

Faith Outreach Christian Life Center
Hephzibah, Georgia
Richard B. Peoples, Sr.; Pastor
Elder Rick Pina
Growing Into Sonship

Introduction: This lesson is designed to help the members of FOCLC realize the benefits of growing towards Sonship in Christ.

Foundational Scripture: (Rom 8:14 AMP) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Pastor Peoples has been teaching us concerning Sonship. Sonship does not happen overnight and it does not happen without a concerted effort on behalf of a child of God. With that in mind, let's investigate the process of growing towards Sonship in Christ. I say 'process' because Salvation is instantaneous, but Sanctification is a continual process.

When asked, "How long does it take to become a Christian?" A Pastor replied, "A second and a lifetime!" So what's the process?

1. We Must Be Born-Again:

- a. The original purpose of man was to have dominion on the earth. (Gen 1:26 KJV) And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.
- b. Man, at this point was a Spirit with a physical body.
- c. Only Spirits with physical bodies have legal authority on the earth.
- d. Sin caused a separation between God and man. God took His Holy Spirit from fallen man.
- e. The blood of animals covered the sin, but could not restore the relationship between a fallen man and a Holy God.
- f. God had to redeem man with a man.
- g. Since only spirits with physical bodies have legal authority on the earth, God came as a Spirit with a physical body -- Jesus Christ.
- h. Jesus came to re-establish the Kingdom of God in the earth. He started His ministry by declaring, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Mat 4:17).
- i. Jesus' death paid the penalty for sin and allowed the Holy Spirit to be given back to man.
- j. Only those that are Born of both the water (physical body) and the Spirit (The Holy Spirit) can have access to the Kingdom of God and operate in Kingdom Authority! (John 3:5 KJV) Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

2. We Must Have a Hunger for the Word:

- a. Once we are Born-Again, we are "positionally" translated from the kingdom of darkness into the Kingdom of God (See 1 Pet 2:9 and Eph 2:1-6).
- b. This does not mean, however, that we know how to operate as Royalty. We have a King for a Father, but are ignorant to the King's culture, customs, courtesies, and mannerisms.
- c. Without the proper training, we are prone to embarrass the family name and neglect the royal privileges of our new family status. We are family, but our ignorance limits our freedoms in the family. We are restricted to operate under the guidance of tutors (Gal 4:1-4).
- d. As newborn babies in the family, we start our growth process by getting fed. Babies have a natural hunger and thirst for milk. (1 Pet2:2) As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.

- e. This growth comes by receiving the milk (the Word) and digesting it into our Spiritual bodies. This digestion causes development, and the development – through the process of change – causes growth. You cannot grow without change. Growth requires receiving and applying the Word.
- f. There will come a time where our Father (the King) will expect us to have received enough milk to where we can transition to meat and also be able to feed milk to others. A 10 year old can feed a baby, but a baby cannot feed a 10 year old.
- g. (Heb 5:12-6:2 NIV) In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.
 - Sons not satisfied with milk
 - Sons are required to receive meat to continue to grow
 - Sons are familiar with the Doctrine of Christ (not laying again the same foundations)
 - Sons are able to 'teach' (give) and not just receive

3. We Must be Ready, Receptive and Responsive:

- a. Paul was on his 2nd Missionary Journey. He had been many places already, preaching and teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He came across a group of believers that put a demand on his anointing. The peoples, Bereans, were ready to receive when the man of God was ready to share.
- b. (Acts 17:11 AMP) Now these [*Jews*] were better disposed and more noble than those in Thessalonica, for they were entirely ready and accepted and welcomed the message [*concerning the attainment through Christ of eternal salvation in the kingdom of God*] with inclination of mind and eagerness, searching and examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.
- c. (Heb 4:2 KJV) For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*.
- d. The Bereans of Acts 17 and the 'US' group of Hebrews 4 both had a Ready and Receptive attitude towards the Word of God. They came Ready for the Word and Receptive to the Word; enabling them to easily Respond to the Word they received in faith.
- e. Sons of God come Ready for a Word from God, Receptive to the move of God, and then Responsive to what it is that God has said. Even if we come ready and receptive, the Word of God will not become alive in us, until we respond to it. We must apply it to our lives so that we can – like our foundational scripture says – be led of the Spirit of God and thereby be categorized as Sons of God!

4. Our Mind Must be Renewed:

- a. (Rom 12:2 AMP) Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [*fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs*], but be transformed (changed) by the [*entire*] renewal of your mind [*by its new ideals and its new attitude*], so that you may prove [*for yourselves*] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [*in His sight for you*].
- b. We are a Spirit, we have a soul, and we live in a Body (see 1 Thes 5:23). This gives us legal authority on the earth.
- c. We were all born devoid of God's Holy Spirit and with an empty hole that only He could fill. When we are Born-Again (John 3:3, Eph 1:13), the Holy Spirit comes into us and seals us with His presence. In our spirit, we are saved instantly. We also know that our body will some day be changed and translated into His presence. So our body will be

- saved eventually. This leaves us with this middle facet of our being -- our soul. Our soul is comprised of our mind, emotions and will. Our soul must be saved progressively.
- d. Think for a minute of a clear glass full of Coca-Cola. You now place that clear glass inside a clear bowl. You now have a full pitcher of water and begin to pour the water into the glass. At some point, the glass will begin to over flow. After it starts to overflow, you stop and look at its contents. You will now see that there is both Cola and water in the glass. The Cola is somewhat diluted by the water, but it is still there nonetheless. The more your pour water into the glass and the more the excess begins to overflow into the bowl, the more you realize that the glass is getting clearer. The more water, the less Cola. I use this illustration to teach about our Mind Transformation. When we come to God we are like the glass of Cola. We are full of dark things. We are saved in our spirit, but our mind is still full of mess. As we receive the Word of God, the dark things begin to get diluted, but they are still there nonetheless. As we continue, however, to read and apply God's Word in our lives, the clearer the glass gets and the more water we find in it. There might be hints of the cola here and there, but the glass now has more water than cola and the contents have been changed.
 - e. Children receive water on Sunday and cola during the week. Children go back and forth between clear and dark content in their glass. Sons, however, abstain from the darkness of the world and continue to receive the Water of the Word. Sons allow their minds to be transformed and thereby are led by the Spirit (Rom 8) and are delivered from the constant struggle (Rom 7 14-25) that children put up with.
 - f. Parents allow little children to get away with foolish behavior, but require responsibility form Sons. When we allow are minds to be renewed by the Word of God, God will begin to treat us like Sons and give us greater levels of responsibility!
 - g. Children play around, because they do not know any better.
 - h. Sons know better and are expected to DO better!
 - i. We are what we think (Prov 23:7) and if are minds are childish, we are children. Paul taught he Corinthian church that there should come a time in our natural development that we should "put away childish things" (1 Cor 13;11).

Conclusion: Development into Sonship Requires:

| Requirement | Feat | Characteristic |
|-----------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Born-Again | Saved | Identity |
| Hunger for the Word | Instruction | Relationship |
| Apply what we receive | Action | Obedience |
| Mental Transformation | Transformed | Imitation |

- a. (Rom 8:14 AMP) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.
- b. All Born-Again believers are children of God and the person has the Spirit of God.
- c. In Sons, however, the difference is that the Spirit has the person.
- d. A Son checks with the Holy Spirit, and verifies through the Word of God, prior to making decisions.
- e. Adherence with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God are mere afterthoughts for children, but a priority for Sons.
- f. Sons are so used to checking with God first that they build Godly habits. Their character is formed in the image of God and the find themselves simply living a life that is pleasing to the Father. This is not a task, but rather an enjoyment.
- g. Righteousness might be a struggle for children, but is a way of life for Sons.
- h. When a baby is born, many say that the baby "looks" like the parents. This statement is made merely on physical characteristics.
- i. After that same baby becomes a young man, if trained properly, people will say that that same boy not only 'looks' like his parents, but "Acts" like them as well.
- j. So it is with children of God. They may know how to "look" like a Christian in dress and mannerisms, but they may not "Act" like a Christian when they leave the church.
- k. Sons of God "Act" like their Daddy wherever they Go!