inclination. It's not foreign. It's not forced. It comes out. Why? The Spirit of God - by that Spirit we are compelled. God is no longer a distant God. He's a close God.

How else? By the Spirit. Again, another text that we come back to over and over and over and over... If by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. People who have life,

have the Spirit. People who belong to Christ, have the Spirit. People who have the Spirit, put to death deeds of the body. You not only have this compulsory cry to God, there's this intimacy, but there's this putting to death the deeds of the flesh, of the body. And if you're not seeing that consistently, I'm not talking perfection. But when you come, when there's this transformation in your life, when there's a looking to Christ, and there's true faith, there's going to be a putting to death of sin, and if there is not battle with sin, and war with sin, and victory over sin, and a conquering. Yes, sometimes we're falling, sometimes the battle is prolonged, and it's aggressive and it's difficult, but if there is not victory, if there is not a pattern of victory that is identifiable, where all things become new, and you see a newness, and it's worked out by the Spirit of God, then that's another witness.

How about another one? Very closely attached to that. We read in Galatians 5, What are the fruits of the Spirit? I guarantee where the Spirit is, He's working love. Where the Spirit is, He's working joy. Where the Spirit is, He's working peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. If a person does not radically become possessed by a love they never knew, a love for God, a love for Christ, a love for their fellow man, especially for Christians, if that isn't a radical change, I can tell you the Spirit of God's not there. And joy, a joy that you never experienced before. I don't mean the happiness, the drunken happiness that goes along with parties and rides at Six Flags and that kind of thing. I'm talking a deep-seated joy. It's attached to the things that Christ has done for you, and salvation. Those are the fruits of the Spirit. And they will be there. Yes, they're not always at peak maximum level, they ebb and they flow, but if you don't have a love like you've never had before, if you don't have a joy like you've never had, if you don't have peace like you've never had before, that's one of the witnesses of the Spirit.

Let's go even further in this. How about this one? Romans 5:5, "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person, though perhaps for a good person one will dare even to die. But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Now follow this: God shows His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. That's right there in the context and attached to this: God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us. You know what one of the witnesses of the Spirit of God is? He pours the love of God for us into our hearts. And that love is identifiable in the fact that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. God shows His love for us in the cross. The Spirit of God pours it into our hearts. By that Spirit, it's poured into our hearts. And it comes back to the cross.

I'll tell you this, one of the dearest and most precious witnesses of the Spirit is when the cross is personal, precious, and overwhelms you with expressions of the love of God for you. I mean, it causes joy and tears, and expressions... and listen, I'll tell you this, the Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we're children of God. The Spirit of God is mighty. And where He intends to bear witness, you will hear it! It's not this kind of thing where, well, He just kind of

whispers, and it's like, I don't know, I can't be certain. Listen: this is the Spirit of God. When He means to bear witness, He bears witness. And you hear it!

And I'll just give you one other thing, do you know what Jesus Christ said of the Spirit of God? When the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all truth, He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears, He will speak. He will declare to you things that are to come. He will glorify Me. I'll tell you this, you know what one of the witnesses of the Spirit is? He glorifies Christ.

And I'll tell you this, one of the witnesses of the Spirit is not just God's love for us in what He did with His Son on the cross, but Christ becomes everything to us. You see the Spirit of God came to exalt Christ. And if the Spirit of God is indwelling you, one of the Spirit's main witnesses within you is going to be of Christ. And if Christ isn't your chief love, if Christ isn't your chief affection, if Christ isn't receiving the focal attention of your life, then you can be certain the Spirit of God is not operating, or the Spirit of God is grieved in your life. Because the Spirit of God has come into this world to exalt Christ, and in those in whom He indwells, He indwells to exalt Christ. And He will make much of Christ. And if He's within you, He will turn your attentions to Christ. He will make Christ real in the Word. He will make that come alive.

These are basically the witnesses of the Spirit. Don't take them lightly. If you cannot identify with these things, oh, run to Christ. Run to Him. Plead. Call upon the name of the Lord. This is salvation. That's what it's all about. What is eternal life? Somebody tell me. To know God and the Christ Whom He has sent. Knowing Them, intimacy. Where is that? John 17:3.