



Advanced Bible Correspondence Course

Lesson 13: God the Son

LORD'S DAY 13

Q.33. WHY IS CHRIST CALLED THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, SINCE WE ARE ALSO THE CHILDREN OF GOD?

ANSWER: BECAUSE CHRIST ALONE IS THE ETERNAL AND NATURAL SON OF GOD (A); BUT WE ARE CHILDREN ADOPTED OF GOD, BY GRACE, FOR HIS SAKE (B).

(A) JOHN 1:14; HEBREWS 1:1-2; JOHN 3:16; I JOHN 4:9; ROMANS 8:32;

(B) ROMANS 8:16; JOHN 1:12; GALATIANS 4:6; EPHESIANS 1:5-6

Christians are children of God

In I John 3:1 we read: *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."* There is no greater privilege for man than to be a child of God. Adam was a child of God in Paradise. However, through the fall he chose the devil to be his father and did what the devil whispered in his ear. We, as his descendants, do nothing else. This father is always seeking our ruin. It is by regeneration that the children of the devil again become children of God. This can only be brought about by God Himself. Then we receive the heart of a child of God.

The Son of God

The Lord Jesus is also the Son of God, but differently from God's children. He was never created, but has always been from eternity. And He is the eternal only begotten Son of God.

Think of a family where there are two kinds of children: adopted children and biological children. It is only in this way that, for Christ's sake, we can become children of God.

Adoption

So it is necessary for us to be adopted by God. Then the devil is no longer our father, but the Lord God is. We then share in the love of our God and He will always provide for us. And one day we may live with God in His heavenly home for ever. Then we have the likeness of God, for then we are holy, as He is holy.

God also gives His adopted child the heart of a child. If I may call God my Father, this will be noticeable in my life and conduct.

How is this adoption possible? It is for His sake, for Christ's sake. He was willing to leave the house of His Father, to become man, and to die as a transgressor in order to make this adoption possible. God's children will be forever thankful to the Lord Jesus for this.

We cannot merit this adoption. On the contrary, we have all deserved death. We can become a child of God only by grace. Just imagine for a moment that a king does not only grant mercy to a man condemned to death, but also adopts him as his own son. He becomes a prince in the palace and receives royal care and education. This is only a poor picture. The blessedness, the salvation of a child of God cannot be expressed, and it remains forever.

Q.34. WHEREFORE CALLEST THOU HIM OUR LORD?

ANSWER: BECAUSE HE HATH REDEEMED US, BOTH SOUL AND BODY, FROM ALL OUR SINS, NOT WITH GOLD OR SILVER, BUT WITH HIS PRECIOUS BLOOD, AND HATH DELIVERED US FROM ALL THE POWER OF THE DEVIL; AND THUS HATH MADE US HIS OWN PROPERTY (A).

(A) I PETER 1:18-19, 2:9; I CORINTHIANS 6:20; I TIMOTHY 2:6; JOHN 20:28

Slaves of sin

Through the fall, man did not only become a child of the devil, but also a slave, a slave of the devil and of sin. This is perceived best when a person who always committed a certain sin with much pleasure, for one reason or another does not want to do that sin anymore. He does not succeed in giving up that sin. Only then does one experience how strong the attachment to sin is and how one is enslaved to it. Formerly it was possible that a slave could purchase his freedom back or that someone else could redeem him. This other person could also buy a slave to make him a slave of his own. Just think of Joseph, who was bought by Potiphar on the slave market (Genesis 39).

The devil has become our lord and master and we are his slaves. Righteously so. It is our own fault.

Yet, a great injustice was here done to God. The devil robbed God of His own beautiful creation. It was done with our help, and we approved of it.

Free servants of the Lord

God does not resign Himself to the fact that we all became slaves of the devil. He does not want to leave His creation in the hands of the devil. For that reason He sent His Son into the world to deliver His creation. Christ says to Nicodemus, *"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* (John 3:16)

Through His suffering and death, the Lord Jesus paid the ransom to His Father which was necessary to redeem God's elect and to deliver them. This implies that He paid the debt which was outstanding with God. However, more is necessary.

They must also be delivered from the power of Satan. This takes place when the Lord comes into a man's life. Then he sheds abroad His love in the heart. This person will desire to serve Him, but then he feels his slavery. Satan does not want to let go of him. The result is a life and death struggle. But the Lord gains the victory and the redeemed sinner is forever God's possession. He acknowledges the triune God, so also the Lord Jesus, as his Lord. In John 20:28 Thomas confessed it, "*My Lord and my God.*"

This manifests itself in his life; then it can be seen who is served: the Lord or Satan.

Questions:

1. Explain the difference between Christ (the Son of God) and the children of God.

2. Can there be equality between them?

3. If Christ has redeemed you, who is your owner?

4. A redeemed man is twice the property of the Lord: by creation and by re-creation. True or False?

Evaluator: _____

Meditation: Romans 8:16 “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.”

These words dropt not from the pen of a saint, in a state of sinless perfection: nor is this heavenly blessing peculiar to Paul the apostle, but to Paul, “less than the least of all saints,” and chief of sinners, as he owned himself to be. It has been enjoyed by sinners, through faith, in all ages; it is the common privilege of all Christians. Well may we cry out in astonishment, “But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee.” (II Chronicles 6:18). Amazing condescension! “Lord, what is sinful, hell-deserving man, that Thou shouldst visit him” with Thy cheering presence?

Delightful to think of! There is a sweet relation subsisting between the High and Lofty One and miserable sinners. In Jesus they are united. The fullness of the Godhead and the misery and curse of our nature meet in him. From the head Jesus, the Spirit proceeds; and, like the oil on Aaron’s head, descends to all the members. To their spirits he bears witness, agreeably to the word of their covenant relation, as adopted sons of God by faith in Christ.

Let no believer be distressed or deluded by the deceiving of others, so as to expect an outward vision, manifestation, or revelation that may be seen, heard, or felt by the outward senses. No; the Spirit bears witness *to our spirits*, not to our senses. Even as the law bears witness to the conscience, that we are sinners, and works wrath there; so the blessed Spirit bears witness to the mind, that we are the children of God by faith in Jesus; that “He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification;” that in Him we are chosen, beloved, accepted, justified, pardoned, and shall be glorified with him. For, saith Jesus, “He shall glorify Me; for he shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you.” (John 16:14)

See, O believer, the riches of covenant grace! Admire and adore the wonderful love of the Trinity! Hast thou received the witness of the Spirit in the word through faith? Happy, highly favoured art thou. Or art thou waiting and longing for the promise of the Father, the joyful assurance of the Spirit, that thou art His? Such a blessing is not for any good naturally found in thee; but because Jesus intercedes before the throne. Therefore plead, in the assurance of faith, this promise, “Your heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him.” (Luke 11:13) “Ask in faith, nothing doubting.” (James 1:6)

Taken from “A Spiritual Treasury for the Children of God” by William Mason