

“Sonship”
Exodus 4:21-23; 29-31
(Preached at Trinity, September 17, 2006)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we have seen, God was not ignorant of the affliction of His people. He knows and cares about His people.
Exodus 3:7 – “And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which *are* in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;”
 - A. He told Moses that He had come down to deliver them.
Exodus 3:8 – “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians”
 - B. Then God told Moses something that he probably didn’t expect. He told Moses that *he* would be the deliverer.
Exodus 3:10 – “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.”
2. Moses at first was overwhelmed at God’s call. He was filled with many doubts and fears and made several attempts at being excused from such a high calling. In the end, however, Moses submitted to God’s command.
In **Verse 20** we find Moses returning to Egypt:
Exodus 4:20 – “And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.”
3. In **Verse 21** God told Moses not to expect immediate success in his mission. Pharaoh’s heart was hard. Wicked men do not easily submit to the rule of God. All men are rebels by nature. We are haters of God by nature. It would take a mighty work to pry Israel from his wicked hands.
4. In **Verse 22** we find the very foundation of the Book of Exodus. God was coming to the rescue of His own people. All that takes place in Exodus was because of sonship
Exodus 4:22 – “And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel *is* my son, *even* my firstborn.”
5. God’s hardening of Pharaoh’s heart was to prove His love for His own children.
Exodus 4:23 – “And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, *even* thy firstborn.”
In essence God is telling Pharaoh, If you harm my child I will take your child.
6. Tonight I want to set before you the subject of Divine sonship

I. The Source of Sonship

A. Sonship begins with Divine Sovereign Election

1. God had chosen Israel above all the other nations
 - a. He called forth Abraham and made a covenant with *him*
Of all the men on the face of the earth God chose Abraham
 - b. He then chose Isaac, not Ishmael
 - c. He then chose Jacob, not Esau
Romans 9:13 – “As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”
 - d. It was through Jacob that God would raise up the twelve tribes
 - e. All of this was by God’s sovereign choice - election
2. God remains true to His promises
 - a. God told Abraham that through him an innumerable people would come
 - b. We can see evidence of fulfillment here in Exodus
Exodus 1:7 – “And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them.”
 - c. This promise did not end with the physical nation of Israel.
Christianity is a religion founded upon God’s old promises – it is the fulfillment of God’s promises.
We are among the innumerable seed of Abraham.
Galatians 3:7 – “Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham.”
Galatians 3:26-29 – “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”
 - d. We are made sons through Jesus Christ by Divine election.
Ephesians 1:5-6 – “Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.”

B. This Election unto Sonship is Unconditional

1. When God called Abraham he was dwelling in a land of idolatry
2. Jacob was a crafty deceiver
3. There was nothing in Israel to be desired
Ezekiel describes their deplorable condition
Ezekiel 16:4-6 – “And *as for thy nativity*, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple *thee*; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. ⁵ None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born.”

4. There was no good in us to cause God to show favor upon us
Romans 3:10-12 – “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.”

C. God chose to adopt us as His dear sons – we are His children

1. This precious truth was made possible through the atonement of Jesus Christ
Galatians 4:4-7 – “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁵ To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. ⁶ And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. ⁷ Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”
2. The human dimension
- a. It is required that we believe. It is required that we receive Christ as our own.
John 1:12 – “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:”
- b. The offer of the Gospel to Sonship is made to all men – all have the responsibility of receiving it through faith and repentance.

II. Sonship carries with it unique benefits

A. Relationship

1. We are no longer outcasts from God. The Law no longer condemns us. We have been translated from children of wrath to children of God.
2. We have been united to God in a close fellowship. He is now called our God and we are now called His people.
- a. God refers to Israel as “my son”
Exodus 4:22 – “And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel *is* my son, *even* my firstborn.”
- b. The phrase “my people” appears in over 200 verses.
Leviticus 26:12 – “And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.”
- c. This is the essence of the New Covenant
Jeremiah 31:33 But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.
3. We are able to call God our Father.
Galatians 4:6 – “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.”
Our Lord taught us to pray:
“*Our Father* which art in heaven . . .”

4. We have access to our Father through prayer
This is a gift that most take for granted. When Joshua lifted up his voice to God it was considered a unique blessing from God.
Joshua 10:14 – “And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the LORD fought for Israel.”
 5. We now have all the privileges of Sonship – we are heirs. We have inherited heaven.
Galatians 4:6-7 – “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. ⁷ Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”
Revelation 21:7 – “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”
 6. As our Father, He protects us, keeps us, disciplines us – He will not let us fall into terrible sin that will destroy us.
Hebrews 12:6-7 – “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. ⁷ If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?”
- B. We become partakers of the nature of our Father – we resemble Him
1. Children usually bear some of the marks of their parents.
In addition, we usually bear the particular characteristics of our family – every family is unique.
 2. We have been brought into the family of God – we are to bear the marks of this relationship
 3. Peter describes this as being partakers of the Divine nature
2 Peter 1:4 - “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”
 4. This was one of the purposes of God’s ceremonial laws. They set His people apart.
All of God’s children are commanded to be a separate people – a holy people.
1 Peter 1:15-16 – “But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; ¹⁶ Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
- C. The sons of God also have His unconditional love
1 John 3:1 – “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God”
1. As Pharaoh looked upon the children of Israel all he could see were lowly slaves. They had little value.
 - a. It was a small thing to command the mid-wives to kill the male babies or to cast them into the Nile.
 - b. It was a small thing to make them serve with rigor

2. To God, however, they were His beloved people – He cared for them.
Exodus 2:24-25 – “And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. ²⁵ And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto *them*.”
Hosea 11:1 – “When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.”
3. God loves us with an infinite love.
 It is an unfailing love
Romans 8:38-39 – “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, ³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Conclusion:

1. The Amazing mercy of God
 - A. God gave up His beloved Son Jesus that we might be made sons.
 This was foreshadowed with Abraham and Isaac.
Genesis 22:2 – “And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”
 - B. God loved us enough to give His Son
John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
2. Sonship is only available through Jesus Christ
1 John 4:9-10 – “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. ¹⁰ Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.”
3. The greatest and most wicked ingratitude is to despise the Son of God. God commands every man to submit to His Son. Jesus sits exalted upon His throne.
Philippians 2:9-11 – “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: ¹⁰ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; ¹¹ And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
Psalms 2:11-12 – “Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.”
4. What is keeping you from serving Him?
 There is no other way to the Father. No other way to sonship. No other way to escape the wrath of God.
John 14:6 - "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by Me."