

**Outline of
the Messages for the Full-time Training
in the Spring Term of 2023**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE CRUCIAL POINTS OF THE TRUTH IN PAUL'S EPISTLES**

Message One

The Designation of Jesus Christ to Be the Son of God

Scripture Reading: John 1:18; 3:16, 18; 14:9-10; 20:31; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:3, 29

I. We need to know the Son of God—John 3:16; 20:31:

- A. *The Son of God* implies the expression of God; because the Son expressed the Father, the Son is the expression of the Father—1:18; 14:9-10.
- B. In the Godhead the Son is the effulgence of God's glory and the impress of His substance—Heb. 1:3a:
 - 1. The glory is the outward expression, and the substance is the inward essence:
 - a. With respect to glory as the outward expression of God, the Son is the effulgence of God's glory—v. 3a.
 - b. With respect to substance as the inward essence of God, the Son is the impress of God's substance—v. 3a.
 - 2. For the Son to be the effulgence of God's glory and the impress of God's substance means that the Son is God reaching us and coming to dispense Himself into us—2 Cor. 13:14.

II. "I will raise up your seed after you...I will be his Father, and he will be My son"—2 Sam. 7:12a, 14a:

- A. *Your seed* in 2 Samuel 7:12a and *My son* in verse 14a imply that the seed of David would become the Son of God, that is, that a human seed would become a divine Son—Rom. 1:3-4.
- B. This word concerning the seed of David becoming the Son of God is continued and developed strongly in the New Testament—Matt. 22:41-45; Rev. 22:16.

III. Regarding the Son of God, there are two aspects—the aspect of the only begotten Son of God and the aspect of the firstborn Son of God—John 3:16; Rom. 8:3, 29:

- A. The Bible calls the second in the Godhead the only begotten Son of God—John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9:
 - 1. His being the only begotten Son of God refers to His divinity and to His identity in the Godhead—John 1:18.
 - 2. As the only begotten Son, He is of the same essence with the Father and the Spirit; He possesses the full essence of God with all its unique attributes—Col. 2:9.
 - 3. His being the only begotten Son does not mean that there was a time when He did not exist and that at some point in eternity past He was begotten of God:
 - a. He is eternally God—Heb. 1:12; 7:3.
 - b. His begetting refers not to an event but to an eternal relationship with the Father; the Father is the eternal source of the Son, and the Son is the eternal expression of the Father—1:3a.
- B. Through resurrection Christ became the Son of God in the aspect of the firstborn Son of God—vv. 5-6; Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 13:33:
 - 1. His being the firstborn Son of God refers to the Lord's resurrection, when He was glorified to be the Son of God both in His divinity and in His humanity—Rom. 1:3-4.

2. In His divinity He was already the only begotten Son of God, but through His resurrection His humanity became the Son of God also, and the way was opened for us to become the many sons of God—John 1:18; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4.
 3. Through resurrection His humanity was “sonized” and uplifted to the eternal plane.
 4. Through resurrection Christ became the firstborn Son of God as the life-dispenser for the propagation of the life embodied in Him—8:29, 10, 6, 11.
- C. In His first coming Christ was the only begotten Son of God; in His second coming He will be the firstborn Son—Heb. 1:6-8.
- D. Christ’s being the only begotten Son is for us to be redeemed and to have eternal life; Christ’s becoming the firstborn Son through His death and resurrection is for us to become sons of God as heirs to inherit all the riches of what God is, that is, to receive, participate in, and enjoy the riches of the Triune God—John 3:14-16; Rom. 1:3-4; 8:14-17; Gal. 3:26, 29.

IV. We need to know Christ in His resurrection, who was designated the Son of God in power with His human nature—Rom. 1:3-4:

- A. Before His incarnation and resurrection, Christ was the Son of God, the only begotten Son—John 1:18; 3:16.
- B. Although Christ already was the Son of God before the incarnation, He still needed to be designated the Son of God out of resurrection because by incarnation He had put on the human nature, which had nothing to do with divinity—1:1, 14; Rom. 8:3:
1. After the Son of God became incarnate, His divine nature was concealed by the flesh.
 2. Christ was already the Son of God in His divinity, but the part of Him that was Jesus with the human nature, born of Mary, was not the Son of God—Luke 1:31-32, 35.
 3. By His resurrection Christ sanctified and uplifted His human nature, His humanity, and He was designated out of resurrection as the Son of God with this human nature; in this sense He was begotten the Son of God in His resurrection—Rom. 1:3-4; Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5.
 4. This designation of the Son of God was “in power,” the power of Christ’s resurrection, the reality of which is the Spirit—Rom. 1:4; Phil. 3:10; Eph. 1:19-20.
- C. Through designation in resurrection the Christ who was already the Son of God before His incarnation became the Son of God in a new way—Rom. 1:4:
1. Before His incarnation He was the Son of God only with divinity; through His resurrection He was designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity—v. 4.
 2. If Christ had not put on human nature, there would have been no need for Him to be designated the Son of God, for in His divinity He was already the Son of God, even from eternity—John 1:18; 17:5.
 3. Having put on humanity through incarnation, He was designated the Son of God with humanity in resurrection—1:14; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4; Heb. 2:14:
 - a. As the designated Son of God, Christ has two natures, divinity and humanity; the humanity that He now has is not a natural humanity but a humanity uplifted in resurrection—Rom. 1:4.
 - b. Even Christ’s human nature has been designated the Son of God, for He has been designated the Son of God with both divinity and humanity.
- D. The designation of Christ as the Son of God with humanity was “according to the Spirit of holiness”—v. 4:
1. When the Lord Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He was designated the Son of God in power by resurrection according to the Spirit of holiness that was in Him—v. 4.
 2. Now He is the Son of God in a way that is more wonderful than before, for now He has both the divine nature and the resurrected, transformed, uplifted, glorified, and designated human nature—6:4; Luke 24:26; John 17:5; Acts 3:13.