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W. H. WITHROW, D.D., Editor

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Our Father.

THE sonship of believers is a New Testament doctrine. Christ first taught it. Moses, Job, David, Isaiah, and Daniel were "servants." When the amazed disciples heard Jesus say, "Our Father," can you wonder at them asking, "Teach us to pray;" possibly meaning, "Teach us so that we may use that prayer, too."

We become sons of God by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the act or new birth of regeneration. "As many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The sonship is the direct gift of the Lord Jesus Christ to the believer, and is through an actual birth by the Holy Ghost, and not by any legal act of adoption; a son by living birth.

Our sonship comes to each of us through personal union with Jesus, and brings us into the fellowship of his own sonship, making us each a child or son of God, in the same sense as he is, himself, the "only begotten son." Nay, more, we are called to the privileges of the first-born, and not that of younger brethren. The eldest, or "first-born," sons inherit, in all eastern countries, the titles and greater portion of the wealth of the father. Jesus is the "First-born" Son of God, and the only-begotten in a sense that can never be applied to any other. Yet, it is this very sonship that he shares with us. We are like him, with him, and even as he, the only-begotten Son of God. Search the Word and see what it says. It may appear strange that it should be thus with so great a multitude of believers, but he is expressly called "the first-born among many brethren." Jesus said in his prayer, interceding for them who should believe through the word of his disciples: "That they may be one, even as we are one; I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Oh, the breath and depth of tenderness and fraternal love in that prayer! What gentle daughter would ask a careful and affectionate father to love all the children of the neighbourhood as he loved her, an only child? Yet that is what Jesus does.

Who is there that would give away the wonderful and peculiar love of a lover or a sweetheart, a husband or a wife, to any one else? Yet Jesus does more than that when he gives his own peculiar treasure of the Father's love to himself away to sordid, sinful men and women. Reverently listen again to him in the closing words of that solicitous prayer before parting in that "upper room" of reverent memory: "Let the love which thou hast for me be in them and I in them." Love them just as thou hast loved me, and bestow all the favour on them thou dost on me. No wonder the weeping "Magdalene," as she caught a glimpse of his loving heart, kissed his feet. How can he love us so!

The Father loves the sinner with a love of pure compassion. He loves the believer with a love of complacency and delight, not because it is merited or deserved, but by reason of the very instinct of his Father heart. Therefore, it is perfect love. It is also everlasting love,

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