

Sonship

By Todd Bentley

It's an amazing thought that as adopted sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, we are full heirs and co-heirs along with His own unique Son, Jesus Christ.

"Adoption is a Family idea, conceived in terms of love, and viewing God as Father. In adoption, God takes us into His family and Fellowship-He establishes us as His children and heirs. Closeness, affection, and generosity are at the heart of the relationship. To be right with God the Judge is a great thing, but to be loved and cared for by God the Father is a greater thing." J.I. Packer, The Father's Heart: His Delight, Your Destiny

"The Son of God became a man to enable men to become sons of God." C.S. Lewis

"For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-our faith" (1 John 5:4).

"The people who are given this power or right or authority to become sons of God are in an entirely different category from others who do not believe. These are those who believe in His name, and the adoption only happens to them, not to the others. Similarly in Romans 8:15, Paul is addressing only believers, those who are 'in Christ' and who have been given the 'Spirit of Christ' (see Romans 8:9). Our Lord put it like this to the unbelieving Jews who had said that they were all children of God: 'If God were your Father,' He said, 'ye would love Me' (see John 8:42). But then He was more specific and said, 'Ye are of your father the devil, and the more than enough to demonstrate the case that not all men and women are the children of God in this special sense.' Our Lord Himself draws that sharp distinction. And the Apostle Paul in the epistle to the Ephesians says that we were all 'by nature the children of wrath, even as others' (see Ephesians 2:3). And it is only those who have been quickened with Christ who have become the children of God." Lloyd-Jones, David Martyn

Spiritual adoption gives us placement, privilege, and rights as sons and daughters. Regeneration gives us new nature as sons and daughters. My adoption is a bestowal of intimate relationship. My regeneration is the transformation of my old nature. Our nature is an overcoming one. We have a victorious and strong Spirit. We are born of His divine nature, and are created in His likeness and image. What an amazing thought! Not just His likeness or image in physical features, but in Spirit and nature. We represent the Father, what He did, who He is, and how He acts. Our image is now Christ. "Because as He is, so also are we in this world" (see 1 John 4:17). This sonship is not just a title or privilege; it is of nature. We possess the very life of God. This sonship is our right, life, position, and inheritance through our intimacy with the Father. We now have the responsibility as sons and daughters of God to re-present the Father to the world.

New Nature

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John 3:6). I am Spirit in a body. We are born by the way of the Holy Spirit and now led by the Spirit. Like the wind that blows wherever it wishes, so are those born of the Spirit. God is Spirit. We are created by nature in His likeness now. We are Spirit in our capacities. We touch, taste, smell, hear, and feel like God. We now have a new heart and Spirit, and are being transformed in the renewing of our minds so we can think, feel, and act like Christ.

Adoption

"So that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons" (Galatians 4:5).

The adopted status of believers means that in and through Christ we know the Father loves us as He loves His Son and will share with us all the glory that is Christ's (see Romans 8:17, 38-39). We now bear His character, presence, and power, and are no longer slaves but sons and daughters. We are in His family and He is our Father. True sonship is an inner cry of the heart to know our Father (Abba, Daddy) and an acceptance that we are His. The spirit of adoption bears witness to our spirits that we are sons and daughters. Apart from the work of the Holy Spirit, we will never experience the Father's love or have confidence that we are children. Our home, inheritance, and estate are in the Father's house.

"But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God" (John 1:12, NRS).

In the regeneration (born again), we become children. Regeneration is the key to our transformation. In adoption, God gives us relationship as sons and daughters. We must grow in the Lord's grace to become mature sons and daughters in Christ. Mature sons and daughters carry the fullness of God. "Until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

Heirs

As children, we are heirs of God and co-heirs with the inheritance of Christ. What He possesses, we now possess. The adoption tells us that the sum and substance of our promised inheritance is a share in the glory of Christ (see Romans 8:17). In the ancient world, adoption implies the loss of all old things in a family, but now as legitimate children, we get all the blessing of our new family.

I like the idea of adoption because it means God wants and chooses me. Sonship (adoption) gives the assurance, security, and confidence that the Father's (parental) providence, protection, and care are ours because we are in His Family. This intimacy will produce servants not slaves. In a family, we do things out of love, not duty. Relationship cannot be lost, even if fellowship is broken. He is our Father by blood (Jesus) and His commitment remains to us, even when we fail. Repentance restores fellowship. It's an amazing thought that as adopted sons and daughters of our heavenly Father, we are full heirs and co-heirs along with His own unique Son, Jesus Christ.

"He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will" (see Ephesians 1:5).

"Christ's undertaking was to save mankind from their sins and transform them into sons of God like Himself. That is the purpose and work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." John G Lake

Glory

God's glory is not just in us and to us, but through us because those whom He has called, He has justified and those He has justified, He has glorified (see Romans 8:30). "But we have this treasure (glory) in earthen vessels" (see 11 Corinthians 4:7). How much of a capacity do we have as mere men to receive and manifest the glory of God? I'm inspired to think of Moses' face shining and Peter's shadow healing as a great start. We need to be hungry for more.

When the body of Christ has a deeper revelation of what it really means to carry the glory presence of God, they will be filled with so much of the fullness (full measure) of God that they will release His glory through prayers, actions, and worship filling the very atmosphere with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord and be a full expression of Him in the earth.

Sons Arise

"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God" (Romans 8:19, KJV).

When we see the manifestation and the revealing of the sons and daughters of God, who understand who they are and what they have, they will take responsibility to defeat sin (corruption, sickness, disease, death, poverty) and bring the glory of God with them wherever they go. Because of the glorious liberty of the children of God, believers will carry the revelation of who they are and what they have in Christ, and they will be releasers of glory.

Instead of looking at how defeated the world is, let's look at the potential there is for the world to become like the kingdom of God under His rule. We can truly help to establish His reign. "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15, KJV). We need to understand that it's the knowledge of the glory of the Lord released through us as sons and daughters of God that will cause His kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21, KJV).

I do believe that light is greater than darkness. I also believe there will be an ultimate redemption of the body and glorification in the final resurrection (see verse 18). However, I also believe we have a greater capacity now to manifest heaven on earth and be light in the darkness. We must come into our place of glory dominion. We set captives free and bring the world into His joy and freedom. Our liberty is glorious.

"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee." For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isaiah 60:1-2, KJV).

The glory will be greater in darkness. The light of His glorious gospel will shine through. We will be burning ones that carry the fire and torch of revival to the nations. I believe that God revealing His sons and daughters in this hour is in the message of sonship, adoption, and understanding who we are, or better yet who Christ is in us. In spiritual adoption, the moment undeserving sinners are adopted by their heavenly Father as His sons and daughters, their entire status is eternally changed-they receive a new name, a new family, new rights, and new expectations. But unlike human adoption, they also receive a new nature, actually becoming partakers of the divine nature!

In Him,

Todd Bentley

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