

The redemption of sons of God

Sonship is essential to our salvation! Paul reminds us that being the sons and daughters of God is, in fact, a promise to those who have been separated from this world and made clean. However, in relation to this promise we all have a problem. We were born into this world as slaves of sin, completely unable to separate ourselves from that which makes us unclean. Rather than living as sons, we are dead in trespasses and sins. In order to receive the promise of sonship, each one of us needs to be redeemed. The word 'redeem' simply means 'to pay a price for the release of someone or something'. In the Old Testament, for example, a slave could be redeemed from their captivity when a cost was met to secure their release. Christ paid the penalty for our sin and the price for our captivity when He died on the cross. Furthermore, His precious blood was made available to cleanse us from all sin.

This is a most glorious relief, yet it would be an error to think that Christ died on the cross just to pay the penalty for our sin, or that because of His death everyone in the world is now free from sin. The Scriptures clearly declare that God the Father chose us in Christ and predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ according to the kind intention of His will. Even before mankind fell into sin, the Father's desire for many sons was to be realised in and through Christ. You see, the redemption of sons of God is more than the payment of the penalty of sin. It is a whole process by which we are made sons of God. And all the elements of this process are only available in Christ Jesus.

References:

2Co 6:17-18 Eph 2:1-2
 Tit 2:14 Mat 1:21
 Gal 3:13 Deu 24:18
 1Co 6:20 Eph 1:3-6, 11
 Rom 8:29-30 Rev 21:7

Further Study

Gal 4

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 30

The elements of redemption

The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are all involved in the process of our redemption. This process involves our recovery from sin and captivity into the adoption in the Son, new birth from the Father, and empowerment by the Holy Spirit. The starting point for our redemption is to be recovered to the position of a son through adoption in Christ. Then, in Christ, the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son by which we cry, 'Abba! Father!' This is what it means to be 'born again' or 'born from above'. Further to this, we are baptised with the Holy Spirit who guides us into all truth and empowers us to live by faith as sons of God. Becoming the sons of God involves all these steps, and we must be careful not to confuse them. For example, 'adoption' and being 'born again' are not the same thing, as some might have assumed. In fact, as we will see, we cannot be born again unless we have first been adopted into Christ.

In our society, adoption is a legal process whereby a child who was born to one set of parents is made a son or daughter of another set of parents. The child is then identified and named as a new member of that family. However, while the child has been given the position of a son in the family, his genetic make-up (or the essential elements of his biological life) is different from that of the parents. Similarly, adoption into Christ means that although we were born as sons of Adam, without *zoe* life, yet we are placed into the position of a son, in Christ. As Peter explained, 'You once were not a people, but now you are the people of God'.

References:

Rom 8:5 Gal 4:5
Eph 1:5 Act 1:8
1Pe 1:3 Joh 3:3
Rom 9:25-26 1Pe 2:10

Further Study

1Pe 2

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 31

Baptism is the first step of obedience

When the message of salvation is preached by a messenger, we are made aware, by the Holy Spirit, of Christ's redeeming work on the cross. Convicted of our captivity to sin and the judgement of God, we cry out to God to forgive us. We are given the privilege of being recovered to Him as we also forgive those who have sinned against us. We are illuminated by the Holy Spirit that we are sons of God by faith and need to come into Christ. This provokes the hearer to ask the question, 'How do I come into Christ?' The answer of course is that we must be baptised into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is to be our first step of obedience.

This was the experience of the Ethiopian court official when he received the word of Jesus from Philip the evangelist. The Ethiopian's immediate response to the word proclaimed by Philip was to say, 'Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptised?' Baptism involves being clothed with Christ's sonship, for the word declares that He is the possessor of all sonship. He is the Firstborn and all the promises have been given to Him. We can only receive the promised inheritance of sonship if we join Him by adoption.

By adoption we join the inheritance of the Firstborn, but we are not yet 'born from above'. We share the inheritance but we are not actually a son at this point because we have not received 'new life'. Nevertheless, we are in the position of a son by adoption. Although previously we had not been a people, we now are moved into the house. Now we are Abraham's seed because Christ is the seed of Abraham. Adoption, then, is a context for life in which we can be born again and continue to grow as sons of God until the fullness of times, when we receive our resurrection bodies.

References:

Joh 16:8
Eph 4:24
2Co 1:20
Gal 3:16, 18, 27

Further Study

Act 8

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 1

Jesus Christ is the one seed

For many Christians, being 'born again' has largely become a descriptor or an indicator of a person's beliefs about Jesus. The term is often used to mark the time when they met Jesus as their Lord and Saviour and accepted that He died on the cross for their sins. However, as we have been learning, the word of salvation is proclaimed by a messenger to bring us into the Son. This is not yet the new birth, but is the context in which we can be 'born again'. To understand what it truly means to be born again, we need to consider that Jesus Christ is the 'one Seed'.

In the Covenant of Yahweh, the Son emptied Himself to make room for a multitude of sons. He emptied Himself, by Eternal Spirit, to the bosom of the Father. And by Eternal Spirit the Father received Him and made Him 'My Firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth'. As the Father's Firstborn, the Son of God also became the Father's possession to give, as a Son, Slave, and Pioneer.

Every person's name as a son of God was declared in the Everlasting Covenant and committed to the Son. The promise of sonship, in Jesus Christ, was the gospel preached to Abraham. In the book of Genesis we read that God made an Everlasting Covenant with Abraham, promising to greatly multiply Abraham's seed (sons), and that in his Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed. The blessing of Abraham is our sonship and it is available in Christ who is the one Seed. 'Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.'

References:

Gal 3:16 Php 2:7
Psa 89:27-29 Heb 12:2
Joh 3:16-17 Heb 13:20

Further Study

Gen 17

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 2

Adoption and new birth

The apostle Paul helps us to understand the distinction between adoption and new birth when he explains that ‘when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.’

We observe in this passage that Paul firstly refers to our adoption as sons. Then, because we are adopted sons in Christ, the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, ‘Abba! Father!’ At this point we are no longer slaves to sin, but now sons and heirs of *zoe* life. We have been born again from the dead, having received the Spirit of sonship from the Father. This birth is so much more than merely accepting that Jesus died for ‘me’. We cannot come to the Father and receive the new birth unless we are already obedient to the messenger word which calls us to be found in Christ.

We come to the Father, through Christ, so that we can hear and learn from Him. In this same season, the Father, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, draws us to enter into Christ, that is, into His body. Jesus said, ‘Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me’. Having qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of sonship, the Father, through the Holy Spirit, places us as members in the body of Christ, just as it pleases Him.

References:

Gal 4:4-7 Rom 8:15
Rom 6:5-6 1Pe 1:3
Joh 6:45 1Co 12:18
Psa 135:6

Further Study

Php 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 3

The obedience of faith

New birth has very real and obvious outcomes for our lives. Those who have been born again are no longer slaves of sin. John explained that ‘whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.’ This doesn’t mean that those who are born again do everything perfectly. It means that instead of continuing to define their own lives, which is sin, those who have been born of incorruptible seed live by the obedience of faith, doing the works of their sonship that were prepared for them in Christ Jesus. They are enabled to put off sin and to grow as a son of God.

This leads us to the second key witness of new birth, which is our love for one another. ‘Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. The obedience of faith works by love and is therefore seen in offering. Clearly, those who have been born again live by offering. So you see, the witness that we have passed from death to life as ones who have been born again is not found in an experience or a belief to which we hold. Rather, the witness is our obedience to the word of our sonship, our love for the brethren, our gathering together as a fellowship of believers, and a life of offering.

References:

1Jn 3:9 Eph 2:10
1Jn 4:7, 12 Gal 5:6
1Jn 3:14 Joh 5:24
Joh 13:35 1Pe 1:22
Rom 16:25-26

Further Study

1Jn 5

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 6

Growing up as firstfruits

As we continue to hear the word of God, receive the word into our hearts with understanding, and respond to that word in faith, repentance and obedience, we grow and mature as sons of God, and we do so in a fellowship, in community, as members of the body of Christ. As members of His body, we are to grow up in all things into Christ who is the Head. In Christ, we shall all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Having been adopted as sons, born of the Father and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we lay our lives down to grow up as firstfruits. We are born of the Spirit, with zoe-life. We are members of Christ's body, presenting our members to obey and fulfil His will. We are motivated by love and by the power of the Spirit, to sow our lives into the offering of Christ. As we die daily, and live by the resurrection life of Christ, we are able to bear fruit in ourselves, in others, and together with others. We make room for multiplication by laying our lives down within the fellowship of His offering, presenting our members as a living sacrifice. As we are raised with Christ and mature as sons of God, we show forth His testimony, not our own, enabling others to receive the ministry of the Spirit to also become sons of God. As we live in this way, we bear fruit to eternal zoe-life. We grow up as sons of God within the offering of Christ, to firstfruits.

References:

Heb 10:25 Joh 10:11
 Joh 15:13 1Jn 3:16
 Joh 3:5-6, 8 Heb 12:23
 1Co 15:31 Rom 12:1
 Rom 6:4-5 Col 2:12-13

Further Study

Eph 4

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 7

The work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is central to the whole process of redemption. In fact, we are unable to come into the adoption or be born again without the Holy Spirit. His work is first as the Helper to the Father and the Son. In this regard, He is 'the Spirit of adoption'. Jesus explained that 'the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.' The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father, in the name of the Son, to do a specific work. He is bringing to remembrance the words of Christ so that we can live by them. Jesus explained this work further when He said, 'But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth ... He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.'

We need to remember that the fullness of the Father has been laid down to the Son. Jesus said, 'All things that the Father has are Mine'. Likewise, Yahweh the Son emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, and as such, He 'belongs' to the Father. The Father has the authority and prerogative to give 'His only begotten Son'. The work of the Holy Spirit is to take everything that belongs to both the Father and the Son and disclose it to us. The love of God is poured into our hearts *through* the Holy Spirit. And in the same way, it is *through* the Holy Spirit, that the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying, 'Abba Father'.

References:

Rom 8:15 Joh 14:26
Rom 5:5 Joh 3:16
Php 2:7 Rom 8:32
Gal 4:6 Joh 1:16
Col 2:9 Eph 3:19

Further Study

Joh 16

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 8

Enabled to live as a son of God

The word of Christ is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit as it is proclaimed by a messenger of Christ. The Father sends the word to each person and it contains the specific naming of each son. The word can be described as the 'oil'. It is the word of our sonship. It causes our hearts to burn and we are illuminated concerning the glorious hope of our inheritance in Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and the Son to be our Helper. As our Helper, the Holy Spirit empowers us to live as a son of God, by faith. He does this by pouring the love of God into our hearts, so that we can live by the obedience of faith. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit brings to us the seven Spirits of God, the Spirit of the Lord. This is the full capacity of everything that God is in Spirit. This was the power through which Jesus was enabled to offer Himself. Likewise, we are enabled by the seven Spirits of God, brought to us by the Holy Spirit, to live by offering as a son of God, and thereby reveal the love of God. 'For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.'

We can resist the work of the Holy Spirit by hardening our hearts to the word that is preached. We do this by refusing to hear, receive or obey the word. If we do this, we forfeit the promises of God and remain captive to sin and death. However, the mercies of God are new every morning if we will receive His word, continue in the fellowship of Christ and receive capacity from God to love and offer as He does.

References:

Luk 24:32 Jer 20:9
Eph 1:18 Joh 14:26
Rom 5:5 Rev 4:5
Heb 9:14 Rom 8:14
Act 7:51 Lam 3:22-23

Further Study

Tit 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 9

The power of seven Spirits

The book of Hebrews teaches us that Jesus offered Himself to God *through the power of Eternal Spirit*. The Eternal Spirit is the fullness of the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of the Son and the Holy Spirit; it's everything that God is, in Spirit! The Bible also calls this 'the seven Spirits of God'. In the book of Zechariah, the seven Spirits of God is represented symbolically as the 'golden oil' that is flowing down to be the fuel for the lampstand, the church, enabling it to be the light to the world. The Spirit of God is now the power of our sonship, just as it was the power of Jesus' sonship.

This same power comes to us in the word of present truth, through an administration which is led by the Holy Spirit. The book of Revelation teaches us the Spirit of God flows down from His throne to 'stars' that are held in Jesus' right hand. These stars are the corporate messengers of the churches. In the book of Daniel, they are described as 'those who have *insight*'. Their work is to know, and then declare, the word of God, the word of present truth. As they fellowship together, they receive an understanding of what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches.

The stars also craft specific events, *ministries* of the Spirit of God, that bring illumination and enable us to become His sons and daughters. Messengers fellowship together to understand what the Holy Spirit is saying to us at this time. From this fellowship, a program, a ministry, is crafted to ensure that this word is declared among us, through the Holy Spirit. As we receive and obey this word, we are empowered to do the works of our sonship. Remember, we are not empowered by our own strength. We are empowered by the Spirit which is coming down from God Himself

References:

Heb 9:14 Rev 4:5
 2Pe 1:12 Rev 1:20
 Dan 11:33, 35 Rev 2:7

Further Study

Zec 4

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 10

Righteousness, judgement and mercy

The gospel is preached to us with the Holy Spirit who illuminates us concerning three things. Firstly, His convicting work gives us illumination about our sin, which is our turning away from the sonship that God predestined for us, to our own way. Secondly, He convicts us of righteousness. This is the righteousness of our sonship and our participation in the works of righteousness that belong to our sonship, prepared by the Father before, that we should walk in them. Thirdly, He convicts us of judgement if we refuse to hear the word of Christ's messengers, to become slaves of the righteousness of sonship, and to become disciples of the culture of Christ's sonship. This is both the work of the Holy Spirit, and the message of the gospel.

We read in the book of Romans that, when the gospel is preached, a righteousness from God is revealed. It is a righteousness of sonship that becomes the possession of everyone who believes. This is called 'the righteousness of faith'. The righteousness of God is revealed in the cross of Christ. By Christ's death on the cross, God redeemed man and judged sin and Satan. We read in Psalm ninety-eight that God has made His salvation known and has revealed His righteousness to the nations. Further to this, He has righteous works that belong to the sonship of every believer, for them to receive and to live by grace, each day. This is made clear to the hearer, when the gospel is preached to them.

References:

Joh 16:8 Eph 2:10
Rom 4:9 Psa 98:2
Rom 1:16-17
Rom 6:13, 16-18

Further Study

Rom 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 13

Right living before God

The righteousness that God has given to every believer is, quite simply, 'right living' before God. It is living how God willed and purposed for us to live. His will and purpose is for us to live as His sons. He desires to beget men and women as His sons and daughters, and to establish on earth an administration that will impart His life and righteousness to all those who seek Him.

We read in the fifty-third Psalm that God looks down from heaven upon the sons of men, to see if there are any who have an understanding of His existence. He looks down to see if there are any who seek Him and His ways, for God's purpose is that the sons of men would become the sons of God. Anyone who comes to God must firstly believe that He exists, and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him. Each one must seek Him because they acknowledge Him as their beginning and their end. He is their God who encompasses the whole of their life. They acknowledge that He is their provision, their life and their breath, and is the source of all things.

Not everyone acknowledges the truth of God's existence and that it is He who is their life and breath. By their own unrighteousness, they refuse God's destiny for them, and ambitiously seek to craft their own destiny and righteousness, according to their own vain imaginations. Although they know God exists, they neither glorify Him as God nor give thanks to Him. They claim to be wise, but they become fools. Their mind and thoughts become futile and their foolish hearts are darkened.

References:

1Jn 3:7-8
2Co 3:9
Gal 5:5
Psa 53:2
Rev 1:8

Rom 14:17
2Co 5:21
Eph 4:24
Heb 11:6
Rom 1:22

Further Study

Rom 10

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 14

Man's reaction to God

The reality is that most of mankind refuses God's destiny for them, and would rather believe that He doesn't exist, because they seek to craft their own destiny and righteousness. Their own righteousness is simply what they deem to be good and right for them. We read in the book of Judges that most of mankind desire to do what is 'right in their own eyes'. However, God does exist! His existence has been made plain to everyone, because it is God who has made it plain. Since the creation of the world, God's eternal power and divine nature, although invisible qualities, have been clearly seen and understood from what has been made in His creation, so that everyone is without excuse.

We observe, from history, man's continual reaction against God and the truth of His existence. In every generation, many have questioned His existence, and crafted gods of their own imagination. The apostle Paul wrote that ones like these would rather exchange the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man, birds, animals and reptiles. Man's reaction against God and the truth of His existence has continued in every generation, and still continues today. God has given all those who believe the lie that He doesn't exist over to the sinful desires of their hearts. Because they do not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, He gives them over to a depraved mind; to do what ought not to be done.

Those who receive His gospel of peace set their hearts to live and minister the gospel of reconciliation to others, as God's peacemakers. Their reward is that they shall be called sons of the living God. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God'.

References:

Jdg 17:6
2Co 10:5
Mat 5:9
Isa 52:7

Rom 1:18-22
Rom 9:26
Eph 6:15

Further Study

2Pe 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 15

The judgement of God

Why is there such conflict, sin and suffering in the world today? It is a world that is full of suffering, because it is a world that has rejected God. Mankind has become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, and ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practise them. All suffering in the world is the result of deviating from God's purpose and from misusing and violating the law of God. We misuse the law of God, when we take hold of it and use it for a purpose other than that for which it was given.

When the gospel is preached, the three elements of the judgement of God are made clear, against all those who misuse and violate the law of God. Any law, when violated, has power in itself to punish its violation. The law itself brings its own wrath or penalty. Those who break any law of God incur the penalty of that law. They receive the due penalty for their error. For example, consider the natural law of gravity. If you think you can fly, and you launch yourself from a height to do so, the law of gravity will kill or injure you. The final penalty of law is death. It is through law that the first element of God's wrath is made known. The law of God cannot do anything but God's will.

References:

2Ti 3:1-5 Rom 7:5
1Co 15:56 Tit 1:16
Isa 29:13 Jud 1:10, 16
2Pe 2:14-15 Psa 10:3

Further Study

Rom 1

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 16

His judgement in the earth

The second element of the judgement of God is when He sovereignly intervenes in the affairs of men. The psalmist declared, 'He is the Lord our God; His judgements are in all the earth'. Throughout history, God has intervened and executed His judgement. God firstly warned people through His prophets that if they persisted in sin, His sovereign judgement would be upon them. There are many accounts of this in Scripture. The judgement of God fell on Sodom and Gomorrah, and many judgements of God came upon the nation of Israel because of their wickedness. God sovereignly raised up world empires, such as the Assyrians and the Babylonians, to chasten His people.

It is interesting to note that we often think of the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah as that of immorality. However, it says in the book of Ezekiel that the iniquity of Sodom and Gomorrah was that they 'had pride, fullness of food and abundance of idleness, and did not strengthen the hand of the poor and needy'. The Lord said of them that they were haughty and had committed abomination before Him; therefore He took them away as He saw fit. But more than this, the Lord says of Israel that while Israel did not walk in the ways of Sodom and Gomorrah, nor act according to their abominations, they became more corrupt than Sodom and Gomorrah, in all their ways. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon every generation of men who reject God and suppress the truth about God's righteous purpose for mankind. The righteous purpose of God is to redeem mankind and make them His sons and daughters.

References:

Psa 105:7 Rom 1:18
Zep 2:9 Jud 1:7
Pro 18:12
Gen 19:24-25

Further Study

Eze 16

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 17

His wrath against all ungodliness

The third element of the judgement of God is the revelation of the wrath of God against all ungodliness. God has appointed a day at the end of the age when He will judge the world through Jesus Christ. He will end the reign of sin and lawlessness by which the nations go their own way. Every individual will stand before the throne of God for judgement and will give an account of their lives. God has set a day when He will judge the world with justice, by Jesus Christ, whom He has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men, by raising Christ from the dead. All are without excuse. It is a sobering thought that the wrath of God shall be revealed from heaven, against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who exchange the truth of God, for a lie.

When we hear and receive the message of the gospel proclaimed, the Holy Spirit makes it clear to us that we are under the sentence of God's righteous judgement, and are dead in trespasses and sins. By the illumination of the Holy Spirit, we understand that the only way to escape the judgement of God, and to be free of the law, is to be in Christ and in this way fulfil the law. Our response is to flee to Christ for refuge from the judgement of God. When we 'run into Christ', and submit to His lordship in our life, we find the mercy of God and escape the sentence of death pronounced upon us by our sin and transgression. As we join His cross for our lives, we know a cleansing from all unrighteousness, and continue to walk in the way of repentance and change.

References:

Act 17:31 Rom 2:5
2Co 5:10 1Jn 1:9
Act 5:29-32 Eph 1:7
Rom 1:20, 25 1Jn 1:9

Further Study

Col 1

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 20

The household of God

Let's look again at the steps in the appropriation of the gospel. We are adopted, we receive the Spirit of Christ, and then we receive the Holy Spirit, from Christ and the Father. The Holy Spirit baptises us into the body of Christ, giving us access to the seven Spirits of God so that we can become members of Christ and of one another, as sons of God. The seven Spirits of God represent the full, unique abilities of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These were made available, by covenant, to the Son to accomplish the work of creation, redemption and begetting sons of God. In the Scriptures, this capacity is called 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge'. The seven Spirits of God are essential to achieving God's plan for man.

The gospel is preached to us by messengers whom Christ sends, with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, to connect us to Christ who is in heaven. When we hear and receive this message of the gospel, we begin to drink of the Spirit, from Christ. We receive the right to become sons of God. As we drink of the Spirit, we are illuminated to the fact that we are dead in trespasses and sins; and flee to Christ for refuge. Christ receives us into His house because we have responded to the message of the gospel, proclaimed to us through His messengers and the Holy Spirit whom He sent to us.

Our desire is to become a part of Christ's household. The household of the Son of God is a community of sons of God of which Christ is the Head and Firstborn. We know that we must become partakers of Christ if we are to receive the inheritance of sonship. Christ was appointed as the Head of the house of the Father; and the builder of this house is the Father.

References:

Col 2:2-3 1Co 12:13
Joh 1:12 Rev 4:5
Isa 42:6 2Co 8:23
Php 2:25 Heb 6:18
Heb 3:4, 6

Further Study

Isa 54

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 21

The Son brings us to the Father

When we receive the word of Christ's messengers, submitting ourselves to the conviction and leading of the Holy Spirit, we flee to Christ for refuge. The Son receives us, as the Head of the Father's house, and brings us to the Father. We are made part of the Father's household as sons by adoption. Remember, Christ's redeeming work was to bring us to the Father. There is no access to the Father, except through Christ.

The Lord's Prayer sums up the work of the Father. When we come to the Father, we pray for forgiveness; for His kingdom to come to us and for His will to be done through us. We also pray to receive the bread of heaven which is the capacity that we need to do His will. The Father receives us into His family on the merits of Christ's redemption, on the conditions that we repent of our own way, and forgive others their trespasses, as we are forgiven. Having satisfied the conditions of the Father, He forgives us and sends forth the Spirit of the Son, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, into our hearts as a personal possession. When this takes place, we are born of the Spirit.

Our inheritance, the completion of the adoption, is only fully received and realised on the day of resurrection when our bodies are fully redeemed and made immortal. Paul described this as 'the redemption of our body'. However, in this life, we receive the Spirit of Christ through the agency of the Holy Spirit, by whom we become the sons of God and cry out to Him, calling Him 'our Father'.

References:

1Pe 3:18 Joh 14:6
Mat 6:8-15 Gal 4:6
Joh 3:5
Rom 8:15, 23-24

Further Study

1Pe 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 22

The Father draws us to Christ

Jesus said that no-one could come to Him unless the Father draws them and grants them access to His body. Everyone who has heard and learnt from the Father comes to Christ. Jesus said this in the context of declaring that we only have everlasting life if we eat of His flesh and drink His blood, which is the true bread of heaven that the Father gives to us. Furthermore, the Father makes His abode with us, and the Father and the Son give to us the Holy Spirit as our Paraclete. He comes to abide in us and with us forever. The Holy Spirit, as the Paraclete of the Father and Son, brings to us the seven-fold Spirit of God that belongs to Christ.

Having been adopted as a son, we clothe ourselves with Christ, by baptism, and begin the process of being born again from the death of sin, by joining the fellowship of Christ's offering. By Christ's offering, we are sanctified to our own name and works, and become possessors of the divine nature. The divine nature is the zoe-life which is sourced from the Father and becomes active in the believer, making him a son of God. The New Testament shows us that being born again is a continuing, unfolding reality which is fully consummated when we receive our resurrection bodies and are brought forth into the new heavens and earth.

References:

Joh 6:55-57 Joh 15:26
Joh 16:14 Gal 3:27
Rom 6:1-11 Col 1:18
2Pe 1:4 1Pe 2:20-25
Heb 13:20-21
Joh 6:44-45, 65

Further Study

Joh 14

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 23

Joined to His offering

We join Jesus Christ in the fellowship of His offering by the power of the seven Spirits of God. Christ's offering is His suffering as a living sacrifice. We are joined to Christ's offering and begin to possess our sonship when, by being baptised into Him, we clothe ourselves with Christ and join the fellowship of His sacrificial work. By baptism, we are progressively made alive together with Christ. We receive the life of Christ that is given to us as we are joined together with Christ in the fellowship of His offering. The life of Christ is in His blood and, as it is poured out by His sacrifice, it is given to us to become our life. In the fellowship of offering, the life of Christ delivers us from the power of sin, and brings us back from death and reconciles us to God. Also, His life is multiplied to us to become our life, enabling us to live as sons of God, and to do the works of righteousness that the Father prepared beforehand that we should do.

We are born of the word of the covenant which encompasses the covenant promise of God that defines our identity and name. As we partake of Christ, eating His flesh and drinking His blood, His sonship life becomes ours, enabling us to do the works of our sonship and fulfil the will of the Father. As we join Him in the fellowship of His sufferings, walking in the Spirit according to the authority of our own sanctified name, we are enabled to become heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ.

References:

Act 9:16 1Pe 2:21
1Th 3:3 Joh 16:33
Rom 12:1 Gal 3:27
Col 2:13 Lev 17:11
Joh 6:53-58 Gal 5:25

Further Study

2Co 3

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 24

The mystery of Christ

Let us look at the pathway of suffering that a Christian endures. The cause of suffering is not a mystery to us, but the reason for suffering is, and belongs to the mystery Christ. The Scriptures teach us that the purpose of God is accomplished in our lives through suffering. Suffering is part of the mystery of the gospel. Suffering is a curse. How, then, does God turn it into blessing?

Paul asked the Ephesian church to pray on his behalf that utterance would be given to him, so that he could boldly make clear the mystery of the gospel. The mystery of the gospel is an understanding of how, by fellowship and participation in the dying of Jesus, a Christian overcomes sin, receives the rewards of glory that belong to their sonship, and then enters into eternal life. Paul explained to the Ephesians that it was by revelation that he received the knowledge of the mystery of Christ. He wrote to them explaining his understanding of this mystery, urging them to study his epistles so that they could have insight into the mystery of Christ.

Paul's work was to bring to light through his preaching the knowledge of the boundless wealth to be found in Christ, and to connect his hearers to the fellowship of Christ's offering so that they might receive this wealth and appropriate their inheritance as a son of God. He was confident that, once a believer had access to Christ, they could be bold and confident in their faith, because the Father would strengthen them with His Spirit in their inner man, enabling them to live and overcome all that they would endure in the world as sons of God.

References:

Rev 14:13 Act 9:16
Col 1:27 Col 2:2
Col 4:3 Eph 6:19
Eph 3:3-9, 12-19

Further Study

2Co 1

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 27

Power to be a son of God

Paul, speaking to the Corinthians about the glory of our sonship, said, 'For God, who said, "Light ... shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.' He was explaining that the same God who made light shine out of darkness has kindled in our hearts the light of sonship that belongs to Christ. The treasure of Christ's sonship has become ours and is now resident in our physical bodies. Clearly, the power to be a son of God comes from God. There is no capacity, springing from our own human ability, to be a son of God. The excellency of the power is from God and not of us.

The discussion in Corinthians then turns to the mystery of joining the fellowship of Christ's offering. Christ offered Himself to God as a living sacrifice and, through suffering, He was able to atone for sin and then by joining believers to the fellowship of His suffering, He is able to destroy the power of sin in their lives. Paul, speaking for himself and all believers, said that wherever we now go as Christians, we carry death in our bodies, that is, the death that Jesus dies, so that the life of Jesus may be visible in our mortal nature. For, continually, while still alive, we are being surrendered into the hands of death for Jesus' sake, that in our dying flesh, the life whereby Jesus conquered death might show forth its power. And Paul also said, 'We know for certain that when we die, He who raised the Lord Jesus from death shall also raise us up with Jesus and we shall all stand together before Him.'

References:

2Co 12:9 2Pe 1:3
1Co 1:24 Rev 20:6
2Ti 1:8 2Co 13:4
2Ti 2:11

Further Study

2Co 4

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 28

Possessing the kingdom of God

Jesus taught us that the kingdom of God is 'rightness of heart'. We possess the kingdom when we find our peace and our joy in the Holy Spirit. The grace that the Holy Spirit gives us enables us to overcome the difficulties we suffer. James tells us that those who are rich in faith possess the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is not comprised of the material things that belong to this world. For the kingdom of God is within you and the reign of Christ is now among you. Nothing happens to us that is outside of His control.

We need to be born again, or born 'from above' to see the kingdom of God. And we need to be born of water and the Spirit to receive and enter the kingdom of God. To be born of water, a Christian accepts that it is necessary for them, through baptism, to clothe themselves with Christ. A believer, by baptism, is literally joined to the fellowship of Christ's sufferings – His death, burial and resurrection. The believer's baptism is outworked in the whole of their pilgrimage through life. For them, to live is Christ and to die with Christ is gain, for it is by fellowshiping in Christ's sufferings that they are delivered from the power of sin.

To be born of the Spirit, a person must receive into their hearts the Spirit of Christ given to them as a gift from the Father. It is the Spirit of Christ who enables them to become a son of God. Once born of God, the believer moves beyond the position of imputed righteousness given to them because of the forgiveness of God, to actually demonstrating the virtues of Christ.

References:

Rom 14:17 Jas 2:5
Luk 17:20-21 Dan 4:25
Joh 3:3, 5 Gal 3:27
Rom 6:4-5 Php 1:21
Rom 8:9

Further Study

1Pe 5

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 29

The judgement of law

The apostle Paul tells us that 'law' has jurisdiction over us as long as we live. We only end our relationship with it, and its judgement that causes suffering, when we die to it with Christ. Once we are dead to the law, sin has no further dominion over us. When a believer dies in Christ, the law of sin and death has no further hold over them. 'Through the law they died to the law'. Under its sentence, they die with Christ. At the point of death, they die only to sin and law but remain alive with Christ. They are no longer married to law but are married to Christ who was raised from the dead. As they die, death is abolished and they live eternally with Christ.

When a law is broken and one suffers the consequences caused by their own actions, there is no merit or atonement in the outcome. Cause and effect have proceeded to their natural conclusion. However, when our sufferings that have resulted from sin are joined to Christ, the result is different. For those who believe, all their sufferings belong to Christ. His sufferings were the means by which the law of God was satisfied. Christ suffered the punishment of law. Because of His innocence, and because He suffered by the power of Eternal Spirit, He was able to fulfil its righteous requirement and, by this means, reconcile us to God, giving us life, peace and rest. Paul tells us in his letter to the Romans that we were made to die to the law through the crucified body of Christ as we join the fellowship of His offering.

References:

Rom 7:1 Rom 6:4
Gal 2:19 Col 1:24
Mat 5:17 Rom 8:4
Heb 9:14 2Co 5:18

Further Study

Rom 7

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 30

The death of a Christian

When a Christian dies, the point of physical death is not the beginning of their personal crossing of the Jordan. Rather, life reaches over the river of death and encompasses the dying believer, lifting them up into their heavenly body. As they die, death is swallowed up in life. The believer is not unclothed as their physical body perishes, but further clothed with their heavenly body. They have moved beyond their mortality into Christ. The believer does not die. Rather, they physically fall asleep in Jesus. Their spirit, the inward man, their true self, is conscious and is raised up into life and joins Christ and the vast company of the redeemed who are in heaven.

In this life, we cross the Jordan with Christ as we join the fellowship of His sufferings and death. This is the true definition as it is pictured as a type of our spiritual journey in the Old Testament Scriptures. We journey with Christ through this life, and cross the Jordan as we fellowship with Christ in His offering and death. At the point of our physical death, we are caught up into eternal life. Once absent from their physical body, the believer resides in heaven with Christ, clothed with a heavenly body.

A believer does not become a disembodied spirit at the point of their death. The heavenly body is the body of glory and reward that will further clothe and activate the resurrection body when, by the word of Christ, it is raised up as a spiritual body from the material elements that belong to the dust of the earth. This occurs when Christ comes the second time to raise the believing dead and judge the world. The resurrection body is the vehicle of expression and glory that belongs to the new heavens and earth, in which the believer will reside for eternity.

References:

2Co 5:2, 4
Heb 4:9-11
2Th 1:9-10
1Co 15:42-44, 53-54

Further Study

1Th 4

Daily Proverb

Proverbs 31