

Module : Firstborn Sonship
Session 2 : Firstborn Identity in Christ
Focus : We Are What Christ Is



This session continues directly on from the previous one. I encourage you to review session 1 before proceeding.

WE, FIRSTBORN SONS, ARE JOINT HEIRS WITH CHRIST, ARE HEIRS OF THE FATHER

Rom. 8:16,17 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him

By our Father's great grace, He had made us, His sons, His heirs in exactly the same degree as His Son, Jesus Christ. We are not just His heirs; we are 'JOINT-HEIRS' with His Son. This is not simply the understanding of me being just another one of many of His sons, all of whom have some inheritance in God. A joint-heir with Christ implies that my inheritance in God is in Christ, His Son, and I am a joint-heir together with HIM. All Christ has access to is also given to me.

Rom 8:17a If we are God's children, we will get the blessings God has for His people. **He will give us all that He has given Christ.** But we must suffer like Christ suffered. Then we will be able to share His glory. (ERV)

This truth has got to become a clearly understood fact in my heart and mind, a firm conviction, and a living reality. The sheer privilege of this is monumental, staggering, mind boggling and deeply humbling. It causes us to respond with sincere gratitude to our Father.

The reference to 'Christ' here is Christ, the SON. He, Christ the Son, is an heir of the Father. We too are sons of God and heirs of God also. Apostle Thamo Naidoo simply, yet profoundly elaborates on this important truth as follows: *"The term 'OF' in the phrase 'son OF God' denotes that the son is literally 'OF' God, i.e. the son is constituted exactly as the Father is – the son is made up of the same constituent elements as the Father is. We as God's sons, have the fullness of the nature of Father God within us. Not only is this true, but further, all the Father is and has He wants to give to all of His sons. We are sons of the Father AND thus we are heirs of the Father."*

We, partakers of His nature then are joint heirs together with Christ Jesus. Whatever Christ, the Son, is privy to and an heir of, so are we. The Father has chosen to engraft us, the corporate firstborn son, together with His SON to be His heirs. We have no inheritance outside of our joint-inheritance with Christ. The deep purpose of Christ is to bring us into all that He is and has access to.

Heb. 2:10a For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory.

The subject of Birthright and Inheritance will be more fully addressed in our next session and illustrated through this series in literally every other subsequent session. We only have access to all Christ has access to because we are what He is, viz. firstborn sons.

WE ARE ALL THAT CHRIST IS

Christ is God's Firstborn Son. We are God's sons too and by virtue of our joint-inheritance with Christ we, corporately, are God's Firstborn Son. The church is described as the church of the firstborn (Heb.12:22). Here below are some Scriptures highlighting the fact all that Christ the Son is, we are – in Him.

❖ AS CHRIST IS, SO ARE WE IN THIS WORLD

1 John 4:17 By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as **He is**, so also **are we** in **this world**.

We are as HE is IN THIS WORLD – i.e. here and now upon the earth and not in some future life.

N.B. : CHRIST APPEARS IN THE WORD :

This process of being AS HE IS, obviously is progressive and one, which occurs by us SEEING Christ. Christ is constantly appearing to us through His Word. GRACE, the divine endowment of the nature of God given to us to configure our identity in Him and to empower our service for Him, is imparted at every 'revelation' or appearing of Christ to you (1 Pet. 1:13: "...the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."). Every revelation of Christ produces grace in the one to whom and in whom the revelation occurs. GRACE is imparted primarily through the Word of God. (**John 1:1,14-17; Acts 20:32; 4:13; Psalm 45:2; Prov. 1:8,9; Luke 4:22; Col 4:5,6; Eph. 4:29**). The Word of God reveals the Christ of the Word to the son of God so that he would become like Christ, the Word made flesh.

In Sessions 1,2 and 4 of the series 'The Primacy of the Word', I demonstrated how that Christ appears to us in and through the Scriptures. I encourage you to rehearse this principle as explained in these sessions as it is crucial for understanding the scriptures cited ahead in this study. Brief allusion to this principle is made here.

For Christ to increase **IN us**, He must be revealed **TO us**. The Word of God is the primary means by which HE has chosen to disclose Himself to us. It is through His Word that He has made us to be '**partakers of Divine Nature**'. So then, as we continue our study on Firstborn Sonship, our methodology would be to lead Christ, the Firstborn Son, out from the entirety of Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments. Attaining and imbibing the reality of the firstborn is not going to happen any other way except by the WORD of TRUTH.

James 1:18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the WORD OF TRUTH, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures

2 Peter 1:2-4

- 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you **in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord**;
 1 seeing that **His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness**,
 through the true knowledge of Him who **called us by His own glory and excellence**.
 2 For **by these** He has granted to us **His precious and magnificent promises**, so that **BY THEM**
 you may become **partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the
 world by lust.

Through our hearing, study, meditation and obedience to God's Word, we become shareholders or partakers of God's divine nature. You can only be a recipient of God's nature through the Word of God forming Christ within you.

❖ **HE APPEARS; WE SEE HIM; WE ARE LIKE HIM**

1 John 3:1-3

- 3 See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God;
 and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.
 4 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know
 that when He appears, **we will be like Him**, because **we will see Him just as He is**.

This scripture need not apply to the time when we literally see Christ at His second coming. Christ is always appearing to us through His Word. The principle to note is a process of transformation that is alluded to here, viz. we will be like Him because we see Him as He is. Our transformation into all He is contingent upon our sight of Him. More and more, the Spirit is bringing illumination to us concerning Christ, the Son, particularly His Firstborn identity. As we see this, we become this. To become it, you have to see it. Sight (revelation) God is the prerequisite for transformation in the son of God.

❖ **WHEN HE IS REVEALED, WE ARE REVEALED WITH HIM**

Col. 3:1-4

- 1 Therefore if you have been **raised up with Christ**, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is,
 seated at the **right hand of God**.
 2 **Set your mind** on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
 3 For you **have died** and your **life is hidden with Christ in God**.
 4 When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then **you also will be revealed with Him** in glory.
- We do not seek the things on the earth – i.e. we do not allow our identity and mindsets to be shaped or influenced by an earth-based perception or perspective of who we are.
 - We seek the things above by thinking on the things above.
 - This thinking becomes our dominant mentality or view regarding these things. We set our minds on this.

- This then shapes our identity – for as we think – so are we.
- My life is **HIDDEN WITH** Christ in God. The entirety of my life is **WITH Christ** or **akin to Christ**. 'With' = 'sun' (pronounced 'soon') = denotes 'UNION'.
- When He is revealed in glory (divine nature and essence) – I am revealed with Him in the same glory – for He is my life. I then become the revelation of Christ to the world.
- Christ is revealed through His Word. So every exposure or unveiling of Himself to me – is an opportunity for me to be transformed into that same image and nature.
- This requires that I DIE – I die to self, my own identity and to a false identity, or one that is less than God's determination and expectation for me.
- My mind must be SET upon my life and identity in CHRIST. It demands a renovation of my mind.

❖ BEHOLDING, WE ARE CHANGED

Revelation is necessary for **representation**. You must have a revelation of that aspect of the nature or function of Christ in which you seek to accurately represent Him.

As you SEE Him, you are transformed from glory to glory according to that which you SEE.

2 Cor. 3:18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit

No sight of Him	= no transformation into His image	= aborted representation.
Poor sight	= incomplete transformation	= distorted representation.
Full progressive sight	= substantial transformation	= effortless but authoritative representation

❖ CHRIST IS THE FIRSTBORN IN US

Rom 8:28,29 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren.

We are "called according to His purpose" (V.28). This purpose is that we would be His sons who exactly represent Him in the world. God causes all things to work together for the good to the end or goal that those things are facilitating the development of maturity within our sonship.

- ✓ God is conforming us into the image of His Son.

Conformed = summorphos = jointly formed, similar fashioned like unto; having the same form as another.

Image = eikon = statue, profile, representation, resemblance, figure, likeness

- ✓ Our image must be reflective of HIS son, not anything else.

Son = **Huios** = Mature son

- ✓ The issue is allowing Him to BECOME in us. We are not so much striving to be what He is like – it is a matter of Him becoming all He is within us. The word ‘among’ should be rendered ‘IN’ – it’s the Greek word ‘en’.
- ✓ He is Firstborn in US – in MANY BRETHREN – the firstborn reality is a corporate one.

Brethren = **adelphetos** = from the collative ‘*a*’, denoting **unity**, and ***delphús***, **a womb**. Thus this word refers to ‘brothers’, i.e. those who emit from the same womb, and thus with the same nature. Christ is not ashamed to call us ‘brethren’. Everything He is, He wants us to be.

Heb. 2:11-12: For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, saying, “I will proclaim Your name to MY brethren, IN the midst of the congregation I will sing Your praise.”

Adelphós (brother) generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family. Both Christ and we are from one Father – from one womb. We are sons OF God, the Father. His nature is ours. Christ is not only our God and Saviour, but also our senior brother in the family of God. He identifies fully with us, for all He is, is what He desires to bring us into.

Both Christ Jesus and US emit from the same womb, viz. the womb of the Father (see Heb. 2:11), and therefore like HE, we too have the capacity to showcase the Father to the world.

John 1:18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, **which is in the bosom of the Father**, he hath declared him (kjv)

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, **He has explained Him** (nasb)

Your inheritance as firstborn son is God, the Father Himself (Rom 8:16,17). As His son, you may reveal Him to the world, since you come out from Him (in Christ). This is so because you have ‘seen’ Him in and through His Word. Actually, He, Christ Jesus, the pre-existent Firstborn Son, has elected to reveal His Father to you, because you are His ‘brother’ having the same constitution as Himself and thus also the Father’s firstborn son too. This marvelous reality is reflected in the following verse:

Matt. 11:27 All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father; nor does **anyone know the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.**

Not only does the eternal Son, Christ Jesus reveal the Father to us, but we too, like Him, can then disclose the Father to men on earth.

This process requires a love for God evidenced by obedience to His Word. The Father loves he who obeys the Word, and the Son together with the Father will come to him to make him their permanent dwelling place.

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, “ If anyone **loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him**

The firstborn principle is to be a corporate reality and expression, for this Christ wants to BECOME in many brethren. Ultimately, Christ wants to be the firstborn within each of God’s sons. Israel as nation was designated as God’s firstborn son – thus alluding to the corporate character of the firstborn son. God only has one son – a corporate son in the earth.

The family of God is the family of firstborn sons. All mature sons are firstborn sons – the entirety of the group. Every individual son is to understand his firstborn status in God.

❖ **WE ARE CHOSEN IN CHRIST**

Eph. 1:3,4a Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as **He chose us IN HIM before the foundation of the world.**

Acts 17:28-30 (KJV)

- 28 For **in him** we **live**, and **move**, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.
- 28 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not **to think that the Godhead** is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.
- 29 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent

WE ARE THE CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN

Israel as a collective was described as the firstborn son of God.

Exodus 4:22,23

- 22 Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord, “**Israel is My son, My firstborn.**
- 23 So I said to you, ‘Let My son go that he may serve Me’; but you have refused to let him go. Behold, I will kill your son, your firstborn.

The term ‘Firstborn’ has a plurality inherent within it. Thus a whole nation is called ‘firstborn’. The concept is always corporate and not singular.

Israel was the church in the wilderness – a shadow of the New Testament Church, which is called the

CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN.

Acts 7:38 This is he, that was in the **church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us

Heb. 12:22,23 But you have come to **Mount Zion** and to the **city of the living God**, the **heavenly Jerusalem**, and to **myriads of angels**, to the **general assembly** and **church of the firstborn** who are **enrolled in heaven**, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect

- ✓ **Zion** depicts a perfected and mature church.
- ✓ **City alludes to the city church – a corporate reality** – not local church. Firstborn principles must apply individually as well as corporately.
- ✓ **The Heavenly Jerusalem – is a descending reality** – coming down from heaven – born out from time into time. This is the Bride, the church of God.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he will not go out from it anymore; and I will write on him **the name of My God**, and **the name of the city of My God**, the **new Jerusalem**, which comes down out of heaven from My God, **and My new name**.

Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready **as a bride** adorned for her husband

- ✓ **Myriads of angels** refer to angelic beings, but also and symbolically to ‘sent-ones’ – authentic apostolic fathers. We will see an increase in angelic activity in our present day. Angels are ministering spirits to minister to those who are heirs of salvation.
- ✓ The term **‘firstborn’** here references the entire Church made of many sons of God. All are firstborn sons, but when God references the entirety of His many-membered Body, He uses the singular term ‘Firstborn Son’ to allude to many. He only has one son in the earth – and you and I are a part of it.

The description of the church as the **Church of the Firstborn** is a powerfully succinct one, which encapsulates and includes the varied and multi-faceted characteristics of Deity. The principle of ‘SON’ is the most comprehensive revelation of God to earth. In the Old Covenant God would reveal Himself in different ways to different individuals. He would give disclosure to facets of His nature to various people at different stages in human history, e.g. to Abraham, God revealed Himself as Jehovah Jireh (The Lord is Provision); to Gideon as Jehovah Shalom (The Lord is Peace); etc.

But all these are redemptive names in that they are attributable, as they accentuate a specific component or ability with God – and these were necessary for the individuals to which they were revealed in order for them to become that revelation - so as to efficiently execute the will of God for their time or circumstance.

The most comprehensive name (nature) of God is FATHER. By His own choice, He has elected to showcase this quintessential nature of father only in and through the medium of 'SON'. Recall Jesus said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." Christ the Firstborn Son is the Head of His Body, the Church of the Firstborn. We are encouraged to GROW INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS. Whatever He is, we are.

Eph. 4:15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to **GROW UP in ALL ASPECTS into HIM** who is the **HEAD**, even **CHRIST**.

Jesus took on human form and fully experienced humanity, being tempted in all points as a man, yet without sin, and was subject to every possible human emotion (Heb. 4:15). HE, the 'Son of God', became the 'son of man, so that we, the 'sons of men' could become the 'sons of God'. He fully experienced us, and now He desires for us to fully experience Him. He knows us completely, and now He desires for us to know HIM entirely. God chose us IN Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph.1:3,4). We are IN CHRIST – and thus are new creations in Him (2 Cor. 5:17). But He also desires to be fully formed in us. He has enveloped us within Himself, and now He desires to be fully matured in each of us.

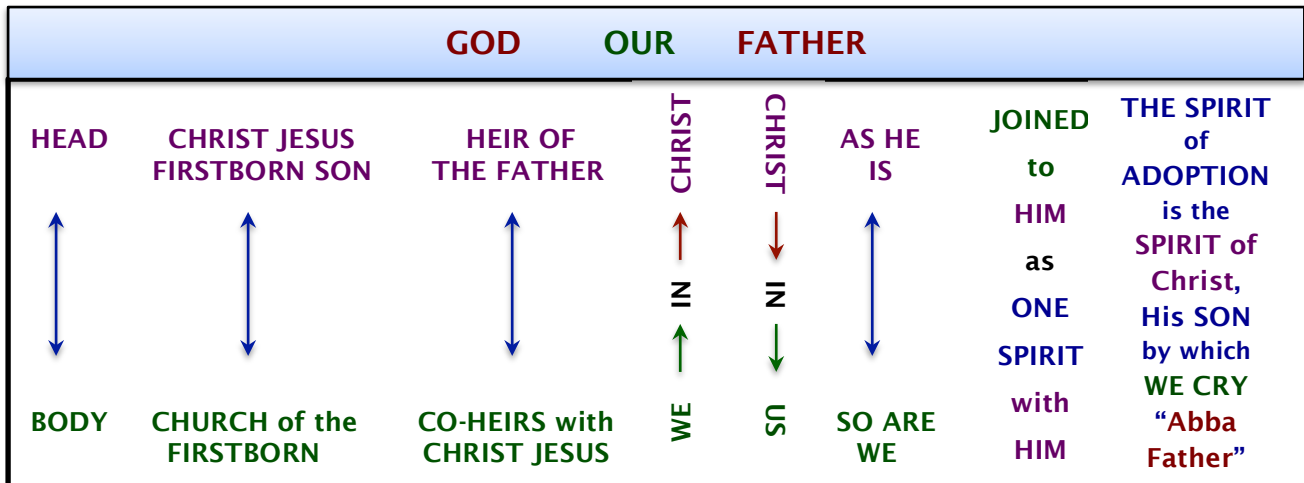
Prayerfully Meditate on These Statements Below.

With Authoritative Apostolic Assertion, Decree the following Aloud & Affirm It as Your Reality.

I BELIEVE; I THINK ; I SAY; I AM GOD'S FIRSTBORN SON IN CHRIST!

- ✎ Christ is being fully formed in me. (Gal.4:19)
- ✎ He must INCREASE and I must decrease. (John 3:30)
- ✎ He wants to manifest in me as the Firstborn Son. (Rom. 8:29)
- ✎ His nature becomes mine. I must grow up into Him. (Eph. 4:15)
- ✎ I must grow up into that dimension in which He is being formed in me, viz. firstborn sonship.
- ✎ My life is hid with God in Christ. (Col.3:3)
- ✎ In Him I live and move and have my BEING. (Acts 17:28)
- ✎ I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ lives in me. (Gal.2:20)
- ✎ The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God. (Gal.2:20)
- ✎ I set my thinking on where I am seated with Christ 'above' (Col. 3:1-4)
- ✎ The more I see Christ manifest in His Word – the more I become like Him. (2 Cor. 3:18)
- ✎ Every time Christ is revealed from the Word, I will be revealed together with Him. (Col. 3:1-4)
- ✎ Christ is in me coming to full formation as the Firstborn. (Rom. 8:29)
- ✎ I am in Christ growing up into Him in all things. (Eph. 4:15)
- ✎ Christ and I are indivisibly one.
- ✎ As He is, so I am in this world. (1 John 4:17)

- ✎ I am a joint-heir, a co-heir, a fellow-heir with Christ. (Rom. 8:17)
- ✎ The Holy Spirit in me is the Spirit of Adoption. (Rom. 8:15)
- ✎ The Holy Spirit in me is the Spirit of Christ. (Rom. 8:9)
- ✎ The Holy Spirit in me is the Spirit of the Son. (Gal. 4:6)
- ✎ Because I am joined to the Lord, I am one Spirit with Him. (1 Cor.6:17)
- ✎ As He envelops all of who I am, I become all of who He is - FIRSTBORN SON!
- ✎ I believe it; I think it; I declare it; I decree it; I experience it; I am ALL Christ is.
- ✎ I am God's Firstborn Son!



FIRSTBORN SONSHIP IDENTITY IS DERIVED FROM RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AS FATHER

Our identity as firstborn sons has inherent within it, the capacity to access the fullest revelation of God as Father. In 'Father', we have, see, experience and enjoy all the full array of all the multi-dimensional and infinite wealth locked up with His nature. So when you say, "I belong to God's Church of the Firstborn", you are asserting your identity as His Son, His firstborn son and proclaiming, "God is my

Father, who becomes all things to me in every situation and at all times.” As this sense of identity is consolidated, capacity to fulfill our responsibility to represent Him and execute His will grows.

We are translated from the domain of darkness into the **kingdom of His SON**, who is the visible representation of His Father, and also the firstborn of all creation (a term denoting pre-eminence over all things).

Col. 3:13-15 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the **image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.**

The kingdom is described as the Kingdom of HIS SON. The character of HIS SON, which must be ours, must be the predominant defining character of the Kingdom of God. As such, the firstborn has a position of pre-eminence over all created things in order to both represent God and steward/manage His purposes.

As Firstborn sons we have an inheritance, which is God Himself as our Father. He will not only take care of us, but will resource us sufficiently to live a full and abundant life that is to be enjoyed. But above all this, our greatest joy in our inheritance would be to represent Him in the world and steward HIS purposes and intent to the entirety of creation. We present Him to the world in which we live. **‘When we accurately represent Him, we actually re-present Him’** (Bill Johnson). To stand on His behalf as His firstborn representation is a great and awesome privilege.

Take a moment to express your sincere thanks to God for giving you such a privileged place in HIM. You are not saved from hell to go to heaven. He saved you to restore the image of His Son in you as the firstborn, so that all that HIS SON is and has, you too could be and have. You are an heir of the Father, and a joint heir with His Son.

Firstborn Sons, ARISE! May Great Grace and Peace be yours.

Acknowledgement and Gratitude: I am hugely indebted and eternally grateful to Apostle Thamo Naidoo and Prophet Shaun Blignaut for providing spiritual keys granting access and penetrative insight into the firstborn sonship reality. Most of what we shall explore in this current series will essentially be an amplification of truth these men of God have imparted to me concerning this subject. I encourage you to listen to the six audio teaching sessions of Thamo Naidoo’s series on the Firstborn Son, as well as to the three sessions of Shaun Blignaut’s on the same subject. [These are available at www.thamonaiddoo.com; click on these specified links to go there directly <http://thamonaiddoo.com/gate-ministries/sunday-messages-from-2014>; <http://thamonaiddoo.com/resources/october-2013-asom>]

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