

Be a born-again son

Consider the idea that before a man can be a father he needs to be a son. Fatherhood is transferred from fathers to sons. Unfortunately, in some situations sons don't learn very much that they need to know to be a good father.

How can we, who believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, learn to be a son to God, through redemption through Jesus Christ? How can we learn what a perfect son is, and what he is like in his relationship to his father? We can learn from the evidence of Jesus, the Son of God, and His relationship to His Heavenly Father.

Take a look at the two verses below. How is God's role as Creator similar to Adam's role as a father? Notice how bearing the image of the father is connected to the concept of being a son of a father.

¹ This is the book of the generations of Adam. When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Genesis 5:1 (ESV)

³ When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth. Genesis 5:3 (ESV)

³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God. Luke 3:38 (ESV)

Although human beings were originally created in the image of God, what happened to their capacity to be faithful in bearing God's image?

¹² Therefore, just as **sin came into the world through one man**, and death through sin, **and so death spread to all men because all sinned**—¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. ¹⁴ Yet **death reigned from Adam to Moses**, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. Romans 5:12–14 (ESV)

Take another look at Genesis 5:3. What was the condition of the "image" passed from Adam to Seth?

³⁸ the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God. Luke 3:38 (ESV)

Jesus Christ, the Son of God the Father, is called “the image of the invisible God”. What does this mean? By what power is Jesus Christ able to bring reconciliation between sinful human beings and God the Father?

¹⁵ He is the **image of the invisible God**, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and **through him to reconcile to himself all things**, whether on earth or in heaven, **making peace by the blood of his cross**. Colossians 1:15–20 (ESV)

In what other ways does Jesus Christ bear the image of God the Father?

¹ Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, **through whom also he created the world**. ³ He is **the radiance of the glory of God** and the **exact imprint of his nature**, and he **upholds the universe by the word of his power**. **After making purification** for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Hebrews 1:1–3 (ESV)

Although Jesus is in every way equal to God the Father, what is His attitude toward God the Father?

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, **though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped**, ⁷ but **emptied himself**, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And **being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross**. ⁹ Therefore **God has highly exalted him** and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:5–11 (ESV)

God’s plan for redemption, then, included a way that the damaged or corrupted image of God in sinful humanity might be restored. This was God’s plan that He had in mind before Jesus came. How does Paul explain this plan of God?

²⁹ For those whom he foreknew he also **predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son**, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. Romans 8:29 (ESV)

The image of God that was in Adam, might be called “the image of the man of dust”. Now those who are in Christ can have a new version of that image, not based on Adam, who was a sinner, but based on who?

⁴⁹ Just as we have borne **the image of the man of dust**, we shall also **bear the image of the man of heaven**. 1 Corinthians 15:49 (ESV)

Further information of what God is doing in the hearts and souls of those who believe in Christ is explained as what?

⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by **the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit**, Titus 3:5 (ESV)

When Christ returns, those who are in Christ will be transformed. What will happen?

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it **we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**, ²¹ who **will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body**, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20–21 (ESV)

² Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that **when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is**. 1 John 3:2 (ESV)

How is this possible?

¹³ **He has delivered us** from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. Colossians 1:13–14 (ESV)

⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**—Ephesians 2:4–5 (ESV)

³ **His divine power** has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, **through the knowledge of him** who called us to his own glory and excellence, ⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 2 Peter 1:3–4 (ESV)

What does Jesus have to say about His relationship with God the Father?

³⁰ I and the Father **are one**.” John 10:30 (ESV)

⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The

words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that **I am in the Father and the Father is in me**, or else believe on account of the works themselves. John 14:9–11 (ESV)

¹⁹ So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing**. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. ²¹ For **as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will**. ²² For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. John 5:19–23 (ESV)

²⁸ So Jesus said to them, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am he, and **that I do nothing on my own authority, but speak just as the Father taught me**. ²⁹ And he who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to him.” John 8:28–29 (ESV)

³⁸ For **I have come** down from heaven, not **to do** my own will but **the will of him who sent me**. John 6:38 (ESV)

²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, **and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him**. Matthew 11:27 (ESV)

⁹ **As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you**. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. John 15:9–10 (ESV)

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. **It is my Father who glorifies me**, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’

⁵⁵ But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. John 8:54–55 (ESV)

What else can we learn about the relationship of God the Father and God the Son from the life of Jesus?

What can we learn from the following verses about that fathers can learn from God how to be a good provider?

⁸ But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. 1 Timothy 5:8 (ESV)

¹⁴ Here for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours but you. For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children. 2 Corinthians 12:14 (ESV)

⁹ Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! Matthew 7:9-11 (ESV)

Here's a comprehensive list of passages that illuminate Christ's relationship with God the Father:

****Passages on Essential Unity and Equality****

Christ declares "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30) (John 10:30), expressing fundamental oneness. Jesus teaches that "whoever has seen me has seen the Father," (John 14:9-11) indicating that the Father is fully revealed through the Son (John 14:9). He explains the mutual indwelling: "I am in the Father and the Father is in me," with the Father working through Him to accomplish divine works (John 14:10). The Word existed with God and was God from the beginning (John 1:1-2) (John 1:1-2), and became flesh as "the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14) (John 1:14).

****Passages on Functional Relationship and Authority****

The Son operates in perfect dependence, doing only what He sees the Father doing, with whatever the Father does, the Son does likewise (John 5:19-23) (John 5:19-20). The Father loves the Son and reveals all His works to Him (John 5:20). The Father has delegated all judgment to the Son (John 5:22). Jesus speaks only as the Father taught Him (John 8:28-29) (John 8:28), and came not to do His own will but the will of Him who sent Him (John 6:38) (John 6:38).

****Passages on Filial Submission and Affirmation****

At His baptism, the Father's voice affirmed: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3:16-17) (Matthew 3:16-17). In Gethsemane, Jesus submitted: "Not my will, but yours, be done" (Luke 22:42) (Luke 22:42). In His high priestly prayer, Jesus asks the Father to glorify the Son so the Son may glorify the Father (John 17:1-5) (John 17:1).

Take a look at the following verses. Is there one in particular that gives you hope that you can be a better father, through Christ's new life, and the power of the Holy Spirit at work in you as a believer?

⁶ And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction." Malachi 4:6 (ESV)

²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. Ephesians 4:23-24 (ESV)

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26–27 (ESV)

¹⁰ and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator. Colossians 3:10 (ESV)