

Son and Sonship #3

by Stephen Kaung

God's eternal purpose for us is to be sons and co-heirs with Christ, living a life of sonship and responsibility, and sharing in the glory of the Son of Man.

Duration: 1:18:27

Scripture: Ephesians 1:3

Topics: "Sonship"

Description

In this sermon on Galatians chapter 4 verse 1, the preacher explains the concept of sonship and its significance. He compares the relationship between a child and his father to our relationship with God. Just as a child is under the authority of guardians and stewards until he matures, we were once held in bondage under the principles of the world. However, when the time was right, God sent his son to redeem us and make us sons. The preacher emphasizes that sonship comes with rewards and the responsibility to serve.

Transcript

Will you please turn to Ephesians. The letter to the Ephesians chapter 1. Ephesians chapter 1, we will read from verse 3 through verse 5. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly in Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly in Christ.

According as he has chosen us in him before the world's foundation, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. As he has chosen us in him before the world's foundation, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. Having marked us out beforehand for sonship through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

Having marked us out beforehand for sonship through Jesus Christ to himself, according as he has chosen us in him before the world's foundation, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. And then we will turn to Galatians. Galatians chapter 4. The first seven verses.

Galatians chapter 4, verse 1. Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he differs nothing from a bondman, though he be lord of all. But he is under guardians and stewards until the period fixed by the father. For we also, when we were children, were held in bondage under the principles of the world.

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent for his son, come of woman, come under law. That he might redeem those under law, that we might receive sonship. But because your son, God has sent out the spirit of his son into our heart crying, Abba, Father.

So thou art no longer bondman, but son, but itself heir also to God. And we turn to Romans chapter 8. Verse 23. Romans chapter 8, verse 23.

And not only that, but even we ourselves are not servants of God. Who have the first fruits of the spirit. We also ourselves groan in ourselves, awaiting sonship.

That is the redemption of our body. May we have a further word of prayer. Dear Lord, as we gather here this morning, our hearts are full of thanks and gratitude.

We thank thee for what thou hast done for us. We thank thee for who thou art. We thank thee that by thy grace we know thee.

And to know thee is eternal life. So when we gather here this morning, O Lord, we open our hearts to thee. And pray that thou will speak directly to our heart.

Give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation that we may truly know thee. Dear Lord, we do want to be what thou want us to be. Thou art the only one who is able to bring us there.

That we may satisfy thy heart. To God be the glory. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Thank God for gathering us together these days. Thank God for gathering us together.

The burden that the Lord seems to put upon us for this time is son and sonship. Son and sonship is so important to us. Because it is the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus for us.

We have mentioned again and again. Our God is a God of purpose. Even before the foundation of the world, he has a purpose in himself.

And it is all according to his good pleasure. Everything that he ever does is according to that purpose. What he has purposed even before the foundation of the world, that is what he is going to accomplish in the days to come.

And thank God that when he created man, he created man with eternity in his heart. He has an eternal purpose for each and every one of us. And if we live according to that purpose, then our life is satisfactory.

If we do not live in that purpose, or according to that purpose, then our life is just a vanity. For this reason, it is of utmost importance that we know what God's eternal purpose for us today. We thank God that his purpose for us is sons and sonship.

Now you can see that in Ephesians chapter 1. There you will find in verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus. Now, what spiritual blessing has he blessed us? He blessed us according to what he has chosen us in him. Before the world's foundation.

And when he has chosen us, even before the foundation of the world, he has chosen us for two things. In verse 4, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love. Not only saved, not only justified, but we

should be holy and blameless before him in love.

And that is son. And then in the following verse, verse 5. Having marked us out before him for sonship through Jesus Christ to himself, according to his good pleasure. So these are the two things that God has blessed us with.

These are the two things that he has chosen us for. And these are the two things that he has purposed for us, even before the foundation of the world. Now, dear brothers and sisters, we begin to see how important are son and sonship.

He not only wants us to be his children, little children, but he wants us to be sons to him. And as sons, he wants us to be in sonship. Now this morning, we are not able to go back to the past today.

So this morning we will focus our attention on this matter of sonship. Now we know that this word sonship is a word used especially by Paul. And this term in Greek, it means placing son, or son placing.

Not only son, but even to be placed in that position of sonship. Sons and sonship are two different words. They can be distinguished, but they cannot be separated.

When you talk about sons, you think of life. The life of Christ Jesus in us. We are conformed to the image of God's beloved son.

So when you think of son, the emphasis is on life. What kind of life do we have? In what kind of life are we living? Is it we ourselves who live, or it is Christ who lives in us? But when you think of sonship, it is the expression and the manifestation of our being sons. Or to put it in another way, it is our responsibility.

The Bible tells us, Christ in you, the hope of glory. The Bible tells us, Christ in you, the hope of glory. There is a glory within us.

Or to put it in another way, God is working out a glory in you. Or to put it in another way, God is working out a glory in you. Christ in you, the hope of glory.

That glory is within you. But at the same time, in Hebrews chapter 2 verse 10, that Christ as our leader, he will lead many sons into glory. And that glory is outside of you.

Not only a glory within you, but you enter into a glory. So one is inward, one is outward. But these two things are one.

And these two things are what God has ordained for us. I wonder if you want to shout hallelujah. According to the Apostle Paul, he wrote a letter to the Galatians.

Now we must remember that the Galatians believers, they are mostly Gentiles. Of course, with the Jews, they have a way of sonship. You know, when a Jewish boy grew up, in our Lord's day, he was 12 years of age.

And this boy who has reached 12 years of age, he will go through a ceremony called the Bar Mitzvah. And that means he is to be made a son of law. Formerly he was a minor.

His parents are responsible for him. But when he reached the age of 12, he will become a son of the law. That is to say, he will be a full member of the synagogue.

He has his right, he has responsibility as a member of the commonwealth of Israel. So you remember, when our Lord Jesus was 12 years old, he was taken by his parents to Jerusalem. And there he was made a son of the law.

And to our Lord Jesus, it was a very real thing. So he did not go back with his parents, but he stayed in the temple. And when his parents found him three days later, his mother said, son, how you have worried us.

And you remember what our Lord Jesus said? Don't you know that I must be occupied with my father's business? Now, that's among the Jewish people. Now today, the Jewish people, Bar Mitzvah is at age 13. The placing of the son, the date, is fixed.

But with the Romans, it's different. Now I believe when Paul wrote this letter to the Galatians, it's not according to Jewish tradition, but according to Roman tradition. I believe when Paul wrote this letter to the Galatians, it's not according to Jewish tradition, but according to Roman tradition.

Because the Galatians were originally foreigners. So he said, as long as the heir is a child, he differs nothing from the born one, though he were lord of all. A boy was born to a Roman family.

He is to be the heir of the family. But when he was a child, he was no different than a slave. You know, in the Roman world, there were more slaves than free people.

So in a Roman family, usually they have lots of slaves. And many of these slaves were Greeks. The Greeks were more cultured than the Romans.

So when a child was young, he was put under guardians and stewards. And these guardians and stewards were slaves. And yet the heir of the family, he was put under them.

Yes. He was no different than a slave. Or may I put it, he is even lower than a slave.

Because he was under guardians. The guardians would take care of all his life. The master would take care of everything related to his life.

He was under the guardians. The guardians would manage everything for him. The guardians would even choose his tutors.

So you find the father would put his son under the guardians and under the stewardship of the slave. So a father would put his son under the guardians and under the stewardship of the slave. During that time, the child had no right.

He had to obey the guardians and obey the stewards. Because they would train him. Not only physically, but also mentally.

They were responsible for his growth. So the father gave these slaves absolute authority. And the son had to obey them and submit to them absolutely.

Now during that period, the father will carefully wait and watch. During that period, the father will carefully wait and watch. He will see whether his son has really grown up.

Or whether he is still like a child. Or whether he has matured. There is no fixed date.

It all depends upon the father. When the father realized that this boy was ready. Then he set the date.

And they would go through a ceremony. And he was praised as son. With the Romans, when you are a child.

Your dress is short. But on that day, he would change the short dress into the long dress. Because he was made a man.

Now what did it mean? It means that from now on, he is to bear responsibility with his father. He will share with his father the inheritance as well as the debt. He will share with his father the inheritance as well as the debt.

So we can see that when the son is placed in the position of a son. He will take on all the responsibilities of a son. That is the title of a son.

Brothers and sisters. By the grace of God, we are children of God. We are born from above.

We are destined to be heirs, co-heirs with Christ. But when we are a child. We are no different than bondmen.

You know, today we want to exercise our right. But are you mature enough to exercise your right? Because in exercising your right, you are equally to be responsible for your life. So spiritually speaking.

When we are just babies in Christ. When we are just little children. We are also put by our Heavenly Father under guardians and stewards.

But thank God, it is not many stewards and many guardians. Because one will train you this way, the other will lead you in another way. He puts us under one guardian who is also a steward.

Now I believe you already guessed who that is. Of course, the Holy Spirit. So brothers and sisters, you know what love our Father has for us.

So brothers and sisters, you know what love our Father has for us. We say God loves us, so He saves us. Thank God for that.

Really. But if only He forgave all our past sins and saved us. And then leave us alone.

You know what will happen to us. Thank God, He makes every provision for us. He not only has given us His life.

But He has given us the steward and the guardian to train that life. To bring that life into maturity. That one day we may enter into sonship.

To be co-heirs with Christ. Brothers and sisters, I don't know if you feel wonderful about it. But I feel it is so wonderful.

How God loves us. He not only gave us His life. But He gave us the Holy Spirit.

And He is within us. Never leaves us. We may grieve Him.

We may quench Him. But we cannot drive Him away. He is with us always.

And He is teaching us in great things and small things. Do nothing in small things. Liberty.

Great things seek God. No, the Holy Spirit will teach us all things great and small. Even your speech.

Has He done that to you? I believe that you are the Lord. You must have experienced it. Even when you say something.

The Holy Spirit within you says, well, is it true? Is it too much? How many people are here this morning? Oh, a thousand people. The Holy Spirit says, is it a thousand? You know, the Holy Spirit takes care of our daily life. And He will arrange our circumstances.

Whom you will meet today. What you will hear today. Everything is arranged by Him.

He uses our circumstances to discipline us. If you don't like the word discipline, the Bible says it's child training. Now, I think we learn that word child training.

But you know, child training is discipline. Because without that we cannot grow up. And He will lead us into sonship.

Now, brothers and sisters, sonship, our sonship, is at the order of our Lord Jesus as the Son of Man. We mentioned already. Our Lord Jesus is the only begotten Son of the Father.

There is the glory of the Son of God that He shares with His Father. It is the glory of the Godhead. This we have no part in.

We are children of God. Not in the sense of entering into the Godhead. We are forever men.

But thank God. We become God's children. It is because our Lord Jesus came into this world.

He died for us. He gave His life to us. And as we believe in Him, we are born from above.

And it is God's will that we should be transformed and conformed to His image. That He may be the firstborn among many brothers. In other words, we are patterned after Christ Jesus.

We ought to be like Christ. We ought to be characterized with Christ's character. And we will also come into the glory that the Father has given to Him.

We have mentioned before that the glory of our Lord Jesus are two kinds. One is the glory that He shares with His Father even before the foundation of the world. So in John chapter 17, you will find our Lord Jesus says, Father, I return to the glory that I shared with you even the world before.

It is the glory of the Son of God. But then in the same prayer, He said, Father, that those who believe in Me will see the glory which Thou has given to Me. And that glory is the glory of the Son of Man.

As the Son of Man, He has accomplished the work of redemption. And He returned to heaven and God exalted Him above all things. And this is the glory that He will share with us.

This is the glory that He will lead us into. So the glory of Sonship is after the order of Christ as the Son of Man. So if we want to know what kind of Sonship that is, we have to look at our Lord Jesus.

So I want to review with you a little bit on the life of our Lord Jesus. Thank God, He who was equal with God, He emptied Himself. The Word became flesh.

Heaven and earth are full of man. Full of grace. Instead of remaining in the form of God, He took up the form of a fallen slave.

He became a man. And He was obedient to the Father even to death, and then the death of the cross. So our Lord Jesus was born to this world.

He was born of the Spirit. And after He was born, on the 8th day He was circumcised. And on the 40th day, that is after His mother was purified.

Because according to Leviticus, a woman who gives birth to a child will be unclean for 33 days. So plus the 7 days, on the 8th day Christ was circumcised. So it's really 40 days.

You find that His parents took Christ to the temple. To offer to God because He was supposed to be the firstborn in the family. So every firstborn belonged to God.

And our Lord Jesus was offered to God. Now we do not know much about the infant stage of our Lord Jesus. We only know from Luke chapter 2, verse 40.

We only know from Luke chapter 2, verse 40. We only know that His body grew, His wisdom grew, and the grace of God was upon Him. The right way of the growing of a child.

Then we know when He was 12 years old. He was in the temple and became a son of the Lord. He had the consciousness within him that he must be occupied with his father's business.

But we find He was obedient to His earthly parents. He submitted Himself to them, went with them home and served them. We do not know much during these days.

We only learn from Luke chapter 2, verse 52. That after He had returned home with His earthly parents, how He grew in wisdom and in stature. And the love of God and man were upon Him.

He became a carpenter. And you know in the Bible, people call Him the carpenter. Because He must be the best carpenter.

That's all we know. These were the hidden years of our Lord Jesus. As the Son of Man.

And then we find, when He was 30 years old, He came to be baptized by John the Baptist. After He was baptized, He came out from the water and the Holy Spirit came upon Him as a dove and dwelt in Him. The heavens opened and a voice out of heaven said, This is my beloved Son, who is my delight.

The heavens opened and a voice out of heaven said, This is my beloved Son, who is my delight. Brothers and sisters, Our Lord Jesus, during those hidden years, He lived a perfect life. Unknown to man, but known to God the Father.

Unknown to man, but known to God the Father. God was pleased with Him. And the result of that year culminated in His baptism.

In other words, His baptisms revealed to us what happened in those hidden years. How He prepared Himself. How He gave Himself.

To do the Father's will. He had nothing to repent of. He had nothing to repent of.

But He offered Himself to the Father. For the whole world. To be the sacrifice.

He was willing to go through baptism. He was willing to die. For the whole world.

No wonder the heavens opened. This is my beloved Son, who is my delight. To me, I feel this is the first indication of His Sonship.

The Sonship as the Son of Man. And then He finally began to work. You remember, in John chapter 5, He said, My Father's workers, He the told, I work.

Serve God in the way that God will do. He said, I cannot do anything by myself. I saw my Father work, so I work.

I cannot say anything out of myself. What I hear, I say. My day, my time is not mine.

It depends on the Father. He lives a life of perfect obedience. He lives a life of self-denial.

He lives a life for His Father's will. And then you find, in Matthew chapter 17, Our Lord Jesus went to the mountain with His three disciples. And there He was transfigured.

His face shone as the sun. And His dress became as light. He was in glory.

Brothers and sisters, What kind of glory is that? Those who really know the Word of God said, This is the glory of the Son of Man. His life is so given to God, that His glory diffuses, as it were, out of Him. And Moses and Elijah appeared.

And they talked about His exit. He had come into this world. He lived a perfect life.

He was the man that God really wants. He was the man that God has created. Everything is according to God.

Now they are talking about His departure. Brothers and sisters, this is the most exciting time. If our Lord Jesus should make it exit from that mountain, you and I are finished.

There will be only one man in heaven. He is the only one who is worthy to go to heaven. The Lord said, For righteousness, because I go to the Father.

No one is righteous to go before God. But He is the only one who can do it. Thank God.

He refused to exit. For our sake. He came down from the mountain, set His face toward Jerusalem.

His face was facing Jerusalem. He wanted to be crucified. No wonder the heavens opened.

The glory of God came in. And the voice said, This is my beloved son. You have to listen to Him.

This is when God accepted the name of His Son. Our Lord Jesus came to Jerusalem. You see, many people welcomed Him.

Even the Greeks wanted to see Him. And our Lord Jesus said, My time has come. I will be glorified.

Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone. If it dies, it bears no punishment. And this He refers to His death.

He takes His death as His glory. But what death that is. He knew what it meant.

He said, Father, Glorify Thyself. And the heavens opened. I have glorified myself.

And I will glorify. This is the third time He was recognized. And then we find He went to the cross.

He was buried. On the third day He was risen from the dead. For forty days He appeared to His disciples.

And then He was taken up. The Father has highly exalted Him. And given Him a name that is above every name.

To that name every knee shall bow. Every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. Brothers and sisters, This is the final recognition of such.

He has entered into glory. Waiting His enemy to be His foe. And dear brothers and sisters, Our sonship is utter His order.

In other words, in spiritual sonship, it is not just a fixed time. It comes gradually until it reaches the summit. Or we can put it another way.

As the life of the Son grows in us, in the same measure is the sonship coming to us. That is to say, the sonship of the Son coming to us, the middle measure, the middle degree, is the degree of the growth of life. So in Romans chapter 8, even though we have familiar fruits, waiting for sonship, the redemption of our body.

Now it doesn't mean that even today we cannot experience sonship. As the life of the Son grows in us, in the same measure, we are placed into sonship. In other words, there is not only life, but according to the life, there is responsibility.

We serve God our Father by the life that he has given us. The more mature you are, the more responsibility you are able to fulfill. Until the time of the redemption of our body that the sonship has.

So we will be co-heirs with Christ. So brothers and sisters, this is what sonship means. If you will allow me to continue a little bit more.

What are involved in sonship? Number one. Sonship involves glory. Because our Lord Jesus, our leader, he will lead many sons to glory.

Our Lord Jesus has already entered into that glory. But he will lead us also into that glory. We will see what the Father has given him.

And we will share with him in that glory. But the principle is, unless that glory is working in us today, how can we stand the glory that we will one day enter into? A person who lives in darkness, suddenly he enters into a brilliant place. Could he stand it? He could.

So dear brothers and sisters, Christ in you, the hope of glory. If we allow that life to grow in us, if we are willing to go through the growing pain, if we experience this life glory in us today, then we are fit to be led into glory. These two glories cannot be separated.

Number two. Sonship involves kingdom. Kingdom is a big subject in the Bible.

Unfortunately, today in Christianity, people do not know what kingdom is. Many problems cannot be solved because they are ignorant of what kingdom is. When our Lord Jesus was on earth, he talked about the kingdom of the heavens.

When the apostles were preaching, they preached the kingdom of God at the end of the book of Acts. Paul, in his hired place, he was talking about the kingdom and about the Lord Jesus. But, the same principle.

Unless you live in the kingdom of the heavens in spirit today, unless you live in the kingdom of the heavens in spirit today, you cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven when one day it appears upon this earth. Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall inherit the kingdom. Number three.

Friendship involves inheritance. If you read 1 Peter chapter 1, we begin with verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an incorruptible and undefiled and unfading inheritance reserved in the heavens for you who are kept guarded by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last days. Inheritance is a great thing in the scripture.

What is our inheritance? Incorruptible. Undefiled. Unfading.

Reserved for us. Who believe. What is it? Well, you need to read the whole Bible to know what it is.

One word. Christ. Christ is our inheritance.

He is our portion. And our portion falls in the good ground. And thank God we are his inheritance.

How can we be? The richest of the glory of his inheritance. We are to be the richest of the glory of his inheritance. He is the richest of the glory of our inheritance.

But the Bible says the richest of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. As we inherit Christ he inherits us. He works in us until to him we become glorious richest inheritance.

Isn't that marvelous? Number four. Sonship means reward. In the Bible there is a place for reward.

Great. Grace and reward seem to be opposite. Because grace is free.

Reward has to be earned. But thank God. In God's sight grace and reward are one thing.

It is the result of grace that gives us reward. If we allow the grace of God work in us God said, I'll reward you. Isn't that wonderful? And that is sonship.

In the Bible you find this mental reward all over. Number five. Sonship is service.

We today think of service wrongly. You remember the disciples came to the Lord. They were arguing among themselves who are the greatest.

But the Lord said in the kingdom it is not so. I am among you as one who serves. And I gave my life for the ransom of all.

What is service? True service is serving the will of God. Today we learn how to serve. One day we will be true servants of God.

Even when the Bible said we will all be kings. A king in the spiritual reality of service. That is true kingship.

We can serve according to God's will. For our service God's will will be brought. And that is sonship.

So strictly speaking service is king, is son, servant. Only a son can be a real servant. A hiring is not a true servant.

Our Lord Jesus is a son's servant. And one day we'll all be sons' servants. That is the place of service.

So dear brothers and sisters we do rejoice before God that his heart towards us is so glorious. And the work of our Lord Jesus is so complete. The Holy Spirit is so patient.

He will work all things out to the glory of God. Dear Heavenly Father we bow in worship because Thou has done so much for us in Thy beloved Son. We have to say we are what we are today.

It is the grace of God. We want to give ourselves completely to Thee. Allow Thee to work out Thy salvation.

That Thy purpose in our lives may be realized. That Thou may be glorified in the name of our Lord Jesus. Amen.

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