

# Maturity in Sonship

A Study Manual



An Overview of the Biblical Stages  
Of Development in Divine Sonship  
From Nepios to Huios

Randolph Barnwell

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Other translations and transliterations of the Scriptures employed are listed below with their respective abbreviations as they occur in this writing:

AMP	:	Amplified Bible	MSG	:	Message Bible
BBE	:	Bible in Basic English	NirV	:	New International Reader's Version
CEV	:	Contemporary English Version	NIV	:	New International Version
ERV	:	Easy-to-Read Version	NKJV	:	New King James Version
ESV	:	English Standard Version	NLT	:	New Living Translation
GW	:	God's Word Version	NRSV	:	New Revised Standard Version
ISV	:	International Standard Version	TNIV	:	Today's New International Version
KJV	:	King James Version	YLT	:	Young's Literal Translation
MKJV	:	Modern King James Version			

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# INTRODUCTION

The contents of this writing are a part of series of teachings on the principle of the FIRSTBORN SON. I encourage the reader to consult the entire series on my website to obtain a more fuller understanding of it.

As God's sons, we are His FIRSTBORN sons in Christ. The church is described as the 'church of the firstborn'. As Jesus is the only begotten of the Father, so we in Him are too. God has only one son, a corporate son which is His church in Christ. As Christ is the firstborn, so are we in Him. As the firstborn son, Christ Jesus, has the right of inheritance of the estate of His Father, but so do we in Him.

## 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 my study 'The Inheritance of the Primogeniture – Parts 1 and 2 on my website. 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).

#### ❖ 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 = eikōn =** 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 (kjb)**

**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.

### **INHERITANCE OF THE PRIMOGENITURE**

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 my study series, Firstborn Sonship on my website. 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. We must understand the **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:**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. We are heirs of a sonship identity in Christ | (Rom 8:16,17; Heb.1:1-6)                            |
| 2. We are heirs of God, the Father              | (Ps 16:5-9; Heb 1:5; Ps 89:20-27; Rev 14:1)         |
| 3. We are heirs of Salvation                    | (Heb 1:14)  |
| 4. We are heirs of Eternal Life                 | (John 10:10; Tit 3:5-7; Matt 19:29; 1John 5:11,12)  |
| 5. We are heirs of Immortality                  | (1 Cor 15:50; Rev 21:3-7; etc.)                     |
| 6. We are heirs of the Kingdom of God           | (James 2:5; Matt 6:33, 25:34; 1 Cor 6:9-11, etc.)   |
| 7. We are heirs of the Abrahamic Promise        | (Gal. 3:16,18,29, 4:28; Heb 6:10-12; Gen 12, 17,22) |
| 8. We are heirs of the 'Blessing'               | (1 Pet 3:8,9; Eph 1:3; Heb 12:17)                   |
| 9. We are heirs of the World                    | (Rom 4:13)  |
| 10. We are heirs of the Earth                   | (Matt 5:5; Ps 25:12,13; 37:11,22,29; 115:16; 24:1)  |
| 11. We are heirs of the Nations                 | (Ps 2:7,8)  |
| 12. We are heirs of All Things                  | (Heb 1:2; Col 1:19,20)                              |

[Refer to addendum 2 on page 48 at the back of this study for a summation of the above]

This list was made to make us aware of the coverage that the Scriptures accord to the matter of inheritance. In essence, these are not twelve separate component parts to one whole. In truth, we have but one inheritance, that being **our Heavenly Father Himself** by virtue of our **inherited name or identity as firstborn sons in Christ** (the first two on the list) .These **two** important aspects represent the fullness of our inheritance, of which the Holy Spirit was given as a guarantee. In God our Father, we as His sons, have access to all things within His will for us, and this would incorporate points three to twelve on the list.



Reflect on Hebrews 3, especially **Heb. 3:14 (NLT)**:

*For if we are **faithful to the end**, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed,  
we will **SHARE IN ALL** that belongs to Christ.*

When we consider the richness of our inheritance in God our Father, and all He has afforded us in making us fellow-heirs with Christ Jesus, we can with deep gratitude declare like David did long ago, ...

*The Lord is the **PORTION of MY INHERITANCE** and my cup; You support my lot.  
The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places; Indeed, my **HERITAGE is BEAUTIFUL** to me.*

**Psalm 16:5**

You and I have been QUALIFIED to SHARE in the INHERITANCE of the saints in LIGHT.

*Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share  
in the inheritance of the saints in Light.*

**Col. 1:12**

Practically accessing this inheritance for which we are positionally qualified for demands that we mature practically in our sonship identity.

### **INHERITANCE CANNOT BE ACCESSED BY AN IMMATURE SON**

Although a son is poised for inheritance, so long as he is an immature 'child', he cannot practically receive it until he exhibits maturity in sonship that in essence positions him to give practical expression to it.

**Gal. 4:1-2** : Now I say, as long as the **heir is a child**, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

The issue of growth into mature sonship is a crucial one, for without it, our inheritance in its totality cannot be fully received.

**Galatians 4:1-7**

- 1 Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything,
- 2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.
- 3 So also we, while we were children, were **held in bondage under the elemental things of the world**.
- 4 But when the fullness of the time came, **God sent forth His Son**, born of a woman, born under the Law,
- 5 so that He might **redeem those who were under the Law**, that we might receive the **adoption as**

**sons.**

6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the **Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”**

7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then **an heir through God**

The passage must be interpreted literally and symbolically.

**The literal interpretation of this passage would be something as follows:**

So long as the son – who is the heir - is a child (immature), he does not differ from a slave who has no legal claim to the father’s estate. **A slave is literally in bondage to another, in whom he has no inheritance.** At one time we were enslaved to the law. The law revealed sin and the inability of man to keep it in his own strength. The law could not save us, and so being slaves to **sin, we were submitted to a life of sin and thus alienated from God.**

This life of sin made us subservient to principles opposed to God that govern this world. By faith in Christ Jesus, who fulfilled the requirements of the law, we broke out from slavery into sonship in God. Being sons, we now have the opportunity to break out from the ‘elemental things’ (v.3) – evil and carnal elementary principles that regulate and govern the world (kosmos). The challenge then is to not revert to the slavish lifestyle of being governed by principles of the sinful adamic nature that are typical of this world system. As sons, we can overcome the world (1 John 2:13,14; 4:4).

**So long as we are immature, inheritance is deferred.** Hence the need for guardians and managers, which in context, represents the Old Testament Law of Moses that failed to bring us to maturity as a son of God. Only when the child matures is his inheritance granted at the time set by the Father. Again, contextually, this occurred when Jesus was sent ‘in the fullness of time ‘to redeem us out from under the law’, bringing us into sonship. We now, by faith and belief in Him, have the Spirit of the SON within us crying ‘Abba Father’. In this respect we are qualified by the Father to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light (Col.1:12). Hence the first step into maturity is acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord by faith. Those who accept Him are legally and technically sons of God. But these legal and bona fide sons are to mature in their relationship with God, and live a life of ascendancy and victory over the adamic carnal nature.

**The spiritual symbolic interpretation of the passage could be understood in the following manner:**

Guardians and managers may also refer to any principle or mechanism designed to shape us into the nature of Christ (the law was powerless to do this). This could also then relate to spiritual fathers who are placed over us, who through the Word, facilitate the formation of Christ in us. This process must not be despised nor underestimated. At 12 years old, Jesus thought He was prepared to do His Father’s business. After a reprimand from Joseph and Mary, He subjected Himself to them for 18 years, and only at 30 years old at His baptism, did the Heavenly Father affirm and validate His sonship by declaring, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased”.

## LEVELS OF SONSHIP LEADING TO MATURITY AND RIGHT OF INHERITANCE

In the New Testament, the word 'son' or 'child' may mean different things dependent upon which Greek word is used. Five distinct levels of sonship are evident from a study of these words. These words denote a progressive development from infancy to mature sonship over time. The words are ...

- ✓ **nepios / brephos**
- ✓ **paidon**
- ✓ **teknon**
- ✓ **neaniskos**
- ✓ **huios (or uihos)**

As sons of God we are 'born from above' (John 3:6-7) through the experience of the new birth. We are in Christ and are new creations in Him. We are 'OF' God (1 John 4:4) – which in the Greek ('ek') means we proceed out from Him and thus have His DNA within us. The 'son is given, but the child is born' (Is. 9:6), and must grow up into Christ in the fullness of His measure and stature. We all must grow up fully in what is given to us, viz. mature sonship.

**In this study manual, each chapter is a brief indication of the most significant characteristics of each stage of the development into mature sonship.** The initial description of each stage is presented first from the Greek etymology of the word, as described by the Greek scholars, James Strong, Spiros Zodhiates, and Joseph Thayer. Following that, in text boxes, is Dr Sam Soleyn's succinct description of the key traits associated with each stage. These are extracted from Dr Soleyn's website, [www.soleyn.com](http://www.soleyn.com), and are used here with his kind permission. I encourage you to listen to the audio teachings on his website. Thereafter, I provide further elaboration on additional key characteristics attendant with each stage.

## Chapter One

# NEPIOS SON

### Greek Definitions

- Zodhiates** : One who cannot speak, hence an infant, child without definite limitation of age.
- Strong** : An infant; figuratively, a simple-minded person; immature.
- Thayer** : Little, child, childish, untaught, unskilled.

**Note** : The Greek term, '**BREPHOS**' (babies) is akin to 'NEPIOS';  
**1 Pet 2:2** "like newborn **babies**, long for the **pure milk of the word**, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation"

**NEPIOS** - Infant, baby not old enough to speak or function.

"This infant of God's house will make **sounds of selfish whining** concerning his own **provision and protection**. The child is in the house and an heir, but not mature enough to have a **right to the inheritance**. This child is easily influenced **by various circumstances, teachings, and schemes of men**. He is given to **jealously, quarreling, divisions, and boasting**. He is in desperate need of tutors and guardians to agree with the Spirit and unveil his/her maturity." **[Sam Soleyn]**

Key Verses: Galatians 4:1-7; Ephesians 4:11-16; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; 1 Corinthians 13:11

(In the natural, this describes an unborn child or an infant of between 0-2 years old)

**(a) Nepios sons have an inheritance only positionally**, but due to immaturity, have not appropriated this reality subjectively, personally, practically and experientially. He is poised to steward all things in Christ, but experiences none of it because he has not yet developed in specific character dimensions or expressions of obedience for him to be able to provide custody over aspects of the Kingdom relative to his assignment and calling in God.

**Gal. 4:1-2** : Now I say, as long as the **heir is a child**, he does not differ at all from a slave although he **is owner of everything**, but he is **under guardians and managers** until the **date set by the father**.

**Needed Action**: Submit to spiritual fathers placed over him. These will teach and feed him the Word of Christ so as to form Christ in him as he receives and obeys the Word.

**(b) This child is easily influenced by various circumstances, teachings, and schemes of men.****Eph. 4:11-16**

- 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,
- 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;
- 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a **mature man**, to the measure of the **stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ**.
- 14 As a result, we are **no longer to be children**, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;
- 15 but **speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects** into Him who is the head, even Christ,
- 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the **building up of itself in love**

**Needed Action:** The child must ...

- (i) Be **exposed to valid/authentic five-fold ministry**.
- (ii) Be **assimilated into the ONE-ness** of the Body of Christ.
- (iii) Begin to **grow in LOVE** for the Body.
- (iv) **Embrace TRUTH** that forms the **stature of Christ within**.
- (v) **Commit to and declare this truth in a spirit of sincere love**.

By **embracing the Body of Christ** and seeing ourselves as an **essential part of the ‘whole’**, and **speaking the truth in a culture of love**, we are able to **GROW UP INTO CHRIST** in all things. **Error, the absence of love, and a poor estimation of the value of the Body of Christ**, highlight our state as infants in Christ.

**(c) He is given to jealousy, quarreling, divisions, and boasting – and thus is ‘carnal’ or ‘of the flesh’****1 Corinthians 3:1-3**

- 1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to **men of flesh**, as to infants in Christ.
- 2 **I gave you milk to drink**, not solid food; for you were not yet **able to receive it**. Indeed, even now you are not yet able,
- 3 for you are **still fleshly**. For since there is **jealousy and strife** among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men
- 4 For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not mere men

When are we 'STILL FLESHLY' or 'CARNAL' (v.3)? When there is JEALOUSY and STRIFE among us. What is the effect of this? It restricts you to the milk of the Word, and hinders movement to maturity and the ability to receive and obey a mature 'meaty' Word. Outgrowing jealousy and strife positions and configures you for the reception of weightier WORD. Failure to overcome jealousy and strife relegates you to an identity of 'STILL FLESHLY' or carnal, able only to drink milk.

**Note :** The context of the above scripture is one in which the loyalties to spiritual leaders in the Corinthian church led to division of the city church based upon this. Immature 'nepios' sonship also manifests itself where there is idolisation of spiritual fathers to the point where ...

- (1) they eclipse the person of Christ in our lives, and
- (2) loyalty to one's own spiritual father breeds disregard/disrespect and isolation from another spiritual father in your city.

**Needed Action:**

- (i) Jealousy and strife must be deliberately overcome by LOVE for others.
  - (ii) One's spiritual father must be viewed in proper perspective and context. Spiritual fathering exists to mature you as a divine son of God. He/She is not God, but a representative father on behalf of Father God, and although must be honoured, loved and respected, they must not be idolised to a place where the pre-eminence of Christ in the spiritual son is undermined/displaced by him/her.
  - (iii) One's commitment to a specific spiritual father must not become a divisive element in that it prohibits you from supporting other apostles/spiritual fathers who are functioning in your city. John Mark was Peter's spiritual son (1 Pet 5:13), but was called by Paul to come to him (2 Tim.4:11), because he was profitable to his ministry. Spiritual fathers and sons must not become so territorial over each other that this becomes idolatrous, controlling, manipulative and thus prohibitive to God's purposes in a city or region.
- (d) **He is prone to seek excellence in spiritual gifts/ministry without excelling first in love.**

**1 Corinthians 13:8-11**

- 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away.
- 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part;
- 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.
- 11 When **I was a child**, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, **I did away with childish things.**
- 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known.
- 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love

In the context of 1 Corinthians 13, childishness equates to operating with great proficiency in the gifts of the Spirit, but devoid of love. The absence of love invalidates any function in the gifts of the Spirit, no matter how powerful and skillful (see 1 Cor. 13:2). The **gift of prophecy** alluded to in the passage above functions ‘**in part**’, but **love is the more ‘perfect’ way**, that does away with the ‘partial’ or imperfect. This is not to suggest that prophecy or any other gift expression is rendered null and void, but rather, when these are motivated by and marinated in divine love, then the limitation of seeing ‘in part’ associated with that gift expression is removed – by the presence of divine love. There will also come a time eventually where all gifts will cease, but love remains.

The Nepios Son is focused on being used by God in terms of gifting and enablement, without having developed a sincere love for and understanding of the strong relational dynamic of the Body of Christ. Development of and in divine love is a sure sign of maturity in Christ. We have no right to minister to someone we do not love. Any expression of skillful spiritual giftedness in any form of ministry, devoid of love, renders the practitioner of no or little spiritual authority nor Divine recognition. Indeed, it does not just render him/her as such, but reveals them to be spiritually infantile even with proficiency in the exercise of the ministry/spiritual gift.

**Needed Action:**

- (i) Seek to develop and excel in LOVE first as a priority.
- (ii) Ensure that any expression of giftedness or ministry is motivated by a sincere love for those the ministry is intended.

(e) **He is only able to assimilate the milk and not the meat of the Word; He is ‘untrained’ / ‘unskilled’ / ‘inexperienced’ in the Word of righteousness; He has undeveloped spiritual faculties of discernment between good and evil.**

**1 Peter 2:1-3** Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn **babies**, long for the **pure milk of the word**, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord.

**Hebrews 5:12 – 6:3 (NKJV)**

- 5:12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have **come to need milk** and not solid food.
- 5:13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is **unskilled in the word of righteousness**, for he is a **babe** (*nepios*)
- 5:14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age (*teleios*), that is, those who by **reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.**
- 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of **the elementary principles of Christ**, let us **go on to perfection**, not laying again **the foundation of repentance from dead works** and of **faith toward God**,

6:2 of the **doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.**

6:3 And this we will do if God permits.

The writer of the Book of Hebrews contrasts two positions that relate to two specific levels of spiritual development, which I describe as a 'foundation' position on the one hand characteristic of the '**nepios**' son, and the 'mature' position on the other characteristic of the '**huios**' son. Here below, these two positions are contrasted using phrases in our text quoted above.

<b><u>FOUNDATION POSITION</u></b> (nepios son)		→	<b><u>MATURE POSITION</u></b> (huios son)	
'A babe'	(5:13)	→	'Full Age'	(5:14)
'Milk'	(5:12)	→	'Solid Food'	(5:14)
Students: 'Teach you'	(5:12)	→	Teachers	(5:12)
'First or Elementary Principles' (5:12; 6:1)		→	'Going on to Perfection'	(6:1)
Inexperienced/Unskilled in the Word (5:13)		→	Practiced Habitually in the Word (5:14)	

We are never to stagnate spiritually, but to always progress toward ultimate perfection in God. The Hebrew Christians seemed to have plateaued out at a specific level of spiritual growth indicated by the 'foundation position' in the illustration above. The writer of the Book of Hebrews exhorts them to reinforce the foundation of the elementary or basic principles of Christ and then to consciously **LEAVE** this position to **proceed to maturity**. Contextually then, the 'nepios' son is characterised by **inconsistency of personal engagement with the Word of God, and an inability to receive weightier or meatier Word because he has not mastered the elementary doctrines of Christ listed in Heb. 6:1-2**, both in understanding and as a lifestyle practice.

Also, he is '**unskilled**' in the **Word of righteousness**, i.e. he is inexperienced in both accurately dividing the Word of Truth, and has also failed to practically apply the Word and thus become subjectively and personally inexperienced in the 'Word of righteousness'. Doctrine, which 'is profitable for training in righteousness' (2 Tim. 3:16) has not yet being fully demonstrated in his life.

This then has the subtle effect of him not having a developed or heightened sense of discernment of good and evil, - which is something that only comes through habitual and consistent engagement of one spiritual faculties (your spirit through the Holy Spirit).

### **Needed Action:**

- (i) Develop a deep love for doctrine and for the Word of God.
- (ii) Engage in the study and practice of the Word of God with great consistency.
- (iii) Master the elementary doctrines of Hebrews 6:1,2.



- (iv) Start to exercise your spiritual senses of discernment with greater regularity ('by reason of use' – Heb. 5:13).

### **THE NEED TO PUT AWAY CHILDISH THINGS**

**1 Cor. 13:11** When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things.

**'did away with' = katargeo =** to render idle, inactive or inoperative; to cause a thing to have no further efficiency; to deprive of force, influence and power; to cause to cease; to put an end to; to annul, to abolish; to be severed or separated from; to terminate intercourse with.

We must deliberately **'PUT AWAY'** childish talk, reasoning and any other behavior which could be classified as a 'childish thing'. As indicated above, the Greek counterpart of this phrase implies a conscious setting aside and reducing to total inactivity any proclivity, or tendency to revert to childish ways and thinking. Note in the passage above, this happens 'when we become 'a man' – i.e. mature. You will naturally outgrow certain childish thought patterns and behaviours as you proceed toward maturity.

### **FOR YOUR OWN STUDY: WHEN A LEADER IS A 'NEPIOS', 'PAIDON' or 'NEANISKOS' SON**

This issue is not the focus of the present study, but I raise it here for your enquiry and consideration. When a leader is inaccurately or prematurely installed into leadership, still being himself/herself at this nepios (or even paidon, neaniskos) sonship of development, the consequences can be disastrous for the context he is meant to influence and for those he leads. Consider this issue by studying the following passages: Eccl 10:16, 17; Isaiah 3:1-8; Isaiah 22; 1 Tim.3:6; Num.11:16.

## Chapter Two

## PAIDON SON

### Greek Definitions

- Strong :** Half grown boy/girl; figuratively, 'immature'.  
**Thayer :** A little child; of a more advanced child; metaphorically - 'children in intellect'.

**Paidion** - A little child mature enough to **understand and proclaim**.

"This little child of God has matured **beyond themselves** enough to truly **know the character and nature of the FATHER**. Knowing both **His intimacy and sovereignty**. During this season of knowing, the child will be in a place to finally receive **the Father's blessing on his life**. For the first time, he really begins to **enter/experience the Kingdom of Father**. During this season the child **grows in strength, wisdom, and grace**." [Sam Soleyn]

Key Verses: 1 John 2:13; Matt. 19:13; Matt. 18:2-5; Luke 2:34-40; 1 Cor. 14:20

(In the natural, this describes a child of between 2-10 years old)

**(a) The child starts to KNOW the nature and character of the Father and develops intimacy with Him.**

**1 John 2:12,13** I am writing to you, little children (**teknion**), because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men (**neaniskos**), because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children (**paidon**), because **you know the Father**.

Just as in the natural, a child of this age starts to value relationships with their parents, not so much in terms of aspects of protection, provision and preservation, but much more for the loving and intimate nature of the relationship. And indeed, in this relationship is the recognition and internal awareness within the child that he is privileged and blessed to be a child borne to loving and caring parents. The child starts to appreciate who the parents are, more than what they do for them. The same is true in the spiritual relationship between a 'paidon' son and their Heavenly Father.

**(b) The child starts to become aware of and know the blessedness of his walk in God.**

**Matthew 19:13** Then some children were brought to Him so that He **might lay His hands on them and pray**; and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, "Let the children

alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the **kingdom of heaven** belongs to such as these.” After laying His hands on them, He departed from there.

Hence the ‘paidon son’ receives blessings. The knowledge and reality of his blessed position in Christ begins to cement itself within him (Eph.1:3; Gal. 3:8; Deut. 28; )

**(c) The ‘paidon’ son knows what it is to humble himself to gain entrance into particular Kingdom expressions of life – he learns to deal with pride.**

**Matthew 18:2-5** And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, “Truly I say to you, unless you are **converted** and become like children, you will not **enter the kingdom of heaven**. Whoever then **humbles himself** as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever receives one such child in My name receives Me.

Humility is a sure sign that the nepios son has begun to grow. Humility includes being meek and gentle, which are traits of the heart our Lord expects of all his disciples to learn of Him (Matt 11:28-30). Humility (‘prautes’) is “mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness”. Humility is opposite to pride and anger and also incorporates divesting oneself of your own opinions or thoughts in order to receive God’s thoughts and ways.

**(d) For the first time, he really begins to enter/experience the Kingdom of Father.**

**Mark 10:15** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a **child** will not enter it at all.

Note here that there is a childlike and extremely TRUSTING characteristic highlighted, with which the child RECEIVES the Kingdom and its expression. This trusting disposition starts to express itself by unquestioning, non-hesitant obedience to God’s commands. He begins to silence the voice of reason and logic from the domain of the unregenerate areas of his soul, and simply obeys from the platform of his spirit. The paidon son begins to learn unswerving trust and faith, which is evidenced by willing compliance to God’s word and ways.

**(e) During this season the child grows in strength, wisdom, and grace.**

This word is used to describe Jesus Himself from approximately 2 years to about 11 years old.

**Luke 2:40** The **Child** (*paidon*) continued to **grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.**

At this stage the paidon son must engage the reading and the study of the Word of God (apostolic doctrine) more consistently and deeply, so as to grow in spiritual stature, wisdom and grace.

**Aside Note** : At 12 years old, Mary addressed Jesus as 'teknon' (Luke 2:48). He had an awareness that He must be about His Heavenly Father's business and thought He was ready for the task. However, after a reprimand by his earthly spiritual parents (Joseph and Mary), He subjected himself to them for 18 years, and emerged at 30 years old as a mature Son. The transition from nepios to teknon and ultimately huios can potentially be a phase wherein many sons of God make shipwreck of their calling in God. Premature engagement with one's calling out of zeal or ambition can be disastrous. Hence the need for the son to submit to oversight spiritual fathering (more on this later).

**(f) The child still needs development in his thinking, especially how to practically apply the gifts, talents and abilities the Lord has given him.**

**1 Cor. 14:20** Brethren, do not be children (*paidon*) in your thinking; yet in evil be infants (*nepiazo*), but in your thinking be mature (*teleios*).

'Nepiazo' implies innocence in the context above; 'teleios' means mature, perfect or complete.

Whilst the 'paidon' son exhibits knowledge of and developing intimacy with the Father, and can understand certain spiritual operations within the Kingdom and Church, his **spiritual mental** faculties are not completely/fully developed and as such needs greater maturation to the perfect state. The context of 1 Cor. 14 concerns the practical administration of the gifts of prophecy and speaking in tongues and interpretation of tongues, and Paul appeals for a mature (*teleios*) mindset in how this is done, especially when determining the appropriateness of the exercise of these gifts dependent on the context or environment. The son may have gifts but lacks wisdom to effectively administrate it.

**(g) The child at times has difficulty in understanding the will of God attendant with his life in a specific season and the revelation of Christ to him in that season.**

[Take the time to read the entire chapter of John 21]

**John 21:4-6**

But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, "**Children** (*paidon*), you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right- hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

Jesus, after the resurrection, at His third appearing to His disciples who went fishing, called them 'paidon', perhaps alluding to the fact that they reverted to a wrong preoccupation (fishing) for ...

- (1) failure to understand how the will of God was playing itself out,
- (2) failure to comprehend 'how' and 'where' Christ is to be recognised, revealed and understood in the current disclosure of Himself to the earth,
- (3) failure to discern the dealings of God with them in that season of their lives – and hence they, in discouragement, went back to a former engagement – but one in which they could not manifest any fruit (no fish), until they reconnected with the risen Christ.

At times the paidon son might not fully understand a specific season of his life, how God is dealing with him in that season, especially in reference to God's purposes for him and how this should play itself out. More so, it might seem as if the Lord has abandoned the son, for the son is somewhat unaccustomed to the new revelation of Christ that is wanting to break through to his mind in this time. Failure to fully understand these things may cause discouragement in the son; there is a sense of futility in regards to the time he has given himself to God's ways and will, and deems that all this has amounted to nothing (for the disciples it was three years). He may abandon his calling in God and the vigour with which he pursues it, although he is still in relationship with God. He might pursue a previous preoccupation or 'lesser' engagement (as in 'fishing') with little or no fruit of divine favour on it (they caught no fish).

I love the way the Lord deals with His disciples who displayed these tendencies. There is no harsh rebuke. Instead, He issues a command to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. They hear a familiar voice they knew for three years. They catch a massive haul of 153 fish, which in Jewish gematria signifies mega sonship – or mature sonship; this was symbolic of the standard of sonship to which they had been called – 'huios'. John recognises that such results borne to obedience to such a voice could only be the work of the Lord Jesus Himself. Peter then re-mantles himself – placing his garment back on which he had taken off in order to fish. This is symbolic of re-commitment to his role as an apostle of Christ. Peter is then challenged to feed the lambs and sheep as an expression of his love for Christ and hears again the familiar command, "Follow me".

At times God may respond with great provision in order to teach the paidon son who is called to significant levels of commitment to God's purposes (as Peter was) that He will take care of him and that he need not revert to dependance on his own way to provide for his own need. This great divine provision accomplishes much more than this. It signifies to the son the great love and mercy of our Father and thus evokes a response within the son to undistractedly and wholeheartedly pursue God's will at any cost (this is evidenced in John 21 where Jesus unveils to Peter the type of death he would die and Peter's willingness still to follow the Lord in spite of this).

## Chapter Three

# TEKNON SON

The main usage of this word stresses the fact of a **spiritual birth** and **relationship** with God.

### Greek Definitions

- Strong :** A child (as produced).
- Zodhiates :** True children, genuine descendants (John 8:39; 1 Pet 3:6); Teknon is a more general designation for offspring and contemplates the individual who is parented, one who is born to another.
- Thayer :**
- The name transferred to that intimate and reciprocal relationship formed by the bonds of love, friendship, trust;
  - Pupil or disciple – who is instructed by their teacher to nourish their minds and mould their character.

**Teknon - This child knows his sins are forgiven.**

“**Sin management** gives way to grace. **Love for others flourishes** during this season. This is a time to **embrace the birth rite of the Father and find his place in his spiritual lineage and heritage**. This child **begins his Father’s business at this stage**. This child receives **the trans-generational promises and crawls on the altar to die to self-fulfillment**. This child matures quickly as he serves a lifestyle of sacrifice. During this season the child grows in **wisdom, and stature, and in favor.**”

[Sam Soleyn]

Key Verses: 1 John 2:12; 1 John 2:1; 1 John 3:18; 3:10; John 13:13; Ephesians 5:1; Luke 2:46-52;  
Romans 9:6-8; Galatians 4:28,31

(In the natural, this describes a child of between 10-17 years old)

**(a) The son is fully conscious that his sins have been forgiven – He has no guilt and condemnation.**

**MATT 9:2** And they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. Seeing their faith, Jesus said to the paralytic, “Take courage, **son (teknon)**; your **sins are forgiven.**”

**1 John 2:12** I am writing to you, **little children (teknon)**, because your **sins have been forgiven** you for His name’s sake

[Note: ‘teknon’ is the diminutive form of ‘teknon’]

Hence the son is not paralysed by feelings of guilt and condemnation (Rom.8:1-2; Heb. 9:14; Psalm 32:1,2).

**(b) The teknon has a legitimate and valid relationship with His Father.**

**John 1:11,12** He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children (*teknon*) of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God

Reception of Christ qualifies you to legally and officially be a part of His family. In a technical sense – you are his son and your sins have been forgiven. The emphasis in John 1:12 is not so much upon the stage of development in sonship as much as it is that the son of God has the RIGHT to be called so. Hence in this sense in which it is used, it stresses the issue that a legal, legitimate relationship with God exists.

**Rom 9:6-8** But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; nor are they all **children** (*teknon*) because they are Abraham's descendants, but:“ through Isaac your descendants will be named.” That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are **children** (*teknon*) of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants

'Teknon' also denotes the sense of someone legally part of a specific lineage or dynasty. Natural descendant of Abraham is not the true Israel of God, but rather anyone who, like Isaac was, is a son of promise through Christ.

The teknon has the witness of the Spirit within him that he is a legitimate son of God.

**Rom 8:16** The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children (*teknon*) of God

**(c) The son starts to live a life overcoming of sin and expressing practical righteousness**

**1 John 2:1** My little children (*teknion*), I am writing these things to you so that **you may not sin**. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous

**1 John 3:10** By this the children (*teknon*) of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not **practice righteousness is not of God**, nor the one who **does not love his brother**.

**(d) The son flourishes in love for others, thereby imitating God His Father**

**1 John 3:18** Little children (*teknion*), let us not **love with word or with tongue**, but in deed and truth.

**1 John 3:10** By this the children (*teknon*) of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not **practice righteousness is not of God**, nor the one who **does not love his brother**.

**Eph. 5:1,2** Therefore be **imitators of God**, as beloved children (*teknon*); and **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma

(e) **The son submits his own ambition and will in subjection to a spiritual father, who through instruction of the Word, matures the nature of Christ within him, thus facilitating his rapid progression to maturity – and a four-dimensional growth in stature, wisdom, favour with God and favour with men.**

**Luke 2:46-52**

Then, after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. When they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "**Son** (*teknon*), why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You." And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He **continued in subjection** to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart.

And **Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.**

Jesus at this stage was aware He had a calling and had to be about His Father's business. He demonstrates great knowledge and understanding, such that well-schooled teachers of His day were astonished at (1) His listening skills and capacity (2) His probing questionings (2) the wisdom and insight He exhibited by the answers He provided. Yet all of this was still insufficient to fully release Him into a practical expression of His Father's will. He had to be in subjection to spiritual parents as represented in Joseph and Mary, who 'put his life in right arrangement' – (as suggested by the Greek word 'hupotasso' translated as 'subjection').

The spiritual father labours to form Christ fully within his spiritual son.

**Gal 4:19** My children (*teknon*), with whom I am again in **labor until Christ is formed in you**.

**Col. 1:28,29** We **proclaim Him**, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that **we may present every man complete in Christ**. For this purpose also **I labor**, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

Paul used the term often to describe his spiritual son Timothy (2 Tim. 1:2; 1 Tim.1:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil 2:22).



Many believe, in this context, that it is also a term of endearment and love. It also highlights the teacher-learner relationship between the father and son. The teknon has an active learning experience with his father.

Consider how Eli trained Samuel to discern God's voice:

**1 Sam. 3:16** The Lord called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he answered, "I did not call, my son, lie down again."

(f) **The teknon must walk closely in the doctrine and ways of his spiritual father in the Lord during this time.**

Probably more than at any other time, it is imperative that the teknon mimic the ways of the spiritual father, so long as these are reflective of Christ in every way.

**Eph. 5:1,2** Therefore be **imitators of God**, as beloved children (**tekon**); and **walk in love**, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

**Imitators = mimetes** = followers – we get the English word mimic from this word – i.e. it relates to 'copying exactly'.

By imitating the ways and doctrine of an accurate and credible spiritual father in the Lord who has or is connected to an authentic apostolic grace, the son is actually imitating God Himself.

**1 Thess. 1:6-7** You also became **imitators of us and of the Lord**, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an **example to all the believers** in Macedonia and in Achaia.

The power of the Thessalonian church to impact people far removed from them with such force was directly dependent upon the extent to which they accurately represented everything Paul stood for. Note that Paul stresses that they were imitators of the Lord and of them. To the Corinthians he said, "Follow me as I follow Christ".

**1 Cor. 4:15-17**

- 15 For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus **I became your father through the gospel.**
- 16 Therefore I exhort you, **be imitators of me.**
- 17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my **beloved and faithful child in the Lord,** and he will **remind you of my ways** which are in Christ, just as **I teach everywhere in every church.**

**1 Cor. 11:1**

Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

**(g) The teknon begins to work in active support of his spiritual father in the Lord.**

This support might express itself in a variety of ways (financially, practically, fellow-labouring, prayer, etc)

**Phil 2:19-22** But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child (teknon) serving his father.

**(h) The teknon lives in the hope and desire of his inheritance and reception of all the promises of His Father. He becomes conscious of the fact that he, as a co-heir with Christ, cannot be joined to any element of bondage.****Gal. 4:28,31**

28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children (*teknon*) of promise.

29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so it is now also.

30 But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son (*uhois*)

31 For the son (*uhois*) of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with the son (*uhois*) of the free woman." So then, brethren, we are not children (*teknon*) of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

**Compare the passages below:**

**Gal. 4:4-6** But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the **adoption as sons** (*uihothesia*). Because you are **sons** (*huios*), God has sent forth the Spirit of His **Son** (*huios*) into our hearts, crying, "**Abba! Father.**"

**Rom. 8:14,15** For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are **sons** (*huios*) of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of **adoption as sons** (*uihothesia*) by which **we cry** out, "**Abba! Father**"

**Rom. 8:16-17** The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are **children** (*teknon*) of God, and if **children** (*teknon*), **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.

The witness of the Spirit within the teknon is that he is a son. The Spirit within spirit of the teknon, CRIES “Abba Father” and is the spirit the son has received - a spirit of adoption AS SONS (uiothesia) – a cry for mature sonship. As a teknon, huioi is already present within, waiting to be unveiled so that inheritance could be accessed. The Spirit cries for this within us; we too cry for it; creation also eagerly awaits.

**[N.B.: I strongly encourage the reader to read ADDENDUM 1 on page 47 at the end of this study. GREAT care must be exercised in OVER-APPLYING the ‘tekonon – huioi’ distinction in respect to teknon being a lower phase of development than huioi. The context of the specific verse you are considering will reveal whether a distinction is made, or whether in fact ‘tekonon’ is simply employed as a term indicating one’s legal status as God’s son without relation to maturity.]**

## Chapter Four

## NEANISKOS SON

Greek Definition

- Strong's** : A youth (under 40)  
**Thayer** : Young man, youth  
**Zodhiates** : Young men in the prime and vigour of manhood up the age of 40 years or more.

**Neaniskos** - Young Man in vigor of manhood.

“In this son the **word of God is alive and sharp**. He has **overcome the evil one**. This son has **keen eyes** and can see what others can't. The spirit is poured out **to him** and **through him**. He is ready to claim the **victory over the largest obstacles** to maturing in his life.”

[Sam Soleyn]

Key Verses: 1 John 2:14; Acts 2:17; Matthew 19:20

(In the natural, this describes someone between 17-40 years old)

- (a) **'Neaniskos sons' exhibit a robust and consistent spiritual strength, have the Word dwelling in them in an abiding and a consistent way, and demonstrate a capacity to overcome the world and the enemy.**

**1 John 2:14** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, **young men (neaniskos)**, because you are **strong**, and the **word of God abides in you**, and you have **overcome the evil one**

- (b) **He has developed keen vision, for the Spirit has been poured out on him and flows through him.**

**Acts 2:17** ‘And it shall be in the last days,’ God says, ‘That I will pour forth of **MY Spirit** on all mankind; And your sons (**uihos**) and your daughters shall prophesy, And your **young men (neaniskos)** shall see visions, And your old men shall dream dreams.

**Note:** The verse above does not imply that only at the ‘neaniskos’ or ‘huios’ stage of development is the Spirit poured out on him, for the baptism of the Spirit could take place simultaneously at the initial point of salvation or one’s entry into the Kingdom of God (e.g. Acts 8:12-17; 10:44,45;19:1-6). Here, the different stages of development are highlighted to draw reference to the fact that certain abilities associated with the outpouring of the Spirit will be more notable in their formation or maturation with

certain sonship stages of development, e.g., in the huios son, prophetic capacity will be notably mature and in the neaniskos son, the ‘seeing’ of spiritual visions will be prevalent. Vision here could also refer to spiritual sight or perception – to see more clearly and accurately.

(c) **The son is ready to claim the victory over the largest obstacles to maturing in his life.**

**Matthew 19:20** The young man (neaniskos) said to Him, “All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?” Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and **come, follow Me.**”

Read the context of the above scripture: Matt 19:16-25. Jesus indicated to a rich young ruler that he should keep the commandments to access eternal life and lists five of the Ten Commandments when asked to elaborate exactly what commandments to observe. The young man claimed to have kept all of them. It is notable that Jesus only lists five commandments that bear reference to how we should relate to others, but leaves out the last of the Ten Commandments, viz., not to covet. Jesus tested his obedience in asking him to give up all he has, sell it, transfer the proceeds to the poor and follow Him, if he desires to be mature (Matt. 19:21). He failed the test, leaving with a grieved heart for he owned much property. Covetousness, greed and a withholding spirit was this young’s man’s problem, and being ‘young’, he laid great store by these things to secure his future. His heart was in his treasure and not in the Lord.

Note too that the first four of the Ten Commandments that relates specifically to one’s devotion and love for God are also omitted by Jesus. Even if he kept five of the commandments, they were not born out of singular devotion and love for God.

To this ‘young man’, Jesus laid an expectation to give up all he has to overcome the pressing desire to self-preserve and self-protect; and obey to a degree where nothing binds him or inhibits him in his desire to ‘follow’ the Lord completely.

Every neaniskos son will have to cross this phase in his journey toward maturity. He starts to make the greatest sacrifices and is willing to lay down all, because his heart is set on eternal treasure that will not fade away (Matt 6:20).

**Matt. 6:20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also

Often this test for neaniskos son will be reflected in his selfless financial giving as he starts to demonstrate that the spirit of mammon has no hold on him and thus he is eligible to begin to steward the eternal riches of Christ.

**Luke 16:10-13:** “He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. Therefore if you have not been faithful in the use

of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.

**(d) The son learns to serve valid Apostolic ministry practically and spiritually.**

**Acts 5:10** And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the **young men** came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

This is not the ordinary deaconship function. The 'Apostolic' seeks to bring the church back to an authentic form and function. To do so, it will extract from the church any false dimension. In Acts chapter 5, Annanias and Saphira had been judged for **lies and hypocrisy** before the Apostles and the Holy Spirit. At this time in the early church, the apostolic dimension was establishing foundations of purity, transparency, righteousness, honour, etc., and young men (neaniskios) came alongside this apostolic function to practically remove that false dynamic which was incapacitated by apostolic ministry. The neaniskos son starts to appreciate, participate and actively support the apostolic dimension in this regard. This son expunges the false, dead or decayed elements that might impede the forward advance of the Body of Christ. An apostolic mentality and outlook matures within him.

## Chapter Five

## HUIOS SON

### Greek Definition

<b>Strong's</b>	:	A son
<b>Zodhiates</b>	:	Huios refers to a legal heir and thus by implication, an adult.
<b>Thayer</b>	:	Those who in character and life resemble God, those governed by the Spirit of God, repose calm and joyful trust in God.

**Huios** - The fully matured son.

“This is a **perfected, matured son who represents his Father**. This son is proclaimed by the Father Himself to be His son. This son ushers in the **peace** of his Father’s government by **loving his enemies and forgiving debts**. He is **led by the Spirit and rules righteously** over creation. He experiences **true unity in maturity with other sons**, and does not **shrink from discipline**. He is ready to **take hold of his full inheritance**.”

[Sam Soleyn]

**Key Verses:** Matthew 3:17; Matthew 5:9, 44; Luke 6:35-36; Romans 8:19; Romans 8:29

(In the natural, this describes someone of 40+ years old;  
although Jesus was identified as huios by His father when he was 30 years old)

**(a) The Huios son has demonstrated consistent submission and obedience to his spiritual father.**

Jesus, who was commended and validated by His Father at His baptism, exhibited a life of total subjection and obedience to Joseph and Mary as His spiritual parents. Thus the Heavenly Father recognised Him as His divine Son. The same principle is powerfully demonstrated in the book of Ruth, who being the representation of a spiritual son (Ruth 4:15), consistently obeyed Naomi (spiritual father) and came into intimate relationship with Boaz (Christ).

**(b) The huios son knows internally that he is a mature son because he has a witness from His Heavenly Father within.**

**Matthew 3:17** and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, “ This is **My beloved Son**, in whom I am well- pleased.”

The ‘huios son’ is declared by His Father to be His Son. He has demonstrated principles of consistent obedience, submission and humility. You will know this witness and declaration by our Father over you as His son. It will be a witness from the Holy Spirit to your spirit within you; you will know and discern this beyond any doubt.

**(c) The huios son, although relating to a spiritual father, is son of God, His FATHER.**

Jesus was Joseph's and Mary's, 'paidon' son (Luke 2:40) and their 'teknon' son (Luke 2:48), but was declared by God, the Father, to be His 'huios' son (Luke 3:22). The goal of spiritual fathering is to mature the son in his relationship with God as His Father. The spiritual father, although always vital, needful, relevant, present and active in the relationship, subtly recedes into the background in the sense, like Joseph did, where the predominant and foremost 'fathering' dynamic in the life of the son is that relationship with his Heavenly Father.

Being the son to an earthly spiritual father is meant to mature you in your relationship with God, your Heavenly Father. If you have a spiritual father, but do not know God as your Heavenly Father, you are still an orphan.

Naomi's (spiritual father) goal was to lead Ruth (spiritual son; Ruth 4:15) into intimacy with Boaz (Christ). Ruth's intimacy with Christ produced an offspring (Obed) who produced Jesse, who fathered David, from whose earthly lineage, Christ would come (Ruth 4:17). It is the relationship between God the Father and the spiritual son that produces something that will change the earth; the relationship with the spiritual father is not an end in itself but a means to this greater reality and objective.

**God, the Father wants to be over all, through all and in all His huios sons (Eph. 4:6).** The huios son is fixated and singularly devoted to none else, but His Heavenly Father. And, because of this he will honour and obey his earthly spiritual father, but is focused upon the ultimate objective this relationship is designed to bring him into, viz., the full formation of Christ within him, the deepening of intimacy with his Heavenly Father and the unswerving expression of obedience to His Heavenly Father.

**Eph. 4:6      One God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.**

Every thought, word and action in the sons of God must exhibit the nature and will of their Heavenly Father.

**(d) He has an intensely intimate relationship with God as His Father, and is convinced HE will take care of him always.**

Knowing God as his FATHER, the huios son has total reliance, dependance and trust in God, his Father, and is completely convinced that God will supply all he needs in this life. In his speech, thinking and behaviour he demonstrates this mentality and does not contradict it. Read, rehearse, review and re-sound the following Scriptures:

**Matt. 6:31-33    Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father**



**knows that you need all these things.** But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

**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**”?

**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.**"

**Ps. 89:26,27** “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.

(e) **The huios son is not offended by the discipline of his father, but receives it as a son who is loved, and so matures, producing evidence of fruits of righteousness in his life.**

**Heb. 12:7-11** It is for discipline that you endure; **God deals with you as with sons (huios)** ; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are **illegitimate children (nothos) and not sons (huios)**. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the **peaceful fruit of righteousness**.

The ‘huios’ son is specifically contrasted with a person who is an illegitimate son - ‘**nothos**’ in the Greek, which means ‘**an illegitimate or misbegotten child, one who is spurious**’ – used here in Heb. 12:8. This is a significant point of comparison, for one would think that the one who refuses discipline would be a ‘nepios’, but rather he is a ‘nothos’, i.e. a false son.

The mature ‘huios’ son has known the instruction and discipline of his Father. This usually is expressed through the discipline of an earthly spiritual father. The discipline by a father must not be an opportunity for the son to disrespect the father. The son must not allow the discipline of a father to sour his relationship with his father. No discipline is pleasant in that moment, but afterwards, he affords the son to be a partaker of the divine nature.

Discipline is for the son’s good and maturation; it is not to highlight the weakness or failure of the son, but to position and prepare the son for his future destiny and birthright inheritance. This son embraces discipline as a necessary part of both his progression into maturity, as well as a significant feature of his ability to endure it, thus denoting him as mature. The discipline and his acceptance of it proves he is son. One the greatest

hallmarks of spiritual maturity and more so, greatest validators of your sonship or that you are 'OF' God, is the ability to receive correction.

**John 8:47** He who is OF God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not OF God.

**1 John 4:6** We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; **he who is not from God does not listen to us.** By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

**Prov. 12:1** Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who hates reproof is stupid.

**Prov.12:1** To learn, you must love discipline; it is stupid to hate correction. **(NLT)**

'Correction' would be all-encompassing, including a correction of one's doctrine or belief system.

(f) **The 'huios' son embraces suffering or life experiences as an essential part of his fashioning as a mature son, who has learnt and become a standard of OBEDIENCE.**

**Heb. 2:10** 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.

**Heb. 5:8** Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

The 'huios' son, like Jesus, fully understands the divine purposes attendant with all of life's experiences, especially suffering. Whilst in the process of suffering, trial and difficulty, he is thoroughly aware that it is designed, amongst many things, to further shape and form the fullness of Christ's image within him, and to teach him greater levels of obedience. He knows that the process of suffering is not worthy to be compared with what God accomplishes within him through the suffering; the result is greater than the process. Don't let the process discourage you; focus on the result.

**Rom 8:18** For I reckon that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with **the glory which shall be revealed in us. (KJV)**

**1 Pet 4:12,13** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but **to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing,** so that also at the **revelation of His glory** you may rejoice with exultation.

Like Jesus, the huios son endures his cross for he is focused on the joy set before him.

**Heb. 12:1a-3** let us run with **endurance** the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the **joy set before Him endured the cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

(g) **The huios son overcomes sin, the flesh, self, etc. demonstrating maturity and his nature as a son of His Father**

We do not overcome to become a mature son; rather we overcome demonstrating our maturity as a huios son, connected to, empowered by and reflective of God, our Father.

**Rev. 21:7** He who **overcomes** will **INHERIT these things**, and I will be **his God and he will be My son** (*huios*).

**2 Cor. 6:17,18** “Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate,” says the Lord. “And do **not touch what is unclean**; And I will welcome you. “And **I will be a father** to you, And you shall be **sons** and daughters to Me,” Says the Lord Almighty.

(h) **The huios son is led by the Holy Spirit. His deeds and speech are reflective of God, His Father**

**Rom. 8:14** For all who are **being led** by the **Spirit of God**, these are **sons of God**.

To be led of the Spirit primarily means to obey the Word of God. The Spirit never contradicts the Word of God. We are being led of the Spirit when we walk in obedience to God’s Word.

Also, be sensitive to the Spirit’s speaking in terms of thoughts and impressions He will place within you.

**Isaiah 50:4** The Lord God has given Me the tongue of disciples, That I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. **He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear to listen as a disciple**. The Lord God has **opened My ear; And I was not disobedient Nor did I turn back**.

The huios son only does what He sees the Father doing and only says what He hears His Father speaking. He does nothing of vain or selfish ambition acting on his own initiative. The Spirit of Father within the son unveils to him what to say and what to do.

**John 5:30** **“I can do nothing on My own initiative**. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because **I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me**

**John 5:19-20** Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, **the Son can do nothing of Himself**, unless it is something **He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.** For the Father loves the Son, and **shows Him all things that He Himself is doing;** and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel

**John 10:30-31** “I and the Father are one.” The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, “I showed you **many good works from the Father;** for which of them are you stoning Me.

**John 10:37-38** If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, **believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father**

**John 12:49,50** “For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the **Father Himself** who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to **what to say** and **what to speak**. “I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore the **things I speak**, I speak just as the Father has told Me.” **(NASB)**

**Say = eipo =** relates to the content of what is said – the substance

**Speak = laleso =** relates to the manner of delivery – the form

**John 12:49-50** “I did not speak on my own. **The Father** who sent me commanded me **WHAT to say**. He also told **me HOW to say it**. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So everything I say is just what the Father has told me to say.” **(NIRV)**

**Matt 10:20** For it is not you who speak, but it is the **Spirit of your Father** who **speaks in you**.

**John 16:13-15** But when He, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on **His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak;** and He will **disclose to you what is to come**. He will **glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you**. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that **He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you**.

**John 14:18-26** “I will not leave you as **orphans**; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that **I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you**. He who **has My commandments and keeps them** is the one who **loves Me**; and he who loves Me will be **loved by My Father**, and I will love him and will **disclose Myself to him**.” Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?” 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. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.**

“These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, **the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance** all that I said to you

**(i) The huios son excels in PEACE, LOVE and FORGIVENESS.**

**Matthew 5:9** “Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called **sons of God**

**Matthew 5:44** But I say to you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be **sons of your Father** who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous

**Luke 6:35-36** But **love your enemies**, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and **you will be sons of the Most High**; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be **merciful**, just as your Father is merciful.

The three verses above highlight how the ‘huios son’ excels relationally as a peacemaker and exhibits right responses of unconditional love, especially toward his enemies. He exudes the love of the Father profusely. He also lives a life of total selflessness and self-sacrifice, doing nothing for personal gain or out of selfish ambition. He only seeks to do His father’s will.

The huios son excels in Divine LOVE. He represents God, who is Love, completely. He loves, not expecting to be loved in return, but to express and demonstrate the love of the Heavenly Father to the one loved, in the hope that this recipient of love, having subjectively experienced God’s love, would then also become a reflection and emitter of the love of God. This mirrors how ‘God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love by which He loved us, even when we were still dead in trespasses and sins, died for us and made us alive in Christ’ – (Eph. 2:4,5); and so we love, because He FIRST loved us. The HUIOS son knows how to love ‘FIRST’ in a context in which he himself is not loved. In this way he models the nature of his Heavenly FATHER (1 John 4:10,19).

It is interesting that the son who, as an expression of His divine love, forgives sins against him is called the son of the MOST HIGH. The phrase ‘Most High’ stresses the lofty and superior nature of God. Many times the ‘huios’ son is described as a son of light, son of the day, son of peace, son of consolation or son of resurrection (see additional note at the end of this study). Each term describes a unique quality associated with this mature son. Now, ‘son of the Most High’ then could allude to the fact that a mature son who perfects relationships and excels in love and forgiveness, has reached a noteworthy ‘height’ and ‘ascendency’ (‘Most High’) in his sonship expression – and thus the nature and characteristic attributed to God, ‘Most High’, now also becomes that of the ‘son, Most High’)

**Aside note:** The son quickly forgives men of their sins against him. He is now eligible, on behalf of His Heavenly Father, to administer the forgiveness of sins generally, thus facilitating the entry of men into the Kingdom of God.

**[John 20:23 -** *If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.]*

**(j) Huios' sons are often described in various ways to highlight certain characteristics associated with maturity, examples:**

- Sons of **the Kingdom** (Matt 13:38) – not 'son of the house' or just 'son of some spiritual father'. The huios son, whilst he is the 'son of man' exhibits behaviours, thinking and levels of commitment beyond his local house and spiritual father to incorporate the wider 'Kingdom'. 'Kingdom and sonship are inextricably linked – see Col.1:13.
- Son of **Peace** (Luke 10:6).
- Sons of the **Day** (1 Thess.5:5) – i.e. enlightened with true knowledge '**Sons of Light**' (John 12:36) – who disclose the nature of God, the Light to men (Matt 11:27).
- Sons of the **Resurrection** (Luke 20:36) – meaning 'partaker of the resurrection'. Hence the principle of 'LIFE' pulsates within this son, who 'has LIFE within himself (John 5:26 ). This son, akin to the last Adam, is a '**life-giving spirit**', not a 'living soul' like the first man Adam (1 Cor.15:45). This son gives life to men (John 5:21).
- Sons of the **Highest** (Most High) – (Luke 6:35-36).

**(k) The huios son activates his FIRSTBORN status, privilege and function.**

**Romans 8:29** 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.

Ultimately our conformity to the image of THE SON is a conformity to His state as a 'huios' son. This huios son is poised to access all the executive privileges and divine functions attendant with his inheritance in and of God as the FIRSTBORN IN CHRIST. Hence it is critically imperative that sons of God mature toward the huios dimension of sonship as quickly as possible. It is not conditional upon time, but upon willing and obedient co-operation with the demands of the Lord. This is our destination and must always be kept at the forefront of our thinking. For this level of sonship, all of creation eagerly awaits. So do we.

**Romans 8:19** For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the **revealing of the sons of God**.

"The degree to which you walk in the 'measure' of the 'SON', is the degree to which you are able to command and influence the environment around you." (Rosh Peters). As we mature in the fullness of the Son, which is in essence already present within us, we shall be able to righteously express the rule of our Father over all of creation. Nothing shall be impossible to us. Jesus commanded creation many times whenever His father's will deemed it necessary. Creation will respond and subject itself to the mature image of God within His sons.

## Chapter 6

# 'PATER'

'Pater' is the Greek word translated in English as 'FATHER'. The level of 'Pater' – FATHER – is possible to the huios son, who has the capacity to accurately represent His Heavenly Father well. It is every huios son's responsibility, privilege and honour to do so. The name of the 'Son' is 'Everlasting Father' (Is. 9:6,7) – so in sonship the nature (name) and function of father can be expressed. Every mature son of God must accurately model and put nature of his Heavenly Father on display for men to observe. So in this sense, 'fatherhood' as seen in this light of a mature son showcasing his Father's character and will in the earth, could be perceived as the highest level of sonship. In essence, the 'huios' son actually does this!

Apart from this, also, there are some called to function as spiritual fathers who are given custody of God's sons who may be in various stages of their development (either nepios, paidon, teknon, neaniskos or huios). This individual is to bring the grace of the Heavenly Father to these maturing sons and aid their development to maturity. This is a serious role and function for the one called to it and must be done soberly, sincerely and in the fear of God. (The present study does not focus on this issue). These individuals should know the Heavenly Father intimately and deeply, and be acquainted with His ancient, timeless and eternal ways.

**1 John 2:13a** I am writing to you, **fathers**, because you **know Him** who has been **from the beginning**

**1 Thess. 2:11,12** just as you know how we were **exhorting and encouraging and imploring** each one of you as **a father would his own children**, so that you would **walk in a manner worthy of the God** who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

The subject of spiritual fathers is addressed in a separate document. Consult my website for details.



## CONCLUSION

### YOU ARE QUALIFIED TO SHARE IN GOD'S INHERITANCE WITH THE SAINTS

Firstborn sonship is a corporate reality. Hence we must understand that the appropriation of our inheritance occurs as a corporate reality. This demands an appreciation for the brotherhood, a deep love for our brothers and sisters in Christ, and a desire to participate JOINTLY together with them in all God has given to all of us.

The Father has **qualified us** to share in the inheritance **with the saints in LIGHT (God)**.

**Col. 1:12** giving thanks to the Father, who has **qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light**.

**Qualified = hikanoo = to enable, to render fit,  
to equip with adequate power to perform duties of one.**

There is nothing you really do to qualify for an inheritance. To be an heir you must simply have the right identity (son). To **'BE'** - and not necessarily work to **'DO'**. But 'BEING' demands maturity to which we must all come. This is not so much a factor of chronological time as much as it is a matter of willing obedience and swift co-operation with the work of the Lord in our lives.

### THE URGENT NEED TO MATURE:

There is an urgent need for sons of God to mature to the standard of functioning as Huios sons – mature sons in Christ. To attempt to access inheritance prematurely would be to incur wastage – like the prodigal son who requested his inheritance from his father. Our Heavenly Father will bestow upon us greater practical out-workings of the inheritance He has already given as we grow in our maturity. May you and I mature in God in our **firstborn sonship identity and so access our inheritance in God**.

**Rev. 21:7** He who **overcomes** will **INHERIT these things**, and I will be **his God and he will be My son** (huios).

### DEVELOP INTIMACY WITH THE FATHER

With consistency, be acutely aware that God is your Father and engrain it into your mentality that your identity is vested in the fact that you are His son. Jesus was literally fixated and obsessed by the fact that God was His Father. He was FATHER-focussed – FATHER-centric – and so must you and I be. You are not an orphan. Pray to and talk with Him daily. Spend time studying His Word. Draw near to Him. Know Him intimately. Learn to discern His voice. He will lead you by His Spirit.

## **LOVE THE WORD OF GOD**

Through the Word of God, you are able to access your inheritance in Christ.

**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.

Never lose your love for His Word, and especially in prioritising God's speaking and voice as channelled through your spiritual father in the Lord. Listen to his teachings over and over again, repetitively, until the Word becomes incarnate within you.

## **LIVE A LIFE OF OBEDIENCE:**

May I encourage you to at least ensure that you are LED of the Spirit daily through His Word and that you seek to OBEY every command and impulse from God. May we submit in obedience to the Word delivered by our spiritual fathers in the Lord, and so come into maturity. Obedience is Key.

**Heb. 11:8** By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to RECEIVE AN INHERITANCE; and he went out, not knowing where he was going

## **LOVE ALL PEOPLE:**

If you carefully examine the stages of sonship as reflected in this study, one thread commonly weaved into all stages is the issue of how the son relates in love to all men. Thus we must seek to excel in love toward all men, even our enemies, and administer the ministry of reconciliation, which we have been given as sons. If in our inheritance in Christ is included that marvelous fact that in HIM, ALL THINGS, both visible and invisible will be reconciled (**Col.1:16-20**), then we must embrace also the issue of living a reconciliatory life with men (**Eph. 2:16**), that we position ourselves as peacemakers between God and men, men and men, and ourselves and all men.

God has given us all things that pertain to life and Godliness (**2 Pet. 1:3**) as part of our inheritance in Him. This includes the fact that He more than adequately takes care of us and sufficiently resources us so that our personal needs are met, and that we have enough to finance aspects of His will in the earth.

## **PRIORITISE THE WELFARE OF YOUR BROTHERS:**

In natural Jewish culture, the firstborn assumed headship in the absence of the father. Thus he would take on the burden of his father, which obviously would include a concern that the rest of the younger siblings are looked after and aided in their own development toward maturity. As mature firstborn sons in Christ, we too must manifest great care and concern for other brothers within our contexts (e.g. local household of faith, or

other brothers in other forums within the city church). We must possess the same burden our Heavenly Father has for them – and indeed also then the mandate our spiritual father has for them as well in respect of facilitating the development of the full formation of Christ within them. This is akin to Christ being FAITHFUL as A SON OVER THE HOUSE, as apposed to Moses being faithful as a SERVANT WITHIN THE HOUSE (see Hebrews 3).

We shall explore this issue in greater depth later. Read 2 Chron. 21:1-7, where Jehoram, who was Jehoshat's firstborn son, is given the kingdom, but kills all his siblings to make himself secure. He acts in contradiction to his firstborn status by not prioritising the welfare and growth of his brothers, but instead perceived them as threats. This started a rapid demise of his reign and a tragic premature end to his life.

### **WE AS GOD'S FIRSTBORN ARE HIS INHERITANCE !**

As we have an inheritance in HIM, He has an inheritance in us. Actually, we are His inheritance. IT IS HIS SHEER DELIGHT to see us come into the fullness of the stature and measure of Christ – to full maturity in our sonship in Him. I pray like Paul did, that our eyes be opened to see **HIS inheritance in us as His Firstborn Sons.**

**Eph. 1:18** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of **His inheritance in the saints,**

His inheritance in us is that we be His sons, sons of His love. Israel, symbolic of the church (Acts 7:38) is pictured as God's heritage.

**Deut. 32:9** But the **Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.** (See also Psalm 87:2)

The present day church is described as 'Zion' and the 'church of the firstborn' in Heb. 12:22,23. We are God's portion and heritage.

I wish you well in your quest toward MATURITY as a SON OF GOD, whose greatest inheritance is your HEAVENLY FATHER, for WE corporately are His Heritage.

May GREAT grace, peace and mercy from CHRIST continually attend your life and that of your families',  
Randolph.

# SUMMATION OF CHARACTERISTICS OF EACH SONSHIP STAGE

## NEPIOS SON

- (a) Nepios sons have an inheritance only positionally, but due to immaturity, have not appropriated this reality subjectively, personally, practically and experientially. (Gal. 4:1,2)
- (b) This child is easily influenced by various circumstances, teachings, and schemes of men. (Heb 4:11-16)
- (c) He is given to jealousy, quarreling, divisions, and boasting – and thus is ‘carnal’ or ‘of the flesh’. (1 Cor.3:1-3)
- (d) He is prone to seek excellence in spiritual gifts/ministry without excelling first in love. (1 Cor.13:8-11)
- (e) He is only able to assimilate the milk and not the meat of the Word; He is ‘untrained’/‘unskilled’/‘inexperienced’ in the Word of righteousness; He has undeveloped spiritual faculties of discernment between good and evil. (Heb. 5:12-6:3)
- (f) This child is usually self-absorbed – making sounds of selfish whining concerning his own provision and protection.
- (h) He is in need of spiritual fathering to unveil the mature measure of the stature of Christ within him. (Gal. 4:12; Luke 2)

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## PAIDON SON

- (a) The child starts to KNOW the nature and character of the Father and develop intimacy with Him. (1 John 2:12,13)
- (b) The child starts to become aware of and know the blessedness of his walk in God. (Matt.19:13)
- (c) The ‘paidon son’ knows what it is to humble himself to gain entrance into particular Kingdom expressions of life – he learns to deal with pride. (Matt.18:2-5)
- (e) For the first time, he really begins to enter/experience the Kingdom of Father. (Mark 10:15)
- (f) During this season the child grows in strength, wisdom, and grace. (Luke 2:40)
- (g) The child still needs development in his thinking, especially how to practically apply the gifts, talents and abilities the Lord has given him. (1 Cor.14:20)
- (h) The child at times has difficulty in understanding the will of God attendant with his life in a specific season and revelation of Christ to him in that season. (John 21:4-6)

### TEKNON SON

- (a) The son is fully conscious that his sins have been forgiven – He has no guilt and condemnation. (Matt 9:2; 1 John 2:12)
- (b) The teknon has a legitimate and valid relationship with His Father. (John 1:11,12; Rom 9:6-8)
- (c) The son starts to live a life overcoming of sin and expressing practical righteousness. (1 John 2:1; 3:10)
- (d) The son flourishes in love for others, thereby imitating God His Father. (1 John 3:18,10; Eph.5:2)
- (e) The son submits his own ambition and will in subjection to a spiritual father, who through instruction of the Word, matures the nature of Christ within him, thus facilitating his rapid progression to maturity – and a four-dimensional growth in stature, wisdom, favour with God and favour with men. (Luke 2:46-52; Gal. 4:19)
- (f) The teknon must walk closely in the doctrine and ways of his spiritual father in the Lord during this time. (Eph.5:2; 1 Thess.1:6,7; 1 Cor. 4:15-17; 11:1)
- (g) The teknon begins to work in active support of his spiritual father in the Lord. (Phil. 2:19-22)
- (h) The teknon lives in the hope and desire of his inheritance and reception of all the promises of His Father. He becomes conscious of the fact that he, as a co-heir with Christ, cannot be joined to any element of bondage. (Gal.4:28,31; Rom.8:16-17)

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### NEANISKOS

- (a) 'Neaniskos sons' exhibit a robust and consistent spiritual strength, have the Word dwelling in them in an abiding and a consistent way, and demonstrate a capacity to overcome the world and the enemy. (1 John 2:14)
  - (b) He has developed keen vision for the Spirit has been poured out on him and flows through him. (Acts 2:17)
  - (c) The son is ready to claim the victory over the largest obstacles to maturing in his life. (Matt.19:20)
  - (d) The son learns to serve valid Apostolic ministry practically and spiritually. (Acts 5:17)
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## HUIOS SON

- (a) The Huios son has demonstrated consistent submission and obedience to his spiritual father. (Luke 2; Book of Ruth)
- (b) The huios son knows internally that he is a mature son because he has a witness from His Heavenly Father within. (Matt.3:17)
- (c) The huios son, although relating to a spiritual father, is a son of God, His Father. (Luke 3:22; Eph. 4:6)
- (d) The huios son has an intensely intimate relationship with God as his Father, and is convinced HE will take care of him always. (Matt. 6:31-34; Heb.1:5; Jer.31:9b; Ps. 89:26,27)
- (e) The huios son is not offended by the discipline of his father, but receives it as a son who is loved, and so matures, producing evidence of fruits of righteousness in his life. (Heb.12:7-11)
- (f) The 'huios' son embraces suffering or life experiences as an essential part of his fashioning as a mature son, who has learnt and become a standard of OBEDIENCE. (Heb.2:10; 5:8)
- (g) The 'huios' son overcomes sin, the flesh, self, etc. demonstrating maturity and his nature as a son of His Father
- (h) The huios son, is led by the Holy Spirit. His deeds and speech are reflective of his Father (Rom.8:14; John 5:19-20, 30; 10:30-31, 37-38; 12:49-50; Matt.10:20))
- (i) The huios son excels in PEACE, LOVE and FORGIVENESS. (Matt.5:9,44; Luke 6:35-36)
- (i) Huios' sons are often described in various ways to highlight certain characteristics associated with maturity, examples:
  - Sons of the Kingdom (Matt.13:38)
  - Son of Peace (Luke 10:6)
  - Sons of the Day and 'Sons of Light' (1 Thess. 5:5; John 12:36)
  - Sons of the Resurrection (Luke 20:36)
  - Sons of the Highest (Most High) (Luke 6:35-36)
- (j) The huios son activates his FIRSTBORN status, privilege and function (Rom. 8:29)
- (k) The huios son can represent His Heavenly Father accurately.

## **ADDENDUM 1: EXERCISE GREAT CARE IN OVER-APPLYING THE ‘TEKNON–HUIOS’ DISTINCTION**

One cannot solely rely on the etymology of a word to isolate its spiritual meaning. The general use of the word in a variety of contexts must also be considered. Together with etymology, the context might decide a particular shade of meaning. In these instances, spiritual interpretation and application of the word rests with the Spirit of God within us, and not solely with the grammarian. (a grammarian is ‘one who is an expert on grammar’)

‘Teknon’ stresses the new spiritual relationship of life we enjoy because of our acceptance of Christ as Saviour and Lord (e.g. John 1:11,12), whereas ‘huios’ stresses the development of spiritual character in keeping with the nature of God, our Father (e.g. Matt. 5:44,45 –‘Love your enemies’). But this distinction denoting a progression in development is not uniformly maintained throughout Scripture, so one must exercise care in over applying the distinction.

### **NOTE THE FOLLOWING:**

[I have interspersed my thoughts and insights here amidst some general principles from ‘The Complete Word Study Dictionary’, by the Greek scholar, Spiros Zodhiates ]

- ‘Teknon’ denotes the more general designation for offspring indicating one that is born to another. It refers generally to posterity (Acts 2:39; Gal 4:28,31).
- ‘Huios’ refers to a legal heir, thus implying maturity or adulthood.
- We as sons are called ‘teknons’ of God. It is used many times as a general descriptor of our technical status as sons of God, who have issued forth from Him and who are a part of His family (see for example: John 1:12, Rom. 8:16,17,21; 9:8; Eph. 5:1; 1 John 3:1,2,10; 5:2).
- We are also called ‘huios’ sons of God, denoting our mature state as His sons. (Rom 8:14,19; Gal 3:26; 4:6,7, Heb. 12:7).
- ‘Teknon’ is often used by spiritual fathers to denote and identify their spiritual sons in the Lord. Timothy is often referred to as Paul’s son in the Lord. The word ‘tekonon’ is used here (2 Tim. 1:2; 1 Tim.1:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; Phil 2:22). The same applies to Titus and Onesimus (Titus 1:4; Phil 1:10). The use of ‘tekonon’ then in this regard alludes to the fact that the spiritual son issues forth from his spiritual father – in a symbolic sense, and that he is the one as a pupil/disciple under the training and mentorship of his father in the Lord. The word is also used to describe corporate sons (1 Cor. 4:14; 2 Cor. 6:13; 3 John 1:4; John 11:2).
- ‘Huios’ is used by Peter as a descriptor of John Mark as his spiritual son (1 Pet. 5:13).
- ‘Teknon’ is often used as a term of great affection and endearment – a tender term of address as in “my son” or “my child” (Matt 9:2).

The above is highlighted to indicate that ‘tekonon’ need not be necessarily viewed as a stage of development in sonship that is inferior to higher stages. It can also be a legitimate expression that can be used to denote various aspects of sonship as is highlighted above. However, it must be borne in mind that the measure and stature of CHRIST, the Son to which we must all be conformed, is a ‘HUIOS’ son – a mature, perfected son (Rom 8:28,29).

## **ADDENDUM 2 : SUMMARY AND PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF OUR SPHERE OF INHERITANCE**

1. God, our Father, is our total and absolute inheritance. We are heirs of the Father.
2. We access our inheritance in God through our firstborn sonship status in Christ. We are joint-heirs with Christ Jesus.
3. We are heirs of everything God the Father and Son is and has. The Holy Spirit is given as a guarantee of this.
4. Sonship and our inheritance in God must become an entrenched and incontestable fact in our minds – our thinking. It must become our predominant mental default setting.
5. Intimacy with the Father as His sons is something we already have and must be conscious of. Our perpetual cry within our spirit is ‘Abba Father’.
6. The hearing of, understanding, reception of and obedience to the ‘Word of His Grace’ is the means by which inheritance is activated.
7. We are heirs of salvation, which ultimately includes total restoration of spirit, soul and body; and daily and varied expressions of God’s power in our lives.
8. We are heirs of eternal life, which not only incorporates a timeless eternal life, but a life depictive of the character of God in every sense – full, abundant, whole, complete.
9. We are heirs of immortality, a life that has conquered sickness and death, the last enemy.
10. We are heirs of the kingdom and its administration; we pursue His Kingdom first, its coming and establishment in the world, its predominance over every other system or kingdom in the earth.
11. We pursue His Kingdom and His righteousness first. As tangible proof of our prioritisation of His Kingdom, we demonstrate our imputed righteousness practically by living lives of purity and obedience, lest unrighteous behaviour disqualifies us from kingdom inheritance.
12. In Christ we are heirs of the Abrahamic promise. In us, all the families of the earth are blessed.
13. Inheritance is by promise through rest, not by human attempts to keep external regulations. The fact that it is promised must be dominant in our thinking, for we access it through rest and not works.
14. We are heirs of all spiritual blessing in Christ. This includes being hugely favoured in life by God.
15. The blessing attendant with our inheritance must not be dis-esteemed, as Esau dis-esteemed his birthright blessing for the momentary satisfaction of his fleshly nature.
16. We are blessed to be a blessing. Our blessed state is for the benefit of others. We are conduits of blessing. This is an essential part of our inheritance.
17. Tacit indication of our blessed state is aptly and powerfully demonstrated in how we bless those who hate us, instead of responding carnally.
18. We are heirs of the world – the right arrangement and orderly functioning of its systems according to God’s ways. As such, we seek to install divine principles of operation to every system in the world.
19. We are heirs of the earth, the physical planet, all its resources, the principles governing its effective and efficient functioning, and all the people who dwell in it. As such we care for the planet. We impose divine standards upon our spheres – our homes, workplaces; we should be neat, tidy, orderly, etc. We also manage all relationships according to God’s expectations of us.



20. We are heirs of the nations. It is our responsibility to immerse all nations into the nature of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit through the repetitive teaching of apostolic doctrine (the doctrine of Christ), and so bring all nations under Christ and His rule.
21. In and through Christ, who is the sum of all things, we are heirs of all things, the heavens and the earth, whether visible or invisible. All things are to be reconciled in Him. Reconciliation and the bringing of all things back to their original placement in Christ is our business and inheritance.
22. Reconciliation of men to God through the administration of the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation of brothers who have offended each other is an essential part of our mandate in Christ. This too, is our inheritance.
23. Ultimately, we will share in ALL THINGS that belongs to CHRIST (Heb. 3:14).

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a 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1f  
b Acts 17:5–  
c 2 Tim 4:2