

Child, Servant Or Son■

by Sunil Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the transition from being spiritual children to mature sons and daughters of God, focusing on the importance of growing in intimacy with the Lord, pursuing holiness, and understanding the unique calling and function each individual has in building up the body of Christ. It highlights the dangers of being caught up in serving without true spiritual growth, comparing oneself to others, and being swayed by worldly doctrines, urging listeners to seek a deeper relationship with God and to embrace their identity as heirs of God's promises.

Scripture: Hebrews 5:8, Ephesians 4:11, Luke 15:11, 2 Corinthians 6:18, 2 Corinthians 7:1

Topics: "Spiritual Maturity", "Identity in Christ"

Description

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Transcript

All right, so before I get to my topic, I wanted, I was talking to some of the youth here yesterday and one of the topics that came up in terms of their discussion with friends and actually interestingly with other young brothers in the church, in this case I was talking to brothers, is about something as simple as the existence of God. That's an important question, I mean how do we know that God exists? Now, I've studied science, all of those things, I don't intend to be able to justify the existence of God through science. I have, I will fail miserably.

Maybe there are others who can do it effectively, I'm not one of them, but I mean if the beauty of, it's important to, the beauty of God's creation, the order of the planets, the order of the way the body heals itself, if that doesn't speak to you, I mean if you see something like a phone just show up out of nowhere, would it be, it would be sort of silly to assume that this phone didn't have a manufacturer. We see the beauty of our creation, I think it's sort of silly if we're not able to explain it and maybe proud on our part if we're not able to explain it to say that there isn't any God. But at the same time, I think it's a dangerous thing to engage in such conversations with friends or even brothers because it stimulates the intellect.

And the moment we stimulate our own intellect, it draws away from our own weakness and dependence on God and starts depending on our intellect to solve and to explain these things. Whereas the humble person says, I'm not able to explain it. And that's why when I, if somebody were to ask me, how do you know that God exists? I have one response to them.

And that is what Jesus actually told a couple of his disciples. We don't have to turn there, but in John one, there were a couple of disciples that were following John the Baptist. And John the Baptist said, there, that's the Lamb of God.

You need to follow him, which by the way, is an amazing word. John the Baptist, the prophet of God had no interest in having his own disciples. When his disciples started following him, he pointed them to Jesus and said, follow Jesus.

Don't follow me. I'm just a prophet. And what did those men do? And the men went to him and they said, we want to know more about you.

Where do you live? And Jesus had three words to them, come and see. And they came and visited his home and they came and they saw his life. So to anyone who asks me whether God exists, I don't have, I can't explain it to you scientifically.

We can talk about the beauty of creation and the body healing, but I can't argue about when time began and things like that. I am not interested in those scientific arguments. But I will say three words, come and see my life.

Come and see that I'm completely a failure, but for the grace of God, that I have nothing on my own to be able to achieve anything. Nothing on my own strength will get me anywhere in life. But with God's help, you will see joy, complete joy in my life, complete peace in my life.

And if you don't see it, it's because I've stopped depending on God. And that's the proof of the existence of God. Come to our church and see how brothers and sisters are united and they're not fighting and they're not striving in each other.

There's no jealousy. The spirit of God is moving in unity. Come and see.

Simple examples, not to be boastful or to talk about it. Even in yesterday's message, I had no idea that my dad was going to talk about being clothed in humility and that we're naked without, I didn't listen to last Sunday's message at CHC. I didn't, I wasn't expecting that.

The Lord put it on my heart to speak about learning humility from Jesus Christ. Who put it on brother Zach's heart to speak about being clothed in humility? The same Holy Spirit. You can't explain that.

Come and see. And this is the explanation that I want to encourage all of the young people who are facing this question about the existence of God. The arguments, the scientific, all of that is, maybe you might win some people over, but that's not the message of the gospel.

Jesus spent very little time trying to explain how the world was created in six days. He spent time living a life that people could follow. And that's the, that's what we want our lives to show, the life of Jesus, the existence of God through us.

And so if you do believe that God exists, then just living the way we've been living as the rest of the world does, so perhaps as some of us are doing, just cannot be the way. If there is a God that we must submit to, that we must serve, there has to be something far greater to life than me pursuing wealth, money, success in jobs, pleasure, sex, relationships, boyfriends and girlfriends. Like there's got to be something much, much bigger than that if a God exists.

Because I'm going to die in a few years, and there's thousands of years that have existed of humankind, and my 70, 80, 90 years is meaningless. So how do I make it count for something? There has to be a far greater meaning. And for those of us who believe in Jesus, the one thing I'll say uniquely about what makes, in my understanding, unique about Jesus and his relationship with me compared to any other faith, other faiths offer the idea of an almighty God.

Almost every religion has the idea of an almighty God. There's two things, two attributes of Jesus that is unfound anywhere else. Jesus the Redeemer, the person who would sacrifice his life entirely, just for me personally.

Don't make it about the world, make it about you personally. If you were the only person on this planet, and nobody else, everybody else had been destroyed by the flood, Jesus would come and sacrifice his life for you. Jesus the Redeemer.

No other faith or religion or enlightenment can match that. And the second, which is far more powerful than even Jesus the Redeemer, to me at least, as I've been walking as a New Covenant Christian, is Jesus the forerunner. Jesus the example.

There are many spiritual examples you can follow, but all of them were imperfect. Many religions are prophets and things like that, great men of God, so to speak, but even they had imperfections. In our faith, in our belief, we have God who became man as an example that I can follow and I can do.

And what does it mean to say he didn't just do great things and heal great people, he lived a life of weakness and complete dependence on his father. And I can identify with that, because I feel extremely weak on some days, where I just can't, I can't, in many aspects of life. And Jesus himself says, John 5 30, I can do nothing on my own initiative.

And again in the next chapter in John 6, he says, I do nothing on my initiative, as the Father tells me I do. This is Almighty God saying, I can't do anything, I'm helpless. Almighty God as a man saying, I can't do anything, I'm helpless.

Find me any other faith which will have God show up as a weak human being and as an example that we can follow. And there's many other branches of Christianity who actually don't believe that Jesus Christ was a man. And this is why it's important if you have, it's a dangerous thing to fall into that level of theology, because if Jesus Christ was not a man, if Jesus Christ was only God and not a man, when he was here, it gives me an excuse to remain in sin.

Because I'm like, of course, he lived a perfect life. I'm human. And you heard, if you had this conversation with your friends and in college and work, oh, I'm only human.

I mean, it's okay. It's a great way to make an excuse for your mistakes. I'm only human.

What do I do? Well, if I can say, well, Jesus was only human. Now I no longer have an excuse. Jesus was only human and he was able to be led by God through the Holy Spirit and live a perfect life.

I do not have an excuse. And he didn't do it out of striving and out of his own will. He did it out of a dependence on God, a complete surrender and a dependence on God.

That makes it easy for me to understand. I've seen somebody who doesn't have any superhero skills that I don't have. He's not able to fly in the air or do crazy things with superhuman strength.

He has the same weak body that I have, but he was able to walk a sinless life. And that gives me hope that no other faith or religion can give me. Jesus, the Redeemer, but more importantly, Jesus, the forerunner.

God has an example to me. So I just wanted to start with that. And it changes the way I look at my outlook of the world and what I live for.

There's a danger every day to look at the things around you, your grades in school, your pursuit of a job, your pursuit of a marriage partner, all of these things as being primary. Turn with me to 2 Corinthians 4, verse 18. It says, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen.

Look at that carefully. How do you look at something that's not seen? You're looking at something that cannot be seen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

So what should I be looking at? For those of you who are into high tech, one of the latest fads is these things called VR glasses, virtual reality glasses. You put them on and you can transform yourself into a new space where you're like in the metaverse and you're exploring and you're collaborating and you can have avatars and you're interacting with people in a different space. But here's the truth.

The earth we're living in is actually the virtual reality. The real reality, according to the verse that I need to look at, is the eternal reality. This earth is like playing a Monopoly game where you're trading with some money, you're buying some properties, you're building some houses, you're charging people rent and you're doing that.

But at the end of the day, the game is going to get folded up and you're going to have to get to the reality, the eternal reality. So the sooner I embrace looking with my eyes at what is truly eternal, if you look at the previous verse, momentary light affliction is producing for me an eternal weight of glory. It means that every trial in my life is not really a trial.

In my VR view, in my virtual reality glasses, it looks like a difficult situation. That's just the video game. The real point is that trial is giving me some gold coins, some treasure up in heaven.

It is giving me an eternal weight of glory. So I want to challenge you today to look at everything, your life in college. If God exists, your life has to mean something much more than just living for yourself.

Think of it through the lens of eternity. Think of it, have your eyesight be transformed into what is eternal. The next chapter, 2 Corinthians 5.15, beautiful verse.

Many people, when they say, why did Jesus die? You think about John 3.16, right? That's a verse we talk about often, John 3.16. Jesus died so I can have eternal life. This is my favorite verse about why Jesus died for me. 2 Corinthians 5.15. There's also a verse which talks about why Jesus died.

It says, Jesus died for me personally so that I might no longer live for myself, but I might live for the one who died for me. That changes. You say, oh, people think about like, oh, so I can get to heaven.

But now this verse says, he didn't just die for me to get to heaven. He died so that today I will no longer live for myself. I will stop living for myself.

His death was not cheap. His death meant that today I need to stop living for myself and for living for the things of eternity. So I want to, with that, I want to talk about the journey of a Christian.

I would call this, the topic of my message, child, servant, or son. And the progression, we have a choice. As we progress through Christian life, we go through maybe some of these stages.

Some of us are children, some of us are servants of God, children of God, servants of God, and some of us are sons of God. The first thing to be a child of God, it says, we've experienced the love of God as a father. 1 John 3, we don't need to turn there, says, see how great the love the Father has bestowed on us that we should be called the children of God.

That means that our Father, our Heavenly Father, had such an amazing love in sending His Son for us that He was willing to adopt us and call us children of God. But the, and the rest of the verse says, for this reason the world does not know us because it does not know Him. The world is not, does not understand this relationship.

They see God as almighty, as a tormentor, or they don't believe in God, or they live in fear of God. The old covenant Jews, even to this day, live in fear of God. But we have something far more beautiful than that.

We have a relationship with God as a Father. We can go to Him, and if you, again, when you think about this, as I'm talking, think about everything in the context of eternal reality, I should be able to go with Him the same way that you go to your dad, or perhaps as you went to your dad when you were five or six years old. How did you go to your dad? You just, anything, you were unashamed.

You didn't have to tremble and say, oh, let me see if I, you go to Him for anything. You could sit on His lap, you could hug Him. Any question you had, you just go to Him.

If you're confused about something, just go to Him, ask Him. That's the relationship we need to have with God. But it's a progression.

We start, let me actually read from Galatians, which actually covers these these three types of Christians, the child, the servant, and the son. Galatians chapter four, verses one through seven. I'll just read it.

Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave, although he's owner of everything. So in a way, a child is not that much different from a servant, slave, servant. Why? Because he's under guardians and managers.

There's things he does not have freedom to do until the date set by his father. He's just, it's, it's, it's different. He's guarded.

So also, while we were children, we were held in bondage under the elemental things of this world. But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His son, born of a woman, born under the law, so that we might redeem those who are under the law, and we might receive this adoption, not just as children, adoption as sons, sons and daughters. And because you are sons and daughters, God has sent forth His

Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the one that allows us to grow into being a son or a daughter and being able to call the Lord Abba Father. Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if a son, then an heir.

An heir means you inherit everything of God's. A child perhaps doesn't inherit because he's not as mature enough. He has the power of Tony or somebody who's a guardian for him.

But a son is ready to be an heir and inherit everything that belongs to God. So I want to talk a little bit about this progression. And many of us have just started our Christian journey.

Perhaps we're children. What is it? It's good that we're children, because we at least know we have a Heavenly Father. A child still has a father.

So it's a good starting point. But the Lord wants to take us from there. What are some, when you think about a child, when I, when I, when you picture a child, I don't think about, none of you here are children.

You're all, some of, most of you are adults. Some of you are almost adults, teenagers. Picture a two-year-old or a three-year-old.

A really little child who is just learning to speak and has not understood how to do things on their own. What are the concerns of those child? Think about the attributes of that child. And so I'll share a few things.

And you can think if you have ideas, they are probably relevant spiritually as well. One attribute of a child is, he's very insecure for attention. He's jealous of somebody else's.

If his father or mother is putting someone else on the lap, while loving the other child, it's a little bit insecure. He wants the child's attention. He wants the attention.

And that's as a child of God. Are you insecure when some other brother in the church is getting a little bit more, one of you is getting a little bit more visibility than you? Well, you're a spiritual child. A child is very anxious when the father leaves the room.

So you're hanging out with your child as a father. And then you're playing with him, babysitting him. And then you get a call and you go to the other room.

You can't see your father. You start crying. Where is he? He's in the home, but the child doesn't know.

He's disappeared. I need to see him at all times. And that can be our relationship with God too, where in a moment where we can't see him, we forget about his existence.

In that moment, we forget that he even exists. And we start crying and we start getting anxious. And we don't know how we're going to handle the situation.

How am I going to handle the situation on my own? Because we've lost sight of God. Lost sight of him as a father. We think he's left the room, but he's still our father.

What else is an attribute of a child? What is a child interested in? What is a two-year-old interested in? Two things that I can think of a two-year-old is generally interested in. One is food. I'm hungry.

You need to feed me. Of course, you're my dad. You're my mom.

You'll feed me. I know you'll feed me. I'll cry out.

But I'm not interested in you as much as I'm interested in the fact that you are a provider of my food. And the other thing I'm interested in is in playing with toys. I'm interested in the toys.

So when you get me a gift, thank you, dad. You got me this gift. But if I don't get you a gift, I don't get as big a hug.

The gift is what is appealing to me. I look up to you as a provider for my food, a provider for the toys that I play with. And if we're children, spiritual children, like the verse I shared yesterday, we of most people are to be pitied if our hope in Christ is just for this life.

Which means that if my hope for Jesus is just, Lord, if my prayers are, Lord, get me into a good college. Give me a good job. Those are very good prayers.

But a much more important prayer is, Lord, your will be done like we heard yesterday. Your kingdom come. If I'm more interested in the toys that God can offer me here on this earth, again, the virtual reality of this earth.

If I'm more interested in the toys and the food that God can offer me on this earth, I might get to heaven. But I'm a spiritual child. And I'm a child.

Let me show you a couple of examples from the life of Jesus between the ones around him who were sort of spiritual children versus the ones who graduated to being sons who were his disciples. If you look at the beginning of the sermon, and this is why it's important to, one of the habits I recommend all of us to do is to just read one chapter of the Bible every day. Sometimes I'll just read one chapter.

I'm not one who's going to say, oh, read the Bible. There's some people who read the Bible three times in a year. I don't know what they're getting out of the Bible.

For me, if I read one chapter, that chapter can actually show me a lot. If I spend 10, 15 minutes, 20 minutes on one chapter, it actually shows me a lot. Ask God to reveal himself to you.

Don't read it as a chore. It says the Pharisees studied, Jesus said to the Pharisees, you study the scriptures, but you fail to, eternal life is not revealed to you because you're not able to find me in the scriptures. And so our goal from reading the scriptures is to find Jesus.

And as you read the scriptures, don't read it casually like, oh, I've read this before. I can skip over this verse. The Lord will show you interesting things, revealing things that will change your life practically that you've not seen before.

Matthew 5, I actually memorized this chapter when I was a child, but I read it recently, a few months ago, and I found something new on a chapter that we've preached on, the Sermon on the Mount, many, many times. And this is what I want to share, a little bit of that example of a child and a son. The previous verse at the end of the chapter, or we'll go back two verses.

Sometimes the chapter boundaries, as we've heard, are dangerous. You kind of have to go back a few, that's another way to read, is to look, if you're starting a new chapter, look back a few verses and see what is the context in which this, what I'm reading about is important. It says in verse 24 of Matthew 4, the news about Jesus spread all over and they were bringing to him those who are ill, suffering with various

diseases, pain, paralytics, and he healed them.

And so you think of these people as the spiritual children. What are they interested in? They're interested in healing of their sicknesses, being made well. And it says large crowds of children followed him, large crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis and Jerusalem and Judea from beyond the Jordan.

What were they following him for? Were they following him for eternal life? No, they were following him for healing and miracles and something new to appeal their ears that they haven't heard before. And what does Jesus do when he sees these spiritual children, these large crowds? Matthew 5 verse 1, what does Jesus do? He sees these crowds and he decides to go away from them. He decides to go up on the mountain.

And I see that as a test. Jesus going up on the mountain is saying, how many of you are willing to climb this mountain when life gets a little bit difficult? How many of you are willing to climb up this mountain with me? How many of you just want me to hang out down here and heal you? Now I'm going up on the mountain, are you going to come up? Might be a difficult mountain to climb, it might be a difficult hike, are you willing to come up on the mountain with me? And it says large crowds followed him, but only 12 people climbed up the mountain with him, his disciples are the only ones who climbed up to the mountain with him. And maybe some of the crowds followed as well.

And he began the sermon of the mount is sometimes thought of as being preached to masses. It was preached to his disciples. It was a sermon meant to be for the sons and daughters of God, not for the children.

And then if you look at, I'm not going to go through the sermon of the mount, but if you look at the end of the sermon of the mount, what happens? Matthew 8 verse 1, which is the end of the sermon of the mount. Again, you have to read the bible carefully to see this. Matthew 7, the sermon of the mount ends.

Matthew 8 verse 1, Jesus comes down from the mountain. What happens as soon as he comes down from the mountains? Large crowds follow him again, and a leper comes to him for healing, back to the spiritual children. And Jesus was, Jesus did not condemn them.

He was merciful to the children, but he had something greater for the sons and daughters of God. If you look at the same passage in Luke, the parallel passage in Luke, where it talks about Jesus, the same sermon on the mount, in Luke chapter 6 verse 20, it says, he turned his gaze towards his disciples, and that's when he began the beatitudes, blessed are you, our poor in spirit. So he was looking at his sons and daughters.

Those were his focus. His children were too, the young toddlers were too young to receive this instruction. They were not interested in this.

They were interested in the toys, the healing, the good jobs, the money that the world had to offer. They were not interested in, you want to be free from the lust of, lust of the eyes? You want to be free from anger? That's what the sermon of the mount was. You want to bless those who persecute you? That's not children stuff.

That's for sons and daughters. And he had something greater, and that's why his gaze was at his disciples. And then it says at the end, when he finished this, Luke chapter 7 verse 1, he says when he completed the sermon on the mount, and here's interesting, it says in the hearing of the people, it says all

the people were, people were around him in the hearing, but his gaze was on his disciples.

And that just, that spoke to me that the Lord has something far greater, if we will rise up and say, Lord, I should be pitied if you died just for, for this life. There's no reason for you to have died just for, if my life and you is just for this life. The verse we read yesterday, 1 Corinthians 15 verse 18.

You have something far greater for me, something that aligns with an eternal reality. What does it mean to truly understand God as a father? Let's go to 2 Corinthians chapter 6. 2 Corinthians chapter 6 verse 18. He says, this is the promise.

I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. The Lord has a calling to be sons and daughters, but what does a son and daughter do if he claims that promise? I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters. And for those who study the Bible, we'll see past, past the chapter references.

2 Corinthians 7 verse 1, very next verse. Therefore having these promises, what promises? The promise that God is a father to me and that I am his son and daughter. Because I have that promise, what do I do? What does a son and daughter do? Does he just go around, does he just, is he just content with pursuing good jobs, good marriage partner, good school, good scores in the entrance exam? No.

The son and daughter pursues something far greater. Let me cleanse myself. Because I have this promise, I will cleanse myself from all defilement of flesh and spirit, and I will perfect holiness in the fear of God.

The son and daughter is something far greater than the child, because they choose to say, Lord you promised that I'm your son and your daughter. This verse tells me I will, I am going to do my end of the bargain and perfect holiness, cleanse myself with the power of your Holy Spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God. So may God help us to move past this stage of just being spiritual children and have him elevate us and grow us up into being mature sons.

So I want to talk a little bit about that other phase that might come and interrupt us as we, especially as we attend the New Covenant Church, it's easy in a church like this to mistake ministry and service and things, oh I'm helping out in the church, oh the elders like me a lot, they ask me to volunteer, they ask me to help out, I help in the singing, I help with the music, I do these kind of things, and it's easy to mistake service for actual spirit growth, spiritual growth. Service has got nothing to do with spiritual growth. We know that the story of Martha and Mary, right, Martha was busy in the kitchen cooking and preparing.

Who was she cooking for? She was serving the Lord, she was serving the Lord, but she was comparing herself to her sister, and that's one of the marks of a servant, a servant is always going to be comparing, what is the other servant doing? What was Mary doing? Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus. Let's look at the story of the prodigal son as an interesting contrast here, I want to show you between the father's expectation for his two sons. The prodigal son had returned and he had been welcomed back as a child of God, now from that point he has to graduate into really being an heir and being a son of God, but let's see God's true heart of what he expected out of both his sons, but the way he spoke to his older son.

Luke chapter 15 is the end of the story of the prodigal son, as we know when the prodigal son came back his older son, his elder son was jealous, why is this guy being celebrated? Why are they putting a ring on his finger and slaughtering a fatted calf and celebrating it? Again similar to the story of Martha and Mary,

right? Why does she get to just sit alone? Why am I busy serving the Lord? I'm so busy serving the Lord, aren't you paying attention to all the work that I've done? Jesus said one thing is necessary and you've missed it, you're serving the Lord and you've missed the one thing that's necessary sitting at the feet of Jesus, you've not understood what it is to be a son, you're content with being a servant, but a servant is almost more dangerous than a child, at least a child has an attitude of weakness and they're willing to be depend on God, a servant has a sense of accomplishment, I deserve something, I'm not just a child, I deserve something, I've earned this. Luke chapter 15 verse 29, the oldest son, should have been a son, should have been a son, but he was acting more like a servant, he said, he answered to his father and said, look for so many years I have been serving you and I've never neglected a command of yours, what does the servant say? The servants, there's interesting, the son who is really treating himself as his own, what does he pay attention to? I have been serving you for so many years, he's keeping a track record of the number of years that he has been a Christian, oh I've been, this person's only just gave their life to Jesus, I've been walking with God for so many years, I grew up in CFC, I was born in CFC, this guy just came from the outside, what does he got to show me? I've been serving you for so many years, what else does he keeping track of? I've never ignored your commands, I pay attention to all your commands, he's keeping track, he's co-carding, how many years he's been serving, how many commands he's kept, never neglected a command, yet you never gave me a young goat so I may celebrate my friends, what does he want? The servant is again distracted by, I wonder, I want something from the Lord in return, I'm not content with eternal life, I need something in itself in return, I need some other glorification before men or some sort of celebration where people will celebrate me as a servant of God, he is distracted from being a son, may the Lord protect us from the attitude of being servants, it's a dangerous thing for those of us who've grown up in CFC, we can take for granted, we can look at, oh yeah I've heard all of these great sermons, I've listened to brother Zach, I can explain even theologically some of these things, the Lord doesn't want people who can explain the gospel, explain the Bible perfectly, but who don't have the attitude of a son or a daughter, verse 30, what did the father want from him? Oh verse 30 still talks about him, again it's still the older son having an attitude of the servant, this son of yours, he's not even willing to call him my brother, look at the lack of love, he does not have an attitude, the servant does not have an attitude of love, because he's serving, he's superior, this son of yours, not my brother, this son of yours, and what does he do? He's finding, criticizing his fault, pointing out all of his past sins, divide your wealth with prostitutes, which by the way, it never says anywhere in the passage that actually the son did those things, that he actually divided himself with prostitutes, he said he wasted his wealth, but he made an assumption, falsely accused, and you're celebrating him, the spirit of comparison, the spirit of keeping track of our service, anything that spirit of jealousy and selfish ambition, like we talked about yesterday, the wisdom of this earth, I'm sharing with the teens, the wisdom of this earth, it says in James 3, his selfish ambition and jealousy, the servant is interested in selfish ambition and jealousy, what is the father interested? The first word the father uses is son, he wants him to be a son, and he says there's only two things you need as a son, you've always been with me, just be content to be with me, be content to be with me, and all that is mine is yours, like we read in that other verse, the son is an heir, everything that is God's is mine, he has given us everything that we need for godliness, everything, all of his promises are available to us, that's the attitude of the son, I'm content Lord to be with you, the situation you're bringing me through, I'm content, I know all things will work together for good, I just want to be with you, that's the eternal reality, I want to be with you and I can claim all that you have for me is yours, that is the attitude of a son, Jesus, we looked at this verse earlier in a couple of the earlier meetings, where Jesus himself, it says he learnt, although he was a son, Hebrews 5 verse 8, although he was a son, he learned obedience from the things which he suffered, the calling of a son is to be content with the Lord, but to also be content

to learn obedience from things that we suffer, where the Lord will teach us to give something up, to deny ourselves, to obey our parents, to not partake in that activity, and there's a suffering associated with that, because we really want it, we want that pleasure, we want to listen to that music, we want everybody's talking about that movie, oh I got to see that movie, and there's a suffering involved with not being able to do that, oh I want to participate in this, I want to, and the Lord's telling you clearly, or your parents are telling you clearly, no you can't be doing that, a child, a son of God or a daughter of God should not be doing that, and there's a suffering that even Jesus went through, to deny himself, but he learnt obedience, as a son, he learnt obedience. I'll close with how this pertains to the building of the church, and what it means when we when we grow up to be truly sons and daughters in the church, the Lord has an amazing ministry for us, for each of you here, in building the church, I was sharing with the teens yesterday that every body part has a function, a unique function, and sometimes the smaller more invisible ones have a greater function, the fingernail is the only body part that can scratch an itch at the back of your back, the strong leg that you have, or the smart brain can't do that, it's the spirit of encouragement, somebody needs a little bit of encouragement, I was sharing yesterday about how I suffered an injury with my tendon, my Achilles tendon which joins the heel bone to the calf muscle, and I knew about the tendon but I didn't know what it did, but without it you can't walk, I couldn't walk with a torn tendon, I could lift my feet and place it, but it's something I took for granted, when we're walking, we walk five thousand, ten thousand steps, you're pushing off with each step, and each time you're pushing off, your tendon is like a rubber band pulling your calf muscle to allow you to walk and push forward, I didn't even realize that I was doing that all my life as a child until the tendon was broken, and maybe the Lord has called one of you to just be a tendon, somebody that just joins one brother to another brother in the church, joins a calf muscle to a bone, and is the glue between them, but without that the church will limp without your role, again an invisible thing, nobody even talks about it, but the Lord's got a function for you, or somebody that filters out the acid in the stomach, don't see it, but the Lord's got a function for it, as we're sons and daughters, the Lord has a calling for us in the church, Ephesians chapter 4 verses 11 through 16, I just want to read this as it pertains to the building of the body of Christ, he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors, some as teachers, these are the more visible ministries, what did he give these visible ministries to some, to very few, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service to the building up of the body of Christ, so who does the building up, it's not the visible saints and the apostles and the prophets, they just do the equipping, they just share a message like I'm sharing, the real building of the body is done by the saints, verse 12, and what is the purpose of that building up, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to a mature man, not just to be a child's body, but to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ, as a result we are no longer to be children, if you truly want to be a build the body of God here in this church, the body of Christ in this church, you we have to grow up from being children, what is the attribute of children, they're tossed here and there by waves and carried away by every wind of doctrine, you feel persuaded by the latest thing you're hearing on the internet or what somebody's telling you in school, those are signs of the trickery of men, craftiness and deceitful scheming, this is what's all around you in school, in colleges, sometimes even in churches, getting caught up with different doctrines, but instead speaking the truth and love to each other, we are to grow up in all aspects to him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body being fitted together, held together by what every joint supplies, every one of you has something to supply to the building of the body, and the proper working of every individual part causes the growth of the body, but the requirement for that is we are not to be children, we are to grow up, verse 15, speaking through the love we are to grow up, and may we grow up to be these ones who are not carried away by what the world has to say on the different doctrines, don't worry about even trying to explain

theology, just grow in love to yours your brothers and your sisters, what they were sharing with the brother yesterday was, think about this analogy, would you rather be a doctor who is dying of some deadly disease, but on his deathbed he's able to explain to you everything about how your body breathes, how it works, how the blood flows in your system, how your bones are made, and he's able to explain to you, but in a few hours he's going to be dead, he's dying, or would you rather be a young child who is full of life, but is not able to explain anything about how the body works, I would much rather be that young person who's just flowing with life, I can't explain, you say, can't you explain, don't you see, you need to be baptized as an adult, you need to be filled with the Holy Spirit, you need to do all of these things in the new covenant, God has these promises for you, and you're able to explain the theology, don't get caught up with all of those things, get caught up with life, the Lord wants you to just say, I don't know how to explain this, I can't explain to you whether God exists or this doctrine versus that doctrine, don't get caught up with those arguments, that's not what it means to grow from a child to a son, it means to grow in speaking the truth and love, growing in love for the Lord, that intimacy with the Lord, that simple devotion like Mary had at the feet of Jesus, that's what it means, and you may never be able to explain that, but you know you have life, you just say, hey, come and see, I'm breathing, how do you prove that I'm alive? I'm breathing, I can't explain how my lungs do it, but I'm breathing, and that's life.

May we all seek to grow up from this from this lens of seeing things through the way of the world, who are just interested in being the large crowds that follow Jesus, interested in our own personal benefit, to truly being sons and daughters, and seeing the great inheritance He has for each one of us. May we not fall into the trap of thinking, of measuring ourselves against others, and tracking our how much time we've been walking with the Lord, but truly be sons and daughters who are interested in purifying ourselves, in cleansing ourselves of all defilement of flesh and spirit, and in pursuing holiness every single day, pursuing intimacy, and the only way to do that is to be filled with the Holy Spirit every single day, growing in the likeness of Jesus every single day. The Lord has a great calling for each of you, not just to be children of God, but to be sons and daughters of God.

Amen.

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