

Spiritual Identity Fraud

Restoring God's Sons and Daughters

Jonathan S. Potter

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...”I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters,
Says the LORD Almighty."
(2 Corinthians 6:18)

Foreword

By J. Lee Grady

Thomas Dewar, the famous Scottish whiskey baron who died in 1930, once said: “An honest confession is good for the soul, but bad for the reputation.” Many men from Dewar’s generation lived by that maxim. They knew that Christianity taught the importance of confession, but they decided to hide their sins and mistakes in order to get ahead in the business world.

The same is true today for the majority of men. We don’t really know how to be honest. We learn at an early age to build fortresses of macho pride. We put on body armor and pretend to be tough. We never allow anyone to see our weaknesses.

And thus we have created the dysfunctional American male. He looks good on the outside—in fact he may spend a lot of time in the gym working on his abs. He reads GQ to learn what to wear and how to perform in bed. All his goals center on how to beat the other guy in business or sports. But when he is ready to go to sleep at night he is plagued by nagging guilt and loneliness.

I wish I could say this is only true for men outside the church. But today, the dysfunctional American male is often sitting in a pew listening to a sermon but suffering in silence. Most Christian men avoid honest confession. We’ve learned to “suit up” for church by putting on masks and religious fronts—knowing all along that we aren’t what we say we are.

Men have struggled with this dilemma ever since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden and went looking for some leaves to cover his nakedness. I call it the Great Cover-up. Guys are particularly skilled at inventing ways to hide their true selves!

You know the story from the book of Genesis. After Adam created a primitive jock strap made of fig leaves, God confronted him by saying: “Who told you that you were naked?”

Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” (Gen. 3:11). In true male form, Adam blamed his wife—again masking the sad truth that he had disobeyed God and was unwilling to take responsibility for his actions.

In the end of that story, the Bible reveals that the withering fig leaves were not acceptable clothes for Adam or Eve. “The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them” (3:21).

This was the first indication in Scripture that sin would require bloodshed. The fact that an animal had to die to clothe the ancestors of the human race clearly foreshadowed the day when Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, would die on a crude cross so that we could be forgiven and restored to fellowship with the Father.

The blood of Jesus is the only thing that can truly forgive us for our past sins and give us power to live the way God intended. We don’t need a flimsy cover-up. We need His covering!

Men today are looking for all kinds of ways to cover their guilt: Many guys turn to the numbing influence of alcohol or drugs; others try sex; still others fill their time with sports or video games so they don’t have to think about eternal realities. And many church-going men cover themselves with religion without fully knowing the power of Christ’s forgiveness.

This is the message of the book you are holding in your hands. I encourage you to read it carefully.

What I love about Jon Potter is his honesty. Contrary to Thomas Dewar, Jon doesn’t care about his reputation. He is willing to admit the dark secrets of his past—including a horrific childhood experience with sexual molestation. I don’t know many guys who are man enough to admit they were “messed with” when they were boys. Most of us are afraid to bring such dirty secrets into the open; we think others might judge us or snicker behind our backs. Personally, I think Jon Potter is a stronger and better man for baring his soul.

Had Jon kept his secret hidden, he would have only known the covering of fig leaves. But because he was brutally honest about his pain—and the shame of the other sinful habits he struggled with—he traded his fig leaves for the blood of Jesus. And he discovered the deep forgiveness that is offered to all of us.

The Bible tells us an amazing truth in James 5:16: “Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.” Notice that confession in this passage is not just directed toward God; it requires transparency with others. I have learned over the years that if I want real breakthrough over temptation, it is not enough for me to talk to God about it. He wants me to humble myself and admit my weakness to my brother.

Why is that? Simply because open confession requires genuine humility. When we admit our flaws and mistakes to others, God deals a death blow to our pride—which is the root of all our sins and addictions. And when pride is gone, God’s grace can move in and help you.

I believe Jon Potter’s honest book can start a revolution—a revolution of honesty. It is time for all of us to come out of hiding. And I believe this significant book will help you make the journey toward true healing.

J. Lee Grady, Author

10 Lies the Church Tells Women

25 Tough Questions About Women and the Church

The Holy Spirit Is Not for Sale

10 Lies Men Believe

He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.

(2 Samuel 7:13-14)

...And he will turn
The hearts of the fathers to the children,
And the hearts of the children to their fathers...

(Malachi 4:6)

...And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(Matthew 3:17)

...Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

(Matthew 5:9)

All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal Him.

(Matthew 11:27-28)

... except you become as a little child, you will not enter the Kingdom of Heaven

(Matthew 18:3)

...Adam, the son of God.

(Luke 3:38)

I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

(John 14:18)

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

(Romans 8:14)

For [the Spirit which] you have now received [is] not a spirit of slavery to put you once more in bondage to fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption [the Spirit producing sonship] in [the bliss of] which we cry, Abba (Father)!

(Romans 8:15 AMP)

...There, they shall be called sons of the living God.

(Romans 9:26)

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

(Hebrews 2:10)

If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? 8 But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons

(Hebrews 12:7-8)

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!

(1 John 3:1)

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

(Revelation 21:7)

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Introduction

...After all, though you should have ten thousand teachers (guides to direct you) in Christ, *yet you do not have many fathers*. For I became your *father* in Christ Jesus through the glad tidings (the Gospel).

(1 Corinthians 4:15 AMP)

Over 2,000 years ago the Apostle Paul made this statement regarding spiritual fathering. Today not too much has changed, except ten thousand teachers might now be approaching the ten million mark. You would think we would have improved in two millennia, yet in our world of mega ministries and global Christian media, fatherlessness is still the scourge of most cultures. I believe this void of fathering may be the epicenter of all of the brokenness found in the human condition.

Too often, The Body of Christ has sat idle expecting governments and social cure initiatives to effect change; however, true transformation of a person, a people, and a nation, comes about only through an intimate relationship with Abba Father. The truth is, that we will never be able to replicate the fathering that the Apostle Paul accomplished with the early Church, until we understand just who Abba is, *and who we are as his children*.

The Bible clearly tells us that God is the sovereign Lord of the universe, yet Jesus told us to address him as “Father.” Paul’s epistles underscore the truth that God has been raising sons and daughters for thousands of years. In Roman culture, at the time when he wrote the above words, an adopted person inherited all the rights of a legitimate child in his new family.

As his adopted children, God also raises us from spiritual infancy through our spiritually formative years and on to mature “sonship,” with divine privileges as our inheritance!

In the New Testament, the phrase “sons of God” means “children of God” or “offspring.” It has nothing to do with gender, but more our position in God after regeneration, and let me add, men and women are equal in worth and value to our Heavenly Father.

Four years ago on a muggy September night, God’s Spirit began to speak to me about my true identity that could only found in sonship. This launched a quest that changed my life. This pursuit has been at times painful, revelatory, but ultimately, liberating beyond belief.

I learned at an early age that becoming a man is my genetic destination and responsibility; however, I have discovered that *sonship* is something altogether different and much more wonderful! Sonship and daughtership are divine *privileges*, and God has ventured our present fulfillment and eternal destiny upon it. I do know this, a faithful child in God’s eyes will always become a great man or woman.

The enemy of our souls has too-long pillaged our inheritance with his subtle lies and fraudulent schemes, deceiving the Church that it’s okay to live beneath our pedigree as God’s children. Well, his deception has been discovered, and I say “No More!”

My hope is that this book about rediscovering who we are, and the way this process unfolded in my own life, will have the same impact for you. I pray that it will stir you to seek, probe and explore---in a new and deeper way---our relationship with Father God, the new identity this relationship provides, and our *adult response* as his children.

Yes, his children. Our Father is still looking for his kids.

For the earnest expectation of the creation, eagerly waits
for the revealing of the sons of God.

(Romans 8:19)