

IN OTHER WORDS SEX IS A PARABLE

INTRODUCTION:

As for my part, the content of this book is the accumulation of over 35 years of getting to know The Lord, and His Church.

Before getting too far into this, I need to say a couple of things:

First, The irreducible Truth about “*male and female*” is relationship. Male and female image truth about the relationship of the “*Us*” who said, “*Let us make man in our own image...*”¹

Second, Jesus only said the things His father said, only did the things His Father did, and only had the ones The Father had given him.² If that’s the way Jesus lived, who are we to presume to live any differently in the Name of The Lord?

Over the last 35 years it has become very clear to me that it is of primary importance that we learn to distinguish between what God calls, Church, and what is calling itself “church.” The Scriptures reveal two alternatives: one of them from God. This is called “*The Kingdom of God.*” This can also be understood as the Government of God. From beginning to end, the Government is God’s doing, and comes to us in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ.³ One of the Biblical pictures of what his place of government looks like is a city, a place of many kinds, forms and levels of relationship, whose builder and maker is God.

The second alternative is man's doing. It comes to us, and often issues from us, as “*the work of Man's hands,*” a city of man’s doing.⁴ It certainly includes the cares of this life, which are perhaps our greatest source of conflict with The Kingdom of God.

Our understanding of these alternatives has taken form in three identifiable, though very related aspects; relationships that come from God; authority structures that come from God, and...

¹ Genesis 1:26

² John 17:6

³ Isaiah 9:6

⁴ Revelation 17:18

The third aspect has to do with man's doing, and is perhaps best understood as the conflict over circumcision which is pervasive in the book of Acts, the Epistles, and The Book of Revelation. As background for understanding this conflict, The Old Testament provides a kind of flannel board for us. In the first instance, the Kingdom of God is a geographical place. That is the flannel board. The reality, found only in Christ, is a Kingdom, which exists in the Spirit. It is a spiritual place. Without circumcision, the circumcision of the cross,⁵ it is not possible to enter the Kingdom of God.

This is a matter of primary importance both in the Scriptures, and in my experience. Without the circumcision of the cross we cannot go to the place where Jesus prayed and died to take us.⁶

The revelation of God in the old creation is no accident. Both the Word of God, The Bible, and the old creation reveal what God wants to say to us.

In the old creation we discover that it is life that puts us in our place.⁷ Jesus is not only the light, but he is also the life.⁸ The old creation not only reveals that life in a figure, but also reveals how it happens, is structured, and is governed. "*God puts the solitary in families.*"⁹

The old creation - who we are in the flesh, has been structured by blood and life. Jesus is doing a new creation the same way. (The new creation is based on better blood, better promises, and is never going to pass away.) Our refusal or inability to see Him in the old creation leaves us with no excuse.¹⁰

The old creation not only reveals the doing of men as well as the doing of God, providing us with a very clear choice, but the doing of God that is revealed in the Old Creation is a shadow of a substance that is ours only in the New creation. Every thing we need for life and godliness is revealed in these three aspects of revelation of God in the creation, and in the Word; the source, and nature of relationship; authority for living; and the point of entry: circumcision. Before there can be intimacy, there must first be circumcision, even and especially the circumcision of the cross.

⁵ Colossians 2:11

⁶ John 17: 1-26

⁷ Acts 17:22-31

⁸ John 1:4-9

⁹ Psalms 68:6

¹⁰ Romans 1:20

In Jesus Christ we become a new creation.¹¹ To date, we have not yet destroyed this old creation picture of what God offers us in the person of His Son. For this reason we have some hope that the old creation might still serve as a flannel board from God, from which we can learn how God does life. Life is what Jesus came to bring us.

Words cannot express my gratitude to God for those with whom and by whom my life has been gifted, "... a hundred times as much..."¹² My heavenly Father has been extravagant with me in this way, and His greatest extravagance has come in bodily form, first in The Person of His Son, and second in those who are His at His coming.

Having already been seated with Him in the heavenlies,¹³ my first eye opening encounter with His extravagance on the horizontal came in Detroit in 1974. At the time I had an understanding, which included, "the brotherhood of all believers." Armed with that very introductory understanding, I was sovereignly and powerfully knit to one I have come to know and appreciate as an older brother in the Lord, Nate Krupp. It does not yet appear, all that The Lord has done for me through Nate, and it would be very difficult to enumerate all, about which I have any even limited understanding. I should say, however, that the power of the encounter was a wake up call from God, that **Jesus Christ is Lord of relationship**. What happened between us was, and remains, God's doing, not our own. It has already been enough so that I am eternally grateful.

I should say that, it was the grace of God that it was through a brother that The Lord opened my heart to this truth. Because the closest experience on earth that I could use to describe what happened that day is "love at first sight." I would have stumbled badly if The Lord had used a woman. My doctrinal understanding at the time just would not have permitted that.

In the years since then, there have been other encounters, equally precious, and, yes, The Lord has even added women to my life, even while my understanding could not embrace such a possibility. However, as long as my understanding of relationship was rooted in religion rather than creation, I had a terrible struggle with special feelings for women other than my wife. When The Lord opened my eyes to His way in creation, I was set free. The Lord was giving me "... a hundred

¹¹ II Corinthians 5:17

¹² Mark 10:29, 30

¹³ Ephesians 2:6

times, mothers, sisters, daughters, sons, brothers, and yes, with them persecution...”

To that point I could not account for why, when some “brothers” were hurting, I hurt, and others were hurting, I had no experiential sense of their pain. Where women were concerned, this was even more of a problem. I thought it had to be lust. Where everyone was concerned, I felt condemnation, after all, I was commanded to love “*without dissimulation.*”¹⁴ Why was my heart so preferential?

When The Lord moved my understanding beyond the brotherhood of all believers to a new creation, I realized that when my own children are sick, I am up all night. When my neighbor's children are sick, I am able to sleep all night. If I am up all night every time any child is sick, I will never get any sleep. The Lord was putting me together with others by love. I was being restructured by Love, His love shed abroad in my heart by The Holy Spirit. I was set free to Love.

Not only that, but I discovered who I was in other ways as well. Over the years I had been asked, what I have come to understand as an essentially satanic question, “Who do you think you are?” It was always asked in a way that tempted me to run off to do something in order to be somebody. But when The Lord opened my eyes to the realization that some of the “brothers” had been made fathers to me in the faith, I suddenly knew that I was a man under authority by His Grace. I was who I was, and am who I am, by The Grace of God. Even the centurion understood this in Jesus, “*I myself am a man under authority...*”¹⁵ Jesus knew who His Father was, and I was very quickly discovering who my Father is, by, and through, those whom The Lord had set in my life.

The old creation will tell anyone with eyes to see, that when fathering breaks down, the whole society has an identity crises. This is the importance of the authoritative dimension of The Lordship of Jesus in relationship. When we don't know who our father is, we have to do things in order to be somebody. The things that we have done, even the things that we have done in The Name of The Lord, have resulted in the disaster that we are presently calling “church.” Please, let my very quickly add, that I have nothing against the Church, she is glorious. My problem, and I believe our problem, is with the practice of presenting the “*work of man's hands*”¹⁶ to the world, and even to believers, and calling it “church.” Too

¹⁴ Romans 12:9 K.J.V.

¹⁵ Matthew 8:9

¹⁶ Isaiah 2:8, Revelation 9:20

often, what we are calling “church” is not born out of a divine knowing. “... *I never knew you.*”¹⁷

It is this matter, this problem, which is most graphically addressed in the New Testament as the circumcision issue. I hope, and pray that the reader might be persuaded by the Spirit that The Lord has not given so much space to this subject by reason of historical interest, but rather by reason of present truth, “Don't,” I repeat, “Don't let man do a number on you!”¹⁸

SANCTIFIED TO BE ONE

John 12:23, 24: “*And Jesus answered them, saying, ‘The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.’*”

John 17:1, 5, 22, 23: “*These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:... And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was... And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.’*”

John 17:21: “*Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth... That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.’*”

Hebrews 4:12, 13: “*For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.’*”

Hebrews 5:14 “*But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.’*”

¹⁷ Matthew 7:22, 23

¹⁸ Revelation 14:9-12

In John 17 Jesus prayed about a certain kind of Glory, and that we might be sanctified to the end that we could be included in the oneness that existed in the Godhead before the world began.

This to say that the object of Jesus' prayer as well as God's creation is an intimacy known only to God. This is an intimacy that is so great that flesh and blood cannot go there. In other words, the old man cannot go there. Only the new man can go there, only the life giving Spirit released out of the last man Adam can go there. He wants, and prayed to go there in us, and He wants to take us there in Him. Jesus in the flesh went away in order to make a way into the place that is ours in the Father's heart and house from before the world began.

Having gone away to do that, His prayer indicates that this is a place that we can go, in deed ought to go, in this present age, "...*that the world may believe...*"¹⁹

But first something needs to happen in us. There needs to be a faith appropriation of the content of the cross. We need to know what happened there. To know this, however, we need to put the information into practice so that by constant use, we might be able to distinguish, good from evil.

This kind of truth, the truth that sanctifies, is born of a Word, that is living and active, not one that is dead and dormant. A living and active word is a Sword of the Spirit, it does not operate, nor is it effective, independent of The Spirit.

To be subject to a sword, capable of dividing soul from Spirit is not the kind of thing that one volunteers for. There needs to be a good reason for enduring that kind of treatment. There needs to be Joy set before the object of such major surgery.

In our case, that joy is, at least, two-fold. First: a complete frustration concerning, who we are in the first Adam. Our heavenly Father has facilitated this frustration for us in that He has made the entire old creation subject to frustration. Second: we need to know where our Father wants to take us in a New Creation, a place where we can only go in His Son.

God wants to take us to a place, which is the desire of every human heart. It's part of the eternity package, which He has placed in the heart of every man. Unless we have a personal revelation of that place which can only come from Him, we will not subject ourselves to the sanctifying work of the Sword of The Spirit, The Word

¹⁹ John 17:21

of God. We need to have both a frustration, and a hunger and thirst, a certain panting after God.

In Other Words, **SEX IS A PARABLE**

According to Webster, a parable is “a short, simple story, usually of an occurrence of a familiar kind, from which a moral or religious lesson may be drawn.”²⁰

Perhaps this is a good place to begin, because Webster’s definition really makes all of our points, some of which I’m sure he never intended.

Jesus came speaking in parables, when asked about it, He explained, “*This is why I speak to them in parables: ‘Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.’ In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving. For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they hardly see with their eyes, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.*”²¹

Jesus said this about the people of that day who, outwardly, at least, seemed to be closest to God. There is something about a religious mindset, which has a very difficult time understanding simple stories, which illustrate reality. Clearly, Jesus did not come to make religious people feel good about them selves. The truth is He came to put an end to religion, not to establish it. In fact, He didn’t even come to establish a new morality. He came that we might have life as it was meant to be, the life that God intended from the beginning. It is the tragedy of history that, along with Mr. Webster, Christians for the most part, have understood Jesus’ parables as religious, and moral rather than life.

It’s not so easy to detect from looking at the way “Christians” relate to each other, but, according to the Bible, we were created for relationship with God, and in His light, relationship with each other. Of all the things that God ever said or did, there is none, which reveals His purpose with greater clarity, scope and power, than His having created us male and female in His image. Bottom line is, male and female is all about relationship.

²⁰ (Webster’s New World Dictionary of The American Language, Complete Reference Edition, The World Publishing Company.)

²¹ Matthew 13:13-15 NIV

Sex is the most powerful, most fully loaded, most compelling, most obvious parable in the Bible, and in creation. To miss it, is to be “*without excuse.*”²² Sex reveals otherwise invisible truth about God. Sex is not something to get religious about, rather it is a powerful graphic calling out to the human heart, about the content of God's heart, and the relationship He wants to have with us.

From the very beginning our heavenly Father has been arranging a wedding for His Son. To that end, He made us male and female, so that we might have some understanding of what He's after. The Apostle Paul puts it this way, after speaking of the union between a man and a woman, He says, “*This is a profound mystery, but I'm talking about Christ and the church.*”²³

Perhaps I should quickly add, because of all the confusion in, and surrounding “the church,” The Bible does not call “church” what has been calling itself “church.” In fact one is not recognizable from the other. What the Bible calls “Church” is the gathering without regard to time and space of all of those who belong to Christ, and therefore to each other. Taken together, they are His “*Bride.*” What The Bible calls “churches” are all the gatherings of those who belong to Christ in their respective geographical times and places. Divisions within a common time and geography, are not churches, they are a misrepresentation of the gospel. Christ is not divided, and in Him, neither are those who truly belong to him.

Father:

*“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, Old things are passed away, behold all things become new.”*²⁴

Perhaps I can be forgiven if I paraphrase for the sake of broader and deeper application: If anyone is in Christ, which can only happen if He is in them, then they are a new race, their old race has passed away, and like Paul, they can consider their membership in their old race, “*rubbish.*”²⁵ Look and see, everything about you, deriving from your new lineage is new.

To explore why it is important to see and understand God as our Father, I want to get very narrow in focus. There is more to His Fatherhood, than what I want to say

²² Romans 1:20

²³ Ephesians 5:32

²⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:17

²⁵ Philippians 3:8

here, and by excluding it for the purpose of this present discussion, I don't want to imply that the rest is not very important.

Let me begin by saying that, if we are “*created male and female*” in God’s image, then God must be male and female. An image ought to look like what it represents, don't you think? The irreducible significance of male and female is relationship. It was an “*Us*” that said in the beginning “*Let Us make...*”²⁶ There is authority in the “*let,*” there is intimacy in the “*Us.*” There is a new creation in the “*make.*”

We don't know what the intimacy of the Godhead must be like in reality, because we are not there yet, but God has made an effort to communicate something of this intimacy by giving us the graphics of our own bodies. It is increasingly apparent to me however, that the graphics are very limited in possibility when compared to the reality that is hidden in Christ in God.

Here, I want to explore what can be learned from the graphics, however.

God has promised to redeem the race of the first man Adam, by the seed of the first woman Eve. Keep in mind, that she began in Adam, and was not called woman until she was taken out of him. Was she any less for having come out from him? In one very important way, “yes,” she was now “less than,” and subject to frustration. And in another less important way, “no,” she was more in some ways than he was. He was “*made,*” she was “*formed.*” In the original, the difference is that He was put together good enough to function. She was formed in the same sense as the creation of a work of art.

Where reproduction is concerned, the man contained seed, she contained more than seed, she contained egg. The egg not only contains the potential for new life, but the environment for the early nurture of new life. Where his seed is concerned, it could not participate in the creation of a new race. It would take God’s seed to do that, even Christ. All through the lineage of the human race, God kept track of the egg. Abraham was looking for love in all the wrong places. Love was in the egg of Sarah, and her only. Look at Tamar,²⁷ the love was in her, and within the limits of Judah, she did whatever she had to do, God helping her, to make sure that it would be her egg that would hatch. From the beginning, Satan has been after the woman, and her seed. His war has been against her, not against him.

²⁶ Genesis 1:26

²⁷ Genesis Chapter 38

Satan makes war against him, only to the degree that we become hers in relationship to Christ.

A father is a seed planter. The life is in the seed. A mother is a place where new life grows. God is the one who gives the growth, or "*increase.*"

In order to have a new race, there must first be a new father, a new kind of a father, in this case, a heavenly one. The heart of God is that everyone becomes a new race. This can only happen by His Fatherhood, which is to say, by His seed, even Christ. In the first instance, what we bring to the process is the egg. He makes us pregnant by Christ.

We then become partakers of the Divine nature, once that happens, we are no longer the old race that we were, the race of the first man Adam. More than that, we are no longer male or female. In any given situation we might be either in spiritual function. At one point Paul was in labor pains, at another he was taking new believers to his breast for nurture, at another point he was planting Divine seeds.

We are not different from Paul in this regard? No, we are not any different. We can be a seed planter. We can be life nurturers. In Christ, we have it all. All we need is the revelation, and the faith to appropriate what is ours in eternity. We are pregnant with new life, and are able to get others pregnant with new life.

God certainly wants us to notice that, in the first instance, he has made us male and female, not to notice is inexcusable, but, armed with what we have noticed he wants to take us to a place of intimacy that leaves what we have noticed in the shadows of who we used to be. If we just can't stay out of the shadows that's okay, but whatever we do, let's not miss the light.

Make no mistake, God does not want us to miss the graphics, but in the process, let's not miss the otherwise invisible reality about God, about which the graphics are only a shadow.

When Jesus went to the cross, it was an act of love with the potential of getting the whole world pregnant. We have been caught up in a very exciting, and fulfilling process, if we only could understand it from God's point of view.

A few years ago now, I was sharing with my son about the Love of God. I knew about it intellectually for years, and I had even responded to it at that level. When I was baptized in the Spirit, I received a much greater experiential sense of His

Love, but still remained quite clueless. Love may be a decision, but it's not something that happens in response to a command. God loves because that's who He is. We love in response to His love. Love is a response. *"We love because He first loved us."*²⁸ Even the love of a husband for a wife flows out of His Love, *"Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her."*²⁹ That much is no more than Jesus died to make possible among us all, *"As I have loved you, so ought ye to love one another."*³⁰ We ought to love one another as Christ loved us. *"There is one who sticketh closer than a brother."*³¹

"Oughts" set legal standards and limits, but the content does not come by "oughts." In the final analysis, the decision to love is the willingness to be a victim, the willingness to give ourselves up for each other. That doesn't come by obedience, it doesn't come cheap, and it doesn't come easily. It comes as part of the package, which is the Love of God. I never understood this "incredible" love until I found it by His grace in my heart for others. Natural love is more or less explainable, but the Love of God *"surpasses knowledge."*³² You just have to experience it flowing out of your own heart in order to begin to understand it. *"It's not the hearers about God's love, but the lovers with God's Love who understand it"*³³ or, at least, begin to understand it. His love is "incredible," incredible coming to us, and incredible flowing from us for each other. What an unspeakable Gift. To know it in the vertical is life to receive it on the horizontal is affirmation of life.

Over the years, I have seen that it is a good idea to ask a certain question, whether of our selves or of others, "What page is that on?" By reason of the golden rule, I am offering the following verses of Scripture in evidence for what I have tried to share to this point, and hope this might also serve as foundational for what is still to come.

LIFE LINKS:

1SA 18:1 *"After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself."*

²⁸ 1 John 4:19

²⁹ Ephesians 5:25

³⁰ John 13:34

³¹ Proverbs 18:24

³² Ephesians 3:19

³³ James 1:22

1SA 18:3 *“And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.”*

1SA 20:17 *“And Jonathan had David reaffirm his oath out of love for him, because he loved him as he loved himself.”*

II Samuel 1:26 *“I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were very dear to me. Your love for me was wonderful, more wonderful than that of women.”*

MAR 3:33 *“Who are my mother and my brothers?, he asked.*

MAR 3:34 *Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers!*

MAR 3:35 *“Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.”*

MAR 10:29 *“I tell you the truth,’ Jesus replied, ‘no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel*

MAR 10:30 *will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields--and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life.”*

LUK 8:21 *“He replied, ‘My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.”*

LUK 12:53 *“They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter- in-law against mother-in-law.”*

LUK 14:26 *“If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.”*

JOH 1:12 *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--*

JOH 1:13 children born not of natural descent,³⁴ nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”

³⁴ Greek “of bloods”

JOH 19:26 *“When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, ‘Dear woman, here is your son,’*

JOH 19:27 *and to the disciple, ‘Here is your mother.’ From that time on, this disciple took her into his home.”*

ACT 13:33 *“he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.”*

ACT 22:1 *“Brothers and fathers, listen now to my defense.”*

ROM 1:4 *“and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

ROM 16:13 *“Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.”*

1CO 4:15 *“Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.”*

1CO 4:17 *“For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.”*

1CO 15:28 *“When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.”*

GAL 4:7 *“So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”*

EPH 6:2 *“Honor your father and mother’--which is the first commandment with a promise.”*

EPH 6:4 *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.”*

PHI 2:19-23 *“I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself,*

because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me.”

PHI 4:1 “Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends!”

COL 3:21 “Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged.”

1TH 2:19, 20 “For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy.”

1TI 1:2 “To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

1TI 1:18 “Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight,”

2TI 1:2 “To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.”

2TI 2:1 “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.”

TIT 1:4 “To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.”

PHM 1:10 “I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.”

HEB 1:5 “For to which of the angels did God ever say, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father?’ Or again, ‘I will be his Father, and he will be my Son’?”

HEB 5:5 “So Christ also did not take upon himself the glory of becoming a high priest. But God said to him, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father.’”

HEB 12:5 “And you have forgotten that word of encouragement that addresses you as sons: ‘My son, do not make light of the Lord’s discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you,

HEB 12:6 *because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.*”

1PE 5:13 *“She who is in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark.”*

1JO 2:13 *“I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father.*

1JO 2:14 *I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.”*

REV 21:7 *“He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son.”*