



What every Christian  
should know about  
**Jesus Christ**

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# Foreword

There are some *elementary* things that every Christian should know about Jesus Christ. The seven papers in this booklet focus on these elements. The topics are varied, but they have a common theme. If we discover who Christ is, and what He has accomplished, we will be firmly established as Christians. We will be planted in good ground and bring forth the fruit of sonship in our lives.

‘For you are all *sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have *put on Christ*.’<sup>1</sup>

In baptism, we are planted and united with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection.<sup>2</sup> In fact, we are clothed with Christ.

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1 Gal 3:26-28.

2 Rom 6:5.

Because Christ *is our life*, we are able to grow in our *own* sonship, for we are sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

To have faith in Christ Jesus is to understand who and what He became for our sake. The fact that He was ‘made ... to become sin for us’ is only one aspect.<sup>3</sup> Far beyond this, He was anointed as our Messiah in the Eternal Covenant before the ages. This is what every Christian needs to know about Jesus Christ.

He was invested with the full capacity of God to achieve the will of God concerning us. He was given all the treasures of grace so that, in becoming poor, He might make many rich.<sup>4</sup> Possessing all the riches of grace, He emptied Himself to become poor for our sakes. By reaching out to the extremity of our need, He took hold of us as the Good Shepherd, and brought us back from the dead with Him.<sup>5</sup>

He possessed the name above every name. Then He came to reveal this name to us, and to glorify us together with Himself, in that name.

By His obedience, He learned the complete experience of every son, for all time. In this way, He became the author of salvation. The capacity that He learned through suffering, as the Son of God in the flesh, is what we can learn in Him. We can learn His obedience and grow up to be the sons whom God has called us to be.

In our companion studies on ‘the lampstand church’, we are learning that Christ is the *base* of the lampstand. His revelation

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3 2 Cor 5:17.

4 2 Cor 8:9.

5 Heb 13:20.



*in flesh* is the foundation for our lives. We must be established in these elementary teachings about Christ. Then we can grow up and be formed as parts of the lampstand church. Christ is the foundation, and we will bear fruit as we abide in Him, like the branches of the vine.

These elementary teachings about Jesus Christ are ‘the good ground’ in which we must be planted. In the parable of the sower, we read that the seed on the wayside, stony and thorny ground, perished. Only the seed on good ground brought forth fruit. In today’s world, wayside ground represents those who are set in their religious ways. They have no understanding, no illumination; and so the seed of Christ’s life does not enter their hearts. The stony ground, in practical terms, represents the tribulation that comes to all those who *do* join Christ and who begin to fellowship in His sufferings. The thorny ground represents worldly cares and pursuits, particularly religious, good intentions that seek to overtake the seed of Christ’s life which has been planted in our hearts. These don’t belong to the Lord’s planting, and they only choke our growth.

These are important challenges because the Lord wants us to become firstfruit Christians who possess the life of Christ and minister it to others.<sup>6</sup> Firstfruit believers and households, like those listed in the New Testament, are those who know the elementary teachings of Jesus Christ, and can teach others. This doctrine of Christ is the base for a lampstand church.

*In studying these papers, let us receive the following challenge, and follow it through practically.*

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6 Jas 1:18.

Can we accept the need for others to ‘teach us again’ in these foundations? Will we revise our understanding, regardless of our past experience? This is vital so that we *do* grow and mature in Christ – just as the cups, buds and flowers of the almond comprise the symbolic lampstand.

The lampstand is a *living* structure of relationship and fellowship. It doesn’t grow by information, by the knowledge of the Scriptures. It grows wherever *messengers connect believers, one to one*, to the doctrine of Christ. Every ‘lamp’ must be lit by a messenger – one who is sent with the oil of grace and the light of the seven-fold Spirit.<sup>7</sup>

Just as is stated in Revelation, Christ is now standing in the midst of His lampstand churches. He is *walking* with His stars (messengers; Gr. *angelos*) in His hand.<sup>8</sup> Christ is walking and establishing His lampstand church through the ministry of His messengers.

To receive Christ and the ministry from His hand, we are needing to seek and receive those messengers who are teaching and providing lampstand connection. Then we can relearn our foundations in a submitted fellowship, *before* we begin preaching to others. Those who *are* becoming ‘firstfruits’ themselves, who are devoted to serving others, will be able to ‘teach others also’.<sup>9</sup> In turn, believers will submit themselves to such firstfruit examples.

Organic growth can only occur as a ‘one to one’ relationship, when members connect one to another, in submission to present truth. So then, local churches *cannot* simply be converted to lampstand

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7    Psa 18:28.                      9    1 Cor 16:15,16.  
      Luke 8:16.                      2 Tim 2:2.

8    Rev 1:12,20.  
      Rev 2:1.

churches. Even if whole groups *do* embrace the lampstand message, every individual and family, *alone*, must negotiate the elementary teaching of Christ.

Until this conversion takes place, individual believers, families and assemblies *must seek out fellowship* across a lampstand region. Thus they can be *sustained* by their fellowship with brethren, and with the messengers of Christ. Then many others, to whom they bear witness, will embrace the present truth.

Opposition may present itself, and existing Christian groups may maintain their historic independence. However, the fellowship of Christ that is coming in the flesh of His brethren can never fail.

The time has come for lampstand churches to form in every region. This explains why God is shaking everyone and everything that contains any element of Babylon; of fleshly mixture, of vain tradition. We must all take heed to ourselves.

The lampstand church, found and growing in Christ, sustained by the oil of grace and the light of the seven Spirits of God, is the only thing that will stand in these days; and is the only instrument that has power against Babylon, the ‘destroying mountain’ of human-religious endeavour.<sup>10</sup> Any relationship, endeavour, or structure that is not connected to the lampstand will *not* stand.

Accordingly, the importance of the elementary doctrine of Christ cannot be overstated. The seven papers in this study deal with these basic, elementary teachings. Let us devote ourselves to revising what every Christian should know about Jesus Christ.

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<sup>10</sup> Jer 51:25.  
Zech 4:7.



# Elements of the beginning

The writer of the book of Hebrews refers to ‘the elements of the beginning’ (elementary teachings, or first principles) when referring to ‘the oracles of God’ that we ought to know.<sup>1</sup> In chapters five and six, we are challenged not to be ‘babes’ who are ‘hard of hearing’. Rather, we are to understand the elementary teachings of Christ. We are to become skilled in the word of righteousness.<sup>2</sup>

An understanding of ‘the beginning’ is the starting point for every Christian. John spoke of ‘that which was from the beginning’ and commenced his Gospel, ‘in the beginning’.<sup>3</sup> He was looking back

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1 Heb 5:12

2 Heb 5:11-13

3 1John 1:1. John 1:1

beyond the start of creation to the eternal covenant when all the 'oracles' of God were spoken. This is where we find the 'elements of the beginning'.

As the writer continues, he urges us to grow up and 'go on' to mature sonship; to perfection.<sup>4</sup> Then he refers to the *foundations* that we need if we are to grow up.<sup>5</sup> In these verses, the admonition of the book of Hebrews goes another step.

A distinction is made between the *elements of the beginning*, and the *foundations* that we need to grow. There are seven of these foundations: going on to perfection, repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgement. The emphasis here is that we cannot grow up in these foundations if we are blind to the elementary teachings about Christ. This is the point of our study. Do we know who Christ is? What is it that every Christian is supposed to know about Jesus Christ?

In this first paper, we need to examine the capacity that Christ was invested with, in the covenant before the ages. These are seven elements, seven treasures of grace, that Christ was given for our sake. This is the knowledge upon which we build our seven foundations as Christians. This is the knowledge that causes us to go on to perfection, to repent, to believe, to understand the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection life and eternal judgement.

Clearly then, we cannot grow and develop this foundation in our lives if we are still babes who are dull of hearing. Therefore, our first focus is on these seven elements of the beginning.

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4 Heb 5:14-6:1

5 Heb 6:1-3

## The seven elements of the eternal covenant

The book of Proverbs teaches us that there are *seven pillars* of the house of Yahweh; seven pillars of wisdom. ‘Wisdom has built her house, she has hewn out her seven pillars.’<sup>6</sup> These are the seven elements of the eternal covenant, the seven treasures of grace, that were given to Yahweh Son as He proceeded in His sending from the Father, and as He emptied Himself.

Yahweh, within the fellowship of *Elohim*, through the word, established the Eternal Covenant. In Their dialogue as I AM, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit anointed the Son with the capacity of Eternal Spirit, to empty Himself to an endpoint within the covenant, so that the Father could bring forth sons of God through Him. Let us examine these seven treasures that were given to Yahweh the Son.

### 1. The Messiah with the oil – *Capacity*

‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He anointed Me.’  
Luke 4:18.

Yahweh the Son, as He committed Himself in faith, received the Eternal Spirit of Yahweh as seven Spirits in a seven-fold anointing, making Him the Messiah, or Christ, of God. This anointing was ‘the oil of joy’<sup>7</sup> that enabled Him to proceed in seven stages of emptying and humbling so that He could despise the shame, endure the cross, and bring forth salvation.<sup>8</sup> He was anointed with the full capacity of Yahweh *Elohim* resident in the seven Spirits of God, making Him the full expression of wisdom and power, as the Christ of God.

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6 Prov 9:1

7 Psa 45:7

8 Heb 12:2

## 2. The Son with the new name – *Authority*

‘For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.’<sup>9</sup>

Yahweh the Son was given the new name, the name above all names, the Lord Jesus Christ. The name enabled Him, and gave Him the *authority* of the name as the fullness of the expression of Deity, to become the Son of God and the Son of Man. He came and revealed this new name so that men could be glorified together with Him, in this name.<sup>10</sup>

## 3. The Priest-Lamb with new creation life – *Life*

‘But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come ... not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood.’<sup>11</sup>

Yahweh the Son was given *the life of God* to multiply as new creation life. He did so by offering Himself through the administrative capacity of His Melchizedek priesthood. He was given the right to *paraclete* as a priest. Note that He was not multiplying His own life; He was multiplying the life of the Father. Even though it is intrinsically part of His name to be able to offer and empty and to priest, He laid these elements down. However, within the capacity of Yahweh, they were given back to Him when, as the Father’s firstborn, He was ‘called by God’ to be the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek.<sup>12</sup>

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9 Phil 2:9

11 Heb 9:11,12

10 Rom 8:30.  
John 17:10

12 Heb 5:6



#### 4. The Apostle-Messenger with the word – *Substance*

‘Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider Jesus, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; He who was faithful to Him who appointed Him.’<sup>13</sup>

Yahweh the Son was the Word, and by the Word He made the worlds. God then dignified man by making the Word flesh and dwelling among us, the full expression of grace and truth. Yahweh the Son emptied Himself, was given the word – the *substance* of the eternal covenant proclaimed – and was sent as the Apostle-Messenger of the word.

#### 5. The Slave with the love of God – *Divine Nature*

‘...the slave plainly says, “I love my master ... I will not go out as a free man”.’<sup>14</sup>

‘The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me ... and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.’<sup>15</sup>

Yahweh the Son was given *the love of God* that enabled Him to be the Father’s Slave and reveal a righteousness not His own. The slave is the foremost expression of giving, and his motive is disinterest because a slave reveals a righteousness that is not his own. Yahweh the Son revealed the *divine nature*, the very essence of God, as the Slave of the covenant, because His righteousness was not His own. Receiving the love of God, He became the exemplar

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13 Heb 3:1,2.

14 Exo 21:5

15 John 17:22-23,26.

of the divine nature as the Father's Slave, the Love-Slave. He then poured out this love, through the work of the Holy Spirit, so that we could become *partakers* of the divine nature.

#### 6. The Author with the bread of obedience – *The Body Prepared*

‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.’<sup>16</sup>

Yahweh the Son was given the obedience of God, enabling Him to be the Bread of God, the Bread from heaven. Obedience was the culture of the Godhead *before*, and Yahweh the Son then learned this in the *flesh*. He emptied Himself to become the full expression of the obedience of God, the revelation of righteousness. He learned obedience in the flesh, in *a body prepared*, through the experience of suffering. He demonstrated within Himself the attitude and culture of obedient sonship. In this way, He pioneered our salvation and became the Author of our obedience.

#### 7. The Shepherd-King with resurrection life – *Power*

‘Now God has not only raised the Lord, but will also raise us up through His power.’<sup>17</sup>

Yahweh the Son was given resurrection *power* in the garden of Gethsemane by which He was enabled to walk the blood-sprinkled path that brought Him back from the death of sin, to finish His atoning work. He was brought back from the death of sin by the power of the *blood* of the everlasting covenant. He was also declared to be the ‘Son of God with power’ when He

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<sup>16</sup> John 4:34

<sup>17</sup> 1 Cor 6:14

was physically raised by the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup> Through this physical resurrection and ascension, He was revealed as the Lord of glory. The kingdom of the Son began to be revealed in the garden of Gethsemane. There, He laid down His life for His sheep, and carried them with Him as the Great Shepherd, all the way to the throne of His kingship. Thus He is revealed to us as the Shepherd-King of the sheep.<sup>19</sup>

## The seven foundations for maturity

Returning to the book of Hebrews, we recall the opening challenge of this paper. We are babes, and we not growing up until we understand these seven elementary teachings. We are unskilled and unaccustomed to the word of righteousness.<sup>20</sup> The *word of righteousness* is a summary of everything Christ has given us through His complete obedience. This is why we are urged to ‘seek first the kingdom of God and His *righteousness* and all *these things* will be added unto you’.<sup>21</sup>

To seek the kingdom is to understand what Christ has brought to us. He is our Messiah with the oil, the Son with the new name, the High Priest with the life, the Apostle with the word, the Slave with the divine nature, the Author of all obedience, and the Shepherd-King who grants us the power of His resurrection.

Indeed, Christ is the author of our salvation.<sup>22</sup> He is the pioneer of the pathway of obedience, and the author of our obedience. This is the amazing result of His Melchizedek priesthood. Once again, note what Hebrews says. ‘Concerning Him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

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18 Rom 8:11

21 Matt 6:33

19 Heb 13:20

22 Heb 2:10

20 Heb 5:13

For by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you'.<sup>23</sup>

The next challenge is that we need seven particular foundations if we are to grow to maturity and perfection. These must become a living foundation – a way of life that we never outgrow.

These seven foundations are:

- Going on to perfection
- Repentance from dead works
- Faith toward God
- Teaching of baptisms
- Laying on of hands
- Resurrection of the dead
- Eternal judgement

These foundations describe the way we live as we proceed to good ground, and grow up as 'a certain firstfruits'.<sup>24</sup> In this present season, we are being called to proceed to maturity in our sonship. This requires us to:

1. Receive the *elementary teaching* about Christ and become accustomed to the word of His obedience and righteousness; and

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23 Heb 5:11-12

24 Jas 1:18

2. We need to make our *seven foundations* complete and, if necessary, adjust what is incomplete in our 'going on', repentance, faith, baptisms, etc.

These foundations, which are 'the way of God', need to be more perfectly taught and understood.<sup>25</sup>

## The need of illumination

This requires *illumination* to deliver us from the darkness of our self-righteous way. Hebrews goes on to speak of those who 'were once enlightened' who fall away.<sup>26</sup> Enlightenment, coming to the eyes of our heart, is what leads us to the elementary teaching of Christ.<sup>27</sup> Enlightenment also opens our eyes to the pathway by which we 'go on to perfection'. We need illumination in two directions. Firstly, we need to see and hear the elementary teachings of Christ; the things that every Christian should know. Secondly, we need light to show us our pathway forward in sonship.

This illumination comes from the seven Spirits which are now shining from the lampstand church. The entrance of God's word brings light to our hearts, illuminating the pathway we must tread to be restored to the inheritance of our sonship. Christ said of Himself that He is the pathway of truth that leads to life.

'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father but by Me.'<sup>28</sup>

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25 Acts 18:26

28 John 14:6

26 Heb 6:4

27 Eph 1:18

We are to follow Him. When we walk His path, we are walking in the light, and Jesus said, 'He who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but have the light of life'.<sup>29</sup>

The way of Christ's obedience is the way to life. The righteousness of God is the fruit of living in the obedience of Christ.

The following papers will focus on a number of the foundation principles. These do not need to be laid again, once they are laid properly in our lives. However, until they *are* operating as a daily mode, we do need to revisit and consolidate them as a way of obedience.

1. In going on to perfection, we refresh ourselves, daily, in the call to sonship made available through Christ.
2. Repentance is the constant decision to turn from the righteousness that is of our own, which is our fleshly operating system where sin works by law.<sup>30</sup>
3. Faith is our ongoing commitment to turn to His righteousness.<sup>31</sup>
4. The doctrine of baptisms, as a daily principle, is the action of putting on Christ, and living in His name, just as Galatians says: those who have been baptised into Christ have put on Christ.<sup>32</sup>
5. Laying on of hands refers to the separating work of the Holy Spirit, administered to us in the body of Christ, as we are sanctified and constrained to our work.<sup>33</sup>

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29 John 8:12

32 Gal 3:27

30 Phil 3:9. Rom 7:8

33 Acts 13:2

31 Rom 3:22. 4:9

6. Resurrection of the dead is also a daily foundation for obedient living. Eternal life has been manifested, in Christ, as the quality of resurrection life – life out of death. Those who are born again have been born from the dead with Christ, and now live by life that rises out of death. Now we ‘die daily’ and bear ‘the dying of the Lord Jesus’ in our mortal bodies, so that His life will also be manifested.<sup>34</sup>

7. Eternal judgement is a daily principle. The various ‘tribulations’ we endure are the evidence of judgement.<sup>35</sup> In His mercy, God’s judgement begins in His own house.<sup>36</sup> However, through daily repentance and faith, judgement is commuted to discipline, and brings change, so that we are not condemned with the world.<sup>37</sup>

The practical activity of these foundations is commended to us in the following papers.

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34 1 Cor 15:31.

2 Cor 4:10

35 2 Thess 1:4,5

36 1 Peter 4:17

37 1 Cor 11:32





# Living by a ‘righteousness not our own’

Becoming established in the seven foundations  
upon which our sonship is built

The focus of this first section of the booklet is to examine the doctrine of Christ’s obedience and identify its miraculous capacity to empower us, through faith, to live as sons of God.

## From darkness to light

Without illumination, we will not understand the need to repent from self-righteousness and believe to walk the way of obedience as sons of God.<sup>1</sup> As we exercise faith toward God to receive His righteousness, we are born again from above. The righteousness

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1 Heb 10:32

of faith is demonstrated as we begin to make offering. Our offering is seen when we are doing the works that belong to our sonship. Without illumination, we cannot repent, and our hearts remain in darkness, bound in chains of self-righteousness – ‘a righteousness that is our own’.<sup>2</sup> True faith springs forth as the fruit of genuine repentance. Faith motivates us to the righteous works that belong to our sonship.

*‘The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!’<sup>3</sup>*

## From faith to grace

*‘Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.’<sup>4</sup>*

Through our Lord Jesus Christ we have obtained an introduction by faith ‘into this grace by which we stand’.<sup>5</sup> The grace of God gives us the ability to be sons of God. Because of this, we ‘rejoice in the hope’ of sonship by which we obtain the glory of God. *This hope does not disappoint, because the love of God is poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is also given to us.*<sup>6</sup>

When we hear the word of God, the word of promised sonship, and believe it, receive it and begin to rejoice in it, the lamp of our heart is lit.<sup>7</sup> Illumination is given to us and our whole being

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2 Php 3:9

5 Rom 5:2

3 Mat 6:22-23

6 Rom 5:5

4 Rom 5:1-2

7 Luk 11:34-36

is full of light. As we proceed on in our Christian lives, the hope of sonship does not disappoint us because the Holy Spirit is pouring the love of God as oil (a fuel) into our hearts. This causes the works that come from our faith to shine forth as light that proceeds from the flame of hope that burns within us. Faith is truly working by love, enabling us to repent from all dead works that spring from our self-righteousness. Through faith, we believe God for the gift of righteousness that belongs to our sonship. The gift of righteousness is seen when we do the works the Father prepared beforehand that we should do.

*‘For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.’<sup>8</sup>*

These works belong to the predestination of our sonship. When we do them, we are obeying God. These works belong to us, yet they are not the works of our self-righteousness.

## Understanding the obedience of faith

The key principle of the message of Christ is declared in Hebrews chapter five, verses eight and nine:

*‘Although He was a Son He learned obedience from the things which He suffered, and having been made perfect He became to all those who obey Him the author of eternal salvation.’*

Understanding and applying the obedience that was authored by Christ is the central issue to finding salvation.

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8 Eph 2:10

## A righteousness not His own

It is crucial to firstly understand that Christ's righteousness was not self-righteousness; neither was His work a self-righteous work. He laid down His life to reveal the Father's will. His work was offering, and in this activity He learned and authored the obedience of sonship.<sup>9</sup> The gospel message is that the capacity of Christ's obedience is available to the believer as a gift.

## Obedient by Eternal Spirit

Amazingly, Christ didn't presume upon His intrinsic Name as He prayed to the Father in Gethsemane. He emptied the prerogative of His own Name as God the Son to become the Son of God. All His intrinsic capacity as God the Son now belonged in Eternal Spirit; held in trust by the Father and measured to Him so that He could walk the blood-sprinkled path of obedience and finish His work.<sup>10</sup> His obedience was His righteousness, and His capacity came entirely from the Eternal Spirit of Yahweh. When He was crucified, He was revealed as the Lord of Glory.<sup>11</sup> By offering Himself, He became the author and pioneer of eternal salvation for those who join Him and follow in the fellowship of His obedience.<sup>12</sup>

## Christ's obedience not mine

There is an obedience which is not 'our own', and there is a righteousness not 'our own'. This righteousness and obedience is found when we receive the message of the cross. As Christ was crucified and lifted up for our salvation, He was set forth before

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9    Php 2:7. Joh 8:28.    11    1 Co 2:8

Joh 5:36

12    1 Pet 2:21

10    Heb 9:14.

Joh 19:30

the eyes of all so that all who saw Him, saw the demonstration of His obedience. He was proclaiming the word of obedience in His flesh. In His suffering, caused by His crucifixion, we see the word of obedience in action as the demonstration of the truth. When we understand this by illumination, we are drawn to Him, and understand that *He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. His chastening was for our peace and by His stripes we are healed.*<sup>13</sup> We are drawn into Christ's obedience as we believe and repent. His righteous work was to go out to our suffering and death, bring us back from the pit of destruction and despair, and restore us to God, enabling us to regain our inheritance as His sons.<sup>14</sup>

The apostle Paul wrote of the capacity of a messenger of Christ. The work of a messenger is to link us to the cross of Christ through the message that he brings. Through the word, we are illuminated to the nature of Christ's obedient work and are convicted of the need to join the fellowship of His obedience. Through the word, we are made captives to the obedience of Christ.<sup>15</sup> The apostle Paul said that every thought that is consistent with our own self-righteousness must be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.<sup>16</sup> To live by any other gospel consigns us to a life of personal interpretation and self-righteous initiative. Unfortunately, religion as a whole, and Christianity to a large degree, has been the stronghold of such self-righteousness and self-determined obedience. Paul identified this principle in the Jews when he said they have '*a zeal for God*' but are without illumination.

*'For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.'*<sup>17</sup>

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13 Isa 53:5

16 2 Co 10:5

14 Joh 12:32

17 Rom 10:3

15 Rom 6:17

## Not accustomed to the word of righteousness

The work of evangelism begins when the message of Christ is believed.<sup>18</sup> The seeker hears that they can have a righteousness that is not their own if they receive the message, and proceeds forward to be redeemed to their sonship. The ‘word of righteousness’ is a specific word given to the hearer from God. It is an illumination that comes to them in the fellowship of the body of Christ. This word is about them and the righteous works that belong to their predestination. They are sanctified to their name as they follow in the way of obedience. It is to this word about righteousness that we must become accustomed. Our senses need practice at discerning ‘good and evil’. They must be trained to recognise the difference between Christ’s righteousness and our own self-righteousness.

*‘For by this time you ought to be teachers but you have need again for someone to teach the elementary principles of the oracles of God [for the doctrine of Christ] and you have come to need milk and not solid food, for everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.’<sup>19</sup>*

## A justified believer

God’s overwhelming interest is to align us to our name. We experience upheaval, pain and trouble as we go through the process of being realigned to the predestination and name that belongs to our sonship.

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18 Rom 1:17

19 Heb 5:12-14

*'But that which was sown on the stony places is this: he who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy. But he has no root in himself, and is temporary. For when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the Word, he immediately stumbles. And that sown into the thorns is this: he who hears the Word; and the anxiety of this world, and the deceit of riches, choke the Word, and he becomes unfruitful. But that sown on the good ground is this: he who hears the Word and understands; who also bears fruit and produces one truly a hundredfold; and one sixty; and one thirty.'*<sup>20</sup>

Trials test our faith but, as we continue to believe the word of God, we receive grace through Christ to become the son of God that we have been named to be. The Holy Spirit is sanctifying us to our name and the works of righteousness we are to do. The joy of the Lord becomes our possession as we live in the integrity of who we are named to be. We no longer hide from God in the shame of our self-consciousness, but rather fellowship with Him in true worship and relationship.

## **The church symbolised as a lampstand – cup, bud, and flower**

As we look at individual members of Christ, represented in the symbolic picture of the church as the lampstand, each cup, bud and flower, in its most basic interpretation, represents an individual growing up in a threefold process. This process proceeds from a cup, to a bud, to a flower, then producing the fruit of sonship as the fruit of light harvested from the flower. The first phase (the cup) is seen when an individual receives, from a messenger, the light of illumination about their sonship, and is born again by this word.

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20 Matt 13:20-23

The individual, as a cup, must be firmly established on the base of the lampstand, which is symbolic of the elementary teachings of the doctrine of Christ. The believer grows and matures in the budding phase, becoming established in named identity, after which they blossom and minister within the corporate expression of the body of Christ. The new believer receives illumination, unction and blessing in this first cycle of their Christian development.

## Joining Christ in His death, burial and resurrection

There is a danger, however, in this first cycle. If a novice presumes, because of the unction and blessing they are receiving, that they have a ministry profile, then they will have moved beyond their maturity. Paul wrote of such ones who become puffed up with pride and then fall *'into the condemnation incurred by the devil'*.<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the believer who humbly joins Christ's death, burial and resurrection in relation to their calling, will come to a *second time* phase that is founded on an obedience and righteousness *'not their own'*.

Through offering themselves as a living sacrifice,<sup>22</sup> they find the righteous works that belong to their name and calling. It is by offering that a person proceeds to becoming a firstfruits Christian, qualified to be a co-worker with Christ.

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21 1 Ti 3:6,7

22 Rom 12:1,2



## The symbol of leaven – purging leaven and finding our name

It is necessary to put off identity projections, ambitions, and all modes of reactive relating that lead to discord. Such behaviours are symbolised in the Scriptures as ‘leaven’. We must all receive the grace of Christ and come to an understanding of God’s will for our lives. How do we find God’s will for our life? The will of God is discovered as we present ourselves in service within the body of Christ. This service of offering is to be the expression of our sincere love of the brethren.

Through this fellowship, in the dialogue of the Spirit of Christ, we will come to know who we are, and how we should proceed as Christians. Moreover, we will be able to recognise and purge the leaven of self-righteousness from our lives.<sup>23</sup> Self-centred, self-righteous familiar ways are the biggest danger a person or family will face. The dynamics we use to build ourselves up become the mechanisms that destroy us. Our self-deception is to blame others who stumble over our sin, believing that they are the source of our demise.

## Administration coming down, sonship growing up

When we live by faith as sons of God, we are able to meet the administration that is coming to the church from the throne of Christ. The administration of the Son is brought to us through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Sonship identity, growing up as

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23 1 Co 5:7,8

cup-bud-flower on the foundational principles of the doctrine of Christ, is being joined to the administration of Christ. The lamp of administration, with its oil of grace, is hidden in a flower upon the lampstand. Light is seen as fruit<sup>24</sup> proceeding from the flower, for a lamp itself on the lampstand is not visible. The individual has become so integrated into the obedience of Christ that they are part of His administration. The oil of grace is imparted to the lamp in such a way that it is seen to belong to the flower. The fruit of light that is revealed from the flower are the works of their sonship. Their works radiate out as light through the agency of the seven Spirits of God. In this way, the command of Jesus is fulfilled when He says, *'Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify their Father in heaven.'*<sup>25</sup>

## The seven foundations upon which our sonship is built

The second foundation we are to be established in is *'repentance from dead works'*.<sup>26</sup> Practically, this means that we repent of our own self-righteous perceptions and their religious works, for these are worthless deeds.

We need to recognise that when we excuse our self-righteousness, we actually reject the covenant of God which contains the personal plan He has for each of us.

The self-righteous seek to be the master of their own destiny. They reject the knowledge of obedience and seek, through the knowledge and understanding of what is good and evil, to

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24 Eph 5:9

25 Mat 5:16

26 Heb 6:1

achieve a righteousness that is their own. The self-righteous make themselves the measure of what is good and what is evil. They become judges of the law from the source of their own knowledge of what is right or wrong.<sup>27</sup> Their emotions reinforce their position. Anger reinforces argument. They are jealous of those who seem to be more accepted, and often become depressed when they are unable to control their environment.

Unless a person finds repentance, they will continue to *‘walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience’*.<sup>28</sup>

In contrast to this, a son of God experiences the glorious liberty that comes to them as they renounce *‘the hidden things of shame’*, and rejects any mode that walks *‘in craftiness’* or *‘adulterates the word of God’*.<sup>29</sup>

A son of God is one who has clothed himself with Christ; his life is not his own. Paul said, *‘I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me’*.<sup>30</sup>

Let us summarise our key point as we conclude this first section of our booklet. Disciples of Christ are those who have taken hold of faith, and now believe and pursue the hope of sonship. They are pressing on, laying hold of that for which Christ Jesus has laid hold of them.<sup>31</sup> Having received, by illumination, an understanding of this glorious mystery, they have sold all to possess this hidden treasure.<sup>32</sup> At the same time, they continue to lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares them.<sup>33</sup> They are repenting from dead works that they may gain Christ and be

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27 Rom 2:1-3

30 Gal 2:20

Mat 13:44

28 Eph 2:2

31 Php 3:12

33 Heb 12:1

29 2 Co 4:2

32 Luk 18:22.

found in Him, not having a righteousness of their own, but the righteousness which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Php 3:9

# The Christian Proposition

## The nature of man

- The human body, in Scripture, is called ‘the outward man’.<sup>1</sup> Through the five senses – sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste – a person communicates with the environment of the physical world.
- Man’s *cognitive* capacity is connected to his senses, and his intelligence gives him the capacity to interpret and relate to his environment.

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1 2 Co 4:16

- The *identity* of a person is called ‘the inward man’.<sup>2</sup> The identity is the *spirit* of a man that lives within his body. The inward man is described as soul and spirit.<sup>3</sup>
- When we speak of a person as a *living soul*, we are expressing the concept that spiritual identity is a personal possession. A person *possesses* his soul:<sup>4</sup> they are, by possession, made accountable and must, therefore, live responsibly. They have been created and ‘set free to be’, and are in bondage unless they are fulfilling the predestination of their being.
- The spirit of a man has the capacity to *worship*. It is able to know and worth together with itself, in relation to others, and its environment. This capacity and exercise of knowing together with one’s self is called ‘conscience’.<sup>5</sup>
- The capacities of *intuition* belong to the function of a person’s conscience. Intuition is not just ‘soulish’ cognition. Intuition is a spiritual capacity, or reality, that proceeds outward from a person’s identity.
- Intuition is a knowing that is not based on knowledge or reason. It is intrinsic to the capacity of spirit, and is part of the exercise of worship in the working conscience.
- Intuition is the faculty to which *illumination* comes. In Scripture, it is called the ‘eyes of our heart’, or the ‘eyes of our

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2	Ibid.	translated as	knowledge’ with
3	1 Th 5:23	‘conscience’ is	oneself.
4	Luk 21:19	<i>suneidesis</i> (Strong’s	
5	The Greek word	NT #4893) which	
		means a ‘co-	

understanding'.<sup>6</sup> If the eye is single and pure,<sup>7</sup> the conscience can truly worship in spirit and truth.<sup>8</sup>

- The entrance of God's word to the heart gives it light.<sup>9</sup> The heart responds and, by the fire of the Holy Spirit, burns as a lamp, radiating the desire to join the fellowship of light by offering.<sup>10</sup>
- When Christ dwells in our heart through faith, His life which is His blood, begins to *purge* our heart. Life now proceeds from it, instead of evil, because the capacity to make offering has been restored to it.
- In the Scriptures, an illuminated person is designated as *spiritual*.<sup>11</sup> They are admonished to live no longer in a carnal way. They are able to understand and judge all things by the Holy Spirit, and thus proceed to possess their sonship which is given to them in Christ.

## The impact of the fall on mankind

- Because of the fall, the spirit of man is no longer God-centred but self-centred. The righteousness of man is self-righteousness.
- Man has appropriated the law to himself, and made himself the judge of what is good or evil. In practice, the law is used to designate what is good or evil for him.

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6 Eph 1:18	9 Psa 119:130	11 1 Co 2:15.
7 Mat 6:22	10 1 Joh 1:1-8.	1 Co 14:37. Gal 6:1
8 Joh 4:24	Luk 24:32	

- The outcome of this exercise is sin, resulting in death, because of man's ineptitude in relation to the use of law, and because his motivations are selfish.
- Jesus described the heart of man as the sum of all of the capacities of soul and spirit, functioning together to execute some enterprise. He said that the motivations of man are fundamentally evil, for out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, etc.<sup>12</sup>
- The soulish faculties of intellect, with its abilities of cognition and reason, along with the emotions connected to desire and imagination, mobilise the will into action, so that deeds are aspired to and accomplished. All this volition and activity springs from the heart of man.

## The service of our sonship

- The mercies of God gave us forgiveness of sin as a gift. Our trespasses were no longer imputed to us when we believed. Once forgiven, we were admonished to not continue in sin, but to present ourselves to God and *serve* Him.<sup>13</sup> The service of our sonship is a *priestly* service.
- If we respond to the call of God, but then say, 'Here I am. I will serve from the resources of my own conscience', the outcome will be self-righteous activity resulting in sin.
- Our service needs another step. It needs the blood, or life, of Christ to thoroughly cleanse our heart and conscience from

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12 Mat 15:19

13 Rom 12:1,2



self-centred motivations, so that we can obey God and fulfil the predestination of sonship by doing the works that God foreordained that we should do.

- The offering of Christ is the only offering that is able to multiply His life to us. When we present our bodies to God, He enables us to join the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. For the *only* life that can multiply the life of our sonship to us, is the life that comes from Christ's offering as we join Him in the fellowship of His sufferings.
- The blood of Christ, which is the life of Christ, enables the service of our sonship.<sup>14</sup>

## The proposition: the way of salvation

- Before we discuss the efficacy of Christ's blood that is able to give us the capacity to be true priests to God, we need to state the proposition of Scripture that explains to us the way of salvation. The proposition is this: in the Scriptures, the water is a symbol of the word that sustains our sonship life, the blood is the life of Christ given to us; and the Spirit brings the resources of God to us, enabling us to receive them, appropriate them, and thus become sons of God.
- The human race was brought into being by a creative action of God. Adam was formed from the dust, in-breathed with the breath of life, and became a living soul. From his seed, through procreation, identities were multiplied.

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14 Heb 9:14.  
Heb 10:22.  
Rom 9:1

- Our names and identities were proclaimed by the word of God, in the covenant before creation. The human race was Adam's seed, and it died to God when he fell into transgression and sin. We were restored to God through Christ's redeeming work. Salvation became ours when we were born again.<sup>15</sup>
- We share Christ's sonship and life by participating in the fellowship of the body of Christ. The blood is the life that the Father gave to the Son, enabling Him to become His firstborn. This sonship life uniquely belongs to Christ.
- Sonship life, when received from Christ, gives to the heart the ability to be a son of God.
- We must note the distinction between the cleansing and the ability that the blood of Christ gives to the heart, enabling it to serve God, and the forgiveness that is given to us, as a gift, by God because of Christ's vicarious sacrifice.
- It is important not to confuse the righteousness that is ours through forgiveness, and the capacity of the blood of Christ to mobilise our service.
- The blood of Christ is the life of Christ. We are calling this life, 'Son of God-life'. The life given to Christ was given to Him to give to us, so that we could share in His life and become sons of God.
- The life of Christ becomes ours as we join the fellowship of the blood of Christ, offered to us by Christ in the communion.

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15 Jas 1:18. 1 Pe 1:23.  
Jas 1:21

16 Rom 6:16,17

This blood gives ability to the heart to obey the doctrine of sonship and reveal the Son of God and His righteousness.<sup>16</sup>

- Without the blood, the life of the Son of God, we cannot reveal the righteousness of the Son of God, for the righteousness of the Son of God belongs to His life.<sup>17</sup>

## Two elements necessary to receive the sonship of Christ

- First, Christ must dwell in an individual's heart by faith.<sup>18</sup> When the Spirit of Christ is in the heart, His life is with Him and He makes it available to the believer. Christ cannot be separated from His life, even though He gives His life as a gift. 'He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.'<sup>19</sup>
- Second, by baptism, a person is hidden in Christ. The revealing of our individual sonship, with its name and righteousness, is not the primary, or first action, of baptism. Rather, to be clothed with Christ is the reason we are baptised; we are to reveal Him. Our confession in baptism is, 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ'.<sup>20</sup>

## The way to our sonship

- The way to our sonship is to take Christ's yoke in baptism and fellowship in His obedience. By this means, we are sanctified to our name and the works of our predestination.

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17 Php 3:9

20 Gal 2:20

18 Eph 3:17

19 1Joh 5:12

- When we lay our life down in Christ, the Son petitions the Father to send the Holy Spirit to us. The Spirit's work is to give to us our individual sonship in Christ. This is why He is called 'the Spirit of adoption'.
- The Holy Spirit is both the covenant given<sup>21</sup> and the One who guides us in our participation in the covenant, enabling us to fulfil our individual sonship in Christ. He guides us into all truth<sup>22</sup> – the truth of our name, and the truth of our works.
- If we are led by the Spirit, we are the sons of God.<sup>23</sup> We can know the truth of our name and works, and the truth sets us free to be the son that the Father named us to be.
- The Son further intercedes to the Father for us, asking Him to remember our name; the name that was lost to Him while we were dead in trespasses and sins.
- Christ's intercession enables us to be born again. The Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. We are made alive again by the word that proclaims our identity. Our name is remembered again, and the Holy Spirit brings to us the predestination that belongs to our sonship, with its accompanying works.
- The predestination that belongs to our name becomes ours when the Spirit is given to us. The Spirit comes to dwell within us forever.

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21 Gal 3:14

22 Joh 16:13

23 Rom 8:14

- We reveal the righteousness of Christ by doing the works predestined for us to do. Our name and righteousness are revealed as we proceed in obedience, obeying the Holy Spirit.
- ‘So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh – for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.’<sup>24</sup>

## A study of the mode of the carnal Christian

(Drawn from Paul’s lesson in Romans chapter seven)

- If a person will not come to the light and find illumination then they will be exposed by the light. Their suffering will manifest who and what they are.
- If, in faith, a person joins their sufferings to the offering of Christ, then they are seen to be children of God. But, if in reaction, they become offended at God and His church, then it is evident that they are on stony ground.
- The common thread that often connects the society of those who are carnal within the church, is the corruption of Christian culture that is evident within their houses. The various familiar sins that beset families are described in Scripture as *leaven*, and, unless these familiar sins are purged from their cultures, spiritual dystrophy and death will result.<sup>25</sup>

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24 Rom 8:12-14

25 1Co 11:30

- When loyalty to a family culture takes priority over obedience to Christ's righteousness, then antipathy towards the authority of Christ and His messengers is seen. The fear of God is not part of their culture; it is not an exercise in which the family participates. They have become confirmed in their religious self-righteousness, and are embroiled in constant conflict, described by Paul as being puffed up on behalf of one against the other.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, they are puffed up because they do not accept that God is sending His messengers to them.<sup>27</sup> They do not receive the messengers of God. Like the Laodiceans, they contend that they 'have need of nothing'.<sup>28</sup> They have the Scriptures, and presume that they can interpret and facilitate their own religious service to God.
- Such a family stumbles at the word because they are disobedient. They are offended. It can be said of such a family that *the pig has gone back to its wallowing and the dog has returned to its own vomit*.<sup>29</sup> When they become distressed because of their religious ways, their confessions are the confessions of Esau. With tears, they bargain with God and others. Their tears are the symptom of their self-deception, because they are tears of self-righteous sincerity. The statements and judgements of themselves, which come from their confessions, are a projection of the truth as they see it, in relation to their own failed righteousness in their personal life and families. However, their confession does not produce obedience for they do not follow through in repentance and submit themselves into fellowship. Their mode of relating is self-based, partial, socialising with religious verbosity. Their

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26 1Co 4:6

29 2Pe 2:22

27 1Co 4:18

28 Rev 3:17

counsel and religion, as they go from house-to-house, is a form of gossip, for they pour out their own emptiness to each other; sympathising with one another as fellows well-met. They are deceived into believing that this exercise of the motions of sin is actually fellowship.<sup>30</sup> Their statement is, 'We have not found life here among the brethren in this church'.

- This is not a confession of repentance. It is an impugning of others with blame, because of disaffection. In this case, their glory has become their shame.<sup>31</sup> They are functioning as mere men.<sup>32</sup> They are of the natural man who does not receive the things of the Spirit of God.<sup>33</sup> They are functioning only from human, soulish cognition. They have rejected illumination. They live according to their five senses in the natural world, and their religion is therefore a form of religious science. Paul described this mode of religious behaviour as 'having a form of godliness but denying its power'.<sup>34</sup>

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30 Rom 7:5

33 1Co 2:14

31 Php 3:19

34 2Ti 3:5

32 1Co 3:3

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# Eating and Drinking- The Food of Obedience

## Overview

- The Father, Son and Holy Spirit live together in covenant.
  - In covenant, They demonstrate the full measure of love, perfectly One and the sum of all identity expression, revealed as Three.
  - The life They live in covenant is Their righteousness.
  - Their worship is the expression of Their life together.
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- Their worship is demonstrated in Their commitment and application of Themselves to love.
- Their love is fully expressed by Their giving. Their commitment is to be fully who They are for one another; to know as They are known and to be known as They know.
- Their obedience is Their givenness to this worship.
- Because of Their capacity to love, demonstrated through giving, They are knowable. We may know God and, through Christ, partake of Their substance; of Their own flesh and blood.
- Christ was commissioned by the Father and Holy Spirit to make known Their obedience to us. His work was to bring us into the fellowship of this obedience.
- Through the capacity of Christ's obedience, He is able to give us a place in the fellowship of God's covenant.

## The meaning of worship

Worship is the essential ingredient of the covenant of God. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit have invited us to join them in worship.

Jesus said, *'But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth'.<sup>1</sup>*

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1 Joh 4:23-24

The truth, God's word, is His covenanted purpose for our lives. The written Scriptures are the record of this covenant purpose.

We cannot find the will of God for our lives by applying the things we have come to understand through study. It is in the fellowship of true worship that we come to the knowledge of the truth and find the will of God. When we worship in spirit, illumination is given to us by the Holy Spirit. We are given an understanding of what God's will is for our lives. It is through illumination that the Scriptures are applied to our lives, and we find life and expression as sons of God.

## Christ – the bread of life

*'Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.'*<sup>2</sup>

*'Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man shall give to you, for on Him the Father, even God, has set His seal.'*<sup>3</sup>

*'....This is the work of God; that you believe in Him whom He has sent. ...'*<sup>4</sup>

*'Truly I say to you it is not Moses who has given you the bread of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. The bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.'*<sup>5</sup>

*'They said, therefore, to Him, "Lord, ever more give us this bread". Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger; he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and you do not believe. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.'*<sup>6</sup>

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2 Joh 4:34

5 Joh 6:32, 33

3 Joh 6:27

6 Joh 6:35-37

4 Joh 6:29

Jesus said that His capacity for obedience came from the Father. The bread of obedience was given to Him by the Father. Christ received ability to do the will of the Father and become the personification of the obedience of God.

Christ was, by *incarnation*, the full manifestation of the obedience of God.

Christ ate the bread of God and received from it the strength to do the will of God. God wants us to do the same; eat the bread of God and receive from it life and strength to do the will of God.

## The obedience of God

The obedience of God is the way of life and offering by which God lives. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit lay life down to one another. They reveal one another. They are obedient toward one another. Their relationship is one of constant giving; they are the full expression of love. The term 'obedience' belongs to Them .

Unless we are connected to Their offering and life, we cannot demonstrate Their obedience.

Jesus told the Jews not to work for the food that perishes, but for the food that would give eternal life to them. He then said that the Father had commissioned and sealed Him to give Himself to them as food from heaven.

The food of obedience is part of the covenant life of God. Christ is the first manifestation of the covenant life of God in flesh. This is why He is called, 'The Bread of Life'.

## The will of God done in a human body

The obedient capacity to be a son of God came down from heaven, personified through incarnation in Christ. Christ said of Himself, '*A body You have prepared for Me ... Behold I have come to do Your will O God*'.<sup>7</sup>

Christ gives this capacity to us when we worship together in the fellowship of the body of Christ. Our communion in the bread and wine is for the purpose of receiving His strength and capacity to live as obedient sons and daughters of God.

## Christ's obedience was His offering

Christ's obedience was demonstrated by the offering of Himself. His offering joins us to the fellowship of the covenant. In the fellowship of the covenant, He multiplies His life to us. We demonstrate His life as we walk and live in the way of His obedience, serving Christ and one another.

The cross is not just an expression of God's power to save us. The cross is the way of Their life, manifest in a dark world. The cross is the means by which God's life is given to us. Once we have received the life of Christ, we are able to walk and live, with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the covenant of obedience.

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7    Heb 10:5-7

## Eating in faith - the work of God

We are encouraged in Scripture to believe that Christ can give us His ability to obey God and do His work. Our food is our work. Our work is to believe that He is giving us capacity to do the works that belong to our sonship. In this way, we partake of Christ as the Bread of Life. This is the work of God *'that you believe on Him whom He has sent'*.<sup>8</sup> Our believing belongs to the faith of God. God believes we can do the works He asks us to do. In fellowship, we join His faith and receive from Him the capacity to obey. We are then able to do the works of God.

When we are doing the works of God, we are not preoccupied about being good or evil, right or wrong, or being perfect. We are simply doing the works that belong to our sonship. If we are doing these works poorly, it is better than doing our own self-righteous, religious works perfectly. For self-righteous works are not the works of God. Our self-righteous works are the demonstration of our own capacity to be good or evil.

We are not to use the communion bread and blood of Christ to validate our own self-righteousness, or to alleviate our sense of self-condemnation because of our failed self-righteousness. It is important to repent of all such activity.

The blood of Christ is the element that gives cleansing and forgiveness in relation to our immaturities and failures as sons of God. The blood of Christ does not compensate for our self-righteousness by justifying and validating it.

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8 Joh 6:29

## The works of our sonship

God has mapped out our predestination for us. Much of what we are doing is His will for our lives. There will be specific seasons when His sovereignty will be seen in our lives.

Many of the works that belong to our sonship we do poorly. However, we should rejoice when what we are doing is God's will for our lives. As we proceed forward in faith, His grace is giving us capacity and skill. This is God's way for us. We are to proceed forward and mature in our service for God. We are to be a believing people. Let's not be hard on ourselves! This comes from our own self-righteousness. Let us bring forth the fruit of sonship, proceeding forward from thirty-fold until, by His grace, we bring forth one hundred-fold.

Believe God for His righteousness, and step forward, for we are sons and daughters of God.

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# Following the Good Shepherd

The command of the Father was the mandate to which Christ was obedient. Christ accomplished His obedience by the power of God.

As the Son of God, Christ did nothing of His own initiative. He said of Himself, *‘I always do the things that are pleasing to the Father’*.<sup>1</sup>

The miracles that He did were not His; they were the works of the Father. When the Jews were contesting His deity, He said to them, *‘I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?’*<sup>2</sup>

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1 Joh 8:28-29

2 Joh 10:32

The Jews denied the truth that His miracles were the works of the Father. To accept this would mean that His claim to be the Son of God was true.

They pressed upon Him their claim that He Himself was the miracle worker when they said, '*He saved others from suffering and death; Himself He cannot save*'.<sup>3</sup>

They did not deny His miracles, but claimed He was proud and misguided when He declared that His works were the Father's works and evidence that He was the Son of God. Their covert accusation was that He was self-seeking in the use of His talents because He had not submitted Himself to the existing authorities, nor had He used His abilities for the national interest.

Christ did not presume upon His ministry relationship with the Father when He asked to be saved from suffering and death, nor was there any rancour in His Spirit when, after having ministered the grace of God to save others, He was asked to suffer and die.

In obedience, Christ moved away from the temptation to save Himself. He embraced the word of obedience that He had received from the Father. Through faith, He found the fortitude to proceed forward and be sustained in suffering by the power of God.

Christ laid His life down without self-interest, and overcame suffering by the power of God. In this way, He made a breach upon the hard hearts of His persecutors. His suffering and dying became the mode by which He completed the work of God. The cross became the standard of God's work. The effective work of

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3 Luk 23:35-40

the cross would be like the raising of a *standard*. This raising of the cross as a standard would act as a *signal* to gather the nations, restoring them to their sonship.<sup>4</sup>

Christ said of Himself, ‘*When you lift up the Son of Man, you will know that ‘I Am’ He.*’<sup>5</sup> At Calvary, they ‘*looked upon Him whom they had pierced*’<sup>6</sup> and watched Him die. By the conviction of the Spirit, illumination was given to many of them concerning what they had done. With illumination came repentance. They began to mourn *for Him whom they had pierced*. Their grief was intense, like the grief of one who had lost their firstborn child.<sup>7</sup>

Many who watched Christ die, ceased to wag their heads and mock Him and began to beat their breasts and mourn and weep for Him. They would soon call Him ‘Lord’ and accept Him for who He was, the Son of God.

The centurion, a Gentile, who supervised Christ’s crucifixion, also received illumination. When he saw *Christ breathe His last*, he said, ‘*Truly this man was the Son of God*’.<sup>8</sup>

## The two criminals

The two criminals that were crucified either side of Christ represent the entire human race. Having stolen from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we are all thieves who have tried ‘to climb up another way’<sup>9</sup>. We have sought to apprehend life through our own self-centred resources only to find that it results in suffering and death. We are dead in trespasses and sins and suffering justly for our disobedience. As the King of

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4 Isa 11:10,12

7 Zech 12:10

5 Joh 8:28

8 Mar 15:39

6 Joh 19:37

9 John 10:1

glory and great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus travelled outside the camp, to the place of cursing, to redeem us from the death of sin. Having been numbered among the transgressors, forsaken among the dead, and cut off from the land of the living, He reached the bottom of the pit at about the sixth hour. It was right then, at the sixth hour, that His suffering death confronted the two criminals.

In this profound illustration, we observe the fundamental decision that confronts every fallen human being. Will we suffer and die outside of Christ? Or will we suffer and die with Christ? The first criminal was hurling abuse at Jesus. He said, 'Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!'.<sup>10</sup> This criminal wanted Jesus to be his Saviour, but He refused to join the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. He maintained His self-righteousness and offence over the injustice he suffered. He was reasoning that if Jesus was the Christ, He should have saved him. And consequently, He couldn't be the Christ or He would have saved him!

The second criminal was illuminated by the work of the cross. He beheld the Lamb of God, opening not His mouth, and proclaimed to the first criminal, 'We are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong'.<sup>11</sup> When the second criminal looked at Jesus, he saw his own sin and his own suffering and death. He was looking upon Him whom he had pierced. With this illumination, he reckoned himself to be dying with Christ. But more than this, he beheld the King of glory and the great Shepherd of the sheep, coming back from the death of sin. Faith was born in his heart. He knew that as he joined the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, he was being redeemed from the death of sin. In this faith, he said, 'Jesus, remember me when You come

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<sup>10</sup> Luke 23:39

<sup>11</sup> Luke 23:41

in Your kingdom!’<sup>12</sup> Jesus responded by proclaiming his sonship before the Father, and the criminal proceeded to die with Him by the power of God. The cross judged the first criminal and saved the second. This is the entire gospel proposition in a few verses. Which criminal are we going to be?

## Becoming a living sacrifice

Paul said that Christ’s example of obedience is the pattern for us to follow. He reminded the Corinthians that he had joined the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings. As a result, he was among them in weakness, fear and much trembling, yet in all his sufferings, his life was sustained by the power of God.<sup>13</sup>

Paul was a living sacrifice and, through offering, he directed the power of God toward them.<sup>14</sup> Bearing the marks of the Lord Jesus in his body, he was able, by the Holy Spirit, to minister the word of the cross to them. Illumination came to them, causing them to mourn in repentance, confess Christ as Lord, and join the fellowship of Christ’s offering.<sup>15</sup>

We, like the Corinthians, are able to examine ourselves and know that Christ is in us because His life is giving us the capacity to priest our bodies as a living sacrifice so that others may see, repent and be saved.

We need the life of Christ within our hearts for, without it, we cannot be the priest of our own sonship. Only by this life can we serve God. When we fellowship with Christ and His sufferings, His blood is made available to us. The life that is in His blood

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12 Luke 23:42

14 2Co 13:4

13 1Co 2:3-5.  
2Co 12:9

15 Jn 16:8. 2Co 7:10.  
Gal 6:17

purges and renovates our hearts. Our hearts become the heart of a son of God.

We only receive the life of Christ when we join the fellowship of Christ's actual sufferings; the suffering He endured on the cross. To receive His life, we must participate with Christ in the fellowship of His obedience.

Christ became the mediator of the new covenant for the specific purpose of making His life available to us from His blood. His life has become the life of our sonship, enabling us, as priests, to offer ourselves in service for the sake of His body.<sup>16</sup>

Our consciences, once purged and renovated by the life of Christ from self-righteous works, are able to perform the righteous works that God has planned for us to do. The Spirit now illuminates our hearts, giving us knowledge and understanding. We can proceed to do the works of God. Our renovated conscience is able to bear witness to what is true and right for us through the Holy Spirit.<sup>17</sup>

## The message preached

*'For He made Him who knew no sin to become sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.'*<sup>18</sup>

Without the word of the cross, people are unable to come to Christ.<sup>19</sup>

The Christian transaction of passing from death to life occurs when a person believes the word of the cross. As they receive the

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16 Heb 9:15

19 Rom 10:14

17 Rom 9:1

18 2Co 5:21

word, they pass from death to life, become a child of God, and begin the life of sonship.

The message of the cross is fundamental to evangelism. Any other message will not bring salvation to the hearer.

The love of God is revealed in the cross. God accepts us as we join the fellowship of the cross. We do not say that God loves us because of the cross. We say that God so loved us that He gave us the cross! There is danger, if we make the cross only the measure of God's love for us and see Christ as a substitute who verifies us through His atoning work. The work of the cross is a process we must join if we are to be delivered from sin and be saved.

## **The ministry of a son of God**

When a Christian begins to proclaim the word of the cross, they encounter resentment because of what others deem to be the foolishness of the message they are hearing.<sup>20</sup> Persecution, tribulation and affliction arise against them and, through this, they are drawn into the sufferings of Christ.<sup>21</sup> Their life has become a living sacrifice. The power of God is operating to bring forth salvation to those who receive their message.

In this difficult situation, a Christian must not be discouraged, but accept that their sufferings are the sufferings of Christ. The difficulty of their situation is of God, and so they must persevere by the power of God. In this way, they will not empty the cross of its power.<sup>22</sup> As they continue in faith through suffering, they are

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20 1Co 1:17-24

21 Mat 13:21

22 1Co 1:17-18

able, by the wisdom of God, to focus the power of God toward those who are struggling under the conviction of the Holy Spirit.<sup>23</sup>

The Holy Spirit is working with us, and will use the circumstances of the hearer's life to bring forth redemption. Signs and wonders follow the work of the Spirit as He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgement to come.

It is necessary to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, for He is leading us in relation to the works the Father has prepared for us to do. Our life and works are already mapped out for us. We need to be confident that Christ is our Lord, and He is guiding our lives.

## The ministry of the church

We are reminded that Jesus was 'despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief'. He was 'like one from whom men hid their face. He was despised, and we did not esteem Him'.<sup>24</sup> One of the lessons that we learn, by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, as we look at Christ's death, is that we hear the cry of the dying world and its demand that we be relevant to their situation. 'If you are the Christ, save Yourself and us' is their demand.<sup>25</sup>

At a fundamental level, we despise those that we seek to use as a resource for our agenda. This is true of those who use the church for their own personal agenda, and for those who use the members of a congregation to advance their own religious programme

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23 2Co 13:4

24 Isa 53:3

25 Luk 23:37



or ideals. The elements of patronage and control expose this situation for what it is.

Understanding fellowship and how it functions, is the only basis we can promote. Fellowship is able to maintain friendship, obligation and disinterest so that relationships are unilaterally based on respect and established according to the way God sets His love on each individual. Sincere relating that discerns what is true for each person and situation becomes the complete mode of life in the church.<sup>26</sup>

The church does not offer itself as a resource to the world and a benefactor to their agenda. The church does not have that role; that is, to act as 'lord' over the Gentiles.<sup>27</sup> Wherever this dynamic takes hold, we see the spirit of Babylon manifest.

The word and work of evangelism is to recover the sons of men to their predestination of sonship. God's love is not to save the world from death, for it is already under wrath, dead in trespasses and sins. He sent Jesus Christ and, through His death, established a process whereby mankind can be redeemed from death.

## The name of the Lord Jesus Christ

The first illumination we receive concerning Jesus Christ is that God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.<sup>28</sup>

The name above every name is the Lord Jesus Christ. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.<sup>29</sup>

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26 Heb 5:14

29 Php 2:11

27 Luk 22:25

28 Php 2:9

There is salvation in no one else. There is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.<sup>30</sup>

If we do not hold this ‘doctrine of Christ’, then we do not have fellowship with the Father and with the Son.<sup>31</sup>

If any man does not preach and proclaim this ‘doctrine of Christ’, the apostle John tells us not to receive him as a messenger of God.<sup>32</sup>

Anything less than a confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, and He is coming in the flesh, is of the spirit of antichrist.<sup>33</sup>

## The name above every name

The apostle John declares ‘God is love’.<sup>34</sup> The satisfaction of Their love is fully revealed and expressed in their name ‘Yahweh-Elohim’. Yahweh-Elohim is completely One and fully Three.

Yahweh-Elohim is the sum of all unity and diversity – more ‘One’ than a numerical one, and more diverse in Three than the sum of everything that could ever be.

The name ‘Yahweh’ reveals I AM as one Lord.

The name ‘Yahweh-Elohim’ reveals I AM as the fellowship of three Persons in the one Godhead.

Within this fellowship, Yahweh the Son is the expression of all sonship. Yahweh the Father is the expression of all fatherhood.

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30 Acts 4:12

33 2Joh 1:7

31 2Joh 1:9

34 1Joh 4:16

32 2Joh 1:10

And Yahweh the Holy Spirit is the expression of all sanctifying capacity.

Before the eternal covenant, the fatherhood of Yahweh the Father was fully revealed and expressed in the sonship of Yahweh the Son. The Father was fully satisfied in the Son. However, Yahweh the Son was not the Father's Son.

The desire of the Father for many sons is born in love, not in any sense of need.<sup>35</sup>

When the Son communicated His mind to empty Himself to no longer be the only identity expressing sonship, the eternal covenant was activated. The Father and Holy Spirit gave Him the name above every name and anointed Him with the seven Spirits of God. The Son was anointed as the Messiah, the Christ, the Holy One, and received the name 'Lord Jesus Christ'.

Yahweh the Son remained the same in identity as He emptied Himself to the Father's bosom to be the full expression of the covenant. The name of the Lord Jesus Christ became His possession as a 'new name' when He emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, and then further emptied Himself to the womb of Mary to become David's Son, the Son of Man. His emptying and obedience was by the power of Eternal Spirit.

It pleased the Father and Holy Spirit to lay down Their fullness to the Son, so that the life of all Three would be multiplied in Him as the life of new creation.

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35 Acts 17:25.

Eph 1:5

When Yahweh the Son emptied Himself in the covenant, the fullness of the offering of Father, Son and Holy Spirit was revealed in the 'one offering'. Likewise, the offering of Father, Son and Holy Spirit was fully revealed in the 'one name'.

The name 'Lord Jesus Christ' is an active name. It is the full expression of fellowship, offering and covenant. We can call it the 'covenant name'.

Further to this, when Yahweh the Son emptied Himself to the bosom of the Father, He was begotten as the Father's firstborn Son. The Father proclaimed, 'Today I have begotten You'. The Son now possessed the name 'Lord Jesus Christ' as both Yahweh the Son and the Son of God.

In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son to be born of woman in the lineage of Abraham and David. In this way, the name 'Lord Jesus Christ' also became the possession of the Son of Man. He was the full revelation of Yahweh-Elohim in the flesh.

## Who is the glorified Son?

In John chapter twelve, Jesus said that it was time for the Son of Man to be revealed and glorified through the work of the cross – His death, burial, resurrection and ascension.<sup>36</sup>

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36 Joh 12:23

It is important that we understand the distinction between Jesus Christ as:

- Yahweh the Son
- The Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father
- The Son of Man – the Son of Abraham, the Son of David

The covenant name, the Lord Jesus Christ, reveals these ‘many crowns’ of the glorified Son of Man.

Firstly, the covenant name, proclaimed on the Day of Pentecost, reveals that He has received the glory He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. This is the glory of His intrinsic name as Yahweh the Son. Seated at the right hand of the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ has repossessed the freedom of initiative that belongs to His intrinsic name.

Secondly, the covenant name reveals that Jesus Christ has been glorified as the Son of God the Father. Jesus prayed, ‘Father glorify Your name’. A voice came out of heaven saying, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’.<sup>37</sup> In the first stage, the Father’s name was fully glorified in Christ the firstborn, the ‘only begotten Son’. In the second stage, the Father’s name is glorified in Christ the firstborn, and the many sons who are begotten in Him in the process of adoption. Jesus Christ is forever the full expression and revelation of the Father’s name.

Thirdly, the covenant name reveals that He has been glorified as the Son of Man, as both the Son of Abraham and the Son of David.

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<sup>37</sup> Joh 12:28

The flesh of Abraham became the possession of the resurrected Son of God, and it was promised to David to be raised to the throne of Yahweh the Son. The flesh of David, which is to be our flesh, has been raised to the throne of Yahweh the Son, the intrinsic Son.

The flesh of Yahweh the Son is something ‘altogether new’ in the fellowship of Yahweh. When Jesus appeared among His disciples for forty days, He was Yahweh the Son in an immortal, incorruptible body. However, He was not glorified with the freedom of initiative that belonged to His own intrinsic name until His ascension.

Finally, the covenant name will reveal the administration of the new heavens and new earth.

## The transition in John chapter twelve

When Jesus proclaimed, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified’, it signified a major transition in His work and ministry.<sup>38</sup>

Up until this point, Jesus had done nothing other than reveal the Father’s name.<sup>39</sup> He testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son does in like manner’.<sup>40</sup>

The Son had fully glorified the Father on earth, having accomplished all the works of sonship that the Father had given Him to do. The Father was fully satisfied in His only begotten

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38 Joh 12:23

40 Joh 5:19

39 Joh 5:43.  
Joh 10:25

Son. We are reminded of the voice from heaven when Jesus was baptised, and on the mount of transfiguration, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased’.<sup>41</sup>

Now, it was time for the Son’s name to be revealed in His own initiative to lay His life down. The initiative of the Son was not accomplished by any exertion of His own will, but by complete obedience to the Father’s will enabled by the power of the seven Spirits of God.

Jesus said, ‘Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit’.<sup>42</sup> This was the unique and particular work of God the Son to humble Himself to the death of the cross to bring many sons to glory.

It is God the Son who is the trailblazer, the author and perfecter of our faith and obedience, and the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey.<sup>43</sup> This is the transition that we observe in John chapter twelve. We begin to see God the Son as the ‘author’. When we see Him lifted up, we behold I AM.

All of the miracles that Jesus performed were ‘good works’ from the Father.<sup>44</sup> He performed no miracles in His own name. Having emptied Himself of all His intrinsic prerogatives, He had no capacity to save anyone in His own name. He could not even save Himself from death.

Throughout His work and ministry as the Son of God, Jesus was never troubled. However, having set His face toward the second phase of His ministry as God the Son, Jesus said, ‘My soul is

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41 Mat 3:17.  
Mat 17:5.  
2 Pet1:17

42 Joh 12:24  
43 Heb 2:10.  
Heb 12:2. Heb 5:9

44 Joh 10:32

troubled, and what may I say? Father, save Me *out of* this hour? But because of this I came to this hour.<sup>45</sup>

The troubling of the Son culminated in the garden of Gethsemane when He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him ‘out of’ death.<sup>46</sup>

In Gethsemane, He was strengthened with the capacity of Eternal Spirit to be obedient and die the death of the cross. This was more than an anointing to go about ‘doing good’ as the Father’s Son.<sup>47</sup> This anointing was power to lay His life down with the full authority of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the name Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>48</sup>

The full authority of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed by the cross.

Jesus was no longer troubled as He proceeded from Gethsemane to the death of the cross. He tasted death for every man by the grace and power of God.<sup>49</sup>

We read in John chapter twelve that Jesus prayed, ‘Father glorify Your name’. A voice came out of heaven saying, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’. This voice was for our sake.<sup>50</sup>

The Father’s name had already been glorified in the work and ministry of the Son of God. God the Son then proceeded to glorify it again by laying down His life to bring many sons to glory.

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45 Joh 12:27 LITV.

47 Acts 10:38

50 Joh 12:28

46 Heb 5:7.  
Mat 26:38

48 Joh 10:18

49 Heb 2:9



Jesus is revealed as God the Son from John chapter twelve forwards, but He does not receive the glory that He had with the Father before the foundation of the world until His ascension.<sup>51</sup>

## He will take of Mine – two aspects of the adoption

Jesus said, ‘It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you’.<sup>52</sup> And more than this, He explained the work of the Holy Spirit. ‘He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you’.<sup>53</sup>

The means by which the Holy Spirit takes what belongs to the Son and gives it to us so that we are heirs of God the Father and fellow heirs with God the Son, is called the adoption.

We need to consider the adoption in two aspects. The first is how we share in what belongs to the Son of God. Jesus said, ‘All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you’.<sup>54</sup> The second is how we share in what belongs to God the Son.

Our inheritance as heirs of God the Father is the new birth. The new birth gives us the inheritance of being sons of God. ‘See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God’.<sup>55</sup>

All the inheritance of the Father’s sonship was given to God the Son as He emptied Himself to become the Father’s Son,

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51 Joh 17:5,24

54 Joh 16:15

52 Joh 16:7

55 1John 3:1

53 Joh 16:14

the firstborn. He is the heir of all things.<sup>56</sup> The Son shares ‘His inheritance’ with us in His body and, in this context, the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.<sup>57</sup>

Our inheritance as fellow heirs with God the Son is two-fold. As individual sons of God, it is our resurrection body. And collectively, as the bride of Christ, we share His name in the administration of the new heavens and new earth as the bride city.

We are fellow members of the corporate body of God the Son. We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.<sup>58</sup> He is the immortal and incorruptible Head of the church.

As we commune together with Christ in the fellowship of His body, we feed on the substance of His life, which Christ called His flesh and blood. Jesus said, ‘The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life’.<sup>59</sup>

In the day of resurrection, our resurrection bodies will be composed, by the word of Christ, from the DNA of His immortal and incorruptible flesh.<sup>60</sup> This is our inheritance in the glorified flesh of the Son of David.

Our corporate expression in His name for all eternity is as a bride to the bridegroom. The church will share His name in marriage. The church comes forth from His body, as flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, to be the glorious bride of Christ. The book of Revelation proclaims, ‘Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready’.<sup>61</sup>

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56	Heb 1:2	59	Joh 6:63	61	Rev 19:7
57	Gal 4:6	60	Php 3:21.		
58	Eph 5:30-32		1Th 4:16.		
			1Co 15:51-53		

The New Jerusalem is the bride city, the capital of the new heavens and new earth. It is the administrative headquarters of God the Son, and the throne of the Father is in it.

## The sequence of the adoption

1. When we receive the word of Christ, faith comes by hearing, and we are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 'For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.'<sup>62</sup> We receive adoption as sons through faith.
2. This faith immediately compels us to be baptised and clothe ourselves with Christ. 'For all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.'<sup>63</sup> This is both the body of the Son of God and God the Son. It is the corporate body of Christ, for there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor freeman, male or female. 'For you are all one in Christ Jesus.'<sup>64</sup>
3. Having clothed ourselves with Christ, we now belong to the intrinsic Son. We are Abraham's descendants and heirs according to the promise.<sup>65</sup> As members of the intrinsic Son, we will receive the blessing of Abraham, the promise of the Spirit.<sup>66</sup>
4. Because we are sons, by adoption, within the corporate body of the ascended, enthroned, intrinsic Son, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'<sup>67</sup> This is the Spirit of the Son of God. By this means, we inherit the new birth. This is our share in the inheritance of the Father's

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62 Gal 3:26

65 Gal 3:29

63 Gal 3:27

66 Gal 3:14

64 Gal 3:28

67 Gal 4:6

firstborn who is the heir of all things. The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are sons of God.<sup>68</sup>

5. We are heirs of God the Father and fellow heirs with God the Son, knowing that if we suffer with Him we will, likewise, be glorified with Him. We consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us.<sup>69</sup>
6. Having the firstfruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.<sup>70</sup> While we are in this tent, we groan to be fully clothed with Christ, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.<sup>71</sup> This is our inheritance in God the Son.
7. Our adoption is complete in the day of resurrection.

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68 Rom 8:16

71 2Co 5:4

69 Rom 8:17

70 Rom 8:23

# The name of the Lord Jesus Christ

The first illumination we receive concerning Jesus Christ is that God has highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name.<sup>1</sup>

The name above every name is the Lord Jesus Christ. Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.<sup>2</sup>

There is salvation in no one else. There is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.<sup>3</sup>

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1 Php 2:9

2 Php 2:11

3 Acts 4:12

If we do not hold this ‘doctrine of Christ’, then we do not have fellowship with the Father and with the Son.<sup>4</sup>

If any man does not preach and proclaim this ‘doctrine of Christ’, the apostle John tells us not to receive him as a messenger of God.<sup>5</sup>

Anything less than a confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, and He is coming in the flesh, is of the spirit of antichrist.<sup>6</sup>

## The name above every name

The apostle John declares ‘God is love’.<sup>7</sup> The satisfaction of Their love is fully revealed and expressed in their name ‘Yahweh-Elohim’. Yahweh-Elohim is completely One and fully Three.

Yahweh-Elohim is the sum of all unity and diversity – more ‘One’ than a numerical one, and more diverse in Three than the sum of everything that could ever be.

The name ‘Yahweh’ reveals I AM as one Lord.

The name ‘Yahweh-Elohim’ reveals I AM as the fellowship of three Persons in the one Godhead.

Within this fellowship, Yahweh the Son is the expression of all sonship. Yahweh the Father is the expression of all fatherhood. And Yahweh the Holy Spirit is the expression of all sanctifying capacity.

Before the eternal covenant, the fatherhood of Yahweh the Father was fully revealed and expressed in the sonship of Yahweh the

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4 2Joh 1:9

7 1Joh 4:16

5 2Joh 1:10

6 2Joh 1:7

Son. The Father was fully satisfied in the Son. However, Yahweh the Son was not the Father's Son.

The desire of the Father for many sons is born in love, not in any sense of need.<sup>8</sup>

When the Son communicated His mind to empty Himself to no longer be the only identity expressing sonship, the eternal covenant was activated. The Father and Holy Spirit gave Him the name above every name and anointed Him with the seven Spirits of God. The Son was anointed as the Messiah, the Christ, the Holy One, and received the name 'Lord Jesus Christ'.

Yahweh the Son remained the same in identity as He emptied Himself to the Father's bosom to be the full expression of the covenant. The name of the Lord Jesus Christ became His possession as a 'new name' when He emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, and then further emptied Himself to the womb of Mary to become David's Son, the Son of Man. His emptying and obedience was by the power of Eternal Spirit.

It pleased the Father and Holy Spirit to lay down Their fullness to the Son, so that the life of all Three would be multiplied in Him as the life of new creation.

When Yahweh the Son emptied Himself in the covenant, the fullness of the offering of Father, Son and Holy Spirit was revealed in the 'one offering'. Likewise, the offering of Father, Son and Holy Spirit was fully revealed in the 'one name'.

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8 Acts 17:25.  
Eph 1:5.

The name 'Lord Jesus Christ' is an active name. It is the full expression of fellowship, offering and covenant. We can call it the 'covenant name'.

Further to this, when Yahweh the Son emptied Himself to the bosom of the Father, He was begotten as the Father's firstborn Son. The Father proclaimed, 'Today I have begotten You'. The Son now possessed the name 'Lord Jesus Christ' as both Yahweh the Son and the Son of God.

In the fullness of time, God sent forth His Son to be born of woman in the lineage of Abraham and David. In this way, the name 'Lord Jesus Christ' also became the possession of the Son of Man. He was the full revelation of Yahweh-Elohim in the flesh.

## Who is the glorified Son?

In John chapter twelve, Jesus said that it was time for the Son of Man to be revealed and glorified through the work of the cross – His death, burial, resurrection and ascension.<sup>9</sup>

It is important that we understand the distinction between Jesus Christ as:

- Yahweh the Son
- The Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father
- The Son of Man – the Son of Abraham, the Son of David

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9 Joh 12:23



The covenant name, the Lord Jesus Christ, reveals these ‘many crowns’ of the glorified Son of Man.

Firstly, the covenant name, proclaimed on the Day of Pentecost, reveals that He has received the glory He had with the Father before the foundation of the world. This is the glory of His intrinsic name as Yahweh the Son. Seated at the right hand of the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ has repossessed the freedom of initiative that belongs to His intrinsic name.

Secondly, the covenant name reveals that Jesus Christ has been glorified as the Son of God the Father. Jesus prayed, ‘Father glorify Your name’. A voice came out of heaven saying, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’.<sup>10</sup> In the first stage, the Father’s name was fully glorified in Christ the firstborn, the ‘only begotten Son’. In the second stage, the Father’s name is glorified in Christ the firstborn, and the many sons who are begotten in Him in the process of adoption. Jesus Christ is forever the full expression and revelation of the Father’s name.

Thirdly, the covenant name reveals that He has been glorified as the Son of Man, as both the Son of Abraham and the Son of David. The flesh of Abraham became the possession of the resurrected Son of God, and it was promised to David to be raised to the throne of Yahweh the Son. The flesh of David, which is to be our flesh, has been raised to the throne of Yahweh the Son, the intrinsic Son.

The flesh of Yahweh the Son is something ‘altogether new’ in the fellowship of Yahweh. When Jesus appeared among His disciples for forty days, He was Yahweh the Son in an immortal,

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<sup>10</sup> Joh 12:28

incorruptible body. However, He was not glorified with the freedom of initiative that belonged to His own intrinsic name until His ascension.

Finally, the covenant name will reveal the administration of the new heavens and new earth.

## The transition in John chapter twelve

When Jesus proclaimed, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified’, it signified a major transition in His work and ministry.<sup>11</sup>

Up until this point, Jesus had done nothing other than reveal the Father’s name.<sup>12</sup> He testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son does in like manner’.<sup>13</sup>

The Son had fully glorified the Father on earth, having accomplished all the works of sonship that the Father had given Him to do. The Father was fully satisfied in His only begotten Son. We are reminded of the voice from heaven when Jesus was baptised, and on the mount of transfiguration, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased’.<sup>14</sup>

Now, it was time for the Son’s name to be revealed in His own initiative to lay His life down. The initiative of the Son was not accomplished by any exertion of His own will, but by complete obedience to the Father’s will enabled by the power of the seven Spirits of God.

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11 Joh 12:23

13 Joh 5:19.

12 Joh 5:43.  
Joh 10:25

14 Mat 3:17.  
Mat 17:5.  
2 Pet1:17.

Jesus said, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone, but if it dies, it bears much fruit'.<sup>15</sup> This was the unique and particular work of God the Son to humble Himself to the death of the cross to bring many sons to glory.

It is God the Son who is the trailblazer, the author and perfecter of our faith and obedience, and the source of eternal salvation for all those who obey.<sup>16</sup> This is the transition that we observe in John chapter twelve. We begin to see God the Son as the 'author'. When we see Him lifted up, we behold I AM.

All of the miracles that Jesus performed were 'good works' from the Father.<sup>17</sup> He performed no miracles in His own name. Having emptied Himself of all His intrinsic prerogatives, He had no capacity to save anyone in His own name. He could not even save Himself from death.

Throughout His work and ministry as the Son of God, Jesus was never troubled. However, having set His face toward the second phase of His ministry as God the Son, Jesus said, 'My soul is troubled, and what may I say? Father, save Me *out of* this hour? But because of this I came to this hour'.<sup>18</sup>

The troubling of the Son culminated in the garden of Gethsemane when He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him 'out of' death.<sup>19</sup>

In Gethsemane, He was strengthened with the capacity of Eternal Spirit to be obedient and die the death of the cross. This was more than an anointing to go about 'doing good' as the Father's

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15 Joh 12:24.

17 Joh 10:32

16 Heb 2:10.  
Heb 12:2.  
Heb 5:9.

18 Joh 12:27 LITV.

19 Heb 5:7.  
Mat 26:38.

Son.<sup>20</sup> This anointing was power to lay His life down with the full authority of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the name Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>21</sup>

The full authority of the name of the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed by the cross.

Jesus was no longer troubled as He proceeded from Gethsemane to the death of the cross. He tasted death for every man by the grace and power of God.<sup>22</sup>

We read in John chapter twelve that Jesus prayed, ‘Father glorify Your name’. A voice came out of heaven saying, ‘I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again’. This voice was for our sake.<sup>23</sup>

The Father’s name had already been glorified in the work and ministry of the Son of God. God the Son then proceeded to glorify it again by laying down His life to bring many sons to glory.

Jesus is revealed as God the Son from John chapter twelve forwards, but He does not receive the glory that He had with the Father before the foundation of the world until His ascension.<sup>24</sup>

## He will take of Mine – two aspects of the adoption

Jesus said, ‘It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you’.<sup>25</sup> And more than this, He explained the work of the Holy Spirit. ‘He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you’.<sup>26</sup>

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20 Acts 10:38

23 Joh 12:28

26 Joh 16:14.

21 Joh 10:18

24 Joh 17:5,24.

22 Heb 2:9

25 Joh 16:7.

The means by which the Holy Spirit takes what belongs to the Son and gives it to us so that we are heirs of God the Father and fellow heirs with God the Son, is called the adoption.

We need to consider the adoption in two aspects. The first is how we share in what belongs to the Son of God. Jesus said, 'All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you'.<sup>27</sup> The second is how we share in what belongs to God the Son.

Our inheritance as heirs of God the Father is the new birth. The new birth gives us the inheritance of being sons of God. 'See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God'.<sup>28</sup>

All the inheritance of the Father's sonship was given to God the Son as He emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, the firstborn. He is the heir of all things.<sup>29</sup> The Son shares 'His inheritance' with us in His body and, in this context, the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.<sup>30</sup>

Our inheritance as fellow heirs with God the Son is two-fold. As individual sons of God, it is our resurrection body. And collectively, as the bride of Christ, we share His name in the administration of the new heavens and new earth as the bride city.

We are fellow members of the corporate body of God the Son. We are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones.<sup>31</sup> He is the immortal and incorruptible Head of the church.

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27 Joh 16:15.

30 Gal 4:6

28 1John 3:1

29 Heb 1:2

As we commune together with Christ in the fellowship of His body, we feed on the substance of His life, which Christ called His flesh and blood. Jesus said, 'The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and life'.<sup>32</sup>

In the day of resurrection, our resurrection bodies will be composed, by the word of Christ, from the DNA of His immortal and incorruptible flesh.<sup>33</sup> This is our inheritance in the glorified flesh of the Son of David.

Our corporate expression in His name for all eternity is as a bride to the bridegroom. The church will share His name in marriage. The church comes forth from His body, as flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone, to be the glorious bride of Christ. The book of Revelation proclaims, 'Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready'.<sup>34</sup>

The New Jerusalem is the bride city, the capital of the new heavens and new earth. It is the administrative headquarters of God the Son, and the throne of the Father is in it.

## The sequence of the adoption

1. When we receive the word of Christ, faith comes by hearing, and we are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. 'For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.'<sup>35</sup> We receive adoption as sons through faith.
2. This faith immediately compels us to be baptised and clothe ourselves with Christ. 'For all of you who were baptised into

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31 Eph 5:30-32

1Th 4:16.

32 Joh 6:63

1Co 15:51-53.

33 Php 3:21.

34 Rev 19:7

Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.<sup>36</sup> This is both the body of the Son of God and God the Son. It is the corporate body of Christ, for there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor freeman, male or female. 'For you are all one in Christ Jesus.'<sup>37</sup>

3. Having clothed ourselves with Christ, we now belong to the intrinsic Son. We are Abraham's descendants and heirs according to the promise.<sup>38</sup> As members of the intrinsic Son, we will receive the blessing of Abraham, the promise of the Spirit.<sup>39</sup>
4. Because we are sons, by adoption, within the corporate body of the ascended, enthroned, intrinsic Son, God sends forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'<sup>40</sup> This is the Spirit of the Son of God. By this means, we inherit the new birth. This is our share in the inheritance of the Father's firstborn who is the heir of all things. The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are sons of God.<sup>41</sup>
5. We are heirs of God the Father and fellow heirs with God the Son, knowing that if we suffer with Him we will, likewise, be glorified with Him. We consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed in us.<sup>42</sup>
6. Having the firstfruits of the Spirit, we groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.<sup>43</sup> While we are in this tent, we groan to be fully clothed with Christ, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.<sup>44</sup> This is our inheritance in God the Son.
7. Our adoption is complete in the day of resurrection.

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35 Gal 3:26.

39 Gal 3:14

42 Rom 8:17

36 Gal 3:27.

40 Gal 4:6

43 Rom 8:23

37 Gal 3:28.

41 Rom 8:16

44 2Co 5:4

38 Gal 3:29

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# Baptism in the Name

It is only once we have considered the framework of the Name that we can discuss the stages of baptism.

We need to consider three stages in the revelation of what is now 'one baptism'. Each stage proclaimed a further truth concerning our sonship.

1. John's baptism which prepared the way of the Lord
  2. Christ's baptism so that the disciples were 'kept' in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ
  3. Baptism with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost so that the disciples could baptise all men in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the command and authority of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
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## 1. John's baptism – preparing the way of the Lord

John the Baptist was sent as the messenger before the face of the Messiah to 'prepare the way of the Lord'.<sup>1</sup> He baptised with water for repentance and faith so that Israel would accept that the Messiah must die for them as the Lamb of God, and be raised and glorified as the author of their resurrection.<sup>2</sup>

John's baptism identified those repenting of their sins with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He prepared the hearts of men to recognise Christ and then follow Him.

Jesus was baptised by John to fulfil all righteousness as the sign of His coming death, burial, and resurrection.<sup>3</sup> He would learn obedience through suffering and reveal the righteousness of God. This is the way of the Lord.

We read that Apollos had been instructed in this way of the Lord. He was mighty in the Scriptures and able to teach accurately the things concerning Jesus. However, He was only acquainted with the baptism of John. Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and explained to him the way of God 'more accurately'.<sup>4</sup>

The way of God 'more accurately' included an understanding that the Lord Jesus Christ was not just the Father's Son, but Yahweh the Son, the intrinsic Son. Until He accomplished the Father's work, He manifested and glorified only the Father's name, and made known only that He was the Son of God.

After He had finished the Father's work, the Son of God, in His intrinsic identity as God the Son, humbled Himself to the

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1 Luk 1:76                      4 Acts 18:24-26

2 Mat 3:11. Joh 1:31.

3 Mat 3:15

obedient death of the cross so that many sons could be redeemed and brought to glory. As God the Son now stepped forward into the obedience that was uniquely His, He became the trailblazer, and author and perfecter of our obedience.<sup>5</sup> He became the source of eternal salvation for all those who join His obedience.<sup>6</sup>

For this reason, God highly exalted Him. He was raised to sit at the right hand of the Father, receiving the glory that He had with the Father before the world was. From this ascended position, Yahweh the Son was able to send forth the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would take the covenant name given to Him and give it to us.

The Holy Spirit joins us to the immortal, incorruptible body of God the Son. And, in this context, the Father sends forth the Spirit of His firstborn Son into our hearts so that we are born from above as sons of God.<sup>7</sup> It is the Holy Spirit that bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God.

With this in view, we understand why Paul asked the Ephesian disciples, ‘Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?’ They did not know about the work of the Holy Spirit because, like Apollos, they were only acquainted with John’s baptism. When Paul baptised them into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and laid hands on them, they immediately received the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup>

John the Baptist was very clear that He was preparing the way for this greater baptism. He said concerning Jesus, ‘I baptise you with water ... but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit’.<sup>9</sup>

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5 Heb 2:10

Rom 8:15-16.

6 Heb 5:9

8 Acts 19:1-6

7 Gal 4:6.

John the Baptist knew that Christ's baptism would invoke upon us the name of the ascended, glorified Son of Man because He described Jesus Christ as the bridegroom. Indeed, the intrinsic Son is the bridegroom and the church is betrothed to Him as His bride.

## 2. Christ kept the disciples in the Name given to Him

The gospels account that Jesus baptised, through the hands of His disciples, all who came to Him.<sup>10</sup> He was making and baptising many more disciples than John. Jesus declared, 'All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me, I will certainly not cast out'.<sup>11</sup>

The disciples of Jesus were baptising into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the revelation of the Godhead in bodily form. This was the name given to Yahweh the Son before the foundation of the world, now revealed in His flesh as the only begotten Son of the Father.

As the only begotten Son, Jesus kept the disciples in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as the full revelation of the Father's name. He prayed to the Father, 'I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have gave Me out of the world'.<sup>12</sup> And more than this, 'While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me'.<sup>13</sup> Only the son of perdition was lost.

Until His ascension, this 'name above all names' was the singular possession of Jesus Christ. He was the Father's 'only' begotten

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9 Mat 3:11. Mar 1:8. 11 Joh 6:37.

Luke 3:16

12 Joh 17:6.

10 Joh 3:26-27

Son. He fully revealed and glorified the name of the Father. The Father was fully satisfied in Him. He was the heir of all things. The covenant purpose of God was complete in Him as the fullness of new creation.

The disciples were kept in the name given to Him, but they could not receive their own inheritance in this name until the Son of Man poured Himself out in offering, humbled Himself to the obedient death of the cross, received again the glory of His intrinsic sonship, and the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost.

### 3. The name given to us on the Day of Pentecost

Jesus kept the disciples in the name all the way to the Day of Pentecost. There is no record that the disciples needed to be rebaptised. Christ's baptism was made complete in them when the Holy Spirit was poured out.

The Day of Pentecost fulfilled the words of John the Baptist, 'I baptised you with water; but He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit'.<sup>14</sup> Jesus reminded the disciples of this prophecy shortly before His ascension. 'For John baptised with water, but you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit not many days from now'.<sup>15</sup>

When the Holy Spirit was given to them, the disciples were joined to the raised, glorified body of Christ. Within the context of the glorified body, the Father could send the Spirit of His firstborn Son into their hearts through the Holy Spirit. This fulfilled the words of Jesus, 'He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you'.<sup>16</sup>

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13 Joh 17:12.

16 Joh 16:14.

14 Mar 1:8.

15 Acts 1:5.

The significance of the Day of Pentecost is that the covenant name given to the ‘only begotten’ Son had now been given to them. The ‘name above every name’ that Jesus revealed throughout the course of His ministry, had now been ‘given among men’. Hence Peter said, ‘There is no other name under heaven that has been *given among men* by which we must be saved’.<sup>17</sup>

As members of His glorious body, the disciples could pray directly to the Father in Christ’s name. Jesus said, ‘In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.’<sup>18</sup>

The disciples could now be sent in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to fulfil the great commission. All authority had been given to Jesus Christ in the name above every name, and He gave this authority to the disciples in His name.<sup>19</sup> According to the command and authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit given to them, they were empowered to make disciples in all nations.<sup>20</sup>

The crowds on the Day of Pentecost were cut to the heart and asked, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’ Peter confidently replied, according to the authority of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ‘Repent, and let each one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’.<sup>21</sup>

The covenant of the name given to Christ is the covenant in which *our* names are hidden, and from which the many sons are

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17 Acts 4:12                      20 Mat 28:19-20.

18 Joh 16:23-24.              21 Acts 2:38.

19 Mat 28:18.

revealed by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. It is necessary now that we receive the Holy Spirit when we believe. And the necessary step in receiving the Holy Spirit is to be baptised into the covenant name of the Lord Jesus Christ. This step is essential if we are to receive 'our' sonship.