**More Like the Master**

In His Sonship

Lesson 6

*“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 3:17)*

**Like Father Like Son**

There are three divine members of the Godhead: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The relationship between God and Jesus is one of a Father and a Son (Hebrews 1:5; 2 Jn. 3). The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that her son, Jesus, would be called *“the Son of the Most High”* (Luke 1:32) and *“the Son of God”* (Luke 1:35). While Jesus was the *“son of Joseph”* (John 6:42) only in a legal sense, he was in a very real sense the *“Son of God”* (Matthew 4:3,6; 8:29; 14:33; 16:16; 26:63; 27:40,43; Luke 3:38; 4:41; John 1:34,49; 19:7; 20:31). In the words of the Roman centurion: *“Truly this was the Son of God”* (Matthew 27:54). The only gospel to be preached is the *“the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God”* (Mark 1:1).

The relationship between God the Father and God the Son exists, in part, to teach us how we are to be in a right relationship with God ourselves. As Christians, God is our Father and we are sons (Galatians 3:26; 4:6). Faithful Christians are *“children of God”* (1 John 3:1-2; 2 John 4). Jesus, as the Son of God, is the example we should be sons of God today.

**Jesus and His Sonship**

Jesus was an obedient son. Jesus lovingly and willingly obeyed his heavenly Father just as he was obedient to his earthly parents (Luke 2:52; John 6:42). Obedience was a matter of choice for Jesus, not compulsion. He freely chose to obey his Father. From the early age of 12, Jesus was concerned about doing his Father’s will and focusing on accomplishing his Father’s work (Luke 2:49). At his baptism, Jesus was determined to obey the righteousness of God even when John tried to hinder him (Matthew 3:14-15). Jesus did nothing of himself, but only what his Father told him to do (John 8:28). Jesus put it simply, *“I know him, and keep his word”* (John 8:55). He always kept his Father’s commandments (John 15:10) and he always submitted to his Father’s will (John 6:38; 10:18; Matthew 26:39; Hebrews 10:9). Paul wrote about Jesus this way: *“…and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross”* (Philippians 2:8).

Jesus was a chastened son. Yes, Jesus was obedient, but his obedience involved chastening and suffering at the hands of his Father. Jesus willingly obeyed even when he was chastened by his Father. Isaiah wrote in chapter 53: “*Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted (verse 4) ... and Jehovah has laid on him the iniquity of us all (verse 6) ... Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he has put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin…”* (verse 10). The author of Hebrews wrote about Jesus’ obedience this way: *“Although He was a Son, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered”* (Hebrews 5:8).

Jesus was a well-pleasing son. Jesus pleased his Father by being obedient to him at his baptism and again on the mount of transfiguration. The Father said, *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”* (Matthew 3:17; 12:18; 17: 5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35; 2 Peter 1:17). Jesus wanted to please his Father, not the world around him. He said to the unbelieving Jews, *“I do always the things that are pleasing to him”* (John 8:29). Jesus glorified and pleased his Father by finishing the work he was given to do (John 17:4).

Jesus was a dependent son. Jesus said, *“the Son can do nothing of himself, but what he sees the Father do”* (John 5:19-20). Jesus, as a loving and obedient son, was dependent upon his Father at all times. Jesus acted exactly the way his Father acted because there was true love between them (John 5:19-20). Jesus did not act independently of his Father, but in conjunction with his Father. He was dependent upon his Father’s word (Matthew 4:4), his Father’s communion in prayer (Matthew 14:23), and his Father’s will (Matthew 26:39).

Jesus was a united son. Jesus and his Father were united in purpose and work. The two were united in revealing God to the world. John writes: *“No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him”* (1:18). Both the Father and the Son were united in love: *“The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hand”* (John 3:35). Both the Father and the Son were united in their work: *“My father works even until now, and I work”* (John 5:17-20). The two were also united in raising the dead (John 5:21), in judgment (John 5:22), in receiving honor (John 5:23), in giving eternal life (John 5:26), and in their witnessed testimony (John 5:30-47). The Father also showed unity with his Son by sealing him (John 6:27). Jesus said on another occasion, *“I and the Father are one”* (John 10:30). He was speaking of the unity that existed between himself and his Father in their work together in the world (John 10:32-38). Jesus prayed that his disciples would be united just as he and his Father were united (John 17:21-23). Jesus was also united with his Father in revealing salvation of mankind (Matthew 11:25-27). Matthew writes: *All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knows the Son, save the Father; neither does any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son wills to reveal him”* (11:27; see also Luke 10:22). Both the Father and the Son were united concerning Jesus’ coming into the world (1 John 4:14). When Jesus comes again in judgment, it will be *“in the glory of his Father”* (Matthew 16:27; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:36).

Jesus was a respectful son. Jesus honored and respected his Father in how he spoke of his Father. He prayed, *“Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be your name”* (Matthew 6:9). Jesus also demonstrated his respect by his obedience to his Father. He said simply, *“I honor my Father…”* (John 8:49) and *“I know him, and keep his word”* (John 8:55). He glorified and respected his Father through his obedience (John 13:31; 14:13) and by accomplishing his Father’s will (John 11:4; 17:1-4).

**The Christian and Sonship**

Sinners become sons when they receive Jesus, hear him, believe him, and obey him (John 1:12; 3:16,18,36; 5:25; 9:35-38; 11:27; 20:31). Sinners must obey the gospel and be baptized into Christ in order to become sons of God (Galatians 3:26-27). Sinners must be baptized *“into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28:19). Outside of Christ, sinners are *“children of wrath”* (Ephesians 2:3) and *“children of cursing”* (2 Peter 2:14). But, in Christ, they are *“children of light”* (Ephesians 5:8) and *“children of God”* (Philippians 2:15).

We must be obedient to our Father. Having obeyed the gospel (the words of the Spirit), we can know that we are children of God. Paul wrote, *“The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit, that we are children of God”* (Romans 8:16-17). The promise of being a child of God is found in Christ, not in some fleshly heritage (Romans 9:8; Galatians 4:27-31). After becoming a son, a Christian must always submit to the Father and be obedient to his will. We must will to do his will (John 7:17). When the Father commands us to do what is right, we must be obedient to him. For example, in order to be faithful sons, we must love our enemies and pray for them (Matthew 5:45). We must not engage in worldliness or we will receive the wrath of God *“upon the sons of disobedience”* (Ephesians 5:6; Colossians 3:6). Peter writes: *“…as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance”* (1 Peter 1:14). John writes: *“Hereby we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and do his commandments”* (1 John 5:2) and *“his commandments are not grievous”* (1 John 5:3).

We must be well-pleasing to our Father. As faithful sons, Christians will say, do, and think only what is pleasing to our Father. We will not walk after the flesh knowing that this is not pleasing to God (1 Corinthians 10:5; Romans 8:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:15). Like Paul, we will seek to please God, not men (Galatians 1:10; Ephesians 6:6). We will become *“blameless and harmless, children of God”* (Philippians 2:15). We will sacrifice and worship only in a way that pleases God (Hebrews 13:16).

We must be chastened by our Father. The suffering we go through as a Christian is a part of our Father’s discipline. Even though it is painful, it is for our good. The author of Hebrews writes: *“It is for chastening that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there who his father chastens not?”* (Hebrews 12:7). After we go through our painful suffering, we will enter *“into the liberty of the glory of the children of God”* (Romans 8:21).

We must be dependent upon our Father. Faithful Christians demonstrate their dependence upon the Father by following his guidance every day. Paul writes: *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God”* (Romans 8:14). They will also show their dependence upon God by crying *“Abba Father”* in prayer (Galatians 4:6).

We must be united with our Father. God seeks to *“gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad”* (John 11:52). Jesus also prayed that his followers would be united as he and the Father are united (John 17:21-23). When Christians live right as sons of God they will be united in fellowship with the Son and the Father and with all their brethren (1 John 1:3). Faithful Christians will not deny the Son (1 John 2:22-23), but we will abide *“in the Son, and in the Father”* (1 John 2:24). They will remain united with the Father and the Son by abiding in the teaching of Christ (2 John 9-10).

We must be respectful to our Father. Jesus taught his disciples in his model prayer to respect the heavenly Father. He taught them to say, *“Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be your name”* (Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2). The word “hallowed” means holy and reverend. As faithful children and sons of God, Christians today will speak respectfully and reverently about God the Father. Just as we would reverence (respect) our earthly father, so we should reverence our heavenly Father (Hebrews 12:9). We are to *“offer service well-pleasing to God with reverence and awe”* (Hebrews 12:28).

**More Like the Master in His Sonship**

Jesus wants us to be *“sons of God”* (Matthew 5:9; Luke 20:36) and sons of our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:45). Jesus is *“the firstborn among many brethren”* (Romans 8:29) and we are to bare the “image” of our elder brother, Jesus. God also wants to be a Father to us all (2 Corinthians 6:18). The way that we can be faithful sons of God is to be *“imitators of God, as beloved children”* (Ephesians 5:1). God has bestowed great love upon us to call us his children (1 John 3:1-2). Let us live in such a way that we demonstrate through our righteous living that we are *“children of God”* and not *“children of the devil”*  (1 John 3:10). Let us all be “More Like the Master” in our sonship with the Father.

**Questions**

1. What relationship does Jesus have with God in the Godhead?

2. How did Jesus demonstrate that he was an obedient son?

3. What chastening did Jesus go through as a son?

4. What did Jesus do that pleased his Father?

5. How did Jesus show that he was dependent upon his Father?

6. What ways were Jesus and his Father united?

7. How did Jesus show respect for his Father?

8. How do sinners become sons of God?

9. How do Christians demonstrate faithful sonship in the following areas of their life:

Obedience?

Pleasing the Father?

Chastening?

Dependence?

Unity?

Respect?