

# Weapons of Spiritual Warfare: Humility, the Spirit of a Son

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It starts in the secret place. God clothes the soul with humility as the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces us of who we really are and who He really is.

Jesus, conscious of the power of the Spirit within, subordinated Himself as Son to Father. He lived in relationship. This One in whom all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily (**Colossians 2:9**) humbled Himself. He did nothing of His own initiative (**John 5:19, John 8:28**), but only that which He saw the Father do (**John 5:19, 20**). He never sought His own will (**John 5:30, John 6:38**) and so never asserted His will against or counter to the will of His Father. He honored His Father.

Jesus never sought His own glory (**John 8:50**) and refused glory from men (**John 5:41**). He didn't come here of Himself (**John 7:28**), but was sent (**John 8:42**). He didn't even speak from out of His own "self," but only as the Father gave Him to say (**John 14:10**). Even His teaching was not His, but of Him that sent Him (**John 7:16**).

As the Son of the Father, Jesus was nothing that God might be all. Jesus lost nothing in such self-abnegation, for the Father honored the Son. The Father honored this total trust and honor given by the Son to the Father. Regardless of what people did or said around Jesus, regardless of the surrounding social, civil, economic, political, and religious systems, Jesus kept focused on pleasing the Father only. Jesus had but one value, one joy.

The Bible tells us that we who are believers in Jesus Christ are being conformed to His image. We learn from Christ that conforming to His nature involves:

1. Acknowledgment that self has nothing of value to assert (**Galatians 2:20**)
2. Surrender to be empty vessels filled with the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 5:18**)
3. Refuting any and every claim of self to be or do anything (**Philippians 3:8**)

A meek and lowly heart consents to letting God be all, consoles itself in perfect dependence upon the Holy Spirit's comfort, and conforms itself to its destiny to reflect the glory of its Creator and Covenant Lord. A meek and lowly heart walks in a raw honesty and naked humility, vulnerable but for the walls of salvation and the defense of God. Content to be nothing but a vessel through which the living God can manifest the riches of His wisdom, power, and goodness, the meek and lowly heart receives first from God what it gives to others.

Jesus humbled Himself...therefore God highly exalted Him (**Philippians 2:8, 9**). The one who humbles himself shall be exalted (**Matthew 23:12**). Indeed, we are to humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord, and then He shall lift us up. (**James 4:10**) God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble, and thus we are to submit to God, resist the devil, and draw nigh to God. We are to cleanse our hands and to purify our hearts and to be single-minded (**James 4:6-8**).

Charles Spurgeon reflected on humility. He considered corn growing in the field. While green, it stands with head erect, but when mature, the ripened ear hangs its head in graciously. So it is also with fruit trees. Branches bow as the fruit ripens. Spurgeon has

stated: "Growing Christians think themselves nothing; full-grown Christians know that they are less than nothing...The more grace, the more the need of grace is felt. He may boast of his grace who has none, he may talk much of his grace who has little; but he who is rich in grace cries out for more, and forgets that which is behind."

To see Jesus in His humility is to see the death sentence to our souls. To see all our life in Christ, He must increase, and we must decrease.

### **The Spirit of a Son**

In the New Covenant we see the glory of the ministration of the Spirit. In the New Covenant the Spirit of God's Son is given into the heart of the believer. All is by the Spirit, who works in the believer the spirit of a son. Thus Paul writes in **Romans 8:12-17**:

*Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

As the children of God we can neglect and grieve the Holy Spirit or we can trust and yield to Him. We are to honor Him by expecting and accepting all that He desires to do in us. He is the great promise of the New Covenant, God's gift proceeding from the Father and the Son. He is the teacher dwelling in the believer's heart. He is the Spirit of faith, enabling belief. He is the Spirit of grace and supplications, supplying the power for obedience and fellowship with God. He is the one who transforms the heart of rebellion into the spirit of a son.

The transition takes place by a death. In Christ we die to sin, to the Law, to the "self." The soul that sins must surely die. All self-effort, self-righteousness, self-aggrandizement, etc. must die. But the soul whose faith and trust are in Christ alone, will surely have eternal life.

*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. (**Hebrews 13:20, 21**)*

As God raised Jesus so also God redeems believers and frees them from the power of sin to make them partakers of Christ's resurrection life. God works all. Sin demanded Blood, the Blood of Jesus, surety of the New Covenant. Jesus mediated this covenant to obtain for the believer peace with God, purity from sin, and power over every enemy of God. In the New Covenant the outpouring of the Blood prepares the way for the outpouring of the Spirit, who ministers the Blood in power. The Blood was shed for our redemption and sprinkled to cleanse the heart from an evil conscience. (**Hebrews 9.14, 10.22; Rev. 1.5; Ezekiel 37.23, 26**)

The spirit of a son comes to the believer as Jesus mediates the New Covenant (**Hebrews 8.6, 9.15, 12.24**), is surety for it (**Hebrews 7.22**), is its messenger (**Malachi**

**3.1**), and is Himself called a Covenant (**Isaiah 42.6, 49.8**). Jesus came to establish and proclaim, to guarantee and safeguard the terms of the New Covenant. Christ is all. With a sense of sin comes a longing for liberty in the believer. Then, in the struggle to surrender, all hope of pleasing God dies as the Holy Spirit reveals the iniquity of the human heart. Only as the faith of Jesus interceding as our High Priest comes before the Father, as Jesus stands in advocacy in our behalf, do we find Jesus proving His dominion, moving in divine power, undertaking all that God requires and all that we need. The Holy Spirit works in the heart, Spirit to spirit, deepening the consciousness of Christ's righteousness as our only plea. To Jesus goes all the glory and praise as even our faith proves finite and limited before an infinitely holy God whose love is unlimited. Jesus transmits from God to us the gifts and powers of the heavenly sphere. Trusting Jesus becomes the believer's way of life as he or she embraces the following assurances:

1. The Love of God, an infinite love, a covenant love, a pure love, a holy love, a bonded love.
2. The sufficiency of Christ's redemption, based upon His finished work.
3. The Holy Spirit dwelling in the heart as Lord.

What Christ has undertaken, He will perform. God is faithful, and He also will bring it to pass. God gives the grace that we might obey through faith working by love. The spirit of a son is one which desires to live in full and unbroken obedience and communion with the Father in Christ. As the Old Covenant taught the absolute necessity of obedience for a life of blessing and God's favor, so it also taught the failure of man to obey and keep it. Jesus as mediator of the New Covenant secures the necessary obedience sufficiently by giving a heart that delights in obedience and which has the power for it.

The spirit of a son delights to obey and keep the commandments of God. The spirit of a son understands that in everything the surety of the New Covenant gives power to maintain the obedience, that such obedience is possible. The spirit of a son says with Jesus, "I have come to do Your will, O God." The spirit of a son hears God saying, "I will be Your God, and you will be My son." The spirit of a son understands success to be obedience to the command of God, not out of slavish fear or slavish bondage, but out of loving relationship, out of kinship. This obedience is by faith which works by love. In its very nature, it is blessedness and joy. It is a delight, a "may," not a "must." This obedience comes by grace. (**1 Peter 1.2**) The spirit of a son trusts in the grace of God.

*"His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."* (**1 Corinthians 15.10**) We can be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus (**2 Timothy 2.1**).

As grace pardons, so also grace powers.

The spirit of a son stewards the Word of God, the grace of God, the blessings of God, the love of God. With the right of free and full access to God, and with the duty and privilege of intercession, sonship involves dispensing the blessings of God's grace and peace, being zealous for God, honoring God, standing on the Lord's side. The spirit of a son claims and receives the anointing of the Holy Spirit, the inbreathing from Christ of His own Spirit and life.

The spirit of a son glorifies and honors Christ as it is indwelt and filled by the Holy Spirit. The spirit of a son lives in personal fellowship with the Father, honors Him, and honors the Holy Spirit who works all within. The spirit of a son desires holiness because the Spirit of holiness has been given to bring holiness. (**John 17.17, 19; Romans 1.7; 1 Corinthians 1.2; 1 Thessalonians 3.13**) The spirit of a son desires to have, maintain, and express the thoughts and intents of a holy heart.

Will you embrace this New Covenant wholeheartedly and enter into the spirit of a son of God? You can, as you humbly ask God to give you by His Holy Spirit grace to obey through faith working by love. Ask God to give you the vision of the heavenly life of wholehearted love/loyalty and obedience in Christ. Ask God to reveal all that the Father desires you to be and all that He has provided for your being. And then offer yourself to God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, without reservation, to be loved, to be sanctified, to be made whole, to be made holy unto the Lord. Believe for a vision of the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Cease striving in your own strength, serving in bondage. Surrender to Christ anew, confessing and giving up all that is of self and sin, of iniquity and soulish. Accept and be willing to experience what grace will do by the Holy Spirit, whatever the cost to the old. Let the Holy Spirit love you.

*Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people...that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham: to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life." (Luke 1.68-75)*

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### **Questions**

Question 1. Jesus, conscious of the power of the Spirit within, subordinated Himself as Son to Father. He lived in relationship. Look up Colossians 2:9; John 5:19, 20; John 8:28; John 5:30; John 8:50; John 5:31; John 7:28; John 8: 42; John 14:10; John 7:16. Identify 7 examples of Jesus' humility as He lived in voluntary subordination to the Father.

Question 2. The Bible tells us that we who are believers in Jesus Christ are being conformed to His image. List three areas we learn from Christ about conforming to His nature. (Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 5:18; Philippians 3:8)

Question 3. Jesus humbled Himself...therefore God highly exalted Him (**Philippians 2:8, 9**). Look up Matthew 23:12; James 4:6-10. What do these passages tell us about the benefits of humility?

Charles Spurgeon has stated: "Growing Christians think themselves nothing; full-grown Christians know that they are less than nothing...The more grace, the more the need of grace is felt. He may boast of his grace who has none, he may talk much of his grace who has little; but he who is rich in grace cries out for more, and forgets that which is behind." Discuss.

Question 4. In the New Covenant we see the glory of the ministration of the Spirit. In the New Covenant the Spirit of God's Son is given into the heart of the believer. All is by the Spirit, who works in the believer the spirit of a son. Review and summarize what Paul writes in **Romans 8:12-17**.

Question 5. List five characteristics or names of the Holy Spirit. How does He transform a person? To what do we die? To what and to whom do we live? For what purpose? **Hebrews 13:20 21, Hebrews 9:14, 10:22; Rev. 1:5; Ezekiel 37:23, 26**.

Question 6. How does the Holy Spirit come to the believer? What do the following verses tell us about Jesus? **Hebrews 8:6, 9:15, 12:24; Hebrews 7:22; Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 42:6, 49:8**. Jesus came to establish and proclaim, to guarantee and safeguard the terms of the New Covenant. Christ is all. With a sense of sin comes a longing for liberty in the believer. Describe the struggle.

Question 7. Jesus transmits from God to us the gifts and powers of the heavenly sphere. Trusting Jesus becomes the believer's way of life. Identify three assurances we can embrace given in the teaching.

Question 8. What is the place of obedience in the New Covenant compared with the Old Covenant relationship? How does this obedience come? **1 Peter 1:2; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Timothy 2:1**.

**Question 9.** The spirit of a son stewards the Word of God, the grace of God, the blessings of God, the love of God. Look up **John 17:17, 19; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 3:13**. What do these verses say about the believer's desires related to stewardship, honoring God, and holiness?

Question 10. If we desire to embrace and enter into the spirit of a son, trusting Jesus Christ alone for life in Him, what might we pray? Look up **Luke 1:68-75**. What reasons are given for blessing God? Discuss the importance of serving God “without fear.”

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