

From Slavery To Sonship (2)

Jack and Trisha Frost

What we see taking place in the natural is often a reflection of what is beginning to occur in the spiritual (1 Corinthians 15:46). I want to briefly review and build upon that. The spirit of Ishmael (the orphan heart) warring against the spirit of Isaac (the spirit of a son) seems to be the dominating spirit upon the earth today. The same spirit that is releasing terrorism upon the earth is also prevalent within all of society. Rivalry, envy, and jealousy produce violence within both the natural and spiritual realms as we compete with one another for the hearts of people and seek to establish our own land. Our search for acceptance, significance, and identity often results in a wrestling match as we grasp for what we deem is rightfully ours. It is evident within politics, the workplace, the entertainment and sports industries, and sadly, even within the Church. The result can be a "holy war" unconsciously proclaimed by those with an orphan heart as they struggle with their brethren for position, and authority, and inheritance.



Ishmael (meaning "whom God hears"), was the first-born of Abraham to Hagar, the handmaiden of Sarah, Abraham's wife. At 16 years of age, Ishmael was forced into the wilderness, away from his father, because of jealousy and rivalry between the two women over whose son would have rights to the inheritance of Abraham (Genesis 21:9-21). Arabic historians divide the Arabs into two races: (1) Pure Arabs, descendants of Joktan; and (2) Mixed Arabs, descendants of Ishmael. The prophecies from Genesis 16:12 and 25:18 are now and have always been true: "And he (Ishmael) will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him... He settled in defiance of all his relatives." Since the moment Ishmael experienced rejection from his father through the next 3900 years, many of Ishmael's descendants' attitudes, dispositions, manners, habits, government, or dress have not changed. What also has not changed is the tension between the one who lives life as if he does not have a home (the spirit of an orphan) and the one who is secure in his father's love and heart (the spirit of sonship).

Often within the church, it is difficult to tell whether a person walks in the heart attitude of an orphan or a son (this includes daughters). Outwardly, a person may have a pattern of service, sacrifice, discipline, and apparent loyalty, but you do not know what is inside a person until he or she gets bumped. Then the attitude of the heart overflows at a time when they feel they are not getting the recognition or favor they deserve. Somehow the difference lies in the motives and intentions of the heart. Let us look at the following chart and see what is revealed as we put definitions to the terms "spiritual orphan" and "spiritual son" and place them side by side in contrast with one another.

"It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?" (Hebrews 12:7-9)

THE HEART OF AN ORPHAN

THE HEART OF SONSHIP

See God as Master	IMAGE OF GOD	See God as a loving Father
Independent / Self-reliant	DEPENDENCY	Interdependent / Acknowledges Need
Live by the Love of Law	THEOLOGY	Live by the Law of Love
Insecure / Lack peace	SECURITY	Rest and Peace
Strive for the praise, approval, and acceptance of man	NEED FOR APPROVAL	Totally accepted in God's love and justified by grace
A need for personal achievement as you seek to impress God and others, or no motivation to serve at all	MOTIVE FOR SERVICE	Service that is motivated by a deep gratitude for being unconditionally loved and accepted by God
Duty and earning God's favor or no motivation at all	MOTIVE BEHIND CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES	Pleasure and delight
"Must" be holy to have God's favor, thus increasing a sense of shame and guilt	MOTIVE FOR PURITY	"Want to" be holy; do not want anything to hinder intimate relationship with God
Self-rejection from comparing yourself to others	SELF-IMAGE	Positive and affirmed because you know you have such value to God
Seek comfort in counterfeit affections: addictions, compulsions, escapism, busyness, hyper-religious activity	SOURCE OF COMFORT	Seek times of quietness and solitude to rest in the Father's presence and love
Competition, rivalry, and jealousy toward others' success and position	PEER RELATIONSHIPS	Humility and unity as you value others and are able to rejoice in their blessings and success
Accusation and exposure in order to make yourself look good by making others look bad	HANDLING OTHERS' FAULTS	Love covers as you seek to restore others in a spirit of love and gentleness
See authority as a source of pain; distrustful toward them and lack a heart attitude of submission	VIEW OF AUTHORITY	Respectful, honoring; you see them as ministers of God for good in your life
Difficulty receiving admonition; you must be right so you easily get your feelings hurt and close your spirit to discipline	VIEW OF ADMONITION	See the receiving of admonition as a blessing and need in your life so that your faults and weaknesses are exposed and put to death
Guarded and conditional; based upon others' performance as you seek to get your own needs met	EXPRESSION OF LOVE	Open, patient, and affectionate as you lay your life and agendas down in order to meet the needs of others
Conditional & Distant	SENSE OF GOD'S PRESENCE	Close & Intimate
Bondage	CONDITION	Liberty
Feel like a Servant/Slave	POSITION	Feel like a Son/Daughter
Spiritual ambition; the earnest desire for some spiritual achievement and distinction and the willingness to strive for it; a desire to be seen and counted among the mature.	VISION	To daily experience the Father's unconditional love and acceptance and then be sent as a representative of His love to family and others.
Fight for what you can get!	FUTURE	Sonship releases your inheritance!

With the chart and scriptures listed, let's define the orphan spirit and the spirit of sonship. The orphan spirit causes one to live life as if he does not have a safe and secure place in the Father's heart. He feels he has no place of affirmation, protection, comfort, belonging, or affection. Self-oriented, lonely, and inwardly isolated, he has no one from whom to draw Godly inheritance. Therefore, he has to strive, achieve, compete, and earn everything he gets in life. It easily leads to a life of anxiety, fears, and frustration.

The spirit of sonship is all about having a heart attitude of submission – being subject to another's mission. Jesus Himself said, "The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner." (John 5:19) In Hebrews 12:9, "Be subject" is also the word "submission." In the Greek, this word means "to get underneath and to push up." So to have the spirit of sonship is to put yourself underneath another's mission and do all you can to make them successful, knowing that as a son/daughter, there is an inheritance that lies ahead. Sonship is about security, significance, identity, patience, basic trust, faithfulness, loyalty, humility, and being others-oriented.

After reading through the contrast chart and definitions, you probably are saying to yourself, "Woe is me!" You may fit into only some of the categories, but most likely you will have some bleed-over between the two. Now perhaps you can see why walking in healthy relationships with God and/or others has been so difficult for you or someone you know.

The orphan spirit is not something you can cast out because it is ungodly beliefs and/or attitudes of our flesh that has been developing over a lifetime. It has become part of our personality and character. It must be displaced (put to death) by a personal experience in the Father's love and a revelation of the spirit of sonship. This will require a re-positioning of our life. Peter Lord recently said, "If you keep doing what you have been doing, you're going to keep getting what you already got!"

We must first acknowledge our need for change. Between 1988 and 1991, Trisha and I were on staff with Pastor Houston Miles at Evangel Cathedral in Spartanburg, SC. At that time, we had no revelation of what it meant to live life as a spiritual orphan or as a son/daughter. We thought we were faithful and loyal staff members. We never spoke against the pastor. We did not stir up strife. But we acted more like servants than sons as we slaved to build the church and our ministry. Until we received a revelation of sonship, we could not see that we were not there in a spirit of sonship – subject to another's mission and doing everything to make him more successful. We were there to build a name for ourselves. We were using that season and Pastor Miles as stepping stones to go on to what we wanted to do. We did not value him for relationship, but for what he could do for us by making us successful in our ministry.

A parent can pick up on a wrong spirit quickly in their children, but they continue to love and nurture. Pastor Miles sensed our spirits and continued to honor us, but he could not fully trust us when we started Shiloh Place Ministries in 1991. As an apostolic covering for many pastors, churches, and for us, he believed in what we were doing and the anointing upon us to minister to leaders. But he could not fully endorse and promote us because he knew the motives of our hearts were often tainted with spiritual ambition. As we struggled to build the ministry, we often reasoned that he had the

power to make us more successful and visible, but could not understand why he seemed to withhold that from us. Sadly, it took us years to receive the revelation that this was not about Pastor Miles, but about the orphan spirit within us.

Then in October 1997, a close friend, Pastor Roger Gosnell, told us that he felt the motives of our hearts were not pure in relationship to Pastor Miles and Evangel Fellowship International (EFI), the minister's fellowship he founded and of which we are a part. At first, we could see no fault on our part because we worked so hard to do everything right. The orphan spirit usually struggles with self-deception and points fault elsewhere. For several weeks we searched our heart attitudes, and the Holy Spirit began to convict us of many of the characteristics of the spiritual orphan within us. We faced the truth that we were with EFI and on staff at Evangel Cathedral years earlier for the same purpose: what they could do to promote us so that we could build our ministry.

Second, we began to confess to one another the sins of the orphan spirit. As we began to acknowledge our impure motives, it was as if we stepped out of darkness and into the light. Soon, we could sense the motives behind our ministry beginning to shift. We knew that in order to move more deeply into this revelation, we needed to go to Pastor Miles and share our hearts with him.

Third, we felt there was a need to receive forgiveness from those against whom we had sinned. I (Jack) took a four-hour drive just to meet with Pastor Miles and tell him how our eyes had been opened. I shared how, for nine years, we lacked a spirit of sonship and related to him for what he could do for us and not for how we could make the vision God had given him more successful. We did not intentionally dishonor him. It was an unconscious grasping within us for position and recognition. We were blinded by our own orphan issues to our own need! He said something like, "I forgave you long ago, but was waiting for you to see it yourself and acknowledge your need." It was as if the relationship with us was reborn as basic trust was restored.

Fourth, Trisha and I knew this would be a daily walk of repentance. The spirit of sonship was not a garment we put on, but it was a change of heart so deep that it brought change to our habits. A new passion was awakened within us to be a blessing in every way possible to Pastor Miles, EFI, and our local church. No longer did we want to bless in order to get something in return. No longer did we grudgingly give of our finances. No longer did we have to be seen or accepted. We knew our identity was in the Father's love, and it became the desire of our hearts to do everything we could to see another's vision and calling fulfilled.

Fifth, we received revelation on sowing into our inheritance. God soon branded on our hearts several verses: "For if the Gentiles have shared in their spiritual things, they are indebted to minister to them also in material things." "And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life." (Romans 15:27; Galatians 6:6-8)

God began to speak to us about the debt we owed to our local church, EFI, and Pastor Miles for all the years of their putting up with our immaturity and helping equip us in our calling. For years, we had sown to our vision and what we wanted, and we reaped very little from our own flesh. Our ministry remained small, unknown, and struggling. It was time we began to repay the debt and sow all we could into our mentors, apostolic

covering, teachers, and local church in order to make their missions successful. How could we serve them? How could we bless? How could we support them financially? How could we pray for them?

Sixth, we began receiving our inheritance. For so many years, we had fought and grasped for recognition and ministry. Then, as a passion for the spirit of sonship rose up within us, almost overnight the blessings of God came upon Shiloh Place, Trisha, and me as we began receiving the inheritance that God had spoken over us many times from as far back as 1980: "I will make you a voice of healing and restoration to the nations." For 17 years we had struggled, but the anointing began to increase in our ability to bring forth the message of the Father's healing love. More people were being saved than ever before. Ministers' families were being healed and restored. Invitations began coming in from around the world. Financial support increased dramatically. SPM became a voice of healing and restoration throughout the nations. What we had fought to achieve for years as spiritual orphans had come in a very short time as the favor of God poured out upon us when we began walking in submission and sonship. That is where His inheritance flows! Spiritual orphans do not have legal rights to the inheritance. It is reserved only for sons and daughters.

Many people have been given words that God will use them mightily to minister to others. Yet, it seems the day and the hour of the Lord's release in your life has been delayed. Others have wondered why they have prayed every prayer known to mankind for deliverance or healing of emotional pain, yet they still battle frustration, anxiety, loneliness, and fears. For Trisha and me, we had to address the hidden, unconscious issues of the spiritual orphan. There is so much more to say about this, and I know this answers some questions and opens the door for many others to be addressed. If you must hear more, you may want to order the 3-audiotape series from SPM, "From Slavery to Sonship." It goes much more in-depth into this revelation, and is setting captives free, releasing greater anointing in leaders, and having a greater impact than anything we have taught before.

With the Father's love,

Jack & Trisha Frost

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