

# What Is a Christian 02 a Child of God

by James K. Boswell

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*A Christian is one who belongs to Christ, witnesses for Christ, and suffers with Christ, and is a people of dignity, distinction, and destiny.*

**Duration:** 38:40

**Scripture:** Romans 1:12, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 John 3:1-3, 1 John 4:18

**Topics:** "Personal Relationship", "Spiritual Transformation"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher shares a personal experience of being mistaken for Jesus by a little girl on a train. He emphasizes the importance of having a personal relationship with Jesus and the hope of being transformed to be like Him in the future. The preacher also highlights the joy and fellowship that comes from having the love of God shed abroad in our hearts. He encourages believers to seek out others who share the same love and life in Christ. The sermon concludes with a touching story of a boy whose eyes were opened and his gratitude towards the one who performed the miracle.

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## Transcript

A couple were being married in Scotland some years ago. We do that across there, you know. And I was down in South Wales, and I couldn't get home in time for the wedding.

So I sent a telegram to them, and on the telegram I put, 1 John 4, 18, which reads, Perfect love casts off fear. There is no fear in love. But when the telegram arrives at the wedding, at the reception, the best man, instead of looking up 1 John 4, 18, looked up the gospel by John 4, 18, which reads, Noah's had five husbands.

I think Noah's husband's not my husband. 1 John, chapter 3, and verse number 1. A dear brother referred to this this morning, and I kind of wonder if he's going to take my... 1 John 3, verse 1. Behold what manner of love the Father bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God, and such we are. Therefore the world knows us not, because it knew him not.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God. And it doth not yet appear what we shall be, for we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. And every one that hath this open hand, purify themselves, even as he is pure.

The Lord will add his blessing to that reading from his word, to our hearts tonight. Now remember, we're looking at the all-important theme, who is a Christian. We found the Christian is one who belongs to Christ, one who witnesses for Christ, and one who suffers with Christ.

Those of you who are here this morning will remember the outline from Acts chapter 11, Acts 26, 1 Peter chapter 4. A Christian is one who belongs to Christ. I trust we're all there. Tonight you really belong to the Lord Jesus, and you know him as your Lord and as your Savior.

If so, we are witnessing for him. If we are not, then we should be. Then of course, if you are witnessing without the shadow of a doubt, you're going to suffer with him.

I don't promise you an easy pathway if you become a Christian, if you become a child of God. The Christian pathway is not an easy pathway. It is a conflict.

The same goes all along the Christian pathway. Christ lives in you, and he that is in us is far greater than those who are without us. And he is saying, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

So we may boldly say, the Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. What a joy to know Christ is not only the beginning and the end of the way, but that he really is the way. He's all the way, the beginning and the end, and all the way in between.

He's a wonderful Lord. Before you now, remember, a Christian is a child of God. We're going to go down to the classic on the word Christian.

A Christian is a child of God, who has Christ living on the inside. I said, I repeat now, Christianity is not coming to us on from without. Christianity is the outliving of the inliving Christ.

What a wonderful change in my life has been brought. Since Jesus came into my heart. Sing of the hymns.

Oh, what a salvation is this, that Christ liveth in me. For there is no longer I, but Christ that liveth in me. Sometimes when you sing, Lord Jesus is standing at the higher door knocking, may I come in.

Some people conjure up in their mind the idea of a full-grown man, thirty-three and a half years of age, coming into your little heart. Oh no, he does not come in physically, but he by his birth comes into your spirit life. He was made out of spirit and soul and body.

Spirit, I'm God conscious. Soul, I'm self-conscious. Body, I'm world conscious.

And when God says, Adam, the day that he deserveth, thou shalt surely die. And when Adam and Eve retrieved that forbidden fruit, immediately they died. Oh no, they did not die physically, they died spiritually.

And a spirit father man, that knew God, that communed with God, that worshipped God, from that moment to the last day he was born in the world, that spirit father dared to war God. That's why the Lord said to Nicodemus, ye must be born again. Ye must be born again.

Not physically, because Adam and Nicodemus said, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter second time into his mother's womb and be born? The Lord said, that which is born of flesh is flesh, or earthly life. That which is born of spirit is spirit, the heavenly, the spiritual life. And so the moment I received the Lord Jesus, believing that he died for me upon the very cross, to bear the penalty against my

sin, and believing God raised him again from the dead, I received him by his spirit into my heart.

And that very moment, that spirit father is quickened into life. And I know God. He is my father.

And the spiritual son went and said, Abba, my own dear father, Galatians 4 verse number 6. Then that spirit chamber is illuminated by the incoming of the blood of the world. Men by nature are not only spiritually dead, they're spiritually in the dark. They're spiritually injured.

I want you to get that tonight. Men by nature are spiritually dead, and they're spiritually in the dark. But when a man receives Christ into his heart, what happens? That spirit father is quickened into life.

They're alive and they're gone. They know him. And what happens? The Lord Jesus said, in John 12 verse number 8, those wonderful words, I am the light of the world.

He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. And when Christ comes into the heart, that spirit chamber is illuminated by the incoming of the light into spiritual life. We've come from spiritual darkness into spiritual light.

We've come from spiritual bondage into spiritual liberty. We've come from hate into love. And that's what it means, my friend, to be a child of God.

You have Christ indwelling you by His spirit. Now I repeat, if we have not the spirit of Christ, we are none of His. When does the Holy Spirit enter into your life? When my all-adventure on Christ was flowing blood, the Holy Spirit entered, and I was born of God.

What about you? What about you? Are you tonight still spiritually dense and separated from God, in spiritual darkness, in spiritual ignorance? My friend, this all can be changed tonight by what? Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, owning Him as Lord and Savior, from your heart's faith, come into my heart, Lord Jesus. I receive you now as my Lord, as my Savior. I have a little bit of a crooked mind.

I'll let you in on a little secret. Every time I come to Father, I know that happens. Every time, for two or three days, it all clears up.

So we trust it's going to happen right here too, eh? But if you tell me I talk far too much, you know, and probably that's what causes it. Let us come a little closer, shall we? Now the Christian is a child of God, and you become a child of God by faith in the Lord Jesus. That is, you receive Him in your heart, verse number one.

Behold, that we should be called the sons of God. We stand back tonight in holy awe, in utter amazement. Behold, stand still, consider, they should gaze upon this glorious fact.

The Father, I love illustration, don't you? The Father, see now, in the family of God, and the Father bestowed upon us. Oh, that matchless love, that we should be called the sons of God, and such we are. May I pause here tonight? Now I want to give you four little deeds that you can carry away with you.

The first one is, what dignity belongs to those of us who are sons of God? The dignity of being a child of God. To be born in the royal family, what honor, what dignity? Why a prince, a princet of the royal family? Royal blood surging through your veins, everyone holds in esteem, appreciation, what honor? Why? He's a prince, she's a princet. Beloved, listen, all that pales away in insignificance when you recognize tonight you're a child of the king of kings.

I want tonight to recognize we are a people beyond ordinary. We are a people, not because I am a child with such dignity, it is not for me to lower the standard. Remember, I repeat, we are a people beyond the ordinary.

We're beyond the ordinary in our birth. We're born not of blood, nor the will of flesh, nor the will of man, we are born of God. We're beyond the ordinary in our relationship.

We are now the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. We're beyond the ordinary in our citizenship. Our citizenship's in the heaven, from Christ also, we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We're beyond the ordinary in our companionship. Our companionship's with the Father, and the Son, in the Holy Ghost. And with all who are of a pure heart, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

Oh, what a society we belong to. Think of the high calling, you are a child of God. My friends, let's come here to the dignity of this, the great honor of the state of souls, walking up and down the street of trees and heights, walking up and down the street to the land from which you have come, that town, that village.

Why? Think the aristocracy of heaven, walking here on earth. Never be apologetic because you're a Christian. Never be ashamed to say, I'm a child of God.

Think of the honor that is yours. Think of the dignity that belongs to you. Remember this, there's nobody like you.

There's nobody like us. Boy, you like to think that, don't you? But it's true. There's nobody like the children of God.

We are the salt of the earth. We are the light of the world. You're the aristocracy of heaven.

Let me get into your soul tonight, my friends. Remember in John, the brother Peter, his first letter, chapter 2, verse 9 says, ye are a peculiar people. Now you say, Jim, you're getting nearer it now.

We are a peculiar people. For you, that's true. The word peculiar is a double of people beyond the order of people beyond and please nevermore remember your high calling.

Remember the dignity and the honor that is yours as a child of God. May I pause now? A people for his own possession. We've one boy, Peter.

He's 29 years of age, got two children of his own now. He was out in business, got a degree in law three years ago, gone back to university to get his master's. But when he's a little boy, the age I'm thinking of now, he's a little girl, about let's say, four and a half years of age.

We're living down here in Birmingham in England at the time. Now I get home from the evangelistic campaign. Peter's playing next door to his innocent wife in the lawn.

She's imitating him in some particular way. She saw me going to my garden gate. She said to Peter, Peter, see what's coming up your garden path.

When the little fellow saw me, he got through the fence, came running down his pathway. I put my feet down. These words, my own, have never left me.

The real is still in my soul now. My own, dada. Child of God, the Lord looks into your heart and I think of my very own.

You're my own special treasure. You're my own darling. You're my own by recreation, my own by redemption.

You see how much you are to him, child of God. Aren't you glad you're a Christian? Amen. The fact that you're a child of God, what honor, what dignity is yours? And therefore the world will know this not because it knew him not.

You see, not only are we a people of dignity, we are a people of... I want you to get this, that if we recognize we are a people... I was walking in and out among men and women day by day. There's something about my friendship. Not only going around with a halo around her hair and a great big Bible under arm, having a sanctimonious kind of a look about us.

Oh no. But there's a serenity, there's a tranquility, there's a joy about the Christian. What did happen to him? They hung him upon a cross.

They placed him outside. I want to tell you frankly tonight, if we as God's beloved people are going to go on with him and as though I move forward in the current of his sweet will, they too my friend will come upon the outside. May I say this lovingly? When dear child of God, the worldling can understand us as Christians, then there's something wrong with our testimony.

Something wrong with our testimony. We are an enigma, we are a wonder, we are an amazement to the unbeliever. They can't understand us.

What, going to Plymouth? Going for four months down the forage of the Bible conference Oh, you're a square or something. They don't know the joy. Going on a train from Toronto to Vancouver was an evangelist and his wife.

The brethren in Vancouver had very wisely and very kindly arranged for him to have a bedroom in a beautiful train called the Canadian, the CPR. The wife is upstairs at the dome looking out through the window there watching the beautiful ceiling going through the rocky mountain. The evangelist is in his bedroom studying, praying, preparing his heart for the ministry on the west coast.

He took a little break. He goes out to the corridor looking out through the windows at a beautiful scenery meditating upon what he's been studying in the bedroom when he became aware of somebody standing beside him. He looked down and he saw a little girl.

Said, hello, how are you? Said, sir, sir, are you Jesus? The evangelist found the train going from his leg to the picture of it. No, darling, I'm not Jesus but I'm a Jesus man. Oh, said, sir, I thought you must be Jesus.

I've been watching you and you're different to the other men on the train. Are those 70 older detected a mark of distinction? What about your life? What about my life? Am I a child of God? Then only the dignity of distinction and we shall be marked out of sight. The evangelist went into a restaurant in, say, Ontario sometime ago on the way to Central for meetings.

One night meeting, in fact. He stopped just outside Chilternburg at a restaurant there. The evangelist went to pay him.

The man at the desk said, it's all right, he's been paid. Said, why? No, I haven't paid, said the evangelist. Said, no, it's already paid.

You're Christians, aren't you? Said, yes, we are Christians. How do you know? I know it by your wife's deportment and by her hair. And your bold vow to give thanks.

We are people of distinction. Are you? Am I? That's what it means to be a Christian. Not a case of just, well, hallelujah, my sins are forgiven.

I'm on my way to heaven. I'll go. No, no, right down here is a place.

I've got to live that before. May God give us grace to recognize this. That's number three.

What does it say? We're a people of destiny. Aren't you glad about this? We're a people of destiny. Oh, that's number two.

Belonging now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. No, no, I have not seen your ear hair. No, they enter into the heart of man.

All that God has prepared for them. Our finite minds can't comprehend or grasp the least and the least measure. All that God has prepared for those who are his own.

What does it say on the next sentence? But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Not only we are people of dignity and a people, my friend, of distinction, we are a people of destiny. My friend, we know where we're going.

I love those who connect with Christian. A Christian is one who is heaven bound. Hold the Zion we are bound, happy in the love of Jesus, peace abiding we are found, happy in the love of Jesus.

Oh, child of God, we are a people of destiny. We started on the way for it to start. There's a way back to God from the dark path of sin.

There's a door that is open and you may go in at Calvary's cross is where you begin when you come as a sinner unto Jesus. And we bear law before him. We acknowledge him as a Lord and Savior.

The queens of destiny, a people of destiny. We're going to be with him. That's wonderful.

Can you imagine what that's going to be? And can you imagine what that's going to be? To be with him in his presence, full of joy at his right hand, treasured forever gone. To be with him, the all who get a lovely one, the terrorist of the fair, just to be with him and where Jesus is, his heaven there. Tonight, as a child of God, we have a little hallelujah heaven right inside here.

Isn't that true? Because Jesus by his spirit lives in here. We said this morning, if this glimpse of love is so divinely sweet, what will it be above his gladdening smile to meet? I sometimes feel homesick for heaven and the glories I there shall behold. When my Savior I see in a beautiful city of God, you know something, that will be to see him.

Are you going to be there? Friend, if you're a child of God, you're going to be there. Thank God that he is before the Father, so that I will be before the Father. May I pause here right now? Not only we're going to be with him, but we're going to be like him.

Like him. Now, can you imagine what that's going to be? Says in 2 Corinthians chapter 3, verse 18, as we continue to behold him in the mirror, the word of God, so are we being changed from glory to glory into the same image. As we continue to behold him in the Holy Scripture, and we're beholding him, we're changed by beholding, and we're being transformed, transfigured.

But friend, what is it going to be just to be there? To gaze upon him without the cloud between? A little boy who was born blind, when this boy was about 18 months old, no, when this boy was about 15 years old, his father got home from office one day, and he found his wife rather... She said, what's the matter with you dear? He said, oh I'm all right. She said, no, there's something troubling you. What is it? I tell you I'm all right.

Leave me alone. He got hold of her and pushed her against the wall. You tell me, what's the matter with you? She began to cry.

Oh you women, how you try to hide things, don't you? Well, it's breaking my heart. The thing that child of mine brought into the world, will never see the mother's dumbness for it. It's breaking my heart.

The child I brought in was born blind. He'll never see us. He went back to his office, somewhat upset.

He confronted one of his colleagues, who told him of a highly strict specialist, with performing wonderful operations. An interview was arranged. It took the boy to see the doctor, who having examined the boy's eyes said, there's very little hope.

I'll operate. I'll do my best. I can do no more.

They agreed to the operation. Some days after, the father and mother sent for, for standing in that little room, amongst a company of doctors, medical students, and nurses. And of course, the boy and the father and mother.

The nurses did the bandages. When it came to the start of that move, it was a breathtaking moment. Would he be able to see? And they're all standing right there on a tiptoe of expectancy.

After a moment, he looked up at the ceiling. He looked down at the floor. He looked at the table sitting right in front of him.

He looked out and he saw his hand moving for the first time. He looked out, and he saw his mummy, and his daddy for the very first time. So, but aren't you now happy, you can see? I'm extremely happy, but I want to see the man who opened my eyes.

When the professor was just next door, waiting for the doctors to drop in, the boy took him by the hand and looked up and said, Thank you, sir, for opening my eyes. You know something, beloved? It may be this very night that we too shall be ushered right into the presence of the man who opened our eyes, and we're going to thank him face to face. Amen? The wonder of it all, my friend, it may happen to light, but you'll never be there unless you're a child of God.

As he'll respond to the magnet, so all who have his spirit will respond when he comes into the air and arise to meet him. And I repeat, it may be this very night when the listening sky is now down, we'll hear the bridegroom's voice saying, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away far above the clouds. Beloved, not only we are people of dignity and distinction, we're a people of destiny, we're going... I know there's

your life story.

You're just like the children, you know? I know there's this, and there you're just sitting so quietly, here's another. It happened in Brantford, Ontario, on my first visit to Canada some 18 years ago. I was giving a series of talks there, Bedford Chapel, on the Lord's coming.

This was the tenth night, the last night. And I was talking there on 1 Corinthians 15. And right on the second front row, there sat a man, a converted boxer, not a dog, a man.

Stan Ford is coming, Stan. May I suggest something to you? Stan Ford is one of the finest evangelists we've got today, and not only in Britain, but in the world. He's a horrific preacher.

I've preached with Stan many, many times. Not only is he wonderful, he's a good Bible teacher. He's developed tremendously.

He's a critic known to some of you. I had a letter from him the other day, it said, Jim, pray for Stan Ford. His next crusade is going to be on the campus at Cambridge University.

The chap never did schooling in his life. He boxed all his life, and his brother went for books. But God's taken that man up, and God's using that man.

My friend in Brantford sat there on the second front row every night. He wanted to shout hallelujah. He wanted to say praise the Lord.

He wanted to say amen. Why he didn't do it, I simply don't know. Do you know? Probably it wasn't etiquette.

Probably it wasn't the right to do such things in such circles. But every night when he was all over, he just absolutely overflowed. Just bubbled over.

This night I told him about, behold I show you a mystery. Leave them all asleep. Leave them to change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

The last night he's rapping on there about the word Atomos. The only time the word Atomos is mentioned there, in the Bible is right there, 1 Corinthians 15. In a moment, too long.

Twinkling of an eye, Atomos! That's all. Your eyes will be up, and before it's down you'll be in heaven. Do you know how long it takes to wink? Huh? The fifth of a second.

The forty-six thousandth part of a second. Think of that. Think of it.

And within a moment, Atomos! In heaven. By you're talking about going to the moon? My friends, think of it like in a moment. Your eyes will be up.

Isn't it amazing? I want to tell you that may take place tonight. Start going rapping along. Make a little change in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

That's it friends. I'm not much to look at now. And before I got my next words, Amen brother.

But I meant to say, I'm not much to look at now, but one day I'll be well. And it'll be all together lovely, isn't it? We're going to be with him. And we're going to be like him.

The one of us all. Now lastly, this connection. The word I want to give you, duty.

In verse number four. What does it say now? And every man hath his hope set on him, purified himself, even as he is pure. Verse three.

And every man hath his hope set on him, purified himself, even as he is pure. So beloved, you're a people of dignity, a people of distinction, a people of destiny, and a people of duty. If I'm looking for the Lord Jesus to come back at any moment, what does the Bible say? We shall pure.

No one will tell me they're expecting Christ to come back. Otherwise this is not the desire to live a holy life. And no one will tell me they're expecting Christ to come back at any moment, if you haven't got a passion.

Duty. This is a purifying hope. A cleansing hope.

And all to have his hope set on him, purified himself, even as he is pure. I can't, we could not get a teenager, a boy, not a girl, girls not like boys, no. We couldn't get this teenage boy to wash.

It was a normal job. It wasn't like every time to get this, have you got that trouble with your teenager? But one day, one Friday afternoon, we got this boy, there he was down, down on the lake. And he had got a barrel of soap.

And my, he's got a wonderful lather. Oh, he's polishing himself beautifully. You know, we thought he'd been converted.

See, conversion makes that change too, you know. Not only cleanse within, you cleanse without too. See, cleanliness connects to godliness.

Now that's not in the Bible. I think it's got a good effect though, don't you? Bible show he's converted, quite sure. And about half an hour afterward, a car came onto the campus.

And from the car, on a teenage girl, just about his own age, I ran to meet her. He was polishing up because his beloved was coming. Now listen, our beloved is on the way.

Are we all polished up? Are we all polished up? Are we all waiting and ready to say tonight, triumphantly, even so come Lord Jesus, even so come today? Friend, listen, we are a people of dignity. We are a people of distinction. We are a people of destiny.

And we should be a people of duty. Why? This is what it means to be a Christian. This is what it means to be a child of God.

An illustration. Two young people back in Britain were gloriously, madly in love with one another. Then they came engaged to be married.

He said to her, darling, I am going to Australia. I am going to try and make good, and I'll come back for you. She's not too happy about the situation, but she knew her future depended upon it.

And so off he goes. Cutting my long story short, he gets a job. Everything, my friend, goes well for him.

He gets some money. With the money, he takes women from Britain. And he gets a lot.

He begins to build a house. Everything's going on very well. The roof gets on the house.

All the furnishings, all the drapes, all the color schemes, all in view of the homecoming of the bride. He's longing for the day when they'll be together in that lovely little home. Of course, there is a tension between them, from Britain and from Australia.

Each letter filled with love and devotion. All those wonderful love letters meant so much to the one day. And all this wonderful completion stands before him.

Why? Longing for the day when his bride will be there to share it with him. She gets a cable. I'm on the way.

I'm arriving in Southampton in a certain boat on a certain day. Now all her appointments take color in view of the day. It's arrived.

She's down there in the harbor waiting for the great liner to come steaming into the harbor there. And it comes. Hundreds upon hundreds of people standing there on the harbor.

Hundreds upon hundreds are there upon the boat. Ah, he's looking for a sign. She's looking up.

Where is he? Who is he? She says, he says, where is she? There are British everybody around them. They're looking for one another. And as the boat, my friend, ties up, there he is.

There she is. Friend, can you imagine what takes place when those two people in their eyes meet? Can you imagine what takes place there in those young hearts? There he is. There she is.

I was in the Gaspé, Quebec some time ago. Now she was in a very similar strangely closing moment to the meetings I'm doing now. What do you think happens when their eyes meet? A boy said he jumped overboard.

I thought he meant to commit suicide, but it wasn't that at all. He was just so haggard. When our eyes meet, our adorable Lord Jesus is going to be with real delight and complete satisfaction.

Again, he's down. He gets through coughing. They're gone.

They meet. They embrace. They hold each other.

Oh, my friend, what does this mean to them? Oh, he's come back. Oh, she says, I'm so glad I was... Beloved, our beloved has gone away to prepare a place. The answer has come.

Behold, the bridegroom cometh is on the way, going out to meet him. And should our eyes meet tonight, would it be with dread or would it be with delight? When he comes, will he find us flirting around with the world? Flirting around with manly religions? Will he find a heart, my friend, of a devoted and look from your very heart and say, Oh, Lord Jesus, thou art enough. The mind and heart are filled.

Oh, fix my eyes to the holy Lord on thee. That was thy beauty occupied. I elsewhere none may see.

And in view of all this, turn your eyes upon Jesus. The fool in his wonderful face and the things of earth will go strangely dim in the light of his flirting grace. In this flirting moment, we are a people of dignity.

We are a people of distinction. We are a people of destiny. And we're a people of duty.

And we'll go on from there with the word child tomorrow night. Now, whatever you're doing tomorrow, don't do it and stay here. Of course, when the Lord comes for you, he'll tell you more about it by himself there, won't he? God bless you.

It's a joy having you. Hymn number 263. 263.

And notice, he wrote the same. Behold, love boundless love, the Father hath bestowed on sinners lost. We should be now called the sons of God.

Aren't you glad you're a child of God? 263.

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