

# Sermon Outline

“LIFE IN HIS NAME”:  
THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

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## JESUS IS THE SON OF GOD

*JOHN 20:30-31*

### I. God’s Word of Life to Us

### II. Various Uses of “Son of God”

- A. In his recent book entitled *Jesus the Son of God*, New Testament scholar Donald Carson examines all the various ways in which the title “Son of God” has been used (Carson, *Jesus the Son of God*, 29).
- B. “Son of God” is used for *Adam*.
- Luke 3:38: “the son of Enos, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.”
- C. “Son of God” is used for the *nation of Israel*.
- Exodus 4:22-23: “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, ‘Let my son go that he may serve me.’ If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’”
- D. “Son of God” as the *individual Israelite*.
- Deuteronomy 14:1-2: “You are the sons of the LORD your God. You shall not cut yourselves or make any baldness on your foreheads for the dead. For you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and the LORD has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”
- E. “Son of God” as the *follower of Jesus*.
- Matthew 5:9: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”
  - John 1:12: “But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God [.]”
- F. “Son of God” as the *king from the house of David*.
- 2 Samuel 7:14: “I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son.”
  - Psalm 2:7: “I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to me, ‘You are my Son; today I have begotten you’ (Carson, *Jesus the Son of God*, 32).

G. “Son of God” as the *glorified believer*.

- Revelation 21:6-8: “And he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment. The one who conquers will have this heritage, and I will be his God and he will be my son. But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.’”
- Romans 8:23: “And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”

H. Summary: The title “son of God” has been applied to...

1. Adam
2. Israel
3. Individual Israelites
4. Followers of Jesus
5. The Davidic King
6. The glorified believer

### III. Jesus as Son of God

A. With regard to Jesus, we find that the term “Son of God” takes on an even heightened meaning. While all members of God’s people are sons of God by adoption, Jesus is Son of God in an even greater way. And Carson discerns a least three distinct ways that this term has been used of Jesus.

B. First: *Jesus is the Son of God because he is the Davidic King*. Some verses where “Son of God” has been used in this sense are as follows.

- Matthew 16:16: “Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”
  - Luke 1:32-33: “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”
  - John 1:49: “Nathanael answered him, ‘Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!’”
- Jesus is Son of God because he is the Son of David. And in that sense, the term “Son of God” is very closely related to “Christ.”

C. Second: *Jesus is the Son of God, because he is the embodiment of Israel*.

1. Carson directs our attention to those verses surrounding Jesus’ baptism and temptation in the wilderness.

2. In Matthew 3:17, we are told that upon his baptism, a voice from heaven said, ““This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.”” Now the use of Son here refers to Jesus as the Servant of the Lord as well as the Davidic King who is to come.
  3. This is followed by the temptation narrative where Satan tempts Jesus to sin by getting him to use his special status of sonship to get out of hardship.
    - Matthew 4:3: ““If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.””
    - Matthew 4:6: ““If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘He will command his angels concerning you...’”
  4. Jesus fends off the attack by recalling God’s commandments.
    - a. As Carson points out, the texts that Jesus quotes were passages that were addressed to/used of Israel as a whole (Dt 8:3; Ps 91:11, 12; Dt 6:13).
    - b. From those verses, it’s clear that Jesus understood his sonship not merely in a royal sense, but in a representative sense—Jesus represented and embodied the people of God.
    - c. There is widespread agreement that when Jesus underwent his temptation in the wilderness, he was replaying or reliving the history of Israel. He obeyed God where Israel failed.
    - d. Jesus showed himself as the Son of God precisely by his obedience. (Carson, *Son of God*, 40).
  5. One more verse that points to this conclusion: Matthew 2:15.
    1. Speaking about how Jesus spent time in Egypt as a child, we read that he “remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’”
    2. The phrase ““Out of Egypt I called my son”” comes from Hosea 11:1, which was originally speaking about Israel.
    3. The impression that John wants us to have is that Jesus is the embodiment of Israel. Jesus is the new Israel who succeeds where the old Israel had failed.
- D. Third: *Jesus is the Son of God, because he shares the same essence as God the Father.*
- John 5:22, 23: ““The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.””
  - John 1:14: ““And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.””
  - Colossians 1:15-16: ““He [Jesus the Son of God] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones

or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.”

- Hebrews 1:1-3: “Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high [.]”

E. Donald Carson draws this conclusion:

In these and numerous other passages (e.g., Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 14:9; 17:1-8; 1 John 5:20), Jesus is not the Son of God by virtue of being the ultimate Israel, nor is he the Son of God by virtue of being the Messiah, the ultimate Davidic king, nor is he the Son of God by virtue of being a perfect human being. Rather, he is the Son of God from eternity, simultaneously distinguishable from his heavenly Father yet one with him, the perfect Revealer of the living God (Carson, *Son of God*, 41).

F. Summary

1. Jesus is the Son of God in the sense that...
  - a. He is the new Son of David, the King of Israel.
  - b. He is the embodiment of Israel.
  - c. He is Son of God in the sense that he really is God’s own “flesh-and-blood,” if we could speak metaphorically. Jesus is the Son of God in the sense that he is God himself.
2. John 5:25-29 presents us with the divine nature of Jesus’ sonship: So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. <sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son and shows him all that he himself is doing. And greater works than these will he show him, so that you may marvel. <sup>21</sup> For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. <sup>22</sup> The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup> that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. <sup>24</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

#### **IV. Believe that Jesus Is the Son of God**

- A. When we come to the title “Son of God,” we are saying more than just that Jesus is the Messiah or the Christ.

- B. “Son of God” does include “Christ” in its meaning. But it’s much more.
1. To believe that Jesus is the Son of God is to believe that Jesus is the one true God of Israel.
  2. It is to confess that Jesus himself is, in some mysterious way, the Lord GOD himself.
- C. The Jewish teaching concerning the Messiah has undergone a change because of Jesus Christ.
1. While many Jews continue to hold out hope for a coming Messiah, they do not believe that the Messiah is God.  
—Rather, the Messiah is a special Human Being sent by God to bring his Word and justice into the world.
  2. But because of who Jesus is, we are forced to revamp our belief in the Messiah. Because of who Jesus is, we see that God does indeed have a surprise in store for his people.
  3. God himself comes to his people in the form of his very own Anointed One. God himself becomes his own Servant.
  4. He becomes his own Servant to answer—on behalf of his people—his own call for absolute obedience, and then to take—also on behalf of his people—the condemnation that they deserve.
  5. It is in Christ Jesus that the love of God comes to its fullest expression.
    - a. First John 4:10 states: “In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”
    - b. As passages in John, Colossians, and Hebrews shows us, this Son is the very extension and projection of God’s very own essence, God’s very own being.
- D. The appropriate response to knowing that Jesus is the Son of God is, as John says, to *believe* in him. It is to entrust our lives to him. It is to rest our hopes on him. It is to place our future on him. And it is to receive him as the Son of God for us.
- E. On this note, I should point out that it is very important for us to recognize that Jesus came into the world for *us*.
- John 3:17: “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”
- F. Both the divine sonship and messianic sonship of Jesus Christ are God’s gifts of love to the world. What do we do with this gift of God’s Son? Will we run to him, or will we keep him at arm’s length?

- G. If we are not yet believers in the Lord Jesus, it is God’s desire that you trust in Jesus.
- John 3:18: “Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.”
- H. If we are believers in the Lord Jesus, it is our heavenly Father’s desire that we continue to trust in and look to Jesus.
- John 15:5: “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15:5).
- I. Since Jesus is revealed in the Word of God, the main measure we must take is to go frequently to the Word of God and expose ourselves to the glory of Christ.
- Hear Christ proclaimed by pastors in Church
  - Join Christ in baptism
  - Partake of Christ at the Lord’s Table.
  - Encourage one another with Christ (cf. Col 3:16).
  - Feast on Christ by reading Scripture, reading good Christian books, listening to songs and sound bites that hold Christ up clearly and squarely to us.

**Keep on trusting in Jesus Christ the Son of God. Keep on praying to him. Keep on learning about him. Keep on resting in his life, death, resurrection, and ascension for you. Keep on asking the Son of God to become more and more the delight of your souls. Don’t ever stop relating to Jesus. Cherish him, because he is God’s gift to you—for your life and your eternal joy.**

*Lord Jesus,  
 you are the eternal Son of God,  
 the Image of the invisible God,  
 the Radiance of the divine glory,  
 the exact Imprint of the divine nature.  
 You are God’s gift of eternal life.  
 In you, we find our heart’s desire:  
 God who is Life.  
 We turn away from the false gods who claim our hearts,  
 from the world and its dictates over our souls.  
 We come to you alone, Son of God for truth, life, righteousness, strength, and glory.  
 Save us from our sins Lord Jesus.  
 Grant us yourself.  
 Amen.*