

# *Children of God*

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*"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God" Rom. 8:16*

Eugene never resigns himself in his struggle of being respected; he wants to be heard and when he encounters closed doors, he lays the blame on Christians. The Christians of any confession, according to him, are among hypocrites because they are submitted to the conditionings of the society in which they live and do not practice love to their neighbor or fellowship. Christians, according to him, are no longer Christians. "Christians should... Christians, if they were real Christians, would..." Repeatedly I have heard statements of this kind, especially when the actions of the believers serve as an obligation toward others. After all, my reply (I leave it to you to tell me what is Christian behavior) is purely defensive. However, the behavior of Christians is often passed through a sieve of human judgment with a great misunderstanding, perhaps fed by Christians themselves: they should be better people, heroes without stain or defect, and then Christians could also be the good conscience of acts of those who don't call themselves Christians.

The reduction to ethics of all that is Christian, or the claim that all that distinguishes a Christian is ethics, underestimates the capacity of love and empathy of human beings. There are many people who don't declare themselves believers, and non-Christian believers who spend their lives in the service of others. The misunderstanding of the reduction to ethics as a distinctive Christian sign is fed by Christians themselves perhaps because we do not know how to explain that it is not so much our life or our choices that make

us different, but it is our origins. I am referring to our being sons and daughters of God. This is that which believing Christians must above all else communicate: that we have received a new birth, the adoption as sons and daughters of God. It is this adoption, this belonging, that is obtained in Jesus Christ. The witness of a new birth, of belonging not only to ourselves, not necessarily to a list of church members or to the baptized, but to God, is this so difficult to communicate?

If we commit to ethics as a principle vehicle to witness about Jesus Christ, we are doing a theologically mistaken and arrogant work. Are we sure that our ethic should necessarily have a Christian label? Is it not that, just because we know that we are sinners and children, we are also aware that our ethic has the limits that are the limits of human nature? But on the other hand, we can't act if it is not on the side of humanity for the Kingdom. Each person, especially the one who is searching for his belonging, who is considerably searching, should receive the message of his belonging to God, of his being a person adopted by God. In this way he is the person to whom is entrusted so great a message that could set his life in motion, as a recipient of the love of God and not as a beggar of the love of Christians.

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