

THE SONS OF GOD

– JANUARY 23. – ROMANS 8:12-30. –

DIVINE SONSHIP LOST BY ADAM – JEWS NOT A HOUSE OF SONS, BUT OF SERVANTS – CHRIST A SON – THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF SONS – THE STRAIT GATE AND NARROW WAY BY WHICH THE CALLED MAY BE ACCEPTED INTO THE FAMILY OF GOD – EVIDENCES OF OUR BEGETTING – THE PREDESTINATION OF THE ELECT – TO WHAT ELECTED.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." – Verse 14.

TODAY we have another wonderful lesson from the inspired Apostle St. Paul. It points out that the Church is a New Creation, begotten of the Holy Spirit, now being gestated in preparation for the glorious resurrection birth to the spirit plane. There is no more important lesson than this.

According to the Bible, Father Adam was created a son of God – in the image of God and only a little lower than the angels – on the earthly plane, instead of the Heavenly. (Psalm 8:5.) When Adam sinned, his blessed relationship with God as a son was forfeited. Forthwith he was a sinner and under the sentence which God had foretold – not an eternal torment sentence, but a death sentence, with an accompaniment of mental, moral and physical degeneracy. There have been no human sons of God since Adam's time – except Jesus. The Jews, received by the Lord under the Law Covenant, were not a House of Sons, and never understood themselves to be sons of God. Instead, they threatened to stone Jesus to death because He declared Himself a Son of God. As St. Paul declares, "Moses was faithful as a *servant* over all his House [of servants], but Christ as a

Son [the Head] over His own House," a House of Sons – the spirit-begotten Church.

THE HOUSE OF SONS

St. Paul points out to us that the natural man, no matter how wise or educated or talented, cannot understand and appreciate fully the deep things of the Bible, because God has caused them to be so written that only the spirit-begotten can fully comprehend them. "They are spiritually discerned." (1 Corinthians 2:14.) Thus the Church of Christ is a company of regenerated beings. Once they were members of the Adamic race and, through sin, "were children of wrath, even as others." (Ephesians 2:3.) Now they are reckoning themselves as dead to the Divine sentence upon Father Adam. They have accepted Jesus as their Redeemer, and the sacrifice of His life as the Atonement-price for their sins.

When they accept the invitation to become followers of Jesus, He becomes their Advocate with the Father; and by the arrangement of the Divine Plan His meritorious sacrifice is applicable to them as a covering for sins past and imperfections future, and affords them opportunity to be accepted of the Father, begotten of the Holy Spirit and eventually to attain joint-heirship with Himself in the Kingdom, "if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together." – Verse 17.

These regenerated, spirit-begotten children of God are not yet perfected; but if they continue in the School of Christ, the faithful will eventually reach perfection on the spirit plane as sons of God, led by the Spirit. These, on the authority of the Scriptures, exercising faith, are enabled to call upon God as their Father – "**Abba**, Father." Through the Word and through their own experiences these receive the witness of the Spirit of the Lord that they are God's children and joint-heirs with Jesus – the grand perfection being dependent upon their suffering with Him. These have no obligation any longer to the flesh; for they are New Creatures. These are no longer to live after

the flesh, but in harmony with the Spirit of God as revealed to them through the Word of God.

These New Creatures, sons of God, in their weakness and ignorance might ask amiss. But the Lord would not deal with them according to their imperfection of asking; He would accept the spirit of their request. The groanings and desires of our spirits, our minds, will be taken by the Lord as instead of our imperfect utterances in prayer; for God, who knoweth all things, yea, the thoughts of our minds (spirits), accepts these. All such may know that "all things work together for good to them" – because they love God – because they have been called according to His purpose. – Verse 28.

EXPLANATION OF THE GOSPEL CALL

Verses 28-31 make plain to us that God has a special purpose in the special Gospel High Calling of this present Age. Other Scriptures show that this Calling of this present Age is to joint-heirship with Jesus in the Messianic Kingdom which is shortly to grant restitution blessings to all the families of the earth. To get a suitable class to be the teachers, blessers, rulers and judges of the world in the future has been the object of this Gospel Call. Jesus, the Head of the Church, was the first to respond and has been glorified and honored, and through all eternity will be honored. His followers, called during this Gospel Age, will have a similar blessing at the hands of God – glorification on the spirit plane, if faithful.

Our Study concludes with an explanation of God's Call. God foreknew, or purposed in advance, that He would have such a Church as the Apostle describes, to accomplish the work mentioned. All that was predestinated or arranged in advance. But in order to be of that predestinated and glorified class, certain things were necessary; i.e., that all those who would be finally accounted worthy of a share in the Kingdom, must be copies of God's dear Son – in heart, in character, and like Him also in the resurrection, spirit beings. This is a glorious predestination. It assures us that God will

have none others in the Kingdom than those who are character-
likenesses of Jesus.

Then the Apostle points out the procedure by which God has selected this predestinated or foreknown class to be copies of His Son. They were called in the sense that the Lord brought to their attention the glorious opportunity, and we may safely say that such a call was extended only to the honest-hearted who were feeling after God, desirous of knowing Him and serving Him. These called ones needed first to be justified before they could accept the call, and this justification must come through repentance and through acceptance of Jesus as the Redeemer. It was those who accepted Jesus and were justified by Him through faith, whom God also glorified (honored) by begetting them with the Holy Spirit, bringing them into His family as children, joint-heirs with Jesus, to the privilege of suffering for the Truth and being glorified in connection with the Kingdom.

"Think it not strange, beloved,
When fiercely burns the fiery flame!
Think it not strange, but praise His name,
Who counts thee worthy to partake
Of painful sufferings for His sake.
Nor think it strange
When loved ones scornful from thee turn,
The Truth reject, the Message spurn;
Consider Him who thus endured,
And Immortality secured!"

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