

## Incorporation, the Soul, and the Word of God

The previous two installments of “Glossa” presented the Triune God as the Word, and the Body of Christ as a divine organism that is constituted the testimony of Jesus by the word of God and built up through the prophesying of the believers. The first article distinguished three kinds of words according to the process of communication. God communicates His mind and concepts through lexical selection and formulation (*logos*) and articulation (*rhema*) to human beings for preservation in writing (*graphē*). The second article concerned how these three kinds of words constitute the believers as the testimony of Jesus and equip them to prophesy for the building up of the Body of Christ. This article considers how the incorporation of the divine mind into the faculties of our human soul enables us to speak the word of God and even become the word of God. If we deny ourselves, not uttering our own word but setting our mind on the mingled spirit to incorporate the divine mind, concept, or opinion, then our hearts will be inscribed, or constituted, with the Spirit of the living God to become a letter of Christ (2 Cor. 3:2-3), incorporating God’s *logos* concept and enabling us to speak forth (prophesy) the *rhema* words given to us by the Spirit. In this sense we will become the word of God to people.

### Incorporation—Persons Indwelling One Another

The notion of incorporation has been developed in a number of issues in *Affirmation & Critique*, beginning from April 2004, with respect to the incorporation of the operations of the Triune God in Christ and in the believers. This article seeks to develop a particular aspect of incorporation that relates to the human soul, from the perspective of the faculties and the life of the soul, in both the Lord Jesus and the believers, and how this incorporation constitutes us with the divine mind (and hence the *logos* concept) to utter the *rhema* words of God.

*Incorporation* has been used to indicate the deepest relationship among the three of the Trinity eternally, the relationship between the divine and human in Christ, and the relationship between the Triune God and the believers.

Kerry S. Robichaux distinguishes three aspects of incorporation, employing terms used in Latin and Greek theology: *mutual existence* (*coinherence*, or *circumincession*), *mutual indwelling* (*perichoresis*, or *circumincession*), and *mutual*

*operation* (“Johannine” 40-42).<sup>1</sup> The Trinity—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—mutually coexist eternally, mutually indwell one another, and in the action of any one, the three mutually operate. John 14:10-11 is a key passage that illustrates the incorporation of the Father and the Son from these three aspects. In this passage Jesus said,

Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; but if not, believe because of the works themselves.

The expressions *I am in the Father* and *the Father is in Me* as well as *the Father who abides in Me* indicate both mutual existence and indwelling of the Son and the Father, and the expression *the words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works* indicates mutual operation, in that the Father works, or operates, in the Son’s action of speaking. This portion of the Word also indicates a key to the operation of speaking the word—that the Father abides in the Son, that is, in the faculties of His soul, filling Him with the divine thought and the spiritual utterance that define, explain, and express God as the Word of God.

The incorporation of divinity and humanity in Christ is enlarged to include the believers. This is revealed by the Lord in the following statements: “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (v. 20) and “That they all may be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us” (17:21). The enlarged divine-human incorporation is symbolized by the vine in John 15, where the Lord Jesus said, “Abide in Me and I in you” (v. 4), indicating the mutual indwelling of the believers with Christ.

In *The Issue of Christ Being Glorified by the Father with the Divine Glory* Witness Lee defines the incorporation of divinity and humanity in contrast to the union and mingling of divinity and humanity in the believers:

*Union* is concerning our oneness in life with the Lord. *Mingling* is related to the divine and human natures... *Union* and *mingling* refer to our relationship with the Lord in our life and nature but not in our person. Humanly

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speaking, no person can be in another person. But in the divine and mystical realm, the consummated God and the regenerated believers, the persons, indwell one another. This is an incorporation. In this universal, divine-human incorporation, persons indwell one another; that is, they coinhere. (40-41)

To respond to the question of how persons can indwell one another, I would like to explore the answer from the perspective of the soul, in relation to both the being and living of Jesus and the being and living of the believers.

### Person

The term *person* is quite complex. On the one hand, it can refer to the human being as a whole; on the other hand, it can refer to our character or personality, which is deeper than our physical human body yet which is at the same time expressed through it. The English word *person* comes from the Latin word *persona*, which can have the sense of a mask or face of a character in a play, similar in use to the Greek word πρόσωπον, which can literally be translated “face” as well as “person.” The Latin and Greek words emphasize more how the individual presents or expresses himself, especially through the face, with his outward facial expression as a window into his inner being. The use of πρόσωπον with the notion of person occurs a few times in the New Testament (Matt. 22:16; 2 Cor. 1:11; 2:10; 10:1; Gal. 2:6).

Other words translated “person” in the New Testament include the words usually translated “name” (Gk. ὄνομα), which is also related to the notion of person (Acts 1:15; Rev. 3:4), and “soul” (Gk. ψυχή), which is closely connected semantically to the term *person* and may be also translated “person” (Rom. 13:1; Exo. 1:5).

Another word that may be translated “person” is the word ἄνθρωπος, which may be rendered “human being,” or “man.”<sup>2</sup> This word seems to be appropriate to view our being as a whole, but writers of the New Testament distinguish between the outer man and the inner man. For example, Paul says, “Though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16; so also Eph. 3:16 and Rom. 7:22). *Outer man* refers to the body with the life of the soul, and *inner man* refers to the faculties of the soul with the spirit. As Witness Lee says,

The outer man consists of the body as its organ with the soul as its life and person. The inner man consists of the regenerated spirit as its life and person with the renewed soul as its organ. The life of the soul must be denied (Matt. 16:24-25), but the faculties of the soul—the mind, will, and emotion—must be renewed and uplifted by being subdued (10:4-5) so that they can be used by the spirit, the person of the inner man. (Recovery Version, 2 Cor. 4:16, note 1)

Peter refers to the “hidden man of the heart,” which, according to the parallel structure, is our (meek and quiet) spirit (1 Pet. 3:4). Paul also refers to the old man (Rom. 6:6; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:9) and the new man (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10). As Witness Lee states, the old man refers to

our very being, which was created by God but became fallen through sin, and it is the same as the “I” in Gal. 2:20. It is not the soul itself but the life of the soul, which has been counted by God as hopeless and has been put on the cross and crucified with Christ. Formerly, our soul acted as an independent person, with the old man as its life and personality; now, since the old man has been crucified, our soul should act only as an organ of Christ and should be under the control of our spirit, having Christ as its life. (Recovery Version, Rom. 6:6, note 2)

The old man is independent and individualistic. However, the new man is composed of Christ as the Head and of the church as the Body of Christ; hence, it is corporate.

### The Parts of Man

In order to get a clearer and more precise view concerning the notion of person, it is helpful to consider the parts of man, especially the soul and its parts. While the Bible sometimes refers to the individual as a whole, it also frequently speaks of our being according to its constituent parts.

According to the Bible, human beings were created as vessels in the image of God to contain, express, and represent Him (Rom. 9:23; Gen. 1:26) with three distinct parts: body, soul, and spirit (1 Thes. 5:23). These three parts are distinct in their function. The body is used to contact the physical, material realm; the soul was created to express and magnify God (Luke 1:46); and the deepest part, the spirit, is used to contact and contain God as Spirit (John 4:24; 3:6; Rom. 8:16).

### The Soul: the Faculties and Function of the Soul, and the Soul-life

The soul is the most complex of the three parts of man. We need to distinguish between the parts of the soul and the life of the soul. According to the revelation in the Bible, the soul consists of three faculties, or parts: the thinking part (the mind), the feeling part (the emotion), and the deciding part (the will). The soul knows (Psa. 139:14) and remembers (Lam. 3:20), which are functions of the mind; the soul loves (S. S. 1:7) and hates (Isa. 1:14), which are functions of the emotion; and the soul chooses (Job 7:15) and refuses (6:7; Psa. 77:2), which are functions of the will.

The fall affected the three parts of man intrinsically. The corrupted body became the flesh containing sin (Rom. 8:3; 7:23; Col. 2:11, 23); the soul, independent from God,

became the self (2 Tim. 3:2); and the spirit lost its function and was deadened (Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13). As a result of the fall, the human soul consists of not just the faculties of the mind, emotion, and will but also the self, self-life, or soul-life. The term *soul-life*, or *self-life*, is not so commonly used among Bible scholars and expositors, but this term has been employed by the “inner-life” writers to refer to the self. The soul is our person, which consists of the God-created faculties and the Satan-corrupted self, or soul-life. In order for the faculties of the soul to serve God’s purpose, they need to be released by the denial of the self and the loss of the soul-life for the incorporation of divinity in humanity for the speaking of the word of God.

### *The Self, the Soul-life, the Mind, and Speaking*

Matthew 16 is an important passage to illustrate the distinction between the self, the soul-life, the mind, and speaking the word. First, in verse 16 Peter responded to the Lord’s question in verse 15, “Who do you say that I am?” by uttering the divine concept he received from the revelation of the Father (that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God). This was in contrast to the natural, religious human concepts circulating at that time (that He was Elijah or one of the prophets). The Lord then revealed that upon this rock, the revelation of Himself, He would build His church (v. 18). However, when the Lord Jesus went on further to reveal His death and resurrection, Peter’s immediate response was to rebuke Him in opposition to the divine concept (vv. 21-22).<sup>3</sup> The narrative continues:

But He turned and said to Peter, Get behind Me, Satan!<sup>4</sup> You are a stumbling block to Me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men. Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his soul-life [Gk. ψυχή]<sup>5</sup> shall lose it; but whoever loses [Gk. ἀπόλλυμι, or *destroys*] his soul-life for My sake shall find it. (vv. 23-25)

Witness Lee points out the distinction and relationship between the three terms, *mind*, *himself*, and *soul-life*:

Our mind is the expression of our self, and our self is the embodiment of our soul-life. Our soul-life is embodied in and lived out by our self, and our self is expressed through our mind, our thought, our concept, our opinion. When we set our mind not on the things of God but on the

things of men, our mind grasps the opportunity to act and express itself. This was what happened with Peter. Hence, the Lord’s subsequent word indicated that Peter had to deny himself, i.e., not save his soul-life but lose it. Losing the soul-life is the reality of denying the self. This is to take up the cross. (Recovery Version, v. 24, note 2)

Matthew 16:23-25 shows that the self must be crucified; the soul-life lost, or destroyed; and our mind (the leading part of the soul) set on the things of God. This makes it possible for the faculties of our soul to incorporate the divine mind, emotion, and will. Whatever concept fills the soul or heart impacts what we speak. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (12:34), and the things that proceed out of the mouth come out of the heart (15:18). By setting our mind on the things of God, we can speak, or utter, the divine concept or word, not the satanic concept or word, for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ through our prophesying (1 Cor. 14:4-5; Matt. 16:18).

### *Incorporation and the Soul*

In John 15:4 the Lord Jesus said, “Abide in Me and I in you.” The imperative “abide in Me” is followed by a declarative clause with an elided verb “and I *will abide* in you.” This can be considered equivalent to a conditional structure with this sense: if you abide in Me, I will abide in you. Verse 7 has a similar conditional structure: “If you abide in Me and My [rhema] words abide in you, ask...” If we take the initiative by abiding in the Lord, then He will abide in us.<sup>6</sup> If we deny ourselves, or lose our soul-life, and bring the faculties of the soul to abide in Christ, who is in our spirit, He will spread into and saturate the faculties of our soul. This same sequence is confirmed by Romans 8 and Ephesians 3.

According to Romans 8, we need to set our mind on the mingled spirit, which affords a way for the Spirit of God to dwell in us (vv. 5-6, 9). *You* in verse 9 can refer particularly to the faculties of our soul. The verb *dwell* (Gk. οἰκέω) in the same verse (having the same root as the verb translated “make home” in Eph. 3:17) implies the spreading of the Triune God as the Spirit from our spirit (v. 10) into our soul, represented by our mind (v. 6), and even to our mortal body (v. 11). Thus, we obtain the mind of the Spirit (v. 27), which is the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16).

A similar thought is presented in Ephesians 3. We are strengthened with power through the indwelling Spirit into the inner man—our regenerated, mingled spirit—so that Christ may make His home in our hearts, bringing

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His mind, emotion, and will into the faculties of our soul (vv. 16-17). The Triune God operates in this process. The Father grants us to be strengthened into the inner man through the His Spirit so that Christ may make His home in our hearts.

### **Incorporation in the Soul of the Lord Jesus**

Although the Lord Jesus did not have a Satan-corrupted self, He did have a genuine God-created human life with a human soul with the faculties of the mind, emotion, and will, and He had a genuine free will with the ability to choose. He chose to deny His natural human life to live by the divine life, allowing God access to the faculties of His soul to incorporate the divine will, mind, and emotion. He laid down His life, His soul-life (Gk. ψυχή) for (Gk. ὑπέρ “on behalf of”) the sheep (John 10:11, 15, 17), for His friends (Gk. φίλων) (15:13), and on our behalf (1 John 3:16). He gave Himself up for us (Eph. 5:2; Titus 2:14), even us as individuals, “for me” (Gal. 2:20), for our sins (1:4), for the church (Eph. 5:25), and as a ransom for all (1 Tim. 2:6); and He offered Himself to God (Heb. 9:14; 7:27). Although these verses refer mostly to His offering up Himself on the cross, His crucifixion was the consummation of a life of self-denial.

**H**e denied His natural human soul-life so that He could be an incorporation of the Triune God with His humanity. The Lord’s incorporation with the Father is clearly indicated by statements that He was in the Father and the Father was in Him (John 14:10-11, 20) and that the Father was in Him and He was in the Father (10:38; 17:21, 23). This coinherence, or mutual indwelling, was the way by which the Lord Jesus took the Father as His person, incorporating the Father’s will, mind, and emotion into the faculties of His human soul.

### ***Incorporating the Divine Will, Mind, and Emotion***

Three main verses indicate that the Lord Jesus incorporated the divine will by denying His human will. The Lord Jesus did not seek His own will but the will of Him who sent Him (5:30; Luke 22:42; Heb. 10:7), and He came down from heaven not to do His own will but the will of Him who sent Him (John 6:38), the will of His Father (Matt. 7:21; 12:50). Even His food was to do the will of Him who sent Him and to finish His work (John 4:34).<sup>7</sup>

When the Lord Jesus referred to “the will of Him who sent Me,” He was clearly referring to the one divine will, and when He referred to not seeking, or doing, His own will, He was referring to laying aside His human will and subjecting His human will to the divine will (cf. Luke 22:42). As Kerry S. Robichaux says,

In the Godhead there is one volition and thus one resultant

decision; in the God-man there are two volitions but only one resultant decision, which, in fact, turns out to be the very same one decision in the Godhead. The effect of this is that Christ lived out the divine will by willing, in His humanity, to do so. He chose to do the will of the One who sent Him, whose will it was that He would so choose...It is not a matter of the Son of God yielding His will over to that of the Father—that is not possible, for there is but one will in God—but of the incarnate Son as a human being incorporating the one will of God into His human and physical actions. It is indeed a beautiful picture of how Christ was in His human living, fully in harmony with, indeed fully expressive of, the divine will. (“Johannine” 47)

**T**he Bible does not say explicitly that the Lord Jesus set His mind on the things of the Father or that the Father’s mind became His mind. However, the Lord’s speaking in Matthew 16:23 implies that, unlike Peter, the Lord Jesus set His mind on the things of God. It was the Father’s mind as well as the Father’s will that the Lord Jesus would empty Himself and become obedient unto death, the death of a cross (Phil. 2:5; Matt. 26:39, 42).

Similarly, in John 15:10 the Lord stated that He abides in the Father’s love by keeping His Father’s commandments (not the Mosaic precepts of the Old Testament but as an issue of the fellowship between Father and Son in which the Father directs the Son). The Son’s abiding in the Father’s love implies that the Son incorporated the Father’s love in His emotions.

### ***Incorporation in the Divine Speaking***

As a result of His incorporation of God in the faculties of His soul, the Lord Jesus was able to incorporate the divine speaking in His speaking. A number of verses indicate that the Lord Jesus did not speak His own words but those of the Father indwelling Him. This speaking issued from the incorporation of the divine mind, emotion, and will in the faculties of Jesus’ human soul. He not only spoke the word of God, as the Old Testament prophets did, but also embodied the word of God and was, hypostatically, the Word of God who became flesh and tabernacled among humankind (John 1:1, 14). As a tabernacle, He contained the speaking, or oracle, of God.<sup>8</sup> He spoke the things which He had seen with His Father (8:38), and what He had seen and heard from the Father, He testified (3:32). He did not speak from (ἐκ) Himself, but He spoke what the Father commanded Him to say and to speak (12:49-50), and His teaching was not His, but the Father’s who sent Him (7:16). The rhema words (utterances) that He said, He did not speak from Himself, but the Father who was abiding in Him did His works (14:10). The logos word (concept) that people heard was not His, but the Father’s who sent Him (v. 24).

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As a God-man who fully incorporated the divine will, mind, and emotion in the faculties of His human soul, the Lord Jesus then passed through death and resurrection in accordance with the divine will to become the life-giving Spirit to indwell the believers as the Head of the Body, the unique person of the one new man.

### **Incorporation in the Soul of the Believers**

To incorporate Christ as the unique person of the one new man, the believers need to deny themselves and lose, or hate, their soul-life to make the faculties of their soul available for the incorporation of God and man (Matt. 10:39; 16:25; Mark 8:35; Luke 9:24; 17:33; John 12:25; Rev. 12:11).

### **Incorporating Christ's Mind, Will, and Emotion**

As indicated above, we first abide in Christ so that He may abide in us. For our mind to be one with His mind, we need to take the initiative to set our mind on Christ, to mind (φρονέω) the things of the Spirit (Rom. 8:5), and to set our mind<sup>9</sup> (φρόνημα) on the mingled spirit (v. 6), on the things which are above (Col. 3:2), and on the things of God (Matt. 16:23).

Our mind set on Christ enables Christ's mind to become our mind. We need to let Christ's mind (His self-emptying, self-humbling, God-obeying mind) be in us (Phil. 2:5-8). Having Christ's mind in us enables us to be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion (1 Cor. 1:10), have the same mind toward one another (Rom. 15:5), and think the same thing and the one thing in the Lord (2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; 4:2), having a mind focused on pursuing Christ (3:15). We need to arm ourselves with the same mind as Christ regarding our sufferings (1 Pet. 4:1). We have the mind (νοῦς) of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). As Witness Lee states,

Because we are organically one with Christ, we have all the faculties that He has. The mind is the faculty of intelligence, the understanding organ. We have such an organ, the mind of Christ; hence, we can know what He knows. We have not only the life of Christ but also the mind of Christ. Christ must saturate our mind from our spirit, making our mind one with His. (Recovery Version, v. 16, note 1)

**A**s Christ's mind saturates our mind, we, the believers, are "transformed by the renewing of the mind" (Rom. 12:2), not thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think but thinking as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith (v. 3). We

are also renewed in the spirit of our mind, with the mingled spirit spreading into our mind so that we may put on the corporate new man (Eph. 4:23-24).

We also need to set our will to choose His will (Matt. 6:10) so that our will becomes one with His will. As a consequence, we can incorporate the divine will, doing the will of God from the soul, as slaves of Christ (Eph. 6:6). We realize His sovereign will in all of our circumstances, and this causes us to give thanks, which is also the will of God (1 Thes. 5:18). When we incorporate the will of God, we can ask anything according to His will, and He hears us, and this is the boldness which we have toward Him (1 John 5:14).

We can have our "love in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor. 16:24), our inward parts in Christ (Philem. 20), so that we can express our feelings, such as our longings, in the inward parts of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:8). We can pray that the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God (2 Thes. 3:5), and we need to keep ourselves in the love of God (Jude 21). Our love needs to be in the Spirit (Col. 1:8). God has given us a spirit of power related to our will, of love related to our emotions, and of sober-

mindfulness related to our mind (2 Tim. 1:7). The love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us (Rom. 5:5). The love of God and the God of love—both can be considered genitives of apposition, love as God and God as love—can be with us, particularly in our souls (2 Cor. 13:14, 11). Christ making His home in our hearts causes us, the believers, to be rooted and grounded in love (Eph. 3:17). Conversely, the Lord testified of the Jews that they did not have the love of God in themselves, when they refused to come to Him (John 5:42).

**T**hrough the process of denying ourselves, having the faculties of our soul set on Christ, and having Christ spread into the faculties of the soul, we take Christ as the unique person of the one new man, where there cannot be what we are in our natural life—Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, even male and female—but Christ is all and in all (Col. 3:10-11; Gal. 3:28; Eph. 4:22-24).

Incorporating Christ as our person makes us one with Him so that what He speaks, we speak, and what we speak is His speaking. Just as the Lord Jesus incorporated God in His speaking and was the Word of God in His humanity, so also the Body of Christ becomes an enlarged divine and human incorporation speaking the word of God and even becoming the word of God.

AS A RESULT OF HIS INCORPORATION OF GOD IN THE FACULTIES OF HIS SOUL, THE LORD JESUS WAS ABLE TO INCORPORATE THE DIVINE SPEAKING IN HIS SPEAKING. THIS SPEAKING ISSUED FROM THE INCORPORATION OF THE DIVINE MIND, EMOTION, AND WILL IN THE FACULTIES OF JESUS' HUMAN SOUL.

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## *Incorporating the Word of God to Become the Word of God*

My article in the previous issue of *Affirmation & Critique* mentions the believers' handling of the written, logos, and rhema words so that we can be constituted with them for our prophesying. The incorporation of God's word is also related to the faculties of our soul and to our speaking. When we read the written word of God, we need to come to the indwelling Christ in our spirit and deny our self by setting the faculties of our soul on Him and allow Him to spread into the faculties of our soul so that we can incorporate the logos word (concept) into our minds (cf. John 5:39-40). This gives us a deposit of the word for us to prophesy, speaking for and forth the Lord with the rhema words that the Spirit gives us as utterance.

Just as incorporation takes place by our abiding in Him and then His abiding in us, so also our speaking is an act of incorporation. We speak in Christ, and He speaks in us. This can be seen in Matthew 10:32, where the Lord said that everyone who will confess (Gk. ὁμολογέω, lit., "speak the same") in (Gk. ἐν) Him before men, He also will confess in him before His Father who is in the heavens. This implies the confessor's union with the Lord and the Lord's union with him, indicating that they confess or speak the same thing as each other.<sup>10</sup>

Our speaking should be a "speaking in the Spirit of God" and declaring Jesus as Lord "in the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).<sup>11</sup> Kerry S. Robichaux writes concerning this kind of speaking,

For the believers to speak "in the Spirit of God" and to declare things "in the Holy Spirit" requires that the Spirit, who indwells them, operate in their speaking and declaring. It is akin to what we find in John 14:10, the archetypal verse on incorporation...In the church the words that the believers speak, they should not speak from themselves, but the Spirit who dwells in them should do His works and fill their speaking with His operation. ("New Testament" 101)

We also speak before God in Christ (2 Cor. 2:17; 12:19) and speak the truth in Christ (Rom. 9:1).

When the believers are delivered up to their persecutors, what they should speak will be given to them, for they are not the ones speaking, but the Spirit of their Father is the One speaking in them (Matt. 10:18-20). The Corinthians sought after a proof that Christ was speaking in Paul (2 Cor. 13:3).

A number of other verbs that denote speaking take Christ as the object of the preposition *in*, indicating union with Him in speaking. We boast in Christ Jesus (Rom. 15:17; 1 Cor. 15:31; Phil. 1:26; 3:3) and in the Lord (1 Cor. 1:31;

2 Cor. 10:17); we have boldness (παρρησία, lit., "all kinds of utterance or speaking") or speak boldly in Christ Jesus (Philem. 8; Acts 14:3); testify in the Lord (Eph. 4:17); rejoice in the Lord (Phil. 3:1; 4:4, 10); and charge and exhort in the Lord Jesus (2 Thes. 3:12). We can also speak boldly in the name of Jesus (Acts 9:27-28), charge in the name of Jesus Christ (16:18; 2 Thes. 3:6), and give thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:20). A name designates a person. Doing something in the name of someone else is equivalent to doing something in that person.<sup>12</sup>

Names are also written on the believers. Writing implies constituting with an element. A new name is written on the white stone given to the overcomers; this signifies that an overcomer is a transformed person for God's building (Rev. 2:17). The overcomers in Philadelphia have the name of the Lord's God, the name of the city of His God (New Jerusalem), and His new name written on them, indicating not only that they are possessed by, or belong to, these entities but also that they have become these entities. "What God is, the nature of the New Jerusalem, and the person of the Lord have all been wrought into the overcomer" (Lee, Recovery Version, 3:12, note 3). The one hundred and forty-four thousand standing on Mount Zion have the Lamb's name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads, signifying that they are one with the Lamb and with the Father and that they belong to the Lamb and to the Father (14:1; 22:4).

Inscribing is part of the new covenant ministry, in which the law of the Spirit of life is imparted into the mind of the believers and inscribed on their hearts (Heb. 8:10; Jer. 31:33; Rom. 8:2). Inscribing makes the believers letters of Christ, known and read by all men (2 Cor. 3:2-3). The Spirit of the living God, who is the living God Himself, as the element, like ink used in writing, inscribes Christ as the content of the letters. The letters convey and express Christ so that others may read and know the Christ wrought into their being. In this sense, the believers may become the word of God.

According to 1 Thessalonians 2:13, the word that the apostles speak is the word of God. When the believers prophesy, speaking for the Lord and speaking forth the Lord, what they say causes the hearers to say, "Indeed God is among you" (1 Cor. 14:25). We need to speak as oracles (λόγια) of God (1 Pet. 4:11). Witness Lee says, "Our speaking should be God's speaking, God's utterance, which conveys divine revelation" (Recovery Version, v. 11, note 1). According to Hebrews 1:2, God speaks in the Son. *The Son* here refers to Christ as the firstborn Son and the believers as the many sons of God. Witness Lee says, "God speaks in Christ as His firstborn Son (Rom. 8:29), indicating that all the brothers of His firstborn Son as His many sons have to be the word of God speaking for God" (*Crystallization* 25).

Just as the Lord Jesus as the Word became a tabernacle containing God's oracle to speak to people, so also the believers may become the tabernacle of God, God's dwelling place among the nations on the new earth, enabling God to speak to the nations through God's being constituted into them and uttering out of them His rhema word (Rev. 21:3).

## Conclusion

In His eternal status the Lord Jesus is the Logos Word of God, and through incarnation He as the Word of God became flesh (John 1:1, 14). In His human living He denied His natural human life and incorporated the Father into the faculties of His human soul to speak not His own word but the Father's word to others. Likewise, as the members of the Body of Christ, we also need to deny of our soul-life by setting our mind on the spirit and allowing the Lord to impart Himself into the faculties of our soul, and we need to take Christ as our person and become incorporated with Him by mutually abiding with Him. This gives God a way to fill us with His concept embodied in His logos word so that we may no longer speak our own word but utter the rhema word of the indwelling Christ as the Spirit. We speak for God, forth God, and as God. In this sense, we incorporate the word of God to become the word of God.

JUST AS INCORPORATION TAKES PLACE  
BY OUR ABIDING IN HIM  
AND THEN HIS ABIDING IN US,  
SO ALSO OUR SPEAKING IS AN ACT  
OF INCORPORATION. WE SPEAK IN CHRIST,  
AND HE SPEAKS IN US.

by Roger Good

## Notes

<sup>1</sup>*Circuminsession* is a compound of three Latin words, *circum-* "around," *-in-* "in," and *-session*, which comes from the verb *sedere* "to sit, settle, or dwell," and it refers to the most static notion embodied in *incorporation*. *Circuminsession* has the same two prefixes as *circuminsession* but has a different verbal root, *cedere* "to go from, to give place to, to withdraw." *Circuminsession* is the equivalent of the Greek word *perichoresis*, which is a compound of *peri-* "around" and *-choresis*, from *χωρέω* "to make room for another, to give way, to go from," and it has the meaning of "mutual interpenetration." Both Latin and Greek words have a more dynamic and active sense than *circuminsession*.

<sup>2</sup>For example, GWN and CEB. In Romans 6:6 a number of versions translate this word as "self" (ESV, NIV, NRS, NAS, and NAB).

<sup>3</sup>While this sudden and sharp contrast between Peter's two responses to the Lord's speaking may seem surprising, as Alford states, "The expression of spiritual faith may, and frequently

does, precede the betraying of carnal weakness; and never is this more probable than when the mind has just been uplifted, as Peter's was, by commendation and lofty promise" (1: 175).

<sup>4</sup>Satan takes advantage of the mind set on the things of men to utter a concept, or thought, that frustrates and opposes God's economy. As Hannan says,

The appellation 'Satan' indicates the role Peter plays on this occasion. He now acts as one who tests or tempts Jesus and endeavours to dissuade him from carrying out God's will (cf. 4:8-10)...[and] discourage Jesus from thinking of his messiahship in terms of suffering and death...By opposing the divine will, Peter speaks from a purely human perspective and as an agent of Satan. This contrasts starkly with the confession of 16:16. However, Jesus does not dismiss him, as he did the tempter in 4:10. [The same Greek word ὑπάγε "go away," "get," is used in 4:10 and 16:23.

But with the addition of ὀπίσω μου "behind Me" in 16:23.] Rather he directs Peter to take his rightful place behind him as a follower or disciple. (146)

<sup>5</sup>Most English versions translate ψυχή as "life" in this verse and in other places where the Recovery Version translates it "soul-life." However, what the Lord Jesus is talking about here is not just a matter of giving up our human life for the Lord's sake in the sense of dying physically, but a more intrinsic matter of losing our soul-life or self for the sake of incorporating the Lord Jesus as our person. This is indicated in the parallel passage in Luke, which says that we need to take up our cross *daily* (9:23). Luke 9:25 also mentions losing, or forfeiting, *oneself* compared to losing one's *soul-life* in Matthew 16:25, thus indicating the equivalence of the soul-life and the self.

<sup>6</sup>Carson (with the NIV) also slightly prefers the conditional rendering, over the alternative comparative "Remain in me, as I remain in you" and the mutual imperative "Let us both remain in each other" (516). Whitacre states,

Remaining is not simply believing in him, though that is crucial, but includes being in union with him, sharing his thoughts, emotions, intentions and power...The divine must take the initiative and provide the means and the ability for the union to take place, but it cannot happen without the response of the disciple. (376)

This is related to the incorporation. If we love the Lord and keep His logos word, then the Father will love us, and the Father and the Son will come to us and make an abode with us (particularly in our soul) (John 14:23).

<sup>7</sup>We need to be careful in considering the matter of will in the person of Christ, as Kerry S. Robichaux points out:

There are two wills that need to be properly understood, the divine will and the human will...Among the Godhead there is only one divine will. This will is numerically one and thus at the same time the will of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Thus, it is not possible within the Godhead for the Son to have a will separate from that of the Father...[Yet as] a genuine human being...[Christ had] a genuine human will...As God, He possessed the divine will, and as man, He possessed a genuine human will. ("Johannine" 47)

The Councils of Chalcedon in A.D. 451 and Constantinople in A.D. 680-681 affirmed the orthodox view concerning person, nature, and will in Christ: one person in two natures with two wills, contrary to the Monothelite (from the Greek words *mono-* "only, one" and *-thelite* related to the will) position that there was only one will in Christ.

<sup>8</sup>The innermost part of the tabernacle, the innermost sanctuary, the Holy of Holies, was also called the oracle (1 Kings 6:5, 16). The Hebrew word translated "oracle" *debir*, is related to the word *dabar* "to speak." From above the Ark of the Testimony, above the expiation cover, from between the cherubim in the Holy of Holies, God could speak to His people (Exo. 25:22; Num. 7:89).

<sup>9</sup>There are two main Greek roots for *mind*—φρήν and νοῦς—referring to the faculty, or organ, for thinking, which are the roots of verbs indicating the action of thinking, of verbal nouns emphasizing the process of thinking (although sometimes translated "mind"), and of verbal nouns ending in *-ma*, indicating the result of the action of thinking, "the mind set" or "thought." The roots also occur in compounds (usually with different prefixes), which change the meaning. The action of thinking can be considered both from the perspective of setting the mind on something and allowing a thought or concept to enter into the mind. The mind can also turn away from what it was thinking (repent), be set on a different object, then allow that to fill the thinking, and thus produce a new thought.

From the root φρήν—mind—comes the verb φρονέω "set the mind, think, mind (vb.), regard, understand" (with the prefix σω- meaning "be sober-minded," and with κατα- ("down from, against") meaning "despise"); and the noun indicating the result of the action of thinking, φρόνημα "thought" (Rom. 8:5-6).

From the root νοῦς—"mind"—comes the verb νοέω—"think, understand, perceive" (with the prefixes μετα- meaning "repent, change the mind," and κατα- ("according to") meaning "consider, examine"); the noun indicating the thought process or the way of thinking, in compounds such as διάνοια "mind, thought, understanding" and μετάνοια "change of mind, repentance"; and the noun indicating the result of thinking, νόημα "thoughts."

<sup>10</sup>Our speaking is in Christ as the Spirit and also Christ as the Spirit speaking in us. The more we are constituted in our soul with Christ and His word, the richer our speaking will be. Even when there is not much constitution of Christ, we can still speak out of our union with Him (1 Cor. 12:3; 2 Cor. 2:17; Rom. 9:1).

<sup>11</sup>As Kerry S. Robichaux states, "The simple declaration *Kyrios Iēsous* ["Jesus is Lord," or "Jesus is Jehovah"]...becomes the rock upon which the church as Christ's Body is built through the exercise of the believers' Spiritual gifts by speaking" ("New Testament" 102). This confession is similar to Peter's declaration in Matthew 16:16: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," which is related to the building of the church (vv. 16-18). It is also similar to John's declaration in 1 John 4:15: "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God," which is related to the mutual abiding of God and the believers.

<sup>12</sup>Although we may do many things in the Lord's name, if they are not done out of an organic union with Him but in a formal or formulaic way, He will respond that He never knew us (Matt. 7:22-23). As Witness Lee states in a footnote on John 14:13, being in the Lord's name

means to be one with the Lord, to live by the Lord, and to let the Lord live in us. The Lord came and did things in the Father's name (5:43; 10:25), meaning that He was one with the Father (10:30), that He lived because of the Father (6:57), and that the Father worked in Him (v. 10). In the Gospels the Lord as the expression of the Father did things in the Father's name. In the Acts the disciples as the expression of the Lord did even greater things (v. 12) in the Lord's name. (Recovery Version, note 1)

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