

## Sonship The Identity of Sons

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When you have an identity as a son of God your whole outlook regarding your relationship to God changes. When you have the mentality of a slave, you always think in terms of what you owe and what you must pay. What is it that God wants from you, and whether or not you are delivering on what He wants because the outcome of that inquiry has to do with whether or not you feel that you will get the things you need. On the other hand when you think of your relationship as your Father—that is that God is your Father and you are a son—then you begin to understand and to experience the reality that you are here for purposes known in the mind of God before you were born and that the relationship that you have with God as your Father is not an adversarial relationship.

The common point of view in religious circles is that you are, and you will always be, no more than a “sinner saved by grace.” That point of view is designed to motivate you to feel grateful for the salvation that you once received and motivated by the sense of guilt that so much was given to you. You are then taught that everything you respond with is less than what is actually required of you. That mentality makes you always a debtor. You can never fully enter into the expectation from God, of God being who God is. It is quite sad actually because most people tend to think that the greatest experience of God’s goodness ended at the point where you were saved. That is: Jesus died on the cross to save you and once you have gotten that—you are not going to hell, you are going to heaven—then everything beyond that is how you somehow show your gratitude for that. And so in a sense, from the point where you are saved, every expectation of the goodness of God is behind you with maybe the only exception being: eventually you’ll die and go to heaven.

Well when you begin to see and to understand and believe that you are a son, the experience of salvation—rather than that which becomes your memory and then that which motivates you to be grateful and to show your gratitude

in terms of obeying what church polity sets out as the indication of your gratitude—you begin to see that that’s just what you were born into. That you were born into a family in which God is your Father and because God is your Father this whole way of life that is called “Christian,” is what is to result from the fact that God is your Father. You begin to see all manner of things changing right away, after that.

For example, as we have spoken before: you anticipate that God will supply your needs according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus for no reason other than He is your Father. (Inserted – actual verse—“**And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.**” – **Philippians 4:19**) See, the gospel that I preach to you, the gospel of the kingdom, is based in the centrality of the goodness of God—that God’s nature is that which it is—and because God’s nature is good, you are secured in who God is, not because you have done righteous works or you continue to do things that are expected of you. God didn’t save you by works of righteousness, He saved you by his mercy and He disciplines and trains whomever He has received as a son for the purpose that you might share in his glory.

It is this purpose for which you were born again. So the notion that you are no more than a “sinner saved by grace” is, to say the least, very juvenile. It is where you used to be before you were saved, and it is what you came to be the day you were saved but if you have been saved for any length of time that should not be how your relationship to God—it’s foundation—and it should not be how it is characterized. Your relationship to God should be: He is my Father. And just like if I had children and my children asked me for bread I wouldn’t give them a stone. If they asked me for fish I wouldn’t give them a serpent. (Inserted – actual verse—“**‘Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!’**” – **Matthew 7:9-11**)

In other words, if they asked me for the things for which they have a need on a daily basis, because I—even as a human—because I love them I will give them the things they need. What do you think about God? Because God loves you, He will in fact have mercy on you and He will in fact be kind to you. That’s just who God is. Now that is the mercy of God, and you can rely absolutely on the mercy of God. It is *more* than that you are such a wretched sinner that God takes pity on you. God created mankind with the intention of making them his sons. Now the end of this matter is all about how God desires to have a relationship with you. And this relationship is not going to end at any point in time, nor is this relationship going to remain static. This relationship is going to increase and increase and increase, in intimacy, in fellowship, in purpose, in closeness. Not only in this age, but in the coming ages.

Let me open up something to you about the future of being the sons of God. In the book of **I Corinthians**, Paul speaks like this, he says at **verse 24**, **“Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.”** Now this is a reference here to how God allows Jesus to reign until God puts all of Jesus’ enemies under his feet. **“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”** (Inserted – **I Corinthians 15:24-26**)

Previous to **I Corinthians 15**, in **I Corinthians 12**, there is much of a discussion about what the reference to Christ is. You note here: this is not so much a reference to Jesus as it is a reference to Christ. The significance is that in the Scriptures when you are speaking of Jesus you are speaking of the man—Jesus. When you are speaking of Christ you may be speaking about any facet of the person known as the Lord Jesus—whether we are talking about his anointing as the Christ, or his body, which is the body of Christ, which is inclusive of us. And certainly because **I Corinthians 12** was speaking about the body comprised of many members, by now when he speaks of everything being put “under Christ,” “under his feet,” it is as much a reference to our ruling and reigning with him in the earth before He comes back.

Now it also tells us the day that he has in mind when he speaks about, **“Then the end will come...”** (Inserted – **I Corinthians 15:24a**) The end he is speaking about here is described in terms of, **“The last enemy to be destroyed is death.”** Now we know when death will be destroyed. **Revelation 20** speaks of death and hell being thrown into the lake of fire; that’s at the end of the millennium. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.” – Revelation 20:14**) So approximately 1000 years, at least 1000 years from where we are now, and how many ever years remain until the end of this age: that’s the time of the end that he is speaking of.

So he is speaking about the body of Christ at that time of the end. So with that in mind, we are looking at the future of the sons of God. **“Now when it says that ‘everything’ has been put under him...”** that is, under Christ, **“...it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ.”** (Inserted – **I Corinthians 15:27b**) So in other words, God put everything under Christ except God himself. **“When God has done this,”** **verse 28**, **“then the Son himself,”** the Lord Jesus Christ, inclusive of the parts of his body that we are, **“The Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him,”** (will be made subject to God) **“so that God may be all in all.”** (Inserted **I Corinthians 15:28**)

Now what is meant by that? Look at this whole matter then. This is the future of the sons of God. All creation is

waiting for the revelation of the sons of God. (Inserted – actual verse—**“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.” – Romans 8:19**) God began creation with the specific intent of making these creatures into his sons. When all creation is finished, what is the purpose? This Scripture answers that. When Jesus has finished ruling and reigning, and this being at the time of the millennium, the end of the millennium, then He will hand up the kingdom to the Father. With this, Jesus will hand everything up to the Father... all that the body of Christ is, all that we have become. These are the sons of God, perfected.

Then he says, “And then God will be all...” (All of who God is) “in all.” (In all of us.) We are the dwelling place of the Most High, forever. The purpose of God creating sons—creating humans who might become sons—the purpose of that is that God is creating, as it were, a spiritual form out of all of the individual sons comprised together as the body of Christ, and it is in *that*—like how we have a spirit who dwells within our bodies, like God himself dwells within us now, like the Lord Jesus, his spirit is present in the body of Christ, like God initially put a spirit that God gave to Adam—this has been the trend. First the natural, then the spiritual.

The intention of God in having sons is to have such close fellowship and harmony with the sons of God that the final analysis, the final outcome is: God will be all in all. All of who God is, in all of us, but not all of who God is in each one of us nearly so much as it is: all of who God is in *all* of us *together*. We are meant to be the house that God is building, but God is the occupant of the house. This latter house to be built at the end of the age is for God’s own dwelling. We know from the Scriptures, that we are the stones out of which this house is to be built... we are the living stones. (Inserted – actual verse—**“As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” – I Peter 2:4,5**) This house is not a house of brick or stone or mortar, this is not a church building; this is not a sanctuary, as people talk about these things. This is made up of living beings, “members”; “parts” of the body of Christ.

The metaphor that is used is that of the building of a house and this house is comprised of living stones, human beings, the spirits of just men made perfect. We are the building material—the sons of God are the building material—but who is the occupant of the house? We know who the builder is; the builder is God. Why is God building this house? What is this latter house at the end of the age that is greater than the former house? (Inserted – actual verse—**“ ‘I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘the silver is mine and the gold is mine,’ declares the Lord Almighty. ‘The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘And in this place I will grant peace,’ declares the Lord Almighty.” – Haggai 2:9**) This is the dwelling place

of God. Here in these houses of spirits—the spiritual beings of men will be, in the aggregate, in the composite, all together—is where God will dwell, which means that God intends, in the future, to do everything that God does while He is within residence in this body that He is establishing for himself for all ages, and through it God will do what He does.

I believe that the example of God and man together, from the beginning, is exactly that. Now as God dwells in this house comprised of the sons of God, everything that God is and everything that God does will not only be contained in this house, but it will be *worked* through this house. This, as it were, is the form if you like that God intends to take. The majesty of this thought defies the human imagination to properly quantify, let alone internalize. One of the key elements in understanding this is that you begin to see that the Living God will not be contained, in his entirety, in just a “part.” It is all the parts, together. It is a corporeity that we cannot imagine in today’s divided church.

We also, within the culture—especially of Western thought—we think about our personal and individual relationships to God, but we do not think of the corporate relationship. And yet God gave us a body that is comprised of many members, certainly each member of our human bodies is comprised of the same basic human tissue but it is arranged differently and it is designed differently—each part is—and each part is meant to respond differently. And it takes the aggregate of all the parts for the whole to function and for the blessing of the whole to be seen through all of the parts.

So yes, just like the Holy Spirit dwells fully in each of us at the present time, we may expect that God will dwell fully in each of us. But just as the Holy Spirit does *not* do all that He is doing in time and space today through each one of us, but only does what He elects to do and what He has made us to be able to entertain, in the same way, God the Father will be all of who He is in all of us. Each one of us will be able to fully experience God in the completeness of that, but we also see that it is not the intention of God to do everything that He is going to do and be everything that He would be in each of us. It is “all in all.” All of who He is in all of us, together.

This begins to almost defy the human imagination to grasp the enormity of this thought. This moves us well beyond the puerile declarations that we are no more than “sinners saved by grace.” We used to be sinners, and we were once saved by grace. But that’s not the end of the story. If we live our whole lives with that as our frame of reference we simply will not become, in this life, who God made us to be and who he put us here to be. If we limit what God is able to do in us and through us to the first things He did when we first met him: namely to save us, then don’t you see that we are meant, from that point on, to be totally dependent upon whatever church we believe

tells us all that we think God is ever going to say to us.

The relationship to God is based in a living form of Father and son so that we might anticipate a *full* life, that is: not so much a long life, but a full life. Everything that this life was supposed to be about, that we might expect to see the fullness of that. For example, with Jesus: Jesus said, "I only do what I see the Father doing. Whatever the Father is doing, that is what the Son is doing." "The Son can only do what He sees the Father doing." (Inserted – actual verse—**“Jesus gave them this answer: ‘I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.’ – John 5:19)** That’s because Jesus relinquished any right He had to an independent functionality apart from this relationship with the Father.

When that happened, Jesus lived a destiny here on the earth for which God had made him. Jesus, we know, came to the earth as the sacrifice, the one who would lay down his life by which all men would be saved. It would not have mattered what else Jesus did, if somehow He did not live that purpose, then his being here would have fallen short of that. So it is not at all about all the good things you could do for God or all the religious things that you were able to do. That’s not what is impressive to God and indeed God has no need for any of those things. Philanthropy is nice, but if that is all you’ve got it is nothing, particularly if God didn’t call you to it. Doing good things for poor people is nice, but that’s not what your life is about unless God has specifically called you to do that.

There is a destiny in God that is meant to be fulfilled in each of us and that is because we are sons of God. It is part of the inheritance that we are to have now, just like our destiny to become the form that receives and entertains the permanent presence of the Most High, in all of who He is, so that by this form, like a body that a human wears, everything that God intends to do, He will do. That is the degree of intimacy that is virtually unheard of and unimaginable even in circles where the Gospel is generously preached and the grace of God generously announced. The fact is that God wants you to live out this destiny for which He created you, but He gave you this destiny as part of your inheritance as a son. It is why you have this destiny.

Now I can assure you that God is at least as interested in you living out your destiny as you might be because, after all, He made you with this intention that He should live in you and that He should live through you, as the Spirit of God would direct you. So your identity as a son gives you not only a permanent place of relationship to God now, but it also gives you the hope of the future that is beyond being bright, beyond brilliance. The intimacy of that, we start to live now, but the fullness of this intimacy we shall know in the coming ages.

That is why it will never be “boring” to be in the presence of God. You will not exhaust the experience and the amazement that comes with the joy in the presence of God because it is to watch the Infinite God unfold himself, layer upon layer for age upon age, and to do that through you. No wonder all creation is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God since it is through the sons, in whom the Father lives—He lives in them corporately and He himself lives fully—that all of what has been started and continues to be expanded, the form of creation waits upon that for the fullness that God has established here on the earth.

So an identity of sons is vastly different from an identity of slaves. As slaves you are seeking to get whatever you can. As sons, the present is yours, but all the more is the future also yours. “Eyes have not seen and ears have not heard. It has not entered into the mind of a man what God has in store, but He is revealing it by the Holy Spirit.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“However, as it is written: ‘No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him’ but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.” – I Corinthians 2:9,10**) For you are the sons of God. I’m Sam Soleyn. God bless you and I’ll see you again.

#### **Scripture References:**

Philippians 4:19

Matthew 7:9-11

I Corinthians 15:24-26

Revelation 20:14

I Corinthians 15:27b-28

Romans 8:19

I Peter 2:4,5

Haggai 2:9

John 5:19

I Corinthians 2:9,10