

Module : Firstborn Sonship

Session 3 : Inheritance of the Primogeniture – Part 1

Focus : Heirs of a Sonship Identity; Heirs of the Father



Word to the World
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Birthright of the firstborn is observed in many cultures worldwide. It is particularly strong in Hebraic or Jewish culture. The term '**primogeniture**' refers to the state of being the firstborn or eldest son of the children of the same parents, and as such has access to an exclusive **right of inheritance**. The '**right of the firstborn**' is called '**birthright**'. The concept of **birthright** alludes to the **privileges and expectations** of the **primogeniture**. The primogeniture, the firstborn son, had a birthright which afforded him specific **status and privilege**. There were benefits and responsibilities/expectations attendant with firstborn son status and both aspects had to be embraced. This birthright demanded of him to conduct himself according to the **nature and profile** attendant with firstborn son. He was to exhibit a **lifestyle and behaviour** commensurate with this identity, so that he would be able to **execute very specific responsibilities** in reference to the mandate of his deceased father. He was to ensure the integrity, purity and perpetuation of Divine purpose in his generation, and transfer the same to the generations coming after him. The 'Firstborn' position was both a position of **honour and accountability** and thus demanded **dignity and discipline** in the primogeniture.

Birthright privilege and expectation can be broadly outlined as follows:

- ✓ A **Fatherly or Patriarchal Blessing** invoked through a **prophetic verbal utterance**.
- ✓ A **Double Portion of his Father's Estate**, i.e. he received twice as much as any other son.
- ✓ **Headship of the Family** in that he inherited judicial authority of his father; and had to also ensure the welfare of the other siblings.
- ✓ In some instances he succeeded to the **official dignities and rights of his father**.
- ✓ The **Power of Representation** in that in his singularity, he inherently embraced a corporeity.
- ✓ Functions relative to the '**Priesthood**' are evidenced in the symbolic application of firstborn.

These and their contemporary spiritual application will be addressed in later sessions. Jesus Christ, the Firstborn Son of God the Father, fulfilled all of the above and so must we, since we are joint-heirs with Him. In this session, we focus specifically on the notion of **HERITAGE OF THE FIRSTBORN** – or – **THE INHERITANCE** given. Isaac was a firstborn son to Jacob, and as such received a patriarchal blessing which included **prosperity and dominion** (**Gen. 27:27,28**). These are also part of our inheritance of God's firstborn sons, but let us give attention to some of the areas of our spiritual inheritance as recorded in Scripture. As we consider these, bear in mind that the primary thought embedded within inheritance is stewardship and not primarily ownership.

WHAT ARE WE HEIRS OF? **HEIR = kleronomos**. This Greek word is comprised of '**kleros**' = **lot**, and '**nemo**' = to hold in one's power and to distribute. Hence, kleronomos = **an inheritance divided by lot**. Whilst this 'lot' or 'share' is given to you, inherent within the notion of 'heir' is the responsibility to 'distribute' or 'parcel' out. This inheritance, whilst when it is received and exists in the heir, it is to be stewarded by the dispensing of grace for the benefit of others; it is never self-indulgent to the neglect of others.

The Scriptures Highlight the Following as Part of our Inheritance in Christ:

- We are heirs of a Sonship Identity
- We are heirs of God, the Father
- We are heirs of Salvation
- We are heirs of Eternal Life
- We are heirs of Immortality
- We are heirs of the Kingdom of God
- We are heirs of the Abrahamic Promise
- We are heirs of the 'Blessing'
- We are heirs of the World
- We are heirs of the Earth
- We are heirs of the Nations
- We are heirs of All Things

Let us give brief attention to each of these. We discuss the first two in this session and the rest in session four.

1. WE ARE HEIRS OF AN IDENTITY – A NAME CALLED 'SON' – 'FIRSTBORN SON'

Our total inheritance – with all that it entails as reflected in the various points above, is only possible because of Christ Jesus, our Lord. We have a JOINT-INHERITANCE WITH Him – apart from Him, we have nothing. He is Firstborn; so are we. He is the Firstborn Son coming into full formation within us. Our firstborn sonship identity and status is in Christ.

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

I want to quote something from session 2. 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 He has access to is also given to me.
{From Session 2: Firstborn Identity in Christ; page 1}

Like the Christ Jesus, the FIRSTBORN SON, we too have inherited a **MORE EXCELLENT NAME**:

Heb. 1:1-6

- 1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
- 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.
- 3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,
- 4 having become as much better than the angels, as He has inherited a more excellent name than they.
- 5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, "You are MY Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again, "I will be A Father to Him And HE shall be A Son to ME"?
- 6 And when He again brings THE FIRSTBORN into the world, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him.

The 'name' denotes character, essence or being; and also alludes to destiny and calling. Christ has inherited a name. His name is SON; more specifically, **'FIRSTBORN SON'**. This name is described as **'more excellent'** (verses 4 & 6).

'Excellent' = diaphoros = surpassing, different, better, superior

By its Hebrew counterpart, **'saliys'**, 'excellent' literally means 'three' or 'third part', or 'a triangle' - thus implying **'threefold things'** (See Prov.22:20). The number 'three' has tremendous spiritual significance. 'Three' indicates that which is **solid, real, substantial, complete and entire**.

The name, SON is real, solid and substantial. He whose identity as a son is firmly established will not be easily unseated in his thinking. He will exhibit a confidence concerning who he is in Christ.

The name 'SON' has a threefold dimension inherent within it. The principle of 'Christ', in an earth-based context, can only be expressed through the medium of 'Son'. Peter said of Jesus, "You are THE Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). Sonship is the only vehicle that has the capacity to reflect CHRIST in the earth. In the principle or construct of 'Christ', the fullness of the deity, i.e. Father, Son and Spirit, can dwell and be expressed in bodily form (in a human being).

Col. 2:9 For in Him (i.e. Christ) all the **fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form** (Read also Col. 1:15-20)

So then the term or name 'Son' fully expresses all of Christ, which contains Father, Son and Spirit (a three-fold, yet one reality).

The name 'SON' is attributed to Christ, but also to us. This is our identity. It is the greatest expression of inheritance, for it grants us an inheritance OF or IN God, our FATHER.

2. We ARE HEIRS OF GOD THE FATHER

The tribe of Levi was a representation of the firstborn principle. Firstborn males were supposed to have been offered to the Lord in service of Him. This was later changed. Instead, the entire tribe of Levi would now represent the whole nation of Israel as God's firstborn son. When God sees the Levites, He sees the whole nation of Israel.

Numbers 3:11-12

- 11 Again the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Now, behold, I have taken the **Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the first issue of the womb** among the sons of Israel. **So the Levites shall be Mine.**
- 12 For all the firstborn **are Mine**; on the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the firstborn in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine; I am the Lord.

The Levites as a priestly tribe warrant our careful study for they embody important principles attendant with firstborn sonship – this we will do in later sessions. They were allotted no land in Canaan like the other eleven tribes. God said this was so because **HE HIMSELF would be their portion and inheritance.**

They did not own any land, but literally possessed God Himself (The name Levi means ‘attached’ or ‘connected to God’).

Numbers 18:20-32

- 20 Then the Lord said to Aaron, “You shall have **no inheritance** in their land nor own any portion among them; **I AM YOUR PORTION AND YOUR INHERITANCE** among the sons of Israel.
- 21 “To the **sons of Levi**, behold, I have given **all the tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service** which they perform, the service of **the tent of meeting**. (See also verses 22-24)

When God is your inheritance, everything around you will be designed to sustain you more than adequately (as in the case of the Levites who were sustained by economic principles of first fruits, tithes and offerings). If your Heavenly Father owns everything then you, as His firstborn son, has access to administrate all things on His behalf. Do not chase things, rather chase after God, your inheritance, and then all things will be redirected to serve His purpose in you.

Psalms 16:5-9

- 5 **The LORD is the PORTION of my INHERITANCE and my CUP; You support my LOT.**
- 6 **The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my HERITAGE is beautiful to me.**
- 7 I will bless the Lord who has counseled me; Indeed, my mind instructs me in the night.
- 8 **I have set the Lord continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.**
- 9 Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will dwell securely.

In **Rom 8:16,17**, quoted on page 2, ‘God’ referred to here is God, the Father. We are heirs of God, the Father. Sons are chosen and designed to manifest and showcase their fathers. The principle of fathering finds its total and fullest expression in and through the medium of ‘SON’. **Thus the ultimate end of our sonship in God is to imbibe and exhibit the entirety of His Fathering nature, character, disposition and function. This is our inheritance and privilege.**

Read **Heb. 1:1-6** again. The writer of the book of Hebrews tells us that the SON (which includes you and I) is **heir of all things** (v.2) by **virtue of the fact of his inheritance of a more excellent name** (v.4). All things are given to Him – to His identity as a Son, and later the writer stresses, ‘Firstborn Son’ (v.6).

Sandwiched in the midst of all of this **is an expression of endearment denoting an intimate relationship** between Father and Son in verse 5.

Heb. 1:5 For to which of the angels did He ever say, “**You are MY Son, Today I have begotten You**”? And again, “**I will be a Father to Him And He shall be A Son to Me**”?

The revelation of God as your Father will be the factor that is going to activate your sonship in Christ. Jesus Christ, the firstborn son of God, had a pure and intimate relationship with His Father. This is evidenced throughout the four Gospel writings. As His firstborn sons, we too are to be intimate with our Father. As we grow in our awareness of the intimacy of the relationship that we as sons have with our Father, so too will there be a ‘coming’ to full maturation of the reality of the firstborn sonship expression in our lives. **Intimacy is nothing we can work for or seek to enhance – it is simply a**

reality that we must be conscious of. Intimacy must be maintained through active relationship with God.

The reality of **God as FATHER**, who has **given us all things** that pertain to life and godliness in the knowledge of Christ (2 Pet. 1:3), must grow stronger and stronger within us. You are already intimate with Him. He calls us His son, His firstborn son. Intimacy with God the Father is a state of mind and is not dependent on works of service. **It is from the realm of intimacy with the Father that identity as His firstborn sons is entrenched and solidified.** You cannot talk about being A FIRSTBORN SON without being conscious of and referencing it within the context of an intimate and dependant relationship with FATHER GOD.

Jer. 31:9b "... I will make them walk by streams of waters, On a straight path in which they will not stumble; **For I am a FATHER to Israel, and Ephraim is My FIRSTBORN.**"

Psalm 89:20-27

"I have found **David My servant**; With My holy oil I have anointed him, With whom My hand will be established; My arm also will strengthen him. "The enemy will not deceive him, Nor the son of wickedness afflict him. "But I shall crush his adversaries before him, And strike those who hate him. "My faithfulness and My lovingkindness will be with him, **And in My name** his horn will be exalted. "I shall also set his hand on the sea And his right hand on the rivers. **"He will cry to Me, 'YOU ARE MY FATHER, My God, and the rock of my salvation.** ' "I also shall **MAKE** him **MY FIRSTBORN**, The highest of the kings of the earth.

The name of God in this context is 'Father'. In this name, David, the firstborn son, exists and draws his identity. He calls this name to his God – '**You are my Father**', and then it says, he is **made** the firstborn. The firstborn son issues forth from his intimate relationship with the Father. Something is 'MADE' or issues out from the realm called 'Father'. Sonship identity emits from a cry for fathering. Amidst a cry for 'FATHER' is the MAKING of the Firstborn Son. By His Spirit, we cry "Abba Father!" Within this cry is the growing maturation of a sonship identity that is 'made' (constituted/set/placed) by the Father.

Make = nathan = to give, to place; something literally placed for function; to constitute.

The firstborn son in a sense is 'MADE', i.e. established and specifically constituted. Interestingly, the same Hebrew word is used when God said He would MAKE Abraham a Father of many nations.

Gen. 17:5 "No longer shall your name be called Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have **made** you the father of a multitude of nations.

When Paul quoted this verse in Rom 4:17, he used a Greek term 'tithemi' for 'make', and this is equivalent in meaning to the Hebrew, nathan, but with the added idea of '**setting something down as a foundation**'.

Fathering and sonship are foundational – they are the bedrock – the substructure to all of God's vast purposes.

The fact that you and I are God's firstborn son in Christ must become a solid foundation in the mind, for on this 'placing', 'setting' and 'constitution', will be built a capacity to both launch forth and uphold God's glory and will. On the forehead (mentality and thinking) of the son is the name 'Father'.

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty- four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

The 144 000 is a symbolic number, referencing sons of God, an apostolic community, who embody the nature of the Lamb. They stand with the Lamb, and have the name of 'FATHER' on their forehead. Forehead alludes to a mentality – a mindset. Thus God as Father must be predominant in my thinking – for this will cause to emerge within me my rights and privileges as His son, His firstborn son.

Whilst baptising at the Jordan, when John saw Jesus, the SON OF GOD, he identified Him not by that title, but by the title 'LAMB OF GOD'. The firstborn spotless male lamb was slain at the first Passover when Israel, God's firstborn son, exited Egypt. The lamb as a type, embodies firstborn sonship (to be explored later in this series). Incidentally, the name of the Lamb is the '**Word of God**' (**Rev. 19:13**). Again it's a reminder, that only through the revelation of Himself through the Word of God will the nature of the Son as Lamb be imparted to us. Through the Word we access our inheritance!

Acts 20:32 And now I commend you to God and to the WORD OF HIS GRACE, which is able to build you up and to give you the INHERITANCE among all those who are sanctified

As our minds become saturated with the fact that we are firstborn sons, it too will result in greater levels of intimacy with the Father.

Out of all the disciples, John had the most intimate relationship with Jesus. This is shown in how he constantly rested his head on Jesus' bosom. We, through Christ, can find ourselves in this kind of intimate position with the Father. We reach this place by walking in our identity as Firstborn sons:

John 1:18 *"No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him."*

We are in Christ and He is in us. He, as the Firstborn Son, is in the bosom of the Father. Therefore, when we walk in our identity as Firstborn sons, we come to the position of "being in the bosom of the Father" - a place of greater intimacy. Maturity in identity = Growth in Intimacy.

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JOHN 1:18 No man has ever seen at any time; the only unique Son, or the only begotten God, Who is in the bosom [in the intimate presence] of the Father, He has declared Him [He has revealed Him and brought Him out where he can be seen; He has interpreted Him and He has made Him known] (**Amplified Bible**)

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.

IMPORTANT:

Our inheritance is God our Father, by virtue of our position as His firstborn sons in Christ Jesus. We have an inheritance of an identity contained in the name 'SON', giving us access to and an inheritance in the fullness of all that our Heavenly Father is and desires. This thought is expressed in the two points raised in this study thus far. The rest of the various aspects of our spiritual inheritance really are varied expressions of the fundamental truth that God our Father is our absolute inheritance through Christ. Our focus in our next session (4) simply delineates some components of the practical outworking of this truth. These are appropriated and activated as a consequence of the confident reality of God as our Father, and we, His Firstborn Son, in Christ Jesus.

May ALL Grace and Peace abound to you always. Arise, Firstborn Sons, Arise!

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