

This is one of my favorite stories, and best of all it's supposed to be true!

Ben Hooper never knew who his father was. His illegitimacy was a serious handicap in rural Tennessee; other children avoided him and he felt separated from "normal people." He didn't even go to church, but when he was 12 years old, a new preacher came to serve at the small church in town. Ben decided to go and listen to the new preacher, but he arrived late and left early so that no one would notice him.

The minister made him feel special, as though he was talking to Ben. So he returned Sunday after Sunday, until one week he didn't make it out the door fast enough. The minister put his hand on Ben's shoulder and asked in a friendly way, "Whose boy are you?" The congregants about them went silent. It was a potentially humiliating moment.

But the preacher broke the silence and said, with a large smile, "Oh, I know whose boy you are! The family resemblance is unmistakable – you are a child of God. That's quite an inheritance you got there, boy. Now go and see to it, and see that you live up to it."

Many years later the Honorable Ben Hooper said that it was on that day in that small church in the foothills of Tennessee he was elected governor of Tennessee.

"For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." Romans 8:15-17

You are a child of God. Do you see the family resemblance? Is there someone who needs to know that too? What a difference knowing whose you are makes!