

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP  
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

**Topic: The Spirit Sonship**  
**Reference Text: Romans 8:15**

**Wednesday, December 27, 2023**  
**Facilitator: Pastor Jide Lawore**

**Our Word of the Year for 2023: My Year of MANIFESTATIONS OF SONSHIP**

*“For all creation, gazing eagerly as if with outstretched neck, is waiting and longing to see the manifestation of the sons of God” ~ Romans 8:19 (WNT)*

**God Is a Family Man**

*Ephesians 3:14-15 “For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”*

According to the scripture, God is a family man. Hence, when we became believers, we were adopted into the family of God. Before then, we were strangers and were outside of the family. Even though we had a relationship with him by virtue of being his creations, becoming his children is totally on another level.

**Question:** *What is the difference between being God’s creation and being his children?*

*Ephesians 2:18-19 “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. 19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God”*

Salvation brought us into a different kind of relationship with God, a relationship based on love and grace.

**Understanding the Concept of Sonship?**

*Romans 8:15 “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” (NKJV)*

*Romans 8:15 “The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, “Abba, Father.”. (NIV)*

The concept of sonship in the Jewish culture is very different from that of our culture today. A son in the Jewish culture is more than just a male child, or daddy’s little boy. In Genesis 22:2, God tells Abraham to take his "son, thine only son Isaac" and sacrifice him to God on the mountain God would show him. Of course, this was long after the birth of Ishmael, so it is obvious that Isaac was not Abraham's only "little boy." Why then was Isaac his only son? The answer is that the Hebrew idea of a son was not only of male offspring, but rather of who would take over the family when the father stepped down.

The ruler was usually the firstborn male. However, this was not a set-in-stone law, as Reuben was not made the ruler among Jacob's children because he had slept with Jacob's concubine. Joseph was made the ruler, even though he wasn't the firstborn. Moreover, Jacob himself was the ruler after Isaac, even though he was younger than his brother Esau. The point of this is being a son is a special privilege and it’s a choice of the father.

**Question: What is the difference between Sons and Servants**

To understand the difference between sons and servants (slaves), it’s important to understand the concept of household in the New Testament era. A typical household then comprised of parents, children and hired servants (or slaves). The concept of slavery then was very different; there was no ethnic or racial basis for slavery. Even though slaves didn’t have much freedom, they were not considered sub-human. They completely recognized that slaves were humans and treated them as members of the household. Ephesians 6:1-9 (NKJV), Luke 15:11-32.

Many poor people in those days would rather be a slave in the household of a rich person because they were guaranteed food and livelihood. The only thing missing was certain rights and freedom. That is why the prodigal son would rather become a slave in his father’s house than suffer hunger outside.

**Luke 15:17-19** *“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.””*

Hence Paul uses the analogy to describe our relationship with God. The challenge here is not to be content with being servants in our relationship with God. We should go higher and pursue the relationship of sonship that offers more, especially freedom, access, and inheritance. Let’s look at the characteristics of the relationships between servants, sons, and the father of the household.

#### Relationship between servants and the father

- It is a relationship with strings attached. The father is a benefactor, the servant is a contributor.
- A servant is not entitled to the father’s inheritance.
- A servant has limited freedom and access to the father.
- The relationship between the father and the servant is largely defined by fear (especially from the point of view of the servant).

#### Relationship of a son and the father

- The relationship is pure and natural with no strings attached.
- A son has an inheritance. Romans 8:17
- A son has freedom and access to the father.
- The relationship is based on love.

**1 John 4:17-19** *“Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. 19 We love Him because He first loved us.”*

As children, our relationship with God should no longer be driven by fear but that of sonship.

**Question:** *What are reasons for fear in our relationship with God?*

#### Manifestations of Sonship – Going from a Child to a Son

**Galatians 4:1-7** *“Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”*

Being a son and manifesting as a son are two different things. In the natural sense underage beneficiaries cannot enjoy their inheritance until they reach a certain age. This principle also applies in the spiritual realm. You cannot enjoy the main benefits of your sonship until you grow up to maturity.