

# Sonship

## Lesson 3

### Union with Christ, Justification and the Gift of the Spirit

The goal of these lessons is to help us grow in attaining a deep confidence and understanding of the nature of our relationship to God, to one another and to the broken world around us, as sons and daughters of the Most High God who have been chosen by God, by grace, to be healed ourselves and to become the agents of his righteousness and healing in every area of brokenness in this world through our union with Christ and the promised power of the Holy Spirit.

The true “sons of God” are those who image God, and Jesus our older brother, in their goodness. This is the manifestation of the glory of God. God is relentlessly, faithfully committed to maturing us into the dignity of being his image bearers in this world.

Our continued growth in confidently embracing and being fruitful in God’s kingdom is connected to a deepened understanding of all the things God has given through our union with Christ, so that more and more we can see sin defeated and in its place righteousness established -- both in our lives personally and corporately -- as well as in the world around us.

In Romans 8, Paul notes five major areas of God’s covenanted commitment to us in Christ that will bring our sonship/adoption to expression. Each one contributes to the fulfillment of the righteousness of God’s kingdom in and through us as his people.

- 1) Justification [*Romans 8:28-30*] – God’s definitive act of vindicating us, declaring us to be righteous in his sight, through our faith in Christ
- 2) The Spirit and Sanctification [*Romans 8:1-16*] -- God’s practical commitment to empower us through the presence of the Spirit to actually defeat sin and live out righteousness, flowing out of our family fellowship with the Father and Son
- 3) Predestination [*Romans 8:28-30*] – God’s Sovereign determination to make sure that absolutely everything in our lives and in the world around us will work toward the end purpose of establishing his righteousness
- 4) Calling [*Romans 8:28-30*] – God’s sovereign determination to faithfully keep leading us back to and into the expression of our purpose in life of being his agents of restoration, righteousness and healing in this world
- 5) Glorification [*Romans 8:15-16, 29-30*] – God’s certain commitment to bring us into the final place of eternal resurrection in the re-created, eternal new heavens and new earth, the home of righteousness forever

Each of these five areas of God's commitment to us is equally ours as a gift in Christ, and each one is equally critical to God's fulfillment of his purposes of making all things new. Last week we looked at justification and the free gift of the standing of righteousness we have before God in Christ. This week we want to look at the gift of the Spirit to produce that righteousness in us, and the important connection between justification in Christ, and the sanctifying work of the Spirit.

## I. The Necessity of the Promised Spirit

*John 1:29-34; Acts 2:17-18; Galatians 4:4-7; Romans 8:12-17*

### A. Jesus Christ -- The Anointed One [*Matthew 3:16*]

"Christ" -- Greek New Testament; "Messiah" -- Hebrew Old Testament

Both include the definition of "anointed for a purpose" [*Dan 7:13-14; Luke 4:18-19*]. Jesus was the "anointed" one, who was called by God to fulfill his purposes of salvation in this world, the redemption of all things, through the destruction of evil and restoration of righteousness by his death and resurrection.

Jesus Christ came to usher in the kingdom of God that would be marked not by empty religious ceremony and the traditions of men, but by the establishment of God's justice on behalf of the oppressed, his mercy for sinners in need of grace, and the fellowship of His presence as the delight of His children. All this would be started and brought to completion through the anointing and power of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus Christ, and through him, poured out upon his people.

Through the anointing of the Spirit, Jesus would:

- face trials, and remain submitted to his Father [*Luke 4:1 ff*]
- proclaim the message of God's favor for the oppressed and poor [*Luke 4:14 ff*]
- perform countless deeds of mercy and compassion [*Luke 4:31 ff, 5:17*]
- call and equip others to follow in his steps [*Luke 9:1ff, cf Matt 10:20*]
- see Satan's power of lies, destruction and demonic oppression broken and defeated [*Luke 10:17-24, 11:14-20 cf Mt 12:28*]
- endure the Cross and be raised again from the dead [*Romans 1:2-4*]

## B. Our Anointing [*Romans 8:1-17*]

One of the core promises that belong to as “sons of God” is this same outpouring of the Spirit of God upon our lives that Jesus, our Elder Brother, received. God’s purpose all along was to make him the “firstborn among many brothers” [*Romans 8:29*] who would, like him, receive the Spirit’s power to become people who do justice, love mercy and have intimate fellowship with the Father [*John 1:32, 33; Acts 1:3-5, Joel 2; Gal 3:13-14*]

Through the Spirit, we are also enabled:

- to put sin to death and yield our bodies to do righteousness [*Romans 8:9-14*]
- to fellowship with the Father- calling Him “Abba”, without fear [*Romans 8:15-16*]
- to proclaim the Word of God boldly, with the presence of God’s power [*Acts 4:31*]
- to perform deeds of mercy, compassion and justice [*Acts 3:1 ff, 4:32 ff*]
- to see Satan defeated [*Romans 16:30*]
- to endure whatever sufferings following our King may bring [*Rom 8:17,15:13*]

## II. The Promise of the Spirit: Through Faith Alone In Christ Alone

Just like our acceptance as sons who are declared “righteous” as a gift through the finished work of Christ, God grants us the Presence of the Spirit to bring that sonship to expression, not on the basis of our performance but on the basis of the finished work of Christ [*Galatians 3:1-5*]

- A. As a son of God, you have the Spirit, because this is the gift of the Father [*Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 12:12,13; Ephesians 1:13,14; Galatians 4:4-7*]
- B. As a son of God, you need to ask for the Spirit’s presence to be made known, because this is a living relationship [*Acts 4:23-31; Ephesians 5:18*]
- C. In order to be confident about asking God for the Spirit you need to ask:
  1. Exclusively on the basis of Christ’s finished work [*Gal 3:1-5*]
  2. For God to fulfill his kingdom purposes [*Luke 11:5-13*]

### III. The Radical Commitment of God to Freely Bless us with His Spirit

#### A. The Example of David

II Samuel 11, 12 -- the sin with Bathsheba and the killing of Uriah, and David's repentance and faith in Psalm 51

##### 1. Psalm 51

Note how David deals with the need for the restored presence of God:

- he relies on the free/undeserved mercy of God [51:1-2]
- he is totally honest about his sin [51:3-6]
- he asks God to freely give him the joy of knowing his sin/guilt has been removed (blot it out) [51:7-8]
- and for God to give him a pure heart and steadfast spirit to serve the Lord [51:9-10]
- and for God to restore his joy in God Himself through the confident presence of the Spirit [51:11-12]
- and for God to give him the opportunity to share the love of God and teach others [51:13-17]
- and for God to prosper the work of the people of God [51:18-19]

##### 2. II Samuel 12-19 -- the discipline of the Father

This presence of the Spirit allowed David to:

- accept God's discipline as the hand of His loving Father [12:9-14]
- seek God's mercy to reverse His decision [12:15-23]
- worship God in the midst of the consequences [15:24-29; 16:9-14]
- receive God's further blessing on his life [chapters 12-19]
- return to his responsibilities as King and totally trust the Sovereign hand of God to fulfill His will - in whatever that required in David's life [19:16-23, ff]

B. The Example of Peter

1. The three denials of Christ [*Luke 22:54ff*]
2. The three affirmations of Christ [*John 21:15ff*]
3. The anointing at Pentecost [*Acts 2:14ff, cf Jn 21:18-19*]