

# God's Eternal Thought of Sonship

by T. Austin-Sparks

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*Sonship represents and embodies all God's thought, and it is the central theme of the Bible, bringing us into the roots of Christ's eternity and transforming us.*

**Scripture:** 1 Chronicles 28:5

**Topics:** "Sonship", "Eternal Identity"

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## Description

T. Austin-Sparks emphasizes that sonship is the core of God's eternal thought, illustrated through the life of Solomon, who was chosen by God to build His house. Solomon's role as a son is a foreshadowing of Christ, the greater Son of David, whose sonship embodies the fullness of God's purpose. The preacher highlights how both John and Paul articulate the significance of Christ's eternal sonship, with John focusing on belief in Jesus as the Son of God and Paul expanding on the implications of being sons through the Holy Spirit. This eternal perspective of sonship transcends Solomon's temporary fulfillment, revealing a divine plan that connects believers to Christ's eternal nature. Ultimately, understanding our sonship in relation to Christ transforms our lives, encouraging us to rise above temporal concerns and embrace our eternal identity in Him.

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## Transcript

Ultimately it is sonship which represents and embodies all God's thought. So the one thing that is constantly reiterated about Solomon is sonship. "Solomon thy son shall build My house and My courts; for I have chosen him to be my son, and I will be his father" (I Chron. 28:6). "Thy son.....My son." David said, "Of all my sons (for the Lord hath given me many sons) He hath chosen Solomon my son" (I Chron. 28:5) - the inclusiveness of sonship, and in a certain sense the exclusiveness also.

It is this word "son" that rules where Solomon is concerned. And when we come over to Christ, to the greater Son of David, we find that everything heads up to, and takes its character and its meaning from, His Sonship. We find that in this matter John and Paul are the great exponents. John presents Christ preeminently as the Son. He sums up all his Gospel in a statement that everything written therein was with one object, that the readers might "believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life in His Name (John 20:31).

John, then, presents Christ as the Son. It is the Person that John has in view. Paul also represents Christ as the Son, but he goes further. What I mean is this: Paul goes on to open up the content of sonship and to show that there is an aspect of it which is a related matter. By the Holy Spirit we are sons. Christ a first

one, the Firstborn; and (leaving out the factor of deity) sonship as a relationship is something into which we are called; and that is Paul's great theme, the meaning of sonship: the content, the explanation, the relatedness, the inclusiveness of it.

I think it is quite patent that the things said by God to and concerning Solomon were not meant to be fulfilled in their entirety and fullness in him. The Lord was speaking with a further thought, with a mind beyond Solomon. He was really, in His own mind, speaking about the Lord Jesus. Solomon would be but a temporary, partial fulfillment of what God said about sonship, and about the kingdom and the house. God was thinking further on. "I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son"; "I will establish his kingdom" - these words were spoken of Solomon, but it is not difficult to see that in the case of the Lord Jesus there is an infinite transcendence.

There is something here in connection with Him which goes far beyond anything that was possible in the case of Solomon. What I am stressing in the first place is this: John and Paul bring Christ into view as Son on the principle of eternity. You know how John seeks to press that home in his Gospel in a number of very impressive ways. He opens, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God", clearly intending to emphasize the eternity of this sonship; for he very soon comes into time - "And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us"; that is the time aspect, the Now, the other is timeless.

But Paul not only brings Christ in in His eternity; he begins to build the Church upon that eternity. In the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians which are in my mind just now, we have Christ in His eternity, and then: "He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). From that eternal election and foreordination and predestination Paul builds the Church. He says, This is no thing of time or of earth; this is a thing that has its roots and its foundation away back in eternity, and it goes on unto the ages of the ages.

Time is a mere fragment in this thing. Paul is building upon the eternity of Christ. What has that to say to us? Well, of course, it bears out our first and all-governing point, the transcendence of Christ over Solomon. This greater than Solomon that is here, this Son, how infinitely more He is than that son! What is sonship? In accordance with God's full thought, not His partial thought in Solomon; that is only representation and type and figure and shadow; but in reality, it is something which takes its rise out of eternity and goes on when time shall be no more.

That is sonship in God's thought. We have said before that emancipation from all our difficulties and problems will be along the line of spiritual enlargement, and spiritual enlargement will be by way of a new and far greater apprehension of Christ; and here it is. Look at Him! What is the object of telling us all this about Christ? Do we just want information that Christ is God's Son and that He was one with the Father in eternity and will be forever and ever? I am quite reverent in asking that question and in saying that as a purely objective matter somewhere out in God's universe it does not matter to me very much.

But when you say that God has revealed this to men, then I want to know why. What is in the Divine mind in revealing it? And the answer is here: you and I are concerned in it, we were chosen in relation to it before the world was, in Him we are bound up with it. Oh, then, receiving eternal life, age-binding life, being linked with the eternal Son of God, what an immense thing it is! Sonship goes beyond anything that is merely temporary and transient. Our union with Christ brings us right into the roots of His eternity, not only in duration but in character, in nature; for eternal life is not merely endless duration, it is the glory of

God in nature, in essence.

So Paul builds everything upon this fact of eternity and brings us in. What a wonderful revelation! As a mere presentation of truth it is fascinating, captivating, bewildering. But brought home by the Holy Spirit, how transforming it can be, how establishing, how emancipating! Oh, if only the Church lived in the good of that, how all these petty, temporary factors would go out! After all, what does this and that matter? It is only for time and for this world at most; but the thing that matters is what God is doing above and beyond this world altogether.

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/t-austin-sparks/gods-eternal-thought-of-sonship/>

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