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# THE PERFECT SON

R. NORTH

If we were to look for a perfect son in this world we should look in vain. The only Perfect Son came forth from the Father into the world, and left the world and went to the Father, more than 1900 years ago. He brought a glory within the range of human contemplation that had never been seen before: 'glory as of an Only-begotten with a Father'. Although the world knew Him not, and His own people received Him not, there were those whose eyes pierced the veil of His humanity, and perceived the Divine glory within. They were able to contemplate His glory, because they belonged to the family.

Adam was a son of God (Luke 3:38). God said 'Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness'. Although this likeness has been marred by the fall, the apostle Paul quoted the words of the heathen poets 'For we are also His offspring' to expose to the Athenians the folly of idolatry (Acts 17, 28, 29). Christians are not merely the offspring of God. They are both 'sons of God' and 'children of God': the term 'children' emphasizing the fact of birth; 'sons' the dignity of the position, and the character of the relationship. 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, *they* are sons of God' (Rom. 8:14). 'The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God' (Rom. 8:16). Angels also are spoken of as 'sons of God': but to which of the angels said He at any time 'THOU art My Son, this day have I begotten thee?' (Heb. 1:5). Israel, as a nation, was called God's son (Ex. 4:22). The One Who is the subject of our meditation is the Son of God in Deity and in Humanity. Son of God eternally, He was equally Son of God when born of the virgin, by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:35).

It is well to keep in mind the words of the Lord Himself, 'No one fully knoweth the Son, but the Father' (Matt. 11:27). It is our privilege to know Him as Saviour, as Lord, as Shepherd, as Priest, as our Advocate with the Father, and in many other precious relationships: but to know the mystery of His Person belongs to the Father alone.

'The higher mysteries of Thy fame  
 The creature's grasp transcend;  
 The Father only Thy blest Name  
 Of Son can comprehend.'

'Neither knoweth anyone the Father, save the Son'. What a blessing He doesn't stop there, but adds 'and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him'. For this word 'whomsoever' not only included His disciples then: it also embraces you and me. Hence we can adoringly sing:

'God and Father we adore Thee,  
 Now revealed in Christ the Son.'

So perfectly did He reveal the Father that He could say to Philip, 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father' (John 14:9).

Under the law, the father of a stubborn and rebellious son, who would not obey the voice of his father, or hearken when he chastened him, was commanded to bring him forth to be stoned (Deut. 21:18-21). Under grace, when the father saw his profligate but repentant son a great way off, he was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and covered him with kisses (Luke 15:20). The disposition of the father's heart was the same towards the self-righteous son. The Perfect Son could not be the object of the righteous government of God, executing judgment upon the rebellious, or the object of compassion and the unmerited favour of God. His life was not a mere negation of lawlessness and self-will, but the glorious perfection of the love which could say, 'The Father hath not left Me alone; for *I* do always the things that are pleasing to Him' (John 8:29). His first recorded words, as a Boy of twelve, were the never-to-be-forgotten words, 'Wist ye not that I must be about My Father's business'; and He never ceased to be occupied in the things of His Father, throughout the whole of His pathway through this world until, having completed the work which the Father gave Him to do, He said 'Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit'.

In wonderful grace, the Lord told David that He would make him a house, and that a son would be raised up to him in whom the kingdom would be established. David could only sit before

the Lord in adoration as he listened to the Divine promise, 'I will be his father, and *he* shall be My son' (2 Sam. 7:14). But how could Solomon, of whom these words were originally spoken, be to the Father all that is expressed in the name of 'Scn'? As one has truly observed, 'The son near at hand is but the shadow of the greater One afar off' (F. W. Grant). There were many things about Solomon that pleased the Lord, especially in the early days of his reign: but Solomon committed iniquity, and God had to chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men. He of Whom Solomon was but the shadow, needed neither chastening nor prevention. Hence the quotation stands in Heb. 1:5 without any qualification, 'I will be to Him for Father, and *He* shall be to Me for Son'. As He emerged from the seclusion of the hidden years at Nazareth, the Father's voice declared 'THOU art My Beloved Son; in Thee I have found My delight'. At the close of His public life, the Father's voice was heard again, 'This is My Beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased'. Never had father such a son! Never had son such a father!

How delightful to be able to contemplate One Whose sole governing motive, throughout the whole of His life in this world, was the will of His Father. His meat was to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work (John 4:34). His judgment was righteous, because He sought not His own will but the will of Him that sent Him (John 5:30). The eternal security, and eternal life, of the believer are indissolubly linked with the will of His Father, and His faithfulness to His Father's trust (John 6:37-40). In laying down His life, and in taking it again, He acted according to His Father's commandment, and furnished the Father with a motive for loving Him. 'Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again. No one taketh it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it again. This commandment have I received of My Father'. (John 10:17, 18). There never was a time when He was not loved by the Father. He could say 'Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world' (John 17:24). But there never was a time when He

was more loved by the Father, than when He laid down His life and took it again according to His Father's commandment, for it showed the depth to which even His devotedness could go.

'To Thy Father's will obedient,  
Thou to death hast been.'

The supreme witness to the world that He loved the Father is seen when, in view of the cross, He said 'As the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence' (John 14:31).

'A son honoureth his father. If then I be a father, where is Mine honour?' was the question asked by the Lord of hosts in the closing book of the Old Testament to the priests that despised His Name (Mal. 1:6). The answer that gladdens our hearts is seen in the life of God's Perfect Son, as depicted in the four gospels. He honoured His Father. He sought not His own glory, but the glory of the One Who sent Him. As He contemplated His approaching death, fully knowing all it involved, He said 'Now is My soul troubled: and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy Name'. And the answer came to Him out of heaven, 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again' (John 12:27, 28). Lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said 'Father, the hour is come. Glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee' (John 17:1). He asks the Father to glorify Him, in order that He might glorify the Father. How wonderful the thought that He is just as much set on glorifying the Father, now He is in heaven, as He was in the days of His flesh. Wherever God's Son is viewed, whether on earth, on the cross, or in heaven, His first and great desire is His Father's glory.

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