



# IDENTITY

---

# SONSHIP

## IDENTITY - PART 3 - SONSHIP

Last week we looked at the difference between sons who live as a son and the sons who live as slaves or as orphans, because even though their Father is God, these sons don't carry the revelation of this in their hearts and minds.

We see Jesus teach in Luke 15 about the prodigal son, but in essence it really should be called the prodigal sons. It's not just the son who squandered His Father's wealth on living for himself who doesn't know who he is, but the older son or brother, also has no reference for what it truly is to be a son of the Father.

How does one know this? Because both of their behaviours are the evidence of their lack of true sonship, the lack of identity.

***Luke 15:11-32 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them. And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with loose living. Now when he had spent everything, a severe famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would have gladly filled his stomach with the pods that the swine were eating, and no one was giving anything to him. But when he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have more than enough bread, but I am dying here with hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men."' So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.***

***And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.' And they began to celebrate. "Now his older son was in the field, and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. And he summoned one of the servants and began inquiring what these things could be. And he said to him, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has received him back safe and sound.' But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.' And he said to him, 'Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.'"***

The key thing that exposes both brothers in relation to not knowing their Father, and who they are in the Father as sons, is ultimately their own personal BEHAVIOUR, but I want us to take a deeper look as to why their behaviour is the way it is.

The young son's words on his return, gives us true insight into the posture of his heart, his true belief. He said in verse 19 ***"I am no longer worthy to be called your son, make me as one of your hired men"***.

The older son's words in relation to the younger son's return, also gives us true insight into the posture of his heart,



# IDENTITY

---

# SONSHIP

his true belief. V28 -30 says ***“But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, ‘Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.’***

Followers who don't have a true revealed position of their own BELONGING to the Father, always start with either their own behaviour or the behaviour of others, when it comes to their relationship with the Father and Jesus.

This behaviour first position is a legalistic one, not a love position. It's a position of self not Spirit. It's the slave or orphan position, even though people have received Christ as saviour. Legalism is incredibly destructive to life in God and it tears down the things which are of God, thinking it is righteous in its behaviour. Legalism has no way of entering into sonship, and we can see the spirit of legalism existing and living in both the younger and older brother's hearts.

Legalism that is operating in a son of God who is really a slave, either believes it owes God something, i.e., like the young brother, or it is owed something, i.e., like the older brother.

The divine order of the Father's heart and His kingdom realm when it comes to the spirit of sonship or identity is;

1. Belong
2. Believe
3. Behave

The legalistic spirit is;

1. Behave
2. Believe
3. Belong

This divine order is the response of the Father towards both His sons. The Father ignores the words of his younger son about not being worthy, by counteracting that with these words and action;

***“But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate”***

We also see the Father counteract the older brothers words with these words;

***And he said to him, ‘Son, you have always been with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, for this brother of yours was dead and has begun to live, and was lost and has been found.’”***

Mature sons of God, those who know who they are and are growing into the image of the Son, are able to live exactly like the Father here. They are fully capable of not holding people's behaviour against them, covering it with the love of Christ that is abiding within them, restoring the person by their actions and speaking in and from love, the truth.



# IDENTITY

---

# SONSHIP

Sons of God do all this in the hope, that sons who are living as slaves, will receive the love and truth that is being poured out upon them for the purpose of inner transformation. One knows they have entered into and are maturing in the spirit of sonship when one is demonstrating this kind of wisdom.

## QUESTIONS

1. Why is the ability to demonstrate this kind of wisdom, the evidence that one has entered into and is maturing in the spirit of sonship?
2. Why is the spirit of legalism operating in a son so destructive to the individual and others around them?
3. Why is knowing without any doubt you "Belong" so empowering to what you believe and how you behave?
4. How many of us can give testimony to truly having God's abiding love operating within us, where we have been able to cover the offence/sin of another and love the person back? Share
5. If you are being honest would you say you recognise the spirit of sonship operating in your life or the spirit of legalism? You can not have both?

**ACTION POINT:** What action point do we need to take away from tonight?