1. “The inward witness of the Spirit is the strongest proof of Christianity.” (A quote from John Wesley’s Father). **Romans 8:15: the Spirit comes not as the Spirit of slavery, but as the Spirit of adoption by which we cry ‘Abba, Father’! He bears witness with our spirits in this way.** John Calvin believed that the greatest, most supreme title given to the Holy Spirt is ***the Spirit of Sonship***. He brings us into family relationship with the Trinity. This title is mentioned in **Romans 8** and **Galatians 4**. Romans 8 **begins** with, ‘*There is therefore now, no condemnation*’ for believers and **ends** with ‘*there is no separation’* for believers. **Sinners are brought out of prison, and into *family relationship* with God, who ministers to them as a loving and responsible Father.** He will ultimately conform his blood-bought children into the image of Christ. He truly desires to hear us say ‘***Father***!’.
2. **The Spirit unveils the face of *Christ* to us, and as he does so he unveils the face of the *Father* as well.** That is why we see believers addressing God as ***Father*** in the New Testament. The Spirit makes us know we are accepted as children in the family of our Heavenly Father.
3. Paul uses the term “Sonship” because, in the culture of that time, only sons received inheritance. So Paul is applying this to men and women. **The point is that we become *heirs* and *inheritors* as *adopted children* of God**
4. **Paul also uses the word ‘*cry’* in Romans 8:15**. It is the Greek word ‘*krazo’*. The Spirit makes us bold to call God ‘*Father’* because he makes us KNOW the reality of our adoption as sons and daughters. **This word ‘*krazo*’ is a sharp cry for help.** It is used by Christ on the cross, and also by the poor man crying out in Psalm 34. **It speaks of one shouting and crying out in crisis and in pain for help**. “Daddy! Daddy! Help me!” This cry is reserved for every believer. **It is the *proof* of the Spirit residing in us—we instinctively cry out to our Heavenly Father**. Unbelievers do not have that knowledge. This cry of the Spirit within us is evidence of the Spirit dwelling within. This is an extension of Luke 11 and the Father giving us the Holy Spirit when we cry out. It is evidence of the new birth.
5. **God has given us the Spirit of his Son, and he wants to give us a consciousness that we *truly* belong to him; therefore, we are able to focus on God’s ultimate goal for us, whether we experience good times or difficulties.** The Father’s ultimate goal is to bring glory and joy through us to Christ as he sees us transformed by the Spirit into his very likeness. The Lord Jesus Christ will see the children whom he has been given glorified in him.
6. Sinclair Ferguson gives an illustration about one of his teachers who said, “Ferguson, you are nothing like your elder brother!” **The Holy Spirit is the one who makes us like Jesus, our elder brother.**