

Treasure Hunt 2006

Ps. 119:162 I rejoice in your Word like one who discovers a great treasure.

Lesson #3 SONS OF GOD: From a Child-heir to a Mature Son February 4, 2026

Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons [huios] of God.

Greek Words for Family Relationship: Tekna & Huios

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right

to become children [tekna] of God, to those who believe in His name:

When one is born-again by grace through faith in Jesus Christ, he is a child [tekna] of God.

- Refers to your relationship to God—being born of Him
- Born into His family through the work of Christ on the cross. Heir of God
- Reconciled to God; Have The Peace With God
- Holy Spirit indwells each child [tekna]. Holy Spirit seals each child.

Rom. 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons [huios] of God.

Sons = Huios: Refers to growing up to take your place in the household of faith—
spiritual maturity and responsibility

Key: They now possess The Peace Of God. They walk in God's promised peace.

Key: The Spirit of God produces the sons [huios] of God.

Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons [huios] of God.

Heb. 2:10 For it was fitting for God [an act worthy of His divine nature] that He, for Whom and by Whom all things exist, in bringing many sons [huios] to glory, should make the author and founder of their salvation perfect through suffering [bringing to maturity the human experience necessary for Him to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest].

Eph. 1:5 He having Predestined Us

- See 1:1b To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Eph. 1:5 He having Predestined Us To Adoption As Sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, [roots adoption in His eternal purpose]

- #5206. Huiotesia: divine adoption as sons [huios]

Consider: When I was born-again, I became a child [tekna] of God.

God's purpose and will is that each tekna becomes a son [huios] of God.

The Greek language has 5 words used to describe the 5 stages of spiritual maturity.

These stages represent a progression from spiritual infancy and carnal thinking to maturity, knowledge of God, and spiritual leadership. Every tekna needs to grow and mature.

- Our goal is to GROW toward true maturity in Christ. [Become a son = huios]

Believers mature spiritually in a pattern similar to that of human growth and development.

One starts out as a babe, then a young child, then an older child, then a full grown one.

Although these stages of growth are almost automatic in a healthy human,

it is not so in our spiritual growth.

1. Nepios refers to an infant, one too young to speak intelligible words.

The NEPIOS Christian is "born again" but is still an "infant" in the faith.

New believers OR those who remain immature.

I Cor. 3:1-4 Paul refers to *nepios* as spiritual babes, who are carnal and immature.

➤ Still led by "the flesh"

Gal. 4:1-3 Still in bondage under the elements of the world

Eph. 4:14 That we should no longer be children [*nepios*] tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

➤ Easily influenced by teaching and schemes of men because they have not exercised their senses to discern both good and evil.

Heb. 5:13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. [*nepios*]

Sad but true: Unlike a physical baby, spiritual babes can stay in this stage a lifetime.

2. Paidion refers to a child older than a nepios, but not yet to adulthood.

It was used for children after they were ~2 years old, up to the age of 12.

During this stage of life in the "natural" or physical world, a child begins to discover their own will, and to want their own way. Rebellion can begin to show. Discipline is needed to correct it.

A PAIDION can begin to develop a true relationship with their father as they do things together. During this stage, a person can learn obedience and service, but only if they do not rebel against it.

Matt. 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, [*paidion*] the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Consider: This characteristic indicates a nepios is beginning to grow.

Mark 10:15 Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child [*paidion*] will not enter it at all."

Jesus presents the little child with trusting, simple, and loving obedience as the model for adults in coming into the kingdom.

I John 2:13c I write unto you, little children [*paidion*], because you have known the Father.

Young children begin learning, know God as Father, though they may still struggle with self-will.

Jesus called His disciples "children" or *paidion*:

Paidion children: signifies a close, loving, and authoritative relationship. Child under training.

Context: 3rd time the Resurrected Christ appeared to His Disciples.

John 21:5 Jesus said to them, "Children [*paidion*], you do not have any fish to eat, do you?"

They answered Him, "No." [*emphasizes human inadequacy*]

➤ Highlights their inability to succeed without His guidance.

- This implies there is an existing relationship, a deficiency in maturity and reveals the childish nature of the disciples at that time.
- These disciples had slipped back and disconnected from their assignment as followers of Christ AFTER the death of Jesus. They returned to their usual routine; fishing.
- When we disconnect from our assignment following an offense, a heartbreak or bitter moment, we are still children. [paidion]
- Paidion children are under the tutelage of a spiritual father because they are not ready for the world on their own.

Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons [huios] of God.

Consider: Some translations say children [tekna] of God.

Does the Greek make a distinction between sons of God and children of God?

3. Children #5043 Τέκνον = Teknon [singular] or Tekna [plural]

- Derived from the Greek *tikto* ["to bring forth"]

Important: Tekna represents both a relationship to God, a child of God, and a specific stage of spiritual growth and development.

A. *Teknon* is the word used to describe our Place in the Family of God as His Children.

To emphasize believers as the born-again "children" or "offspring" of God,

focusing on their familial relationship, identity, and position.

- Refers to your relationship to God—being born of Him, born into His family through the work of Christ on the cross. Your position in Christ.

Key scriptures using *tekna/teknon* for children of God include:

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right [authority]

to become children [tekna] of God, to those who believe in His name:

Rom. 8:16-17 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children [tekna]

of God, and if children [tekna], then Heirs..."

I John 3:1-2 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,

that we should be called the children [tekna] of God:... and that is what we are.

²Beloved, now we are children [tekna] of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be,

but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

Eph. 5:1 Therefore become imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example],

as well-beloved children [Tekna] [imitate their father];

Consider: Tekna implies an intimate, permanent, and "born" relationship with God.

Truth: All tekna children are Redeemed and Adopted into God's family. They are granted the rights of being an Heir Of God. They have Eternal Life and the Righteousness Of Christ.

All this and more is the POSITION of every tekna child of God.

Key: Biblical adoption: We are given the status of Children With All Its Rights And Privileges.

B. Tekna as a Stage of Spiritual Growth and Development

In the natural sense, the Teknon is a teenager. Beginning at the age of 12-13 until about 25-30 years old [when a son could assume his father's business], a Teknon was a young man who was being trained in his profession. It is also a time when the rebelliousness of youth (if it had not been dealt with fully in the NEPIOS and PAIDION stages) would reach "full flower."

- Teenagers are generally known for wanting their own way, thinking they know everything, and not wanting any accountability. On the other hand, at this stage of life they can experience tremendous growth and are capable of learning a tremendous amount.

Spiritual teenagers, the older children in the Body of Christ, are known as Tekna or Teknon. A stage of transition, learning to apply spiritual truths.

They are sometimes referred to as those directly under teaching and training.

The training dramatically changes from just knowing God, to having Christ formed in their character, their personality, their lives.

Gal. 4:19 My little children, [Tekna] for whom I am again in [the pains of] labor until Christ is [completely and permanently] formed within you.

Teknon children actively seek the Lord [John 13:33].

This is a fundamental characteristic of this level of growth. They [Tekna] are commanded:

I John 2:1 My little children [tekna], these things I write to you, so that you may not sin.

And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

I John 3:7a Little children [tekna], let no one deceive you.

However, if they sin and confess them [I John 1:9], they are to know their sins are forgiven.

I John 2:12 I write to you, little children, [tekna]

Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

I John 2:28 Now, little children [tekna], abide in Him, so that when He appears,

we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.

I John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.

- You do not expect this kind of love from a nepios or a paidion. Not mature enough yet.

I John 5:21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.

A Teknon Christian is truly a disciple. The disciples seem to have been at this stage of spiritual growth when Jesus called them "little children" at the Passover Supper before His crucifixion.

John 13:33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer.

Spiritual Growth & Development: Tekna are children of God who are in a transitional phase—more mature than infants, but still developing toward the full, responsible maturity of *Huios*.

Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons [huios] of God.

4. Sons = #5207 > huios:

Refers to growing up to take your place in the household of faith—
spiritual maturity and responsibility

- Resembling His character more and more by living *in faith*
- Highlights the (legal) right to the *Father's inheritance*,
i.e. as the believer lives in conformity with the Father's nature and purpose

Maturity/Position: Represents believers who have grown, matured,
and are "adopted" or "placed" into the role of active heir.

Defining Characteristic: They are led by the Spirit, exhibit spiritual maturity,
and are trusted with the Father's business.

Key characteristics of *huios* (sons of God) include:

- Spirit-Led Empowerment: Actively led by the Holy Spirit. Romans 8:14
- Maturity and Responsibility: Unlike *nepios* (infants), *huios* are mature,
entrusted with the Father's authority, and responsible for acting on His behalf.
- Character Likeness: They reflect the nature of their Father,
demonstrating fruits like love, joy, peace, and self-control.
- Heirs of Promise: They are recognized as heirs who receive
the spiritual inheritance of God. Rom. 8:17
- Obedience and Submission: They follow God's will without murmuring or complaining,
submitting to parental (divine) authority.
- Active in Spiritual Warfare/Ministry: They are described as peacemakers,
those who love enemies, and are often seen acting with authority
to establish righteousness. Matt. 5:9

Key Differences:

- Maturity Level: Children are immature believers; sons are adults, mature believers
- Focus: Children often focus on their own needs,
while sons focus on the Father's kingdom and purpose.
- Function: Children are fed and cared for; sons are trained and deployed for ministry.

Consider: While all sons of God are children of God,
not all children of God have matured into the full position of sonship.

Wiersbe: In the Roman world, the children of wealthy people were cared for by slaves.

- No matter who his father was, the child was still a child, under the supervision of a servant.
- The child was not much different from the servant who guarded him. The servant was commanded by the master of the house, and the child was commanded by the servant.
- According to Roman law, the heir was under the control of a tutor until the age of 14. This tutor was named by the father and placed in his will.

- From the age of 14 to 25, the heir was under a guardian or manager.
- When the heir reached the age of 25 [or the age stipulated by the father], he then entered into the full privileges of his possession.
- Until that time, the heir was in the frustrating predicament of legally owning his father's inheritance without actually enjoying its possession.
- For all intents and purposes, the heir was no different from the slave, for he received only what the "guardians" and "managers" determined to give him.

Gal. 4:1 Now I say, as long as the heir [kléronomos] is a child [nepios],
he does not differ at all from a slave, although he is owner of everything,

Paul states that as long as an heir is underage, he does not differ from a servant even though he owns everything.

This means that as long as we are spiritual babies, this inheritance may lack value in our hands.

Example: Esau thought his birthright was of no value. He sold it and lost it. [Gen. 25:34]

Gal. 4:2 but he is under [the authority of] guardians and household administrators *or* managers until the date set by his father [3962. Patér]

Gal. 4:3-5 So we too, when we were children [3516. Népios],
were held in bondage under the elementary principles of the world.

⁴But when the fullness of the time had come,

God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

⁵so that He might redeem *and* liberate those who were under the Law,

that we [who believe] might be Adopted As Sons

5206. Huiotesia: as God's children with all rights as fully grown members of a family.

- This locates adoption in the accomplishment of Christ: He came "to redeem those under the Law, that we might receive our adoption as sons." Redemption [purchase from bondage] and adoption [placement into family] stand in seamless sequence.

Wiersbe: The New Testament word for adoption means "to place as an adult son."

It has to do with our standing in the family of God: [my position]

We are not little children but adult sons with all the privileges of sonship.

Every child of God is automatically placed into the family as a son who has all the legal rights and privileges of a son. [my position]

Grow up to possess our inheritance. Grow up to take our place in the house of God, in the household of faith. Grow up to become responsible. Grow so God's purpose can be fulfilled in us.

Gal. 4:6-7 And because you are [His] sons, [5207. Huios]

God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba! Father!"

⁷Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son [Huios], and if a son, [5207. Huios]

then an HEIR [kléronomos] of God through Christ.

In ancient times inheritance laws privileged the son who inherited everything when he came of age. When the believer attains to being a mature son of God, he is qualified to inherit all that God is and has for him.

Scriptural Basis: Apostle Paul: Romans 8:14-19

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he calls believers "children of God" or "sons of God." Is there a difference between the two?

Rom. 8:14 For as many as are Led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons [huios] of God.

- It implies a higher level of responsibility and spiritual maturity.
- The Spirit of God produces sonship [huios] in the children [tekna] of God.

Rom. 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery [bondage] leading again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of Divine Adoption as Sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Note: Transition from sons [huios] in v. 14 to children [tekna] in verses 16-17.

Rom. 8:16-17a The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children [tekna], then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ".

Note: Because we are God's children [tekna], we are Heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.

- That is our position in Christ Jesus. Wow! Praise God!

Key: Our status as God's children [tekna] is not based on our behavior, but only and always on our faith in Christ. Our status as God's "sons" [huios] is based on our behavior.

We become more mature sons as we are led by the Spirit and seek to do as our Father does, as we seek to be about His business.

It is not that we are God's children because of our behavior,

but rather that because we are God's children we will behave in certain ways.

Key Truth: It is the Holy Spirit who produces sonship in the children of God.

Eph. 1:5 He having Predestined Us To Adoption As Sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, [roots adoption in His eternal purpose]

Divine Adoption as Sons: # 5206 > Huiotesia: literally means "to place one as a son." [adoption]

- Was originally a legal technical term for adoption as a son with full rights of inheritance.
- God predestined us not to be His children, remaining in the initial stage, the stage of immaturity, but to be His sons, attaining to the final stage, the stage of maturity.

Rom. 8:16-17 The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

And if children [tekna], then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Romans 8:17 captures the astonishing elevation of believers.

The clause links inheritance to discipleship's cost and future glory.

Heir: #2818 klēronomos, denotes an heir—one entitled to receive an allotted possession. It draws believers into God's sweeping story: The Father bequeaths all things to the Son. The Son shares His inheritance with His redeemed family. The concept embraces promise, identity, stewardship, and eschatological hope.

Co-heir #4789 sugkléronomos: used of believers sharing in the inheritance of the heavenly Father *with* [through] the *chief* heir, Jesus Christ.

Rom. 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Rom. 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons [huios] of God.

Rom. 8:21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children [tekna] of God.

Rom. 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

Rom. 8:23 And not only this, but we too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we groan inwardly, as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons [Huiiothesia]—the redemption *and* transformation of our body [at the resurrection].

Huiiothesia meaning "adoption as sons" or "placing as a son," appears 5 times in the NT, exclusively in Paul's letters to describe:

- A believer's legal, relational, and future standing with God.
- It implies a change in relationship where believers are not just children by birth, but placed as heirs to God's promises
- It signifies being placed as a legal heir with full rights.

Eph. 1:5 He having Predestined Us To Adoption As Sons [huios] by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, [roots adoption in His eternal purpose]

Gal. 4:5 so that He might redeem *and* liberate those who were under the Law, that we [who believe] might be Adopted As Sons

- As God's children with all rights as a fully grown members of the family.

Rom. 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery [bondage] leading again to fear, but you have received the Spirit of Divine Adoption as Sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we cry, "Abba! Father!"

Key: The Holy Spirit produces Sonship in the children of God.

Rom. 8:23 And not only this, but we too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we groan inwardly, as we wait eagerly for [the sign of] our Divine Adoption As Sons—the redemption *and* transformation of our body [at the resurrection].

"Firstfruits of the Spirit" represent the present, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit as a down payment, pledge, or foretaste of the future, full inheritance—specifically the resurrection and redemption of the body.

It signifies that believers already possess a spiritual "first crop" of blessings [such as salvation, adoption, and the new nature]] that guarantee the complete, future harvest.

➤ Adds an eschatological dimension:

Believers "wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies."

The "hiothesia" is the future hope of the believer.

Phil. 3:20-21 For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

II Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race,
I have kept the faith.

Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord,
the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day,
and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Consider: Life can be very difficult at times. At the same time, even our worst nightmares are staging periods for our great redemption. Our loneliest moments are the waiting room for our final adoption into the very presence the King of Ages. With the Spirit living inside us, we are assured of the ultimate destination of our lives, no matter where the current scene in life's drama places us. Let us live as those who are assured of their final destination but just have not yet finally arrived, not those who have made their home and placed their hope in what is present. *Glory is Coming!*

Scripture appropriates the cultural practice of adoption to describe God's gracious act of granting believers the status, privileges, and responsibilities as His own children.

I Pet. 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy, begat us again unto a Living Hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead unto an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away, reserved in heaven for you, who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Truth: All born-again believers have the inheritance because of their position in Christ.

Question: Will ALL born-again believers receive the full inheritance?

Col. 1:12 giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us

to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light.

Acts 20:32 And now I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace,

which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all them that are sanctified.

Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons [huios] of God.

Rev. 21:7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things,

and I will be his God and he shall be My son. [huios]