



## DEVELOPMENT OF SONSHIP

Dr Stephen Smith, 29 March 2015

Sonship is not about us, but everything about Christ. Characteristics of children are self-absorption (selfishness) – what's in it for me.

One of the greatest distractions to come upon the church has been the over-emphasis of who we are in Christ, instead of who He is in us.

***But for right now, friends, I'm completely frustrated by your unspiritual dealings with each other and with God. You're acting like infants in relation to Christ, capable of nothing much more than nursing at the breast. Well, then, I'll nurse you since you don't seem capable of anything more.***

***As long as you grab for what makes you feel good or makes you look important, are you really much different than a babe at the breast, content only when everything's going your way?***

**I Corinthians 3: 1-3 (MSG)**

***<sup>13</sup> [That it might develop] until we all attain oneness in the faith and in the comprehension of the [full and accurate] knowledge of the Son of God, that [we might arrive] at really mature manhood (the completeness of personality which is nothing less than the standard height of Christ's own perfection), the measure of the stature of the fullness of the Christ and the completeness found in Him.***

***<sup>14</sup> So then, we may no longer be children, tossed [like ships] to and fro between chance gusts of teaching and wavering with every changing wind of doctrine, [the prey of] the cunning and cleverness of unscrupulous men, [gamblers engaged] in every shifting form of trickery in inventing errors to mislead.***

**Ephesians 4: 13-14 (AMP)**

***<sup>6</sup> Let no one delude and deceive you with empty excuses and groundless arguments [for these sins], for through these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of rebellion and disobedience.***

***<sup>7</sup> So do not associate or be sharers with them.***

***<sup>8</sup> For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light [lead the lives of those native-born to the Light].***

***<sup>9</sup> For the fruit (the effect, the product) of the Light or the Spirit [consists] in every form of kindly goodness, uprightness of heart, and trueness of life.***

***<sup>10</sup> And try to learn [in your experience] what is pleasing to the Lord [let your lives be constant proofs of what is most acceptable to Him].***

***<sup>11</sup> Take no part in and have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds and enterprises of darkness, but instead [let your lives be so in contrast as to] expose and reprove and convict them.***

**Ephesians 5: 6-11 (AMP)**

## WHAT TYPE OF PERSON ARE YOU?

### 1. Natural Man:

*But the natural, nonspiritual man does not accept or welcome or admit into his heart the gifts and teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God, for they are folly (meaningless nonsense) to him; and he is incapable of knowing them [of progressively recognizing, understanding, and becoming better acquainted with them] because they are spiritually discerned and estimated and appreciated.*

I Corinthians 2: 14 (AMP)

- He has never passed from death to life in Christ. The person who has never made Jesus the Lord of his life.
- He lives by the natural, the flesh, and is therefore governed by the flesh.

### 2. Carnal Man:

*HOWEVER, BRETHREN, I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!]*

*I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it].*

*For you are still [unspiritual, having the nature] of the flesh [under the control of ordinary impulses]. For as long as [there are] envying and jealousy and wrangling and factions among you, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh, behaving yourselves after a human standard and like mere (unchanged) men?*

I Corinthians 3: 1-3

- He is born again, received Jesus as his Saviour but never grew.
- Operates by his natural senses, his body and intellect, and not the Holy Spirit.
- He is a baby Christian who has not grown and developed. What he senses and observes in the natural is fact and law (final) to him.

### 3. Spiritual Man - Sons of God:

*But the spiritual man tries all things [he examines, investigates, inquires into, questions, and discerns all things], yet is himself to be put on trial and judged by no one [he can read the meaning of everything, but no one can properly discern or appraise or get an insight into him].*

I Corinthians 2: 15 (AMP)

- He has developed into a dimension of the Spirit.
- He got victory over the flesh. His spirit has control of his physical senses and his intellect (will).
- He knows he can overcome everything with love.
- For the natural and carnal man this man seems to them "insane". He seems to act irresponsibly, but he has the wisdom of God and not man.

## SIGNS OF SONSHIP

### 1. When the desires of the world are no longer attractive.

If we love and trust money (Mammon) more than God, you are a child and will not be entrusted with the estate (kingdom).

*It's obvious, isn't it? The place where your treasure is, is the place you will most want to be, and end up being.*  
**Matthew 6:21 (MSG)**

**2. Sons of God are dead against criticism, as well as the need for approval, affirmation and praise.**

<sup>3</sup> *It matters very little to me what you think of me, even less where I rank in popular opinion. I don't even rank myself. Comparisons in these matters are pointless.*

<sup>4</sup> *I'm not aware of anything that would disqualify me from being a good guide for you, but that doesn't mean much. The Master makes that judgment.*

<sup>5</sup> *So don't get ahead of the Master and jump to conclusions with your judgments before all the evidence is in. When he comes, he will bring out in the open and place in evidence all kinds of things we never even dreamed of-inner motives and purposes and prayers. Only then will any one of us get to hear the "Well done!" of God.*

**I Corinthians 4: 3-4 (MSG)**

Children are self-centred. A son of God is no longer a slave of circumstances, and people! Sons of God are bond slaves to God.

*Do you not know that if you continually surrender yourselves to anyone to do his will, you are the slaves of him whom you obey, whether that be to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience which leads to righteousness (right doing and right standing with God)?*

**Romans 6:16 (AMP)**

<sup>22</sup> *Then Samuel said, do you think all GOD wants are sacrifices- empty rituals just for show? He wants you to listen to him! Plain listening is the thing, not staging a lavish religious production.*

<sup>23</sup> *Not doing what GOD tells you are far worse than fooling around in the occult. Getting self-important around GOD is far worse than making deals with your dead ancestors. Because you said No to GOD's command, he says No to your kingship.*

<sup>24</sup> *Saul gave in and confessed, "I've sinned. I've trampled roughshod over GOD's Word and your instructions. I cared more about pleasing the people. I let them tell me what to do.*

**I Samuel 15:22-24 (MSG)**

To whom do you put yourself at disposal? Are you a servant of obedience to righteousness or of people to slavery?

**AND [Jesus] said to His disciples, Temptations (snares, traps set to entice to sin) are sure to come, but woe to him by or through whom they come!**

**Luke 17: 1(AMP)**

The only reason that offenses have such a dramatic effect on us is that we, in our unbelief, try to deal with offense unscripturally.

Every offense that comes our way has the potential to destroy us. Although, it is not the offense itself that carries the power. The potential for destruction lies in how we handle offenses.

**3. Sons have the ability to recognize that something is God's doing (Gen. 45, Joseph).**

Joseph had no hatred and bitterness in his heart. **In verse 8 he says: So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt.**

Can you recognize God's hand in your life? Sometimes cause for offense is from God to test and to develop your character!

***For You, O God, have proved us; You have tried us as silver is tried, refined, and purified.***

***You brought us into the net (the prison fortress, the dungeon); You laid a heavy burden upon our loins.***

***You caused men to ride over our heads [when we were prostrate]; we went through fire and through water, but You brought us out into a broad, moist place [to abundance and refreshment and the open air].***

**Psalm 66:10-12**

There comes a point in a son of God's life where he recognizes God's hand in his life. He does not respond to everything and everyone. He knows who he is and where he's going - sonship!

***Rather, let our lives lovingly express truth [in all things, speaking truly, dealing truly, and living truly]. Enfolded in love, let us grow up in every way and in all things into Him Who is the Head, [even] Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).***

***For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in love.***

**Ephesians 4: 15-16**

#### **4. Sons of God walk in divine love, not natural love.**

Being in the right relationship with God; means that you will often be in trouble with the people.

***IF I [can] speak in the tongues of men and [even] of angels, but have not love (that reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion such as is inspired by God's love for and in us), I am only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.***

**I Corinthians 13: 2**

A Son of God does not react to anyone or to circumstances.

<sup>20</sup> ***But that's no life for you. You learned Christ!***

<sup>21</sup> ***My assumption is that you have paid careful attention to him, been well instructed in the truth precisely as we have it in Jesus.***

<sup>22</sup> ***Since, then, we do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything-and I do mean everything-connected with that old way of life has to go. It's rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life-a God-fashioned life,<sup>23</sup> a life renewed from the inside<sup>24</sup> and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you.***

<sup>25</sup> ***What this adds up to, then, is this: no more lies, no more pretense. Tell your neighbor the truth. In Christ's body we're all connected to each other, after all. When you lie to others, you end up lying to yourself.***

<sup>26</sup> ***Go ahead and be angry. You do well to be angry-but don't use your anger as fuel for revenge. And don't stay angry. Don't go to bed angry.***

<sup>27</sup> ***Don't give the Devil that kind of foothold in your life.***

**Ephesians 4: 20-27 (MSG)**

The last of human behaviour is to choose my response.

<sup>17</sup> *May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love, <sup>18</sup> that you may have the power and be strong to apprehend and grasp with all the saints [God's devoted people, the experience of that love] what is the breadth and length and height and depth [of it].*

<sup>19</sup> *[That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]!*

<sup>20</sup> *Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams].*

**Ephesians 3: 17-20 (AMP)**

How we treat each other and behave towards each other matters to God. We can no longer continue to live in unforgiveness, strife, envy and jealousy.

There is a golden principle right through God's Word: ***Do not let yourself be overcome by evil, but overcome (master) evil with good (Rom. 12:21).***

If we walk continually in love, evil cannot overcome us. Real love is a conscious decision - it's looking for someone you can do something for. Love seeks opportunities to serve someone. The power of love is in partnership with faith!

True sonship is to walk in true love to the point where others are positively influenced by your presence.

## **SONS OF GOD TAKE HOLD OF THEIR HERITAGE**

*For [even the whole] creation (all nature) waits expectantly and longs earnestly for God's sons to be made known [waits for the revealing, the disclosing of their sonship].*

**Romans 8:19**

Someone is waiting on your revealing as a son! You grow in your authority and manifest your sonship through maturity. God will not give the inheritance to babies.

***NOW WHAT I mean is that as long as the inheritor (heir) is a child and under age, he does not differ from a slave, although he is the master of all the estate;***

***But he is under guardians and administrators or trustees until the date fixed by his father.***

**Galatians 4: 1-2**

The fullness of your inheritance depends entirely on your willingness to grow into sonship.

No **Christian** believer who is not pursuing the life of victory in Jesus has any hope of being an over comer and conqueror, or of inheriting the nations with Christ.

Let us not be amongst those who neglect our great inheritance as sons of God. Let us lay aside all else in order to gain Christ. If we do this, God will regard Himself as our God and us as His sons.