

into the dark

INTO THE FAMILY.

Have you ever felt out of place?

Perhaps it was in a classroom or an event, perhaps with a group of friends or in a certain city, perhaps you were a child in foster care... whatever your circumstances, at some point or another all of us have asked, "Do I belong?"

God answers with a resounding, "Yes!"

We are loved by Him; we are adopted by Him; we will never be abandoned by Him - and no matter our physical circumstances, we can have confidence, security, rest, and joy in that.

So then, what do we do with this confidence and joy? How can we start to spread it?

IN THE BIBLE.

James 1:27

Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

Romans 8:15-25

15 So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." 16 For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. 17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. 19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. 22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. 24 We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. 25 But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

QUESTIONS.

- 1.) Have you ever asked, "Do I belong?" What were the circumstances? How did you feel?
- 2.) How does it feel knowing, in Jesus, you always belong?
- 3.) How can you start to spread this belonging?
- 4.) What are some ways you can live out James 1:27?

Whenever you read the Bible, ask yourself these three questions:

1. What does this tell you about God?
2. What does this tell you about yourself and the world?
3. How is this going to change who you are and how you live?

The Empty Cup coffee shop is located at Center, 9111 Executive Park Dr, Knoxville, TN 37923 and all net profits and tips go to support adoption and fostering efforts - showing kids all over the world that they are LOVED and they BELONG!