

Revisiting "Sonship" Part 2

John R Gavazzoni

"They can't see the forest for the trees." That could be said of so many formal or informal fellowship-networks of believers whose gathering together, in one form or another, has tended to be around some particular revelation-distinctive, as rich in content as that distinctive might be.

It is so important that, besides closely examining individual trees in the forest, that we get up higher and see the whole of the forest, its larger majestic grandeur, so that we don't end up, so to speak, with our noses up against tree bark, virtually oblivious to the larger picture. This most certainly applies to the subject of creation eagerly waiting for the revealing of the sons of God. (Rom.8:19).

There is a principle that, once grasped, helps to get us to that higher ground that will afford us a view of this breathtakingly glorious forest. This principle is:---simply stated---"You ain't, as the elect of God, generically different than any other human being, fella.' You need to get that through your head, AND, even as to your initial and continuing response to God's call, you have nothing of which to boast."

You see; folks who have received the grace of God that is intrinsic to the election of God, have not received that grace to set them apart as God's pets, but as God's patterns. Day after day, God adds to, and sets apart some as members of, what is, the penultimate manifestation of the elect of God. They are the less than final expressions of His election. There is the ultimate dimension of election and the penultimate dimension.

Ultimately, all humanity is the elect of God. Those presently participating in election are meant to be indicative of, REPRESENTATIVE of, how He, not only values all mankind, and relates to all mankind, but representative of that community to which all men belong---the community of the elect.

Let me draw a parallel as an excellent illustration. When, on earth, believers gather together, interact together, relate to one another as members of Christ's body in locally expressive ways within society, we call that a church (or better, a gathering, or assembly). But certainly, whenever or wherever there is that expression, we don't think of that as the whole of the body of Christ, It's a local corporate expression of Him at any given point in time.

Even if we were to speak of the whole global called-out gathering of Christ, even that would not be the whole of Christ's body, for there are those who are no longer with us visibly, and there are those who are yet to be added to our ranks.

Ultimately, the "church" (poor translation) is the totality of the redeemed, and that totality is/will be the totality of all humanity. We are at any given time the present "summoned gathering" (my preference over "church), not the final one. The present expression is, just that, a present expression; it is not the whole, and until the whole is revealed, whatever the called-out, the summoned ones are meant to accomplish will not be fully accomplished.

Though much is accomplished penultimately as we move toward the aeonian consummation of God's purpose in the earth; though we do break through the gates of hades and proclaim our Lord's victory over death and the grave, the gates still have, by some definition, a presence in the earth that presents us with the challenge of that final unqualified demonstration of death's impotence.

When the writers of the New Testament---particularly in respect to the epistles---speak of "we," "us," "you;" they did not intend to be understood as addressing an eternally distinct element within the human family, but a called-out expression of the whole of humanity, which will be called out of death, into life abundant; out of the kingdom of this world, into the kingdom of our God, and of His Christ.

So it is with the revealing of the sons of God. The sons of God are all the children of God, fully grown up into nothing less than the measure of the stature of Christ, and those children, finally understood, are each and every child "born of a woman."

The Last Adam, gathers together, sums up, and fulfills in Himself, all of the first Adam. Until we see this, the cult-mentality is still present with us and corrupting the fellowship of the saints. "Us" and "them" has to begin to take on a different meaning to us. "Them thar folk" who don't know what we know need to be seen as "them thar folk" who are OUR kind, but just don't know it yet.

John R Gavazzoni