

BFF414 Sons of God

Scott Moore: Welcome to the "Building Faith Families" podcast with Steve Demme. I'm your host, Scott Moore. Thanks for joining us today. Good morning, Steve. How are you today?

Steve: Recovering. How are you?

Scott: Good. What are you recovering from this time?

Steve: I was in Virginia at HEAV last weekend. John went with me. He loves to go to conferences, and this is the only one he'll be able to travel with me this year. He's been counting the days for months. John loves to look forward to things. He's a little bit lost right now because there's nothing on the calendar. He kind of lives in the future.

We drove down on Wednesday. It was about a five-and-a-half-hour drive. Then we got up Thursday, ate breakfast, and then I spoke. He joined me for the end of it. It was a talk about having a son with Down Syndrome. That was very special and then I finished by Saturday at five o'clock. The convention hall closed. I sat for half an hour trying to get my energy up to walk to the car, and at 5:30, he and I drove home.

Scott: Wow.

Steve: We arrived a little after 10:00. I drank lots of green tea. We had a wonderful time, and he was happy. He enjoys talking to people. It a very special three days. How was your week?

Scott: It's been good. It's been fun watching Henry who's starting to walk.: It wasn't that long ago he finally figured out how to crawl and started zooming around and my daughter, his mom, was a little freaked out like, "Oh, oh, he's moving now." Then he started pulling up on stuff. Now, he's just sort of like mostly holding on and shuffling along. He's not quite walking across the room yet, but it's coming.

Steve: How old is he now?

Scott: Gosh, almost a year and a half.

Steve: Good for him.

Scott: He had his final surgery, hopefully. They had to remove some scar tissue from an old surgery and adjust some things and hopefully, he's done with surgeries now.

Steve: Praise the Lord.

Scott: It's amazing watching him.

Steve: Amen. We got in trouble the first time that Johnny had the surgery because we thought this was going to be the final one. You get your hopes all set, girding your loins, and holding your breath. However there have been several more, but God gives grace. Life is a cross-country race not a sprint. It requires endurance.

Scott: Indeed.

Steve: Today, we're going to build on what we had the other day as we were talking about what a homeschool dad looks like? As I was praying about this, God reminded me that what we're really focusing on is, what does a son of God look like? There's a passage in Romans 8 I'm going to read verses 12-17.

"So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption, as sons, by whom we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him."

Did you pick up the references there to the sons of God? There's one more, and it's in verses 18–19 of the same chapter. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God."

That puts our topic into perspective. We don't want to be sons of God simply to be sons of God, but because being sons of God impacts creation. The creation is waiting for the sons of God to step up to the plate.

Let's pray. Father, thank You for Your word. Thank You for Your Spirit. Thank You for this calling. Thank You for being our heavenly adopted dad. Thank You for doing what it takes to make us Your sons. Help us today as we consider this new topic. I pray that You'll give us ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to us and You'll give me lips to speak what You want me to speak. In Jesus' name, amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: All creation is waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. This is on the horizon, and perhaps is happening right this minute, as the sons of God are being transformed into this calling. Creation is waiting with bated breath to see these sons of God be revealed.

Romans 8:14, "All who are led by the Spirit are sons of God." I would like to consider today, what does it mean to be led by the Spirit?

We've talked a lot about the Spirit, and I hope that our minds have been transformed about the person of the Spirit and how He was so instrumental in the life of Jesus. He was the secret sauce, you might say, for Jesus being Jesus the Christ, Jesus the anointed, Jesus filled with the Spirit.

The Spirit helped Jesus. The Spirit conceived Jesus. The Spirit was with Jesus. We documented this. If we want to be sons of God, if we want to receive the Spirit of adoption, then we should expect that the same Spirit that helped Jesus be Jesus can help us be the sons of God that creation is waiting for.

This provides me some focus and zero in on my objective. I want to learn to be led by the Spirit. If that's the characteristic of what it means to be a son of God, I want to be led by the Spirit of God.

Steve: Luke 11:1–13, "Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when He had finished, one of His disciples came to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray as John taught his disciples.'

"He said to them, 'When you pray, say, 'Hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us, and lead us not into temptation.'

"And then He said to him, which of you has a friend will go to him at midnight and say to him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves for a friend of mine has arrived on a journey and I have nothing to set before him.' And he will answer from within, 'Do not bother me. The door is now shut and my children are with me in bed. I cannot get up and give you anything.'

"I tell you, though he will not get up and give him anything because he is his friend, yet because of his impudence he will rise and give him whatever he needs. And I tell you, ask and it will be given to you. Seek and you will find. Knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

"What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

I think it's really important that we understand the context off what Jesus is saying. Right after He teaches them how to pray and He then teaches them to ask.

I can't think of a stronger illustration. He basically says, "Your impudence will get you the answers. You need to keep asking until you receive. You need to keep knocking until somebody opens the door. You keep seeking until you find. And if you get answers that way, just think about your Heavenly Father who wants to give the Holy Spirit to those who ask."

This is the background. The Holy Spirit is waiting and anxious to lead us, to fill us, to come upon us, but we need to open the door. The first thing that came to my mind is almost as I was thinking and praying about the sons of God was John. We read a bunch of scripture the other day from Revelation.

John was "in the Spirit on the Lord's Day." That might be the first question is, what does it mean to be in the Spirit? I think it's pretty clear in Scripture that we have a war going on within us. We have the flesh, which is our sinful nature, our carnal self, which is there every day.

And we have our spiritual self that has been born from above. This is the part of us that's being transformed into the image of God. The part that is growing and pushing out the fleshy stuff. This is a conflict. This is something that you and I have to deal with every morning. It's an ongoing battle. I'm going to read the New Living Translation, because it gives us a little different flavor.

Galatians 5:19, "When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear, sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these.

"Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the kingdom of God." If you wonder if you're in the flesh or the spirit, it's helpful to read those verses, because it gives you a picture.

If you are prone to outbursts of anger, quarreling, you enjoy dissension, and have selfish ambition, you have a habit of getting drunk, and you're sexually immoral, then it is clear you are not in the spirit. You are living in the flesh.

Galatians 5:22, paints another picture. "The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Many years ago I looked up all the Greek words for the characteristics or fruits of the flesh, and then I looked up the words for all the characteristics of the Spirit. I boiled it down to two expressions. The flesh is out of control, the Spirit is in control.

The flesh runs rampant. It's governed by what your body naturally feels like doing. You remember that when they used to say, "If it feels good, do it"? That is the flesh. On the other hand, the Spirit says, "If it is good, do it." This is it. This is the battle. To begin our understanding of being led by the Spirit, the first place we're going to address is to be in the Spirit. The Bible speaks about sowing to the Spirit and reaping eternal life? Sowing to the flesh leads to death. How do we sow to the Spirit? I think that's a little different for everybody. For me, being in the word, and listening to the Spirit, and being connected to other believers helps me stay in the Spirit.

I want to be in the Spirit so that I can hear the Spirit as He communicates with me. We have talked at length about how the Spirit speaks. We have talked about His ability to communicate with us, but we also have to work on our ability to hear Him. It says seven times in Revelation, in the letters to the churches, found in chapters two and chapter three, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." I've had people tell me that Pentecost was not just about the tongues of fire, it was also about the miracle of the ears, because everybody who was there from different nations heard God speaking to them in their own language. Some have said, "Well, no, that was a miraculous gift of speech that He gave people."

Others have said, "It's a miraculous hearing thing." I think it's both. But for each of us, we need to figure out how to learn to hear what the Spirit is saying. Another version renders Revelation 2:7, "Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what He is saying."

Listening and hearing are essential. Stephen, in frustration while in the Spirit, told the people of Israel, "You do always resist the Holy Spirit." We don't want to have a spirit of resistance.

We want to have a spirit of humility and teachability. We want to have our ears and our hearts circumcised. We must encourage God to do a work in us so that there's a miracle that happens and we get to learn to listen to what the Spirit is saying to us. Point number one, we're committed to being in the Spirit and sowing to the Spirit.

Point number two, we're going to do a lot of asking. We're going to simply start knocking and seeking, and asking God to help us learn how to hear the Spirit, how to be led by the Spirit, how to have a miracle happen in our ears and hearts.

You remember that Samuel, as a little boy, was in the temple. He was there with Eli, and God spoke to him. Even though he heard a voice, he didn't know who was speaking, he didn't know what was being said.

He had to go back to God and say, at Eli's direction, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." There was some work that he had to do on his part. He had to ask God. I'm going to stop and pray right now, and then we can discuss this some more.

Father, we're going to do what that impudent friend did. We're going to start asking, and we're going to start seeking, and we're going to start knocking, and we're going to ask You to help us to learn how to sow to the Spirit. Help us to feed the Spirit, help us to be in the Spirit. Then I pray that you will circumcise our ears and our hearts to learn how to hear and understand what the Spirit is saying to us.

I pray this so that we can be, not just earnest believers, but sons of God, the very sons of God who, when they are revealed, satisfy something in creation, because creation is groaning, waiting for these sons of God to be revealed. If a characteristic of a son of God is being led by the Spirit, then we want to be in that team.

We want to be in that group. We want to be a part of that company of believers who are not satisfied with just living day to day, doing the best we can. We want to be those who are led by the Spirit, and thus the sons of God that are being revealed. Help us to that end, I pray. Help us in Jesus' name. Help us.

I pray You'll put something in our hearts and everybody that's listening here. Put something in there that is absolutely dissatisfied with just the status quo. Help us to have a desire and a, overused word, but a passion. Help us to have something deep in our hearts that was going to keep asking and keep knocking, and keep seeking until You teach us how to be led by the Spirit and how to hear the Spirit. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Scott: Amen.

Steve: What do you think, so far?

Scott: If I had to boil it down, it sounds like ask, listen, repent, maybe, because you're going to screw up probably and be quick to get back on the right track. That's how I would boil it down at this point. Ask for the Spirit, listen to the Spirit, and be quick to repent when you find out if you're off base.

Steve: There's a key piece in my own Christian journey that changed when I finally realized that God had my back. That's one way to put it. When I found out that God likes me for who I am, that He designed me to be who I am, that He really likes me. It made me want to get to know Him more. It made me want to get close to Him. It made me want to be led by Him. It made me hungry for God. You might say that I was content to be at arm's length with God until that breakthrough occurred.

That's what I am hoping that we'll all have, a breakthrough in our understanding of grace, that we'll understand that because of what Jesus has done, He is the propitiation for our sins. That is a great word.

Steve: I keep thinking about propitiation, which communicates two truths. It satisfies the wrath of God, and it restores us to a relationship with God. Propitiation does both. It takes care of the penalty of our sin, which is death, but it also restores us to that blessed fellowship in the garden that Adam shared with God Himself.

Knowing that God really did everything we needed to have done to restore us to that kind of intimate relationship where God and Adam communicated, and God was able to just talk to Adam and have fellowship with him, and Adam was able to hear God and have fellowship with Him, that's what Jesus came to do, restore that Edenic relationship.

Once I got that, that God really enjoyed spending time with Adam, and that God is so hungry for us to be in that same relationship with Him that Adam was with Him, once you see that this is what God yearns to do, and that He really likes us, and He's really likable, then it makes us want more of Him, want more of His Spirit, and want to be taught and led by His Spirit.

I don't know where we all are on this spectrum, if you want to put it that way, but I pray that God will give us a hunger and thirst for God's Spirit. A hunger and a thirst that will not be quenched or assuaged by anything fake, but we will just keep holding on to God until we get what He wants us to have as sons of God. Amen.

Scott: Amen. That's our show for this week, folks. Thanks for joining us for the Building Faith Families podcast with Steve Demme. If you have a question for the show, email Steve at spdemme@gmail.com. If you have a question for me, you can reach me at scott@unsocializedmedia.com. Thanks for joining us. Have a great week.