

## Servant, Friend, Son or Daughter

*The pinnacle of redemption, with an inheritance*

Under the older covenant of the Old Testament, God is our Master. Under the Abrahamic covenant, God is our Friend. Under the new covenant in Jesus' blood, God relates to us as the Father of our Salvation. Service and friendship to God and men stem from a secure position as an adopted son or daughter of God. It is worth noting that a friend or servant do not enjoy eternal relationships, as does family. The status of servant or friend can be temporary, but always these relationships are defined by set boundaries. Not so with family, where there is security, intimacy, and an eternal inheritance. The progression to become a son or daughter of God is seen with the Prophet Joseph Smith. He was first called a servant in D&C 1:17, a friend later in D&C 93:45, and finally a son in D&C 121:7-8. Note the differences in these stages of relationship with God.

1. A good **servant** to our Master knows His will and motivations works to this end. It is best to be servant hearted, however, not servant minded – a drone who conforms out of fear.

2. A true **friend** of our Savior does what Jesus asks to please Him out of friendship and love. “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:15).

3. A **son** or **daughter** of God is a joint heir with Christ of all that the Father has. He is a shareholder, not receiving wages as a servant, and not doing things as a friend, but wholly invested in the family business – the gospel of Christ, clothed and empowered with Father's righteousness and light. A son or daughter chooses to do what he sees his Father or Mother do. He or she has Greater access and loyalty to them, a special intimacy based on love, and one tied to blood or grateful adoption.

God said to David in Psalm 2:7, “Thou are my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” He had become a beloved son of God. Note that the Hebrew name David means “beloved.” We read in in the book of Romans, “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 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. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together” (Romans 8:14-17). The book of Galatians states, “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). See also Gal. 3:26; Eph. 1:18-19; Hosea 1:10; Romans 8:14-17; Heb. 12:7; John 5:19, 15:14, and 1 John 3:1.

In latter-day scripture we find additional clarification. In Mosiah five, after King Benjamin's people had experienced “a mighty change” in their hearts – *their baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost* – they willingly entered into a covenant with God (Mos. 5:5). They then became “the children of Christ,” as He had willingly given His blood and life for them in the Atonement. He had become the Father of their salvation. They were “born of him and have become his sons and his daughters” (verse 7). They had taken upon themselves His sacred name (verse 9). It was written always upon their hearts (verse 12). They heard and knew His voice and responded when He called upon them with the name He had given them. They had went through the process of personal growth, first as a servant and later as a friend (verse 13). They were finally “**sealed his**” as sons and daughters, where they were “brought to heaven” that they might “have everlasting salvation and eternal life” (verse 15). This was made possible through the “wisdom, and power, and justice, and mercy of him who created all things, in heaven and in earth...” (Mosiah 5:15).

Thus to be called a “son or daughter” of God is to be redeemed, to have the testimony of Jesus, to receive the great blessing of salvation and eternal life in this mortal life, the greatest of all God's blessings. It is to be part of God's blessed family with a full inheritance.