

The Person of Jesus Christ – Sonship

Context: Individual & Group

Focus: Christ/Character/Community

And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Matthew 3:17

Jesus Christ is fully God (Heb. 1:3; Col. 2:9, etc.) yet at the same time the unique Son of God (Luke 1:34-35; Matthew 16:13-17; John 3:16).

Truth No. 1 - As the Son of God, Jesus obeys the Father & follows the Father’s direction. (John 4:34; 5:19-20; 6:38; 12:49-50; 14:31; 15:10)

1. Though each is equally eternal God, the Father and Son (and Holy Spirit) have distinct roles within the Triune Godhead
2. The Son’s obedience is pleasing to the Father and brings the Father glory (John 17:4; 8:28-29; 13:31)

Truth No. 2 – The sonship of Jesus is a demonstration of the fellowship present within the Trinity for eternity (John 1:1-2, 18) and now available to followers of Christ (John 14:20-23; 17:9-11, 20-26)

Truth No. 3 - Jesus is “the firstborn of many brethren” (Rom. 8:29). As sons and daughters of God (Rom. 8:12-17; Gal. 3:26-4:7) we are joint-heirs with Christ.

Exercises:

Day 1 – Find a quiet place and spend the next hour reading the gospel of John.

- As you read pay special attention to those verses where Jesus describes His relationship to the Father. Read these passages again slowly and ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand and remember them.
- Take notes as you read, especially of any observations specifically related to the interaction between Jesus and His Father.

Day 2 (*Team and Individual Assignment*) – The basic definition of sonship is, “the relationship between son and father” (*Merriam Webster Dictionary*), so let’s examine the father-child relationship today.

- Individually, take a few minutes to reflect on your life so far. Think of 2 or 3 memories that you have which most accurately describe your relationship with your dad. (Note: if you would rather, reflect on your relationship with a spiritual father/mentor.)
 - a. Are these good or bad memories?
 - b. Do they reflect a healthy or strained relationship (i.e. sonship)?

Connexions Theological LEs

- Now, in your cohort teams share these stories and your thoughts about sonship with each other.
 - a. What are some of the similarities between your stories? Differences?
 - b. How much do you think your relationship with your dad has affected your relationship with your heavenly Father? In what ways?

Day 3 (*Team Assignment*) - What kind of sonship does Jesus have with the Father?

Together with your cohort team review what you had read in John on Day 1.

- Spend 30 minutes together looking at specific passages from John that will help you answer the following questions:
 - a. What kinds of words did Jesus use to describe His relationship with the Father?
 - b. Did Jesus give attention to strengthening His relationship with the Father? How did He do this?
 - c. What were the results of His sonship in His life and ministry?
 - d. What are some specific examples of Jesus interacting with the Father during moments requiring a critical decision or action? What characterized these interactions? Who initiated them?
 - e. What was the Father's attitude towards His Son? Why?
 - f. How did Jesus expect His disciples to respond to His example of true sonship? What specific commands did He give them in this regard?
- Elect 2 team representatives to summarize and condense your team discussion into a list of key characteristics that describe Jesus' relationship with the Father. Turn in this list of characteristics next week.

Day 4 - Read Romans 8:12-17 along with Galatians 3:26 – 4:7. We are sons and daughters of God if we have surrendered our lives to the Lord Jesus and He lives within us. In fact, the Holy Spirit within us affirms this with our spirit and gives us great confidence in our standing as sons and daughters. So how are you doing as you walk out your sonship in daily life? Are you measuring up to the example given us by Jesus?

- Spend some time in quiet reflection before the Lord. Ask Him to show you areas of improvement in your dependency on the Father and obedience of His Son.
- Repent for those times when you have fallen short and forgotten to give attention to developing and strengthening your relationship with the Father.
- Commit to giving proper attention to the areas of improvement that you have identified. Make a 1 week plan of daily activities that you will complete as you look to God for growth in your relationship with Him. Use your reading in John about Jesus' life and ministry for practical examples of how to do this.

Day 5 – Let's encourage another son of God in pursuit of their relationship with the Father. Galatians 3:26-28 says that followers of Christ are all sons of God regardless of race, culture, economic status, or gender. This means that we all have the same potential for fellowship with the Father; unfortunately, we also share the same struggles that often keep us from realizing this potential.

- Using Jesus as a guide, identify one brother or sister who has demonstrated several of the key characteristics of sonship in their life and walk with God.

Connexions Theological LEs

- Decide how (e.g. by letter, in person, with an award, etc.) you would like to communicate the following to them:
 - a. Comparison of their behavior to Jesus' (use specific examples)
 - b. Your appreciation of their good example
 - c. Your encouragement to continue in a life of sonship with God
- Share your encouragement with the brother or sister this week

Day 6 – As the Son of God, Jesus fulfilled a unique role within the Triune Godhead.

Read John 1:18; 14:7-11; and Hebrews 1:1-2. What role or function was this?

- Practically, how did Jesus do this in His life and ministry?
- We have been called to be ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor. 5:20) and to diffuse the fragrance of His knowledge in every place (2 Cor. 2:14-16). Practically, how can we do this in our life and ministry?

Day 7 – Pray for the meeting tomorrow to conclude our study of the Person of Christ.

- Ask God to meet with us and be a part of our discussion.
- Pray that the Father would be glorified through our discussion about His Son Jesus Christ.
- Ask that your cohort would come ready to receive and apply truth in their lives.