

# KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

*"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."*

## FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 239

### THE INHERITANCE OF THE SONS OF GOD

“And he that *overcometh* shall *inherit all things*; and I will be his God, and he shall be *my son*” (Rev. 21:7).

Two young men were enjoying a hearty meal together. One boy was the son of a wealthy rancher; the other was a very likable and reliable hired hand. Both men worked together. Their dress was similar and they frequented the same recreation spots, played on the same local team, and even attended the same place of worship. In many respects there was very little difference between them. However, one morning all this similarity vanished instantly when the solemn faced ranch foreman came to the rancher's son bearing the news, “Sam, your father died in his sleep last night. I found him just a while ago. You are in charge now, you are the sole heir to his estate.” Immediately a vast chasm of difference separates these two young men. The heir becomes the owner and proprietor while the hired man remains the same as before. The son inherits the provisions of the Will in which the hired

man has no claim. *Heirship* is what made the difference! And his *heirship* was rooted in his *sonship*!

Sonship to God is glorious beyond anything our eyes have seen or ears have heard. Jesus Christ is the firstborn Son of God. He is what *sonship is!* And now all His brothers are empowered to follow Him to maturity and into the power of His resurrection. All will follow His steps, becoming what He is. The spiritual life of every son has the same origin as the firstborn, for all are born of God. We are being perfected by the same process, and will ultimately achieve the same result. Jesus Christ was and is the personification of the Father, and so shall we be. The holy and divine nature of Jesus Christ is ours to be raised up within us. The works He did we shall do as well. The authority of Jesus Christ, the power of His throne, even the dominion over the ages and all things, He will share with those who grow up into Him in all things, coming to the measure of the stature of *His fullness* (Eph. 4:13; Heb. 2:5-11). Jesus possesses the totality of God's essence and substance, and this is the heritage of every manifest son of God. The present resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Jesus Christ is the portrait of our very own destiny! Oh, the wonder of it!

The ministry all creation is waiting for, longing for, groaning and travailing for, is the ministry of *sonship* (Rom. 8:19-23). Only Jesus has demonstrated what it is! The ministry of Jesus was not in the gift realm of Pentecost, it was not a "firstfruits of the Spirit," it was not "in part," nor was it "by measure," but His ministry was the ministry of a MANIFEST SON OF GOD in all the nature, power, authority, wisdom, and glory of the Father! Some tell us that the ministry Jesus demonstrated on earth is *not what manifest sonship is*. If sonship ministry is not what Jesus Christ, the *Son of the living God*, revealed on earth, including His resurrection, then pray tell me, what is it? I never thought I

would see what I see today, brethren who received the revelation of manifest sonship now “watering it down” to something far less than what Jesus has shown us, in order to make the message more “palatable” and more easily “attainable” by brethren who have never been sovereignly called to it by God. Let me tell you — the great secret of the ministry of Jesus was that it was not in limitation but in fullness. Jesus Himself said that the Father did not give Him the Spirit *by measure*. He also said that the works the Father did through Him were the proof and evidence of His sonship! And yet Paul tells the saints that *we* have at this present time received the Spirit *by measure*, that is, the *firstfruits of the Spirit*, and that we now groan within ourselves for our placement as full grown manifest sons of God by which we will receive the Spirit *without measure* as well as the redemption of our body (resurrection). Jesus did not receive a “gift” in the church realm, but He was the incarnation, the embodiment, the personification of the FULLNESS OF THE FATHER! That is the realm of *sonship*. Thus Paul tells us plainly, “Now I say, That the *heir*, as long as he is a *child*, differeth nothing from a *servant*, though he be *lord of all*; but is under tutors and governors *until the time appointed of the Father*” (Gal. 4:1-2). Even though everyone is dear to God, and all will eventually live willingly under His sovereignty, the inheritance of *all things* is for none but the *mature sons — the overcomers*. Everyone will enjoy the blessings and benefits of this great kingdom of God, but professions, confessions, beliefs, doctrines, church attendance, good works, or any other religious activity does not make a *mature son, an heir*. In God’s economy the heirs are not irresponsible little children who wouldn’t know what to do with the inheritance, or how to handle it should they receive it, but mature ones in the full stature of Christ. Even the noblest ministries of the church age are still merely “in part” ministries (I Cor. 13:9-11). And that is why creation is not groaning for another gift-ministry, another apostle, another prophet, another bishop,

another evangelist, another pastor, another teacher, another healing crusade, or another revival!

Creation is in pain and travail waiting for the *manifestation of the sons of God!* Oh, yes! Only the sons of God will possess within themselves the fullness of the **power of the kingdom of God** as did Jesus! They will have all that He had as He ministered to the multitudes *plus* the **power of His resurrection!** Only the sons of God, in the power of Christ's resurrection, can deliver creation from *the bondage of corruption*. Jesus is not the firstborn among many Christians, or among many evangelists, or many teachers, or even many apostles and prophets. Oh, no! He is the firstborn among **MANY BRETHREN!** The brethren are *like Him*. They are completely *like Him!* That is what *makes* them brethren, and that is what makes them *sons*. They are not His brethren in the stable in Bethlehem, nor in the temple at twelve years of age, nor in the carpenter shop of Nazareth. They are His brethren in His maturity, in His total victory over the adversary, in His purity and sinlessness, in His consciousness of the indwelling Father, in His sensitivity to the voice of the Father, and in His yieldedness to allow the Father to speak and move and work mightily through Him! Oh, that all God's elect would realize that God is not bringing many gifted and talented Christians to glory, He is not bringing many musicians to glory, He is not bringing many deacons to glory, He is not bringing many Sunday School teachers to glory, He is not bringing many apostles and prophets to glory, but He *is* bringing many **SONS** to glory! (Heb. 2:10). Aren't you glad!

The sons of God are destined to inherit all things; they are selected by the Father to become the dispensers of the blessings and benefits of the kingdom of God to all created realms. Thus creation groans in sympathetic birth pangs, longing for their arrival! From powerful angels in heaven, to worlds in the farthest galaxy, the universe resonates with

anticipation of the glorious unveiling of the sons of God. The sons will share the fullness of the glory of their Father. They will grow up into the attributes of God as a permanent state of being. The sons of God will partake of Godlikeness, and a spiritual inheritance that is incomprehensible to natural men, even religious men, saved men, and Spirit-baptized men! This celestial race of beings shall be endowed with all the authority and capacity of God. Immortal omnipotence will flow from them as the light rays from the sun. In the heaven blest days before us, those who have attained to sonship will be displayed in the blazing glory of immortality. This climatic finale is a fast approaching certainty.

From the difficulties, struggles, testings, and processings of this present time the son company will burst into everlasting splendor, streaming glory, wisdom, and power as a shower of stars. With Jesus as the Captain, this reigning government of God shall invade the bastions of darkness and by war, yea, by *spiritual warfare* shall they take the rule from the kings of the earth. They will not “glean” the little truth out of all the vaunted religions of the world, for their swords will be the sword of the Spirit, which is the living Word of God, and when their warfare is accomplished all the false religions of earth will have been cast down, destroyed, demolished, and obliterated from the face of the earth. There will be no more Islam, no more Moslem extremists, no more Hinduism, no more Buddhism, no more Confucianism, no more Shinto, no more Roman Catholicism, no more Protestantism, no more Judaism — all these and hundreds more will have vanished from the earth in the blazing glory of God’s truth and power through His manifest sons. These are celestial kings and priests, the army of God, trained and tested in conquest. They are invincible in the nature and power of the Father. Nothing shall confound them; no one will be able to kill them; all will succumb to their sway. This company of sons will establish the final world government — the new order of the kingdom

of Christ — it will never be overthrown! They will subdue every enemy, deliver every soul, transform every life, renew every mind, and be the fountainhead of every blessing! They are the solution that God has ordained for the travail of earth's teeming billions. This is the destiny of God's Christ, Head *and* body!

God has put His hand to the task; He is ready to grasp the *whole world* and, through the sonship ministry, switch it on to another track, changing its course and destination. I tell you, dear ones, as sons of God we are laborers together with God in inaugurating the **next stage** of the kingdom which shall impact every living nation of earth. We are now called to “come up hither” to His *throne!* We shall work and work, minister and minister, deliver and deliver, heal and heal, reign and reconcile and bless and transform all nations and all men and all realms and all worlds and all ages until we accomplish **the end**. “Then cometh **the end**, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign, until He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death” (I Cor. 15:24-26). If it takes a week, a month, a year, a decade, a century, a millennium, or a billion years or a trillion years, it matters not one whit — the kingdom of God shall increase and expand and triumph until that blessed day when from pole to pole and from sea to sea and throughout all the vastnesses of infinity everywhere God shall be **ALL IN ALL!**

Let the mountains reverberate with the sound of the message, let the hills shout aloud for joy, and all the trees of the forest clap their hands! For we now stand on the threshold of a new dimension of the kingdom of God, and we must be prepared to receive HIM in fullness. As we earnestly look for His appearing, we are to receive **ALL THAT HE IS**, for when He appears in His glory in His manifest sons, all the traditions

of yesterday will be swept away and the realms of limitation swallowed up in His surpassing glory. I cannot overemphasize this great and important truth: When Christ appears in the fullness of Himself in His many brethren, we must be prepared to receive Him on a higher plane than we have known Him hitherto. We cannot tell Him what portion of Him we will receive and what portion we will not receive. WE WILL RECEIVE AND MANIFEST HIM IN FULLNESS, and without any reservations or preconceived ideas, or we will not receive Him at all. Either we will walk in the power and glory of His sonship, or we will miss the glory. We will not bring into that new order of life and power the old ways and traditions of the church systems of man, nor the deceitful and greedy ways of the religious hucksters sometimes called “healing evangelists.” Should we cling to the ministries and methods of the past, we will not be manifest sons. Vast multitudes of Christians will not stand in this new glory because of their tradition — but their time of visitation will come later. But for those who are willing to pay the price, to be thoroughly purged of all that is of the flesh, and disposed to turn loose of the past religious traditions, the old forms and ceremonies, the former means and methods, the pulpit theatrics, the carnal fund-raising promotionalism, the stagnant remains of yesterday’s visitations, there awaits great glory and heavenly wealth, and a world-shaking ministry beyond the comprehension of mortal mind. It is indeed wonderful!

It is not my wish to press the truth of the inheritance of God’s sons beyond reason, yet because of our limited understanding on the matter, we must pursue it a little further. There are a number of scriptures which express the truth that the sons of God are the inheritors of “all things.” Our present text says the same in the King James Bible, however that is not exactly how it is stated in the Greek text. The Greek text reads, “He who overcomes shall inherit *these* things...” The question follows — What are “these things” which we inherit?

It's the very things that are listed in the previous verses, the very things John describes for us in his vision! They are — a new heaven, a new earth, no more sea, the holy city — New Jerusalem bride, the tabernacle of God with men, no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying, no more pain, all things new, all that is included in the Alpha and Omega, and the fountain of the water of life. Now, since “all things *new*” includes “all things,” it is still true that the sons of God **INHERIT ALL THINGS!** And it's not saying that the sons will just be a part of all this, or blessed to enjoy its wonders, but that all is their “inheritance,” that is, they are the **OWNERS AND LORDS OF IT ALL!** Why is this important to us? What does it mean to inherit “all things”? One of the questions I ask myself is just this: When I get “all things” what will I do with them? You might be asking the question, What has this got to do with me today, **NOW?** Will knowing this help either you or me in our daily lives? You had better believe it will — *if we truly HEAR IT IN THE SPIRIT AND BY THE SPIRIT!*

More than fifty years ago, standing in the darkness of a jungle in South America, many miles from the nearest road or town, and further yet from anything that could be called a city, it seemed that every star and galaxy in the heavens adorned the night with its scintillating brilliance of diamonds. Looking up I could see the immensity of God. On some dark night take a look at the heavens, consider this infinite universe, contemplate the immensity, the complexity, the majesty of it, examine the balance of it, reflect upon the order of it, give attention to the symmetry of it, observe the way everything works by divine law and purpose — in the light of all this consider the deep probings of the Psalmist when he asks, “When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which Thou has ordained: what *is* man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visiteth him?” (Ps. 8:3-4). Yes, indeed, what **IS** man, that God



cares for him and visits him — do you want to see it? Continuing this divine assessment of man the inspired Psalmist says, “Thou crownest him with glory and honor” (Ps. 8:5) He’s showing how mindful God is of man, the greatness of His purpose for man. “Thou didst *set him over* the works of Thy hands” (Ps. 8:6). Do you want to see how great man is in the universal scheme of things? Consider just what are the “works of God’s hands” over which man, crowned with glory and honor, is set: “When I consider Thy *heavens*, the work of Thy fingers, the *moon* and the *stars*, which Thou has ordained: *what is man...*”

“Thou has put all things under his feet” (Ps. 8:6). Now “his feet” in this case is not Jesus, *his feet* are the feet of MAN. It’s not talking about Jesus, though it is ultimately fulfilled in and through Jesus, but it’s talking about MAN. Quoting this very passage and speaking again of *man*, not Jesus, the writer to the Hebrews says, “Thou hast put *all things* in subjection under his feet. For in that He put *all* in subjection under him, He left *nothing* that is *not put under him!*” (Heb. 2:8). How broad and all-inclusive that statement is! Can we not see by this that man was created to be king of the universe! Man was designed by God to rule and reign over all things everywhere! Man was destined to have dominion both on earth and throughout the heavens above! Man was to have authority in all realms! Man was appointed to be sovereign — not merely over the earth, but over all the unbounded heavens! Did you know that? Did your preacher ever tell you that? From the very beginning it was the divine intent that man should be lord of all with all created things under submission to him, that man would explore, conquer, control, harness, utilize, bless, rule, and direct all the earth, the elements, the heavens, and all worlds and realms, visible and invisible, and all creatures, visible and invisible — the whole creation of God!

But there is a problem. Although man is destined for universal rule and dominion, the apostle continues: “But now we *see not yet* all things put under him” (Heb. 2:8). Does any wish to debate that? Take a look at the world in which we live! Man was made to reign over the earth, but man broke his covenant with God. When man sinned he brought ruin to the earth, the ruin of sin, strife, the curse, and death. Before sin man’s hair was not turning gray, his teeth were not decaying, his heart was not giving out, his skin was not wrinkled, his bones were not brittle or his body weak and stooped. There was no cancer, no stroke, no disease of any kind. There was no famine. There were no weeds. There was no rust. There were no floods, no plagues. There were no storms — no frightening hurricanes, no devastating tornados. There was no hatred, no greed, no lust, no cheating, no lying, no deceit, no murders, no crime, no wars. God created man in His own image, He placed him in a perfect environment, and he told man that he was to rule and have dominion, and that *all things were in subjection under his feet*. But man violated his union with God. Every broken body, every disturbed mind, every lack and weakness and sorrow of the human race throughout the ages can be traced to man’s violation of his contract with God. Therefore, we see *not yet* all things put under man! Look at the terrors of our world and it is plain to see that *not yet* has even the *earth* been subjected to man, much less the celestial realms above!

But — the apostle continues, “WE SEE JESUS!” (Heb. 2:9). It is interesting to note, there are two prominent words used in Greek for “see” — *horao* and *blepo* — and the writer uses both in one sentence. He says, “We *see* not yet all things put under man,” that is, take an in-depth, studied, wide-angled look, examine carefully — we see not yet all things put under man. That is *horao* — in-depth scrutiny. “But we *see* Jesus” — it’s a fleeting glance, one look is enough to settle the issue — that is *blepo*. Ah, we see not yet all things put under man,

but we see Jesus “made for a little while even lower than the angels for the suffering of death, **NOW CROWNED WITH GLORY AND HONOR...**” (Heb. 2:9). Jesus was lowered for a season that He by the grace of God might “taste death for *every man*,” that through His redemption He might restore all men to the righteousness, joy, peace, wisdom, authority, power, and dominion that was theirs in the beginning.

The world is filled with hopelessness today only because men do not **see Jesus!** All is despair and futility and lack if we don't **see Jesus!** He is the great Captain of our salvation and the Firstborn among many brethren. He is the Firstborn from the dead, and the first manifest son of God who “inherits all things.” He is the proto-type of God's ordained destiny for all men who become the sons of God! Oh yes, we who have been quickened by His Spirit, infused with His life, and imbued with His mind — we **SEE JESUS!** We see Him overcoming sin, self, the curse, and death. We see Him risen, ascended, crowned with glory and honor, exalted to the throne of the Majesty of high, heir of all things, with all power in heaven and in earth, having obtained a name above every name, Lord of all, King of the universe, higher than angels and principalities and powers, the image and likeness and dominion of the Father over all things **restored in man.** That is what we see! We *see* Jesus and in Him we see our very own sonship, calling, destiny, and inheritance!

The Bible clearly teaches that God's sons shall inherit *all things*. The whole universe shall be theirs! Every world that floats in space shall be subject to their word and at their disposal, as they range the broad fields of the endless vastnesses of infinity. Here and now we are a people in whom there is royal blood; sons of the almighty God, heirs to His throne (Rev. 3:21). We are born to rule over all things, and God is preparing us for that dominion. The rule of one little world is not enough for a man born of the omnipresent,

omniscient, and omnipotent God of the universe! It may be for a chipmunk. It is not for a son of the Highest, for one born *from above* is too big in his spirit, which is his real divine self. To be a spiritual man, a heavenly man, he must reach out to the future, to eternity, to infinity, and grapple with the powers of the ages to come, and compel them to gird him with strength to fulfill the ultimate intention of our *heavenly* Father!

Oh, the wonder of it! Our Lord Jesus Christ, the **man** Christ Jesus, has been exalted to the right hand of God. He has been given the kingdom and the dominion. The whole universe has been delivered into His mighty hands, and now He tells us that it belongs to us, for we are *heirs of God* and *joint-heirs with Christ*. He tells us that we have been raised to sit together with Him in the heavenly places, at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto us (I Pet. 3:22). We are to sit with Him on His throne, which is the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). We are not only raised up to sit with Him on His throne, but He has been given a name that is above every name, and we are also to share that wonderful Name. Do you think I am making these things up? Listen to this: "To him that overcometh...I will write upon him (inscribe in his nature) the *name of my God*, and the name of *the city (government) of my God*, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God...and I will write upon him MY NEW NAME" (Rev. 2:12).

This present time is but a proving ground for those who through grace will reign with their Lord over all the unbounded heavens. They have been proven faithful over few things. Now they shall be made rulers over many things...over ALL HIS POSSESSIONS (Mat. 24:45-47). He has given us His glory because we are His brethren, bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh, spirit of His spirit, life of His life, mind of His mind. We are of common parentage, brothers by the new birth, becoming like Him in name, nature, and being.

We are all “out of one” for which reason He is not ashamed to call us brethren. He has raised us up to sit with Him in the higher than heavenlies, hence we belong on His throne. And the place which He has been preparing for each one is not only a world to come, and a kingdom of life, and light, and love, but a position, a place of eminence at His side, ruling with Him over *all things!* People get all excited about some “alien” who they imagine steps off a space ship, coming from some advanced civilization in some distant galaxy, coming to teach us wonderful things that we know not. Oh, no, my brother, my sister, that is but a fantasy. It’s the other way around. Whoever they may be, wherever they may be in the myriad worlds scattered throughout God’s great universe, the sons of God are coming to *teach them*, to *deliver them*, and reveal the almighty Creator *unto them*, and subject them to His righteous rule! That is the inheritance of the sons of God!

Our inheritance is in the Son of God, for we are heirs of God, and *joint-heirs* with Christ! Why is this? Because it was “in Christ” that we had our existence and identity from eternity! We were “in Him” before we came “out” of Him. HE IS THE HEIR OF GOD! Only through our return into Him can we claim the inheritance. How beautifully this is illustrated in the following story.

A wealthy man and his son loved to collect rare works of art. They had everything in their collection, from Picasso to Raphael. They would often sit together and admire the great works of art. When the Viet Nam conflict broke out, the son went to war. He was very courageous and died in battle while rescuing another soldier. The father was notified and grieved deeply for his only son.

About a month later, just before Christmas, there was a knock at the door. A young man stood at the door with a large package in his hands. He said, “Sir, you don’t know me, but I

am the soldier for whom your son gave his life. He saved many lives that day, and he was carrying me to safety when a bullet struck him in the heart and he died instantly. He often talked about you, and your love for art.” The young man held out his package. “I know this isn’t much. I’m not really a great artist, but I think your son would have wanted you to have this.” The father opened the package. It was a portrait of his son, painted by the young man. He stared in awe at the way the soldier had captured the personality of his son in the painting. The father was so drawn to the eyes that his own eyes welled up in tears. He thanked the young man and offered to pay him for the picture. “Oh, no sir, I could never repay what your son did for me. It’s a gift.” The father hung the portrait over his mantle. Every time visitors came to his home he took them to see the portrait of his son before he showed them any of the other great works he had collected.

The man died a few months later. There was to be a great auction of his paintings. Many influential people gathered, excited over seeing the great paintings and having an opportunity to purchase one for their collection. On the platform sat the painting of the son. The auctioneer pounded his gavel. “We will start the bidding with this picture of the son. Who will bid for this picture?” There was silence. Then a voice in the back of the room shouted, “We want to see the famous paintings. Skip this one.” But the auctioneer persisted. “Will someone bid for this painting? Who will start the bidding? \$100, \$200?” Another voice shouted angrily, “We didn’t come to see this painting. We came to see the Van Goghs, the Rembrandts. Get on with the real bids!” But still the auctioneer continued. “The son! The son! Who’ll take the son?” Finally, a voice came from the very back of the room. It was the longtime gardener of the man and his son. “I’ll give \$10 for the painting.” Being a poor man, it was all he could afford. “We have \$10, who will bid \$20?” “Give it to him for \$10,” a voice responded, “let’s see the masters.”

“\$10 is the bid, won’t someone bid \$20?” The crowd was becoming restless and angry. They didn’t want the picture of the son. They wanted the more worthy investments for their collections. The auctioneer pounded the gavel. “Going once, twice, SOLD for \$10!” A man sitting on the second row shouted, “Now let’s get on with the collection!”

The auctioneer laid down his gavel. “I’m sorry, the auction is over.” “What about the paintings?” “I’m sorry. When I was called to conduct this auction, I was informed of a secret stipulation in the will. I was not allowed to reveal that stipulation until this time. Only the painting of the son would be auctioned. Whoever bought that painting would inherit the entire estate, including the paintings. The man who took the son gets everything!” — author unknown.

The message is clear — The Son! The Son! The inheritance is *IN THE SON*, so you see, whoever *gets the Son gets everything!*

“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in the last of these days spoken unto us *in the person of a Son. Whom He appointed Heir and lawful Owner of ALL THINGS*, by whom also He made the worlds and framed the ages” (Heb. 1:1-2).

“When the fullness of time was come, God *sent forth His Son*, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive *the adoption — placement as — sons*. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, *then an heir of God through Christ.*”

“That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one *all things* in Christ...***IN WHOM we have obtained an inheritance***, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will” (Eph. 1:10-11).

“And this is the record, that God has given unto us the life of the ages, *and this life is in His Son*” (I Jn. 5:11). “He that ***has the Son has life***; he that has *not* the Son of God has not life.” Ah, yes! The whole inheritance is in the Son — he who (fully) *gets the Son — gets everything!*

## TO BE A FATHER — TO BE A SON

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will *be his God*, and he shall *be my son*” (Rev. 21:7).

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will *be a Father* unto you, and ye shall *be my sons and daughters*, saith the Lord Almighty” (II Cor. 6:17-18).

Fathers and mothers want their children to have “the best of everything.” But sometimes that comes when certain things children want are withheld from them. Ann Landers, the newspaper columnist of a previous generation, shared a letter sent in by someone who wrote about what her parents did *not* do for her. They didn’t let her do whatever she wanted, whenever she wanted, and they didn’t shower her with things, things, and more things. They also did not pass up the opportunity to teach her the value of money and the benefits of hard work; they never failed to listen to her when she had a problem; they never refused to give her advice when she asked; and they never left any doubt about their love for her. Whoever wrote that letter understands that parents try to



do for their children what will help them grow into responsible adults. The Bible, too, teaches that the relationship between parents and children is based on a natural love that God established when He made them. God even requires this love in one of His commandments. Parents and children must love each other in the Lord. The best expression of this is when loving parents ask for their children's obedience and children respond by obeying in love. As children honor their parents and parents conduct themselves as worthy of their children's honor, both parents and children benefit immeasurably.

This principle is just as true in the family of God! There is *responsibility* on both sides — the parent and the child. God has a responsibility to each of His sons, and every son has a responsibility to his Father. This responsibility is powerfully expressed by the Holy Spirit in these words: “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. And I will BE a Father unto you, and ye shall BE my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” God can never actively BE a Father to you until you receive and walk out the revelation of your sonship. Millions of Christians today call God Father, and pray to the Father. Yet their sonship to God is totally meaningless to them. Not understanding the biblical term “adoption” (placement as mature sons) they view themselves as the “little adopted children of God.” It’s as though God *sees* them as His little children, and they see God as their heavenly benefactor to supply all their wants and needs, but they have no concept of what sonship is all about, what its ultimate purpose is, what it really *means* to be a son of God! They see themselves as Christians, believers, forgiven, saved, justified, redeemed, sanctified, etc., but they walk not in the consciousness or experience of SONSHIP to God. They live out their lives as believers in Jesus, Christians, church members, teachers, preachers, etc. But God is *not* their Father! He is their Saviour, their Healer, their Deliverer, their

Comforter, their Blessor, their Baptizer, and their “soon coming King” — but He is not their Father. They have not *been* sons to Him, and therefore He has not *been* a Father to them.

Now, let me explain what I mean by this. “I will BE a Father to you, and ye shall BE my sons...” There are two levels of Fatherhood. The first is biological, the second practical and experiential. On the first level one hears the title “father” merely because he has biologically generated an offspring. His name will appear on the birth certificate as the father of the child, even if he has never been seen again since the night of conception or the hour of birth. On the second level, however, one is respected and loved as a father because he fulfills all the responsibilities, privileges, and potentials of fatherhood. He is there when the child is born. He is there after the child is born. He provides, cares for, loves, nurtures, disciplines, guides, trains, and counsels that child through all the years of his growth and development into adulthood. His purpose in fatherhood is to produce an end result — a loving, knowledgeable, capable, responsible ADULT! In that process he is *reproducing himself* in the son or daughter. He is not just giving them a roof over their head, food to eat, and some “goodies” along the way. Oh, no! Can we not see by this that there are fathers who are *not* fathers — they have merely contributed the sperm to generate an offspring, but have never had a father’s heart, have never understood or taken seriously the true purpose of fatherhood, nor have they fulfilled the responsibilities of fatherhood. They have not actively, truly, caringly BEEN a father! With what wonder and understanding do we now receive the promise of the Lord: “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord...and I will BE a Father to you!”

In like manner there are children who are *not* children, sons who are *not* sons. Oh, yes, their name, too, is on the birth

certificate as the child of the one who gave them life. They are biologically the offspring of their parents, but they do not relate to the parents in a functional way. Rather than submitting to, obeying, respecting, honoring, and loving their parents, they are rebellious, self-willed, disrespectful, uncaring, and hateful. On the one hand they are legally the children of their parents, but on the other hand they have never BEEN sons and daughters. They have refused to fulfill the responsibilities of sonship. They have refused to walk in the relationship of sonship. They have spurned the spirit of sonship. Can we not understand by this the deep, profound cry of the Father's heart when He says, "Wherefore come out from among them (the religious idols, the false gods and false ideas concerning the true God, the carnal church systems of man, the childishness of man-made religion — Mystery Babylon), and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing...and ye shall BE my sons and daughters!" Ah, that is just it! There's something to do, a responsibility to fulfill, a walk and relationship to enter into in order to BE sons to the Father! Often in my prayers, meditations, and consecration I say to my Father, "I want to BE a son to you, so that you may truly BE a Father to me!" That is the deepest desire of my heart. Carl Schwing once wrote, "There is no greater communion than that of a son losing himself in the depths of the Father. There is no greater love than the Father giving and being all to His son. There is no greater testimony than this: 'I and the Father are one.'"

We have seen that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only One who could have revealed the Fatherhood of God to us, in fact, that is the very thing He came to do. Truly God is a Father, as far as He is concerned. His whole attitude toward all men is that of a Father; but the trouble is that our attitude is often not that of sons. Men see themselves as human beings, as sinners saved by grace, as Christians, Methodists, Baptists, Catholics, Charismatics, or Pentecostals. They see the forgiveness of

their sins as the ticket to a beautiful heaven somewhere where they will sing, dance, and shout their way through eternity. They have no concept that God is after *sons, mature sons, the reproduction of Himself* in love, holiness, wisdom, power, authority, and glory to bless, govern, and establish His kingdom throughout all realms of His great universe. They are stuck on being little children to get to heaven — they're just interested in playing forever in God's celestial park! They neglect, or dismiss, or reject, or rebel against any parental guidance that would steer them into DIVINE ADULTHOOD.

It never dawns upon the understanding of most believers that the terms “children,” “son,” “sons,” “daughters,” and “Father,” appear multiplied hundreds of times in scripture, whereas “Christian” appears only *twice* and Methodist, Baptist, Pentecostal, Roman Catholic, and nearly all the other names churches call themselves *do not appear at all!* The apostles of our Lord knew absolutely nothing of Roman Catholicism, Baptist, Lutheran, Charismatic, or any of the hundreds of other denominations — but they certainly knew a lot about *sonship!* ***Sonship*** is God's revelation in Christ Jesus. Through Him God spoke to us “*in Son,*” is how the Greek text puts it (Heb. 1:1-2). ***Sonship*** is the central issue of God's great and eternal purpose. ***Sonship*** is the longing and the hope of creation. ***Sonship*** is our calling and destiny in God! Let us all truly BE sons to our Father, that He may BE a Father unto us! This is the heritage of the *overcomer!*

To be continued...

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