

THE ORPHAN SPIRIT AND THE CRAVING FOR CONNECTION

Series: A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL FATHERING

Lesson #3

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There is a well-known phenomenon among children who are adopted out of extreme poverty. Even after they are brought into a wealthy, loving home with a fully stocked pantry, parents will often find food hidden under the child's mattress. The child has been adopted, but their mind is still operating in survival mode. They do not yet trust the provision of the house. This is exactly how many Christians operate in the kingdom of God. We have been adopted by the Heavenly Father, but we still live with an orphan spirit. And because we think like orphans, we reject the very spiritual fathers God sends to impart our inheritance.

#1 ORPHANS SURVIVE; SONS INHERIT

An orphan has no covering. They have to fight for every scrap of survival, figure out life on their own, and protect themselves at all costs. When you carry an orphan spirit, you view spiritual fathers not as a blessing, but as a threat. This is why we see so many accomplished, highly successful women who are secretly depressed - they are exhausted from running on the fumes of their own performance, terrified to let anyone see them fall apart. This is why we see so many men struggling with a profound sense of invisibility, trying to figure out biblical masculinity in total isolation. An orphan only knows how to survive. A son or daughter knows how to inherit.

Romans 8:15 NIV

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'

Transition: Independence looks strong on the outside, but it is actually a trauma response that blocks the Holy Spirit.

#2 THE MANTLE REQUIRES PROXIMITY

When Elijah was about to be taken up, Elisha did not ask for his journal. He did not ask for his sermon notes. He asked for a double portion of his spirit. Elisha understood that his divine destiny required the mantle of his spiritual father. But notice this: Elisha only received the mantle because he refused to leave Elijah's side. He served him. He stayed close. The mantle requires proximity. The orphan spirit tells you to run away when relationships get hard or when correction comes. But if you run away, you drop the mantle.

Theologian J.I. Packer captured the weight of this identity shift: "Adoption is the highest privilege that the gospel offers: higher even than justification."

John 14:18 NIV

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

Transition: We cannot just talk about this. We have to bring our exhaustion to the altar.

THE MIRROR AND THE ALTAR

Right now, look in the mirror: Am I functioning like an orphan, fighting to survive, or am I positioned like a son or daughter, ready to inherit? If you are carrying the exhaustion of independence, I want you to come forward today. To the men who feel invisible, who have carried the weight of your family with zero covering - come down here. To the women who are incredibly successful in your careers but emotionally depleted, running on fumes - bring that to the altar. The Holy Spirit wants to act as your therapist

right now. We have mature leaders standing by who want to pray for you, to offer you the co-regulation and the covenant connection you have been craving.

Conclusion:

We were not made to survive; we were made to inherit. God brings us under covering to heal us, but He heals us so He can use us. In our final lesson next week, we will discuss how to move from being the one who needs covering to becoming the spiritual parent for someone else.