

The Father/Son Relationship With God

[Part 2]

In the first part of this article we saw that through what Jesus Christ has done for all humanity we can have now this glorious relationship of becoming adopted children of God.

Implications of Sonship

1 Acceptance

John 15:16 [NIV] *“You did not choose me, but **I chose you** and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.”*

God chose us. Our being accepted into the created family of God can be illustrated by a simple story.

The Godhead is likened to three people holding hands in a circle, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, depicting their love, unity and communion. However, there was a moment in history when the “hands” of the Father and the Son were unclasped.

Matthew 27:46 [NIV] *“... my God my God why have you forsaken me?”*

At that moment in time the circle was broken as Jesus our Saviour took on Himself the weight of all our sins. **The circle was broken just once in eternity to allow us to enter the family circle.**

Now the circle is once again complete with Jesus holding one of our hands and the Father the other.

John 14:15-21 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. **I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.** Before long, the world will not see me any more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day you will realise that **I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.** Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. **He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.**”*

As we are welcomed into the circle of the family the love that the Father has for the Son becomes the measure of the love the Father has for us.

By adoption we are accepted, unreservedly, by the Father.

2 Access

Under the **Old Covenant** the people were conscious that **access** into the direct presence of God was **reserved for only the High Priest** and then only once on one day of the year.

Mark 15:37-38 [NIV] *“With a loud cry, Jesus breathed his last. The curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.”*

Access made available to God’s Holy presence. This curtain cut off access to the Holy of holies to all humans.

Our ability, through the death of Jesus, to have immediate and personal access to the presence of the Father was one of the “bombshells” the disciples landed on the law-abiding Jews.

Ephesians 2:18-19 [Message Bible] “*Through Him* [Jesus Christ] *we both share the same Spirit and have equal access* [Greek “royal invitation”] *to the Father. That’s plain enough, isn’t it? You’re no longer wandering exiles. This Kingdom of faith is now your home country, you’re no longer strangers or outsiders.*”

Through Jesus Christ we not only have access to the royal throne, but have been adopted into the royal family of God as His created children.

3 Authority

Matthew 28:16-20 [NIV] “*Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*”

All authority has been given by the Father to Jesus Christ. “*Therefore*” as a result of this **we are to use this authority to continue the work that Jesus the Son of Man started when here on earth.**

Mark 16:14-20 [NIV] “*Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen. He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.” After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.*”

Are we like the disciples, before they received the Holy Spirit, lacking in faith or just stubbornly refusing to use the authority given to us by Jesus Christ to fulfil the commission He has given us?

God can and does act through those who use the name [authority] of Jesus Christ.

God will confirm their words by signs and wonders as the Father did with Jesus when He was a human on earth.

John Wesley once said as the result of personal experience “*without God man cannot, but without man God does not!*”

Why does God go to so much trouble and difficulty to do His work through human beings?

Why does God not do it Himself, more effectively and quickly?

2 Corinthians 6:1 [NIV] “*As God’s fellow-workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain.*”

Because He wants us to exercise the authority of sonship as His co-workers on the earth.

Ephesians 2:8-10 [NIV] “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no-one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*”

We are saved **not** by our own works of law-keeping but by grace, to do a job of work with Jesus Christ.

This work with and for Jesus Christ is **not** an option.

Romans 5:6, 8-10 [NIV] *“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.” ... “But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God’s wrath through him! For if, when we were God’s enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life!”*

We are justified, made right with God by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, but **we are saved, by allowing Jesus to live His life again in us.**

John 14:15-18 [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; **I will come to you.**”*

Christ will live His life again in us by the active indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:12-14 [NIV] *“I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.”*

By using the name [authority] of Jesus Christ great things will happen.

4 Intimacy

John 5:19-20 [NIV] *“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.** For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these.”*

Intimacy is the key to disclosure.

The mature son or daughter working with the father and learning to think as he thinks, having same goals.

Intimacy with the Father is the key to spiritual growth to maturity.

Matthew 6:6 [NIV] *“But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.”*

As we spend time in some secret, quiet place with the Father, we will hear the whisper of His voice and know the embrace of His love.

Psalm 91:1-2 [Amplified Bible] *“**He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty, Whose power no foe can withstand.** I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, on Him I lean and rely, and on Him I confidently trust.”*

5 Provision

Psalm 131:2 [Living Bible] *“I am quiet now before the Lord, just as a child who is weaned from the breast, yes my begging has been stilled.”*

Anxiety is the enemy of spirituality.

Knowing we are children of God our agitated and fretful spirits are calmed and quieted and at rest.

Philippians 4:12-13 [NIV] *“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”*

The world can win its joys and equally well lose its joys. A change of fortune, a collapse in health, a failure of a plan; even the change in the weather, can take away the fickle joy the world can give us.

But **the Christian has a serene and untouchable joy** which comes from walking in the company and presence of Jesus the Christ and fellowship with others with the same spirit in them.

Matthew 6:25, 31-33 [NIV] *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?” ... “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

Sonship is the guarantee that as we seek first the kingdom [the created family of God] all these things necessary for our physical life will be provided by God.

Real anxiety is rare among children from secure homes as they know all their needs will be provided by loving parents.

Matthew 7:11 [NIV] *“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!”*

We can have total confidence in our loving heavenly Father to provide all our needs.

6 Obedience and Suffering

In the Jewish culture the father was to be obeyed at all times, obedience was not optional but integral to sonship.

Mark 14:36 [NIV] *“Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”*

The obedience and reverence of Jesus in His relationship with the Father transcended the Jewish culture of the day. The word “*abba*”, while embracing intimacy, does **not** exclude costly obedience to the point of suffering.

Romans 8:15-17 [NIV] *“For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.” **The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.** Now if we are children, then we are heirs, **heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ**, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.”*

Sonship involves being heirs with Jesus but also suffering with Him, often because of obedience to Him and the Father.

1 Peter 2:19-21 [NIV] *“For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But **if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God.** To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.”*

For Jesus, sonship meant total obedience that include embracing the cross; it will mean no less for us.

We must **not** lower the level of sonship and fatherhood as depicted in God's Word, by producing it to totally inadequate models of today's society.

7 Sonship and Guidance

Romans 8:29-30 [NIV] *"For those God foreknew he also **predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.** And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."*

Ephesians 1:5, 11 [NIV] *"**he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will,**" ... "In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,"*

To use these two scriptures to claim that our lives have been pre-planned in fine detail is a serious misuse of scripture.

The calling is to conform to the likeness of Jesus Christ, for Jesus to be the first of many children of God.

To me **this is family planning by God**, He is choosing when to expand His family.

Ephesians 1:5 [NIV] *"he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, **in accordance with his pleasure and will,**"*

God adopts us as His children in accordance to His pleasure and will.

1 Corinthians 15:22-23 [NIV] *"For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But **each in his own turn:** Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him."*

Note *"each in his own turn."*

Just as we did **not** choose when we were born physically, our physical father decided that.

So we do **not** choose when God calls us to be born again spiritually.

God as our spiritual Father chooses the time of our spiritual conception.

Following the same physical analogy as we mature as physical children our parents give us more freedom of choice in our lives, the same is with our spiritual Father.

Our physical parents desire us to choose what will be in the end best for us and guide us mostly by personal example.

In the end it is the love and sacrifice of our physical parents that motivates us to do what is pleasing to them.

God works in the same way with us, His spiritual children.

God's love for us is expressed through the personal sacrifice and personal example of Jesus Christ.

This leads us in the end to show our gratitude to Him by seeking to do His will, knowing that in the end it will be for our own good.

Romans 12:1-2 [NIV] *"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to **offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.** Do not conform any*

longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Maturity means that our changed minds can increasingly make decisions that will please our Heavenly Father.

John 15:9-17 [NIV] *"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. **Greater love has no-one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.** I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other."*

As we mature through obedience to Jesus Christ's words we become friends as well as children of God.

Isaiah 41:8 [NIV] *"But you, O Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham my friend,"*

Abraham who obeyed God became His friend.

Genesis 18:17 [NIV] *"Then the LORD said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do?"*

God shared with His friend Abraham His agony over Sodom.

Hebrews 6:1-2 [NIV] *"Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to **maturity**, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment."*

The tragedy is that so many of us remain as immature children, learning only the first principles of obedience, when we should be going on to maturity through a daily intimate time with our Heavenly Father.

Paul, as many others whom God used in the past in a tremendous way, described themselves as slaves ["*doulos*"] of Jesus Christ.

The word characterises their willingness to obey and serve Jesus Christ **not** their relationship with the Father.

As created children of God our obedience towards the Father should be greater than that of slaves, as it comes from the heart, in pure gratitude for all that the Father has done for us in His love for us.

Four aspects of the Father/child relationship.

1 As I desire to do my heavenly Father's will, even if I do not know what it is, it puts me in a position where I can hear His voice.

What pleases the Father is my desire to do His will.

2 The Father's will is often, as we mature, for us to exercise our will, for we are His children not His slaves.

3 As a child of God I have freedom to initiate issues concerning the expansion of His Kingdom.

What pleases our heavenly Father is the enthusiasm we have for the expansion of His kingdom and the initiative we have taken on His behalf. This does **not** negate our talking to God about our hopes and dreams for expanding His Kingdom.

- 4 The intimacy of being a child of God is that as I mature the Father will commence to share His heart and thoughts with me.

The foundation of fatherhood gives us a firm base to build on that will be adequate to withstand all the stresses that are an inevitable part of our life.