

Jesus The Only Begotten Of God  
John 1:12-14

Here in the passage that we'll study today is a very special word, a word seldom used in our modern-day conversations, but a word that has meaning and purpose that reaches beyond our ordinary human comprehension. The word is "Begotten", Begotten"!

And though this word "Begotten" is not a commonly used word today, variations of this word was used by the people of Jesus day. We find it especially within the translation of the King James version of the bible, using the words begat and begot when describing the genealogy and lineage of the Lord Jesus. There in the Book of Matthew, the meaning of the word was simply expressing the birthing of the sons and daughters of the people mentioned.

But as we read this word "Begotten" as it's given to us here in the Book of John chapter 1 describing the Person of the Lord Jesus, there is another altogether different and very special meaning that's being ascribed to it.

Here, the word "Begotten" is not describing the birthing of the Lord Jesus into His human form, it has another meaning that reaches back even long before He was conceived and born there as a babe in Bethlehem. This word "Begotten" describes the Lord Jesus as He was and has always been for all eternity, "Begotten of the Father", Eternally Begotten of the Father".

In the sense that the word "Begotten" is used here, it has nothing to do with "birthing". Jesus, as the Second Person of the Trinity was not "birthed" or in any sense of the word "created". Jesus, as the Second Person of the Trinity had no beginning and He has no end. This "begotten-ness" has instead to do with Him having the same substance, same essence and same nature as God the Father.

And no, my description doesn't even come close to an adequate explanation of the "Begotten" nature of the Lord Jesus, but these are the best words that the Lord has given to my mind for this moment in time!

And please do bear with me for a few moments. These explanations might seem a bit tedious. But it's so very important that we know all that we can know about our Lord, especially concerning His "eternal" being.

Perhaps the description given in the Westminster Confession of Faith might help us. Listen! There we're told . . .

"In the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Father is of none, neither begotten, nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Spirit eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son."

Also, in the words of the Nicene Creed, we're told . . .

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made."

What these words of the Nicene Creed are affirming with the words "Begotten Not Made" is that the Son is from the Father eternally, having His same divine nature. When He came into existence as a Man, He was already, from eternity past, in existence as God.

And yes, as we know from many proofs within the "Gospels", when Jesus came to this earth, He came having two natures, still fully God, but then also fully human, a condition that our human minds will never fully comprehend, but is true, nonetheless.

But with His birth, the description "Eternally Begotten of the Father" took on an added meaning. As He came to be among us, the Lord Jesus brought with Him all the plans, all the purposes and the ability to change the sinful souls of men and women like you and me into the "sons" that He had envisioned since before the foundations of the earth were laid. And oh, what a blessed provision that would be to us, that we too would become "sons of God".

But let's pause these thoughts for a moment and read about it in today's passage. I'll begin with verse 1 so that we can get the full picture, but we'll concentrate our study on verses 12 through 14.

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God.

<sup>3</sup> All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

<sup>4</sup> In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.  
<sup>5</sup> The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.  
<sup>6</sup> There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.  
<sup>7</sup> He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.  
<sup>8</sup> He was not the Light, but *he* came to testify about the Light.  
<sup>9</sup> There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.  
<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.  
<sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.  
<sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name,  
<sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.  
<sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.  
(John 1:1-14)

I chose to read this passage from the NASV of the bible. I could have read it from the KJV or the NKJV and it would have been similar in its wording. But if I had read this passage from one of the newer versions of scripture, the ESV and some of the others, there would have been a noticeable lack of the use of these words in verse 14 "the only begotten from the Father".

And why would that have been? Are some of those versions wrong and the others right? Not necessarily! It is a choice that is being made by the publisher, a choice in which I very much prefer to use a version that has been more accepted and preferred by most of the bible translators throughout the many centuries past.

The translations differ because the words that make up the phrase "only begotten of the Father" are an odd combination of words. The word for "only" is repeated a second time. It would be like saying that Jesus is the "only, only of the Father". And there is something very special that most learned bible scholars have come to understand about the intended meaning of the "two-fold" use of these words "only, only", that as these two "onlys" combine with the words for "of the Father", it produces the more appropriate wording, "only begotten of the Father".

The Greek word being “Monogenēs”, meaning that Jesus was “Mono”, the “Only, Only”, and “Genes” meaning that He is of exactly the same Kind and essence and nature as God the Father”.

And no, I am not a fit bible scholar that can argue the matter, but because the trusted bible scholars who wrote the words of the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Nicene Creed understood that “Only begotten of the Father” was the intended meaning of those words, I am comfortable with preaching and teaching that Jesus truly was “the Only Begotten of the Father”.

With that being said then, may we fully take these thoughts into our hearts and minds. Because this is the fundamental difference between who Jesus was and who you and I are. He was an “only, only”, the “only begotten of the Father”, of exactly the same Kind and Essence and Nature as God the Father”.

Those words in Hebrews chapter 1,

<sup>3</sup>The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being. (Hebrews 1:3)

And as Jesus came to this earth in human form, He was still the Only Begotten of the Father, retaining the full sum and substance of the Father, but then also taking on the full sum and substance of a man.

And because God His Father had no “sin nature”, as Jesus was birthed into this world He had no “sin nature” passed to Him in His human condition through His DNA.

Listen carefully to the way the Holy Spirit explained it for us in Luke chapter 1 as the Angel Gabriel said to Mary,

<sup>35</sup>. . . “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. (Luke 1:35)

Folks, this is why the “virgin birth” was so very necessary. Jesus had no earthly father to pass on the sin nature to Him. God the Father was Jesus’ Father.

You and I in a similar manner proceed from our fathers. And unfortunately, just as with the Lord we receive and we retain the sum and substance of our fathers, their personalities, their traits, and unfortunately also their human "sinful natures".

And because of that, you and I, are not true "sons of God" as we enter into this world. Why do we need to know this for sure? It's because there are false teachers in many of the churches across our land and especially on our televisions and internet that make those false claims, saying that we can become so much like the Lord Jesus that we can do some of the same things that He can do, that we can "speak" things into existence, especially things having to do with money.

But folks, such things are not true. As you and I are "begotten of our earthly fathers" we come into this life full of our father's sin nature. And left unchanged, we'll become just like them.

We are clearly told about that in John chapter 3. Listen!

<sup>18</sup>He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18)

Folks, unless and until this one specific change comes into the lives of the "sons of men" . . . that we would "believe on the name of the only begotten Son of God", then each one of us stands condemned already.

And that is the second part of this message today. In verse 12, we are told with a certainty that if we, by a deliberate act of our will, reach out and receive Christ, we will be given the right to become "children of God", "sons of God", very much like the Lord Jesus.

And no, we will not suddenly become "begotten" of God as Jesus was, but we will have the living presence of His Spirit within us. And by His presence we become "adopted" as sons.

Listen again!

<sup>12</sup>Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)

To those of us who believe in the Lord Jesus and receive Him by faith, He will give "the right" to become "children of God", children with "privileges that go far beyond any privileges that we can imagine".

Children occupy a very special spot in the heart of a loving father. And God wants you and me to grab hold of that concept about our relationship with Him.

He wants us to be able to move on past the notion of simple adherence to rules and laws. He wants us to see that our Christianity is so much better and more intimate than simply a set of excellent principles to live by.

God wants us to have a personal union, an intimate bond with Him. He wants us to be "family", and so He deliberately uses the words "children" and "sons".

And folks, He does it all for a reason. He has plans for us, plans that include our joining with Him in the "business of His kingdom".

I'm reminded of the concept of a family business. A father begins his business from scratch and through the years that business grows. As opportunities arise, he involves his sons and daughters in the work and in the management of the business. At some particular point, the father, with great joy, passes the daily operation of the business along to his sons and daughters. It is a precious moment in the life of the father.

With others in the business, the hired men, it's very different. A hired man may work hard and be able to follow the rules and principles of good business. He may even be intensely loyal, but his hard work and his loyalty will only go so far.

A hired man simply doesn't have the same heart as the owner. A hired man is likely to abandon the business when the going gets rough, or a seemingly better offer comes to him.

Those words given in John chapter 10.

<sup>12</sup>"He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

<sup>13</sup> "He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. (John 10:12-13)

No one cares for the sheep like the shepherd. And no one cares for the business like the owner.

God invites you and me to be His "children" and to "join in" with Him as shepherds, as owners, as intimate participants in the "business of His kingdom".

Folks, to the unbelieving heart and mind, this sounds like real fantasy. Even to us as believers, this kind of thinking is inconceivable. But it is pure and unsullied truth. And God wants us to grab hold of it.

Listen again!

<sup>12</sup>Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)

And He repeats this message over and over again in the scriptures. Listen to this truth given in Galatians chapter 4,

<sup>4</sup> . . . when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, <sup>5</sup>To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. <sup>6</sup>And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. <sup>7</sup>Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Galatians 4:4-7)

And also in Romans chapter 8, God tells us,

<sup>14</sup>For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. <sup>15</sup>For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. <sup>16</sup>The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: (Romans 8:14-16)

I'm not sure just how all of these thoughts come across in your mind. I must confess, in my own mind the concept is hard to grab hold of. But I do know that I want it, for myself and for my family.

And I know that if I don't personally surrender to God's claim on me as a son, then the "business" of His kingdom will not go forward in the way He intends.

Folks, we may truly be saved, in a narrow sense. But in every other way, we may be "estranged" from God as our Father.

Let's think again for a moment about the analogy of the man and his family business. If the children of the man who owns the business chooses to open their own business, or perhaps chooses to go to work for someone else, then the whole plan has difficulty in developing.

The children may remain faithful children in the sense that they visit regularly, they share supper together, they hug their Dad, they even give him some "weekend help" on certain projects, but they aren't interested in "taking over his business". If all of that be so, then the father's business will flounder and might someday even cease to exist.

You and I can remain faithful children of God in the sense that we visit with Him regularly on Sunday, even perhaps sometimes during the week.

But what is to happen if we do nothing more . . . if we simply choose to live our own lives . . . If we aren't truly interested in "taking over our Father's business".

What then will happen with us? And what will happen to His kingdom business?

Folks, no, you and I truly are not the "only, only begotten of the Father" as Jesus is. Jesus and Jesus alone has claim to that name. He is the "Only Begotten of the Father".

But through salvation, you and I do become His "adopted" sons and daughters and able to become "conformed to the very image of the Lord Jesus", God's only begotten Son. And oh, what a precious condition of soul that will be for us, an indescribable free gift.

And as His adopted children, His "adopted sons", we have obligations that we absolutely must not ignore . . . obligations to join with God's "only begotten Son", the Lord Jesus, and to be about the work of His kingdom! Those words again in John chapter 1,

<sup>12</sup>Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right (and I might cautiously add, the responsibility) to become children of God. (John 1:12)

And dear friends, God truly does want you and me to become His "sons", His sons and daughters, adopted children that are conformed to the image of His "Only Begotten Son". And we must do that, we really must do that . . . else we'll

not only not be able to “see” His Kingdom while we’re still living within this daily life of ours, we’ll especially not be able to join into our Lord’s eternal Kingdom in heaven. Sadly, we’ll remain forever within the misery that the “darkness” provides to us.

Oh dear friends, join with me and live within that precious light that the Lord Jesus, the “Only Begotten of the Father” provides for us!

Pray with me.