

Sons of God

by George Kulp

We are sons of God, born of the Spirit, not of the world, anointed of the Spirit, called to serve and suffer, and loved of the Father.

Scripture: John 1:12, John 14:3, Romans 8:14, Romans 8:17, 2 Corinthians 6:17, 1 John 3:1-2

Topics: "Sonship Of God", "Spirit Led Living"

Description

George Kulp preaches on the profound truth that as believers, we are now the sons of God, a status that surpasses earthly lineage or worth, as seen in the genealogy of Jesus and the creation account. Kulp emphasizes the miraculous love of God that allows sinners to be called His children, sharing a powerful testimony of a notorious sinner who found salvation by simply asking God for it. He challenges listeners to embrace their identity as sons of God, heirs of His kingdom, and to live a life led by the Spirit, separate from the world, and dedicated to serving and saving others, just as Jesus did.

Transcript

I John 3:2 -- "Now are we the sons of God."

When Jesus was initiated into the priesthood "there came a voice from heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." If we read the third chapter of Luke, where the genealogy of Jesus is recorded, we find it begins, "And Jesus Himself began to be about thirty years of age," the age at which the priesthood began with the Jews; and then it goes Or] back over a long list until we read, "Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God." Again, we read in the Word that when God created the worlds and spake them into existence, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy.

I am not surprised that Jesus, the sinless One, He who knew no sin, virgin born, conceived of the Holy Ghost, that He should be called the Son of God. It does not surprise me that Adam who was made in the image of God, the man whom God looked upon and pronounced perfect, that he should be called the son of God. I can appreciate it without surprise when I read that the angels who kept their estate, who stood out their probation, are called the sons of God; but that we, born in sin and conceived in iniquity, sinners by actual transgression, that we should be called the sons of God surprises me, and I can join in the song,

"O 'twas love, 'twas wondrous love,

The love of God to me,
That brought my Savior from above,
To die on Calvary."

Some time ago a man of God was preaching in a Southern City, and in his sermon he said, "If you are the worst man that ever lived, God will save you if you give Him a chance." In the congregation was a man who was looked upon by the church as the worst man in the community. All had given him up. He was the terror of professing Christians. They avoided him because of his wicked tongue, and his hatred of everything good. But one morning that man heard the preacher make that statement. He rose up, went up the aisle, looked the preacher in the face, and said to him, "Preacher, do you say, and do you believe it. that God will save the worst man in the world?" The preacher said to him, "I pledge you my word as a Christian man, that if you will get down on your knees and ask God to save you for Jesus' sake, He will do it, and you will know that you are saved." Down on his knees he went, and in the presence of that great audience made up of many who knew him as such a wicked man, he cried at the top of his voice, "O God, I am the wickedest man in all the world! Save me, for Jesus' sake! Save me, O God, for Jesus' sake!" The audience was breathless and sympathizing and praying. In a little while that man heard from heaven; God saved him, and he praised God and shouted until all heard and knew that a change had been wrought. So the wickedest man in town was saved, and he lived his salvation and became a power for righteousness. Once he was a rebel, an alien, now, "a son of God."

If you go to Boston, they ask, "How much does he know?" If you go to New York, they ask, "How much is he worth?" If you go to Philadelphia, they ask, "Who were his ancestors?" But here my text declares, "now are we the sons of God." Once we were sinners, with no hope, no help in ourselves, outcasts, but now are we the sons of God. It is a present experience, not a theory, but a consciousness of God in the heart, so that we say with the Apostle, "For to me to live is Christ," "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me" -- a child of God, if a child then an heir, heir of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ. That is enough to keep me shouting for a week. now, in this dispensation of the Holy Ghost, we are the sons of God. Good-bye, ancestry, good-bye Hebrew of the Hebrews, good-bye tribe of Benjamin, I am now a son of God, adopted into the family, and have the witness of the Holy Spirit. No wonder the poet sings,

"How happy every child of grace
Who knows his sins forgiven!
'This earth,' he cries, 'is not my place,
I seek my place in heaven,
A country far from mortal sight,
Yet oh, by faith I see,
The land of rest, the saints' delight,
A heaven prepared for me."

Have you, my hearer, this witness? Can you prove your seed? When Ezra led the Jews back to Jerusalem, there were some who could not prove their seed. They had come by the way of adultery with the world. There had been intermarriages, and the children could not talk the language, so they were put to one side until the matter could be looked into. Can you prove your seed? Do you know when you were adopted into the family? Do you know when, and where? I had an elect lady in my church one time, . and as she and wife and I were riding together one day she said to me, "Oh, Brother Kulp, you do annoy me so with your preaching." I asked, "Why, sister, how do I annoy you?" "Well," she replied, "you preach that unless you know when you were converted, and where you were converted, you never were. Now I do not know the time when I did not love God, I always have." She had been trained by a godly mother, and never knew the blight of sin as many do. I have met one other like her. Baxter, the author of The Saints' Rest, has left on record that back beyond where memory runs he gave his heart to God. Dr. Wentworth, an old Methodist divine, left it on record that he was saved in remote childhood, and had no recollection of time and place. We believe him, and yet I am quite confident that nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand know the time and place.

"There is a spot to me more dear,

Than native vale or mountain;

A spot for which affection's tear

Flows grateful from its fountain.

'Tis not where kindred souls abound,

Tho that is almost heaven;

But where I first my Savior found,

And knew my sins forgiven."

Sons of God have all the characteristics of Jesus. First, they are born of the Spirit. So was Jesus. The angel said to the virgin, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." Listen to the words of Jesus, "Except ye be born of the Spirit, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Ye must be born again -- born from above. You and I may not understand it. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

They are not of the world, even as Jesus was not of the world. Do you remember the prayer of Jesus for the disciples and for us? "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Pay attention to that. How much was He of the world? The Book says, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." The greatest hindrance to the cause of Christ today is that the world and the church are yoked up together. The supper room takes the place of the upper room. When a church is built nowadays it is built with a kitchen and ranges, and pans, and dining rooms, with the view of courting the folks whose god is their belly. The church is astray on this line today because the ministry at large is catering to the appetite of the crowd instead of to their spiritual needs. I was in a church some time ago where the choir was

composed of young folks who were dressed in the styles of the world, -- short dresses, high heels, low necks, bare arms, and they called themselves, "Holiness." Good Lord, deliver us from that kind! It will pave hell six feet deep with professors. The good Lord did remove that pastor and his wife who were catering to the passions of the world, and I have since held a revival there when the altars were stained with penitential tears, and members of the church and sinners wept their way to God. No wonder they have curtains before the choir lofts today; they have to have them for decency's sake. I know a lady who enjoys the blessing of Holiness seven days in the week. She is the wife of a man who is the owner of a large department store, and when he buys his goods he will see a dress that he thinks his wife would look well in, so he takes it home and gives it to her. She looks at it, puts it on, and then takes some dress goods and makes something that will cover up the open space in front. Her husband calls the improvement "Holiness curtains." I have been in churches where I thought a few holiness curtains would be a blessing. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord and I will be your God and ye shall be my people." This is still in the Book. For fear some may wonder where this is, I will say it is in Second Corinthians, sixth chapter, 17th and 18th verses. Amen!

Jesus was anointed of the Spirit. So is every child of God. He never received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit; He did not need it. After the Jordan scene where He was initiated into the priesthood, He went to the synagogue, and took the book out of the hand of the minister and, opening at the prophet Esaias, he read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And He began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears. Every child of God has the anointing of the Spirit, for every work to which God calls him, and without this he is a failure. John leaves on record in his Epistle, "Ye have an unction from the Holy One -- ye have the divine anointing." One may have Pentecost, and have that once for all; but the anointing, the unction, is the absolute necessity of every minister, every worker, every child of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." You may say that will unChristianize some folks. It is God's Word, and the great need of the church today is the Spirit of Christ. It kills selfishness. It means abandonment to God and it means the possession of the victory to which we as the sons of God are called, and which the world needs to see us have.

Jesus came to save and serve. So do the sons of God. Proof of this? "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The one object of the church is to save; the one work of the ministry is -- not to serve tables, to be financial agents -- but to save; not to be ecclesiastical bosses, but to serve. Jesus said, "I am among you as the serving One." Jesus "must needs go through Samaria," that He might save and serve just one sin-sick soul. On the cross before He gave up His life, He handed a passport signed in His own blood to a poor dying thief, saying, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Take the Word and read the last thing He has to say to the believer, "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come."

This is the last exhortation of Jesus to the individual believer, and there is nothing in which the individual member of the church is more remiss. Personal workers are scarce. How many can you count in the church where you belong? "Let Him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Does this mean your pastor, your class leader? No; it means you.

Jesus was loved of the Father. So are we as the sons of God. God so loved that He gave. Jesus loved the Church and . gave Himself for it. He first loved us. The Father went after the prodigal while he was yet a great way off. Love sent Him. He loved that Prodigal. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you." Is the world saying today, "See how these Christians love one another?" Are there many giving away the second coat or going the second mile? Yes, there are sons of God. Listen. If we suffer with Him.

Jesus was called to suffer. So are we as the sons of God. Listen. IF we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him. Paul was His branded man, bearing about with him the marks of the Lord Jesus. Jesus said to Ananias, "I will show him what great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Called to suffer? Yes, appointed thereto. Called to stand abuse and say nothing back; called to suffer misrepresentation; to go to prison and, by the grace of God, to sing Psalms in prison until the others shall hear, and heaven shall hear, and earth quake, and chains fall off, and revivals begin, -- suffer, not for wrong doing, but for Jesus' sake.

Jesus was received up into glory. So shall we be some day. Moses prayed, "Show me thy glory." God answered that prayer, centuries afterward, on the Mount of Transfiguration. Hear it: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me shall be where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." His glory! The glory that came to a Caesar, to a Napoleon, to the Field of the Cloth of Gold, all fades away; but you and I are to see His glory, the glory that made the angels hide their faces behind their wings, the glory that was so overwhelming that when Moses came down from the Mount his face shone, reflecting the glory of the Father; fadeless glory, eternal glory, not seen through a glass darkly, but face to face. When the three saw it in the Mount they were dazed, and knew not what they said; but up yonder we shall see His glory, with vision undimmed, and, walking in the light of an endless day, we shall go from glory to glory, and revel in the light and shine of the countenance of the Triune God forever.

"We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is," Praise God. Like Wesley? NO. Knox? No Asbury? No Fox? No But we shall be like Him, like our Lord and Savior while countless ages roll. Oh, the glory that is to be revealed in us through Him in that day! Once He was the man of the marred visage, once He was the man of the thorn-crowned brow, once He showed the marks of the nails and the spear print, but now He is the Christ of the Mediatorial throne, with Him is all the glory of the Father, and we shall be like Him. Like Him, and where He is. Bishop Quayle one time said, "Christ is staying at home now;" and we are to be at Home with Him. If His presence disperses the gloom here and makes all within us rejoice, what will it do when we are there! Hold on, O soul of thine, a little longer, and then where He is, that will be glory for thee.

Your privilege and mine! Hear it again: "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." Faith is the victory. It is your privilege to have this blessed relationship now. You may have the home awaiting you, a home where the garnishing has been done by the Architect of the universe, with all manner of precious stones, jasper and chalcedony, and jacinth, and emerald, and the streets are gold like transparent glass and the gates are solitary pearl. The foundations are all rapture, and the place is praises that are eternal.

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