

**HWMR: EXPERIENCING, ENJOYING, AND EXPRESSING CHRIST (2) (Week 13)**

*Scripture Reading: Acts 13:23, 33; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:29*

**The Seed of David Becoming the Son of God**

- Acts 13:23 From this man's seed, God, according to promise, brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus,  
Acts 13:33 That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; today I have begotten You."  
Rom 1:3 Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,  
Rom 1:4 Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;  
Rom 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

**Day 1**

*Acts 13:32-33 - And we announce to you the gospel of the promise made to the fathers, That God has fully fulfilled this promise to us their children in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, "You are My Son; this day have I begotten You."*

- I. In Acts 13 Paul said that from David's seed "God, according to promise, brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus" (v. 23), and that "God has fully fulfilled this promise...in raising up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, **You are My Son**; this day have I begotten You" (v. 33):**
- A. In verses 32 and 33 we see that Christ as the Firstborn of God was promised to the fathers, and God fulfilled this promise by **raising up Jesus**.
  - B. **Resurrection** was a **birth** to the man Jesus:
    - 1. He was **begotten** by God in His **resurrection** to be the firstborn Son of God among many brothers—Rom. 8:29.
    - 2. **He** was the **only begotten Son of God** from eternity—John 1:18; 3:16.
    - 3. After His incarnation, through resurrection He was begotten by God in His humanity to be **God's firstborn Son**—Heb. 1:6.

Regarding the status of Christ, we should note that the phrase according to is used twice in Romans 1:3-4: He was the seed of David according to the flesh, and He was the Son of God according to the Spirit of holiness. The two occurrences of according to in 1:3-4 show that the Lord has two essences—the human essence and the divine essence. For this reason, Christ could be of two natures; He could be at the same time divine and human as well as human and divine. Hence, He is a wonderful person. He is not only God but also man; He is not only man but also God. He is the complete God plus the perfect man. Therefore, many great Bible teachers through the centuries have considered Christ to be the God-man. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, msg. 295)

## Day 2

*Psalm 2:7-8 - I will recount the decree of Jehovah; / He said to Me: You are My Son; / Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, / And I will give the nations as Your inheritance / And the limits of the earth as Your possession.*

*Hebrews 1:6 - And when He brings again the Firstborn into the inhabited earth, He says, "And let all the angels of God worship Him."*

- C. Paul was able to see the Lord's resurrection in **Psalm 2:7**: "You are My Son; / **Today** I have begotten You":
  - 1. Paul applied the word *today* to the day of the **Lord's resurrection**.
  - 2. This means that **Christ's resurrection** was His **birth** as the firstborn Son of God.
  - 3. Jesus, the Son of Man, was born to be the Son of God through being raised up from the dead; therefore, God's **raising up** Jesus from the dead was His **begetting** of Him to be His firstborn Son—Acts 13:33.
- D. Through **incarnation** God's only begotten Son **put on humanity** and became the God-man (John 1:14, 18; Luke 1:35); then in **resurrection** this God-man was **born of God** to be His Firstborn (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29):
  - 1. **Before** incarnation God's only begotten Son **did not** have the **human nature**; He had **only** the **divine nature**.
  - 2. In **resurrection** God's firstborn Son has the **human nature as well as** the **divine nature**.

God does not intend that we lose our humanity. On the contrary, we shall bear our humanity for eternity. But our humanity in eternity will not be natural; it will be resurrected, glorified, and uplifted. This is proved by the contrast between the natural body and the spiritual body, the resurrection body, in 1 Corinthians 15. Today our physical body is like a seed. But one day this "seed" will be resurrected and glorified.

How can we have divinity? We have it by being regenerated in our spirit by the Spirit of Christ. Through incarnation Christ put humanity upon Himself and thereafter had two natures, the divine nature and the human nature. Through His resurrection and through coming into us as the Spirit, Christ has brought divinity into us. Therefore, we also have two natures, the human nature and the divine nature. By being born of the Spirit we have become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). We can say, "Lord, just as You have two natures, so we have two natures also. You are divine and human, and we are human and divine. Hallelujah, we are the same as You! Lord, You have our nature, and we have Yours. You are both divine and human, and we are both human and divine. You are the Head of the Body, and we are the members of the Body. Lord, You are the Son of God, and we are sons of God also." The Lord appreciates it when we speak to Him in this way. He enjoys it when we declare the fact that God no longer has just one Son, the only begotten Son, but many sons, Christ as the Firstborn and us as the many sons of God. Christ has already been designated the Son of God, but we are still in the process of designation. One day this process will be completed, and for eternity we shall be the same as Christ, God's firstborn Son. Romans 1:3 and 4 contain many key words. Verse 3 has the phrase "according to the flesh," and verse 4, the phrase "according to the Spirit." In 8:4 Paul speaks about walking "according to spirit" and not "according to flesh." This is one example of how the key words in 1:3 and 4 are used again by Paul later in this book. (*Life-study of Romans, Message 52*)

### Day 3

*1 Peter 1:3* - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us unto a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

*Hebrews 2:10* - For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

- E. Through His **resurrection** Christ was born to be the **firstborn Son**, and at the same time **all His believers** were born to be the **many sons of God**—1 Pet. 1:3; Heb. 2:10:
1. Among these many sons, **only** the Firstborn is **God's only begotten Son**—John 1:18; 1 John 4:9.
  2. This only begotten Son of God, in His **resurrected humanity**, is also the **firstborn Son of God**—Rom. 8:29.
  3. The **Firstborn** has **both** divinity and humanity, and **we, His believers** as God's many sons, also **possess both** the human nature and the divine nature—2 Pet. 1:4.

The New Testament begins with a genealogy. Matthew 1:1 says, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." This is Christ's incarnation. The first great thing that was accomplished in the whole universe was God's incarnation, God's becoming a man. Then there was His living for thirty-three and a half years, recorded in the four Gospels. How great this was! Then He entered into death, passed through death, came out of death, and entered into resurrection.

Three results came out of His resurrection. First, He, the only begotten Son of God, became the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29), indicating that many sons of God are following. So the second thing is that millions of us, the believers, were born with Him (1 Pet. 1:3). He was born as the firstborn Son of God, and we were born as the many sons of God. We are His "twins." Third, this One, who was the only Begotten becoming the Firstborn with many twins, became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b), and this life-giving Spirit is the consummation and aggregate of the processed Triune God. Out of this consummation of the Triune God, the church came into being, and the church as the house of God is the Body of Christ. This Body of Christ is the organism of the Triune God, which consummates in the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem will remain in the new heaven and new earth as a city expressing God for eternity with divinity mingled with humanity. This is our New Testament. (CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 1, "Crystallization-study of the Epistle to the Romans," ch. 18)

### Day 4

*Romans 1:3-4* - Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

## II. We need to know Christ in His resurrection **designated** as the Son of God in power with His human nature—Rom. 1:3-4:

- A. **Before** His incarnation and resurrection, Christ was the Son of God, the **only begotten Son**—John 1:18; 3:16.
- B. Although Christ already was the Son of God before the incarnation, He still needed to be **designated** the Son of God out of resurrection because by incarnation He had put on the human nature, which had nothing to do with divinity—1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3:

1. After the Son of God became **incarnate**, His divine nature was **concealed** by the flesh.
2. Christ was already the Son of God in His divinity, but the part of Him that was Jesus with the human nature, born of Mary, was not the Son of God—Luke 1:31-32, 35.
3. By His **resurrection** Christ **sanctified** and uplifted His human nature, His humanity, and He was designated out of resurrection as the Son of God with this human nature; in this sense He was begotten the Son of God in His resurrection—Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5.

We are being designated as sons of God by resurrection. We are daily undergoing the process of designation, and this designation is by resurrection. We all need to see that what the Lord is doing within us today is a matter of designation.

I would like to continue with the illustration of a carnation seed. A carnation seed is designated, not by being labeled, but by being sown into the earth and by growing gradually into a mature, blossoming carnation plant. The seed is designated as it grows. The more it grows, the more it is designated. When it reaches full bloom, it will be designated in a complete way. This means that the full blossoming of a carnation flower is its full designation. Like the carnation seed, we all are in the process of designation. The more we grow and are transformed, the more we are designated the sons of God. (*Life Study of Romans, Message 54*)

#### Day 5

**Romans 1:3-4** - Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

**1 Peter 3:18** - For Christ also has suffered once for sins, the Righteous on behalf of the unrighteous, that He might bring you to God, on the one hand being put to death in the flesh, but on the other, made alive in the Spirit;

4. This **designation** of the Son of God was “in power,” the **power of Christ’s resurrection**, the reality of which is the Spirit—Rom. 1:4; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-20.
- C. **Through designation** in resurrection the Christ who was already the Son of God before His incarnation **became the Son of God** in a new way—Rom. 1:4:
1. **Before** His **incarnation** He was the Son of God only with divinity; **through** His **resurrection** He was designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity—v. 4.
  2. If Christ had not put on human nature, there would have been no need for Him to be designated the Son of God, for in His divinity He was already the Son of God, even from eternity—John 1:18; 17:5.
  3. Having put on **humanity through incarnation**, He was **designated** the Son of God with humanity in resurrection—1:14; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; Heb. 2:14:
    - a. As the designated Son of God, Christ has two natures, divinity and humanity; the humanity that He now has is not a natural humanity but a **humanity uplifted in resurrection**—Rom. 1:4.
    - b. Even Christ’s human nature has been designated the Son of God, for He has been **designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity**.
- D. The designation of Christ as the Son of God with humanity was “according to the **Spirit of holiness**”—v. 4:

1. The Spirit of holiness is the **life essence** within the Lord Jesus; when He lived on earth in the flesh, He had this essence within Him—Matt. 1:18, 20; Luke 1:35.
2. When the Lord Jesus was resurrected from among the dead, He was **designated** the Son of God in power by resurrection **according to the Spirit of holiness** that was in Him—Rom. 1:4.
3. Now He is the Son of God in a way that is more wonderful than before, for now He has both the divine nature and the resurrected, transformed, uplifted, glorified, and designated human nature—6:4; Luke 24:26; John 17:5; Acts 3:13.

In 1:4 why does Paul speak of the Spirit of holiness and not of the Holy Spirit? There is a distinction between the Holy Spirit and the Spirit of holiness. Holiness is the divine essence, the substance of God. Hence, the Spirit of holiness is the Spirit of the divine substance, whereas the Holy Spirit is the Person of the Spirit. As fallen ones, we are constituted with sinfulness. But as the Son of God, Christ is constituted with holiness. Holiness is His very element. Here holiness does not mean sinless perfection or positional separation; it denotes the divine essence, the very substance of God's being. It was according to the Spirit of holiness that Christ was designated the Son of God.

Once again we may use the plant life as an illustration. When a carnation and a lily have just sprouted, they may look very much alike. But as these plants grow, they are gradually designated according to the life-essence within them. In the same principle, the Spirit of holiness is the life-essence within the Lord Jesus. When He was living on earth in the flesh, He had this divine life-essence within Him. Because this life-essence was according to God's being, it was also the essence of holiness. According to our understanding, the word holiness refers to being separated, distinct, from all common things. Because God's essence is unique. God is separate from all things other than Himself. The holiness spoken of in verse 4 is the divine essence that was in the Lord Jesus when He lived on earth. Just as a carnation flower is designated according to the life-essence within it, so the Lord Jesus was designated by resurrection through the divine life-essence within Him. (*Life Study of Romans, Message 55*)

#### Day 6

**Romans 8:29** - *Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;*

**Hebrews 2:10-11** - *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,*

E. We need to connect **Romans 1:3-4** and **8:29**:

1. Through His incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection, Christ, the Son of God, became the firstborn Son, and the many sons, who are the brothers of Christ, are being conformed to His image—Heb. 2:10-11; Rom. 8:29.
2. In **Romans 1:3-4** Christ, the Son of God, is the **prototype**, whereas in **8:29** the many brothers are those who have been “**mass-produced**” from the prototype and, by being saved in life, will be conformed to the image of the firstborn Son.
3. This brings us to the matter of **deification** and implies that God's intention in His economy is to **make Himself man so that, in Christ, we, the believers in Christ and children of God, may become God in life, in nature, and in constitution (but not in the Godhead)**; such an implication is exceedingly great, and eventually, the Bible consummates with this matter—Rom. 8:29; 1:3-4; John 1:1-13; 1 John 3:1; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.

We all need to see the vision of the dispensing of the life of the Triune God into the three parts of our being. If we see this divine vision, our natural concept of ethics and morality will be shattered. We need to say to the Lord, “Lord, I thank You. Since You came into me, my spirit has become life. Now if I set my mind on my spirit, my mind also will be life. O Lord, how I praise You! Through Your indwelling Spirit, Your zoe life can be dispensed even into my mortal body. Lord, I worship You for this, I enjoy this, and I am one with You in this dispensation.” This is the dispensation of the life of the Triune God into the tripartite man. Through such a dispensing the Triune God becomes one with the tripartite man, and the tripartite man becomes one with the Triune God. It is through this dispensation of the divine life that we become sons of God. Furthermore, it is by this dispensation that we are transformed and conformed to the image of Christ. This is the Christian life and the church life. *(Life Study of Romans, Message 62)*