

# The Crystallization

## EXPERIENCING THE PNEUMATIC CHRIST

Without explanation, the Bible simply declares, “The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit,” and with this declaration, it provides the key for our entrance into an experience of Christ that is not limited by the confines of time, doctrinal systemization, or mere objective worship. The key which opens up the divine economy of God is the simple yet profound revelation that Christ has become the Spirit in resurrection for the purpose of imparting the divine life of the Triune God into the believers. Through resurrection the incarnated Christ became the pneumatic Christ. Rather than being distant and historical, the pneumatic Christ is ever available. Rather than being an odd doctrinal construct, the pneumatic Christ is the realization of the eternally coinhering and coexisting Triune God; and rather than being objective and separate from us, the pneumatic Christ is intrinsically joined to us in our spirit.

During His earthly ministry Christ, the incarnated Logos of God, did not dwell among humankind as an independent being. He did not do His own work; rather, He did the work of the Father by the Spirit. Despite the clear record in the Gospels of the full involvement of the Trinity in the person and work of Christ, there is a prevailing tendency within Christian thought to separate the Son from the Father and the Spirit. This tendency, perhaps a misplaced attempt to maintain the distinctions within the Trinity, results in a view of Christ that imperceptibly glosses over the fundamental relationships within the Trinity during the stage of His incarnation, but massively ignores these relationships during the stage of His resurrection. He was a pneumatic person in incarnation, and He is a pneumatic person in resurrection.

The revelation of the pneumatic Christ, that is, Christ as the Spirit, is clearly presented in the Gospel of John. Our Christ, who has passed through incarnation, death, and resurrection, is not merely spiritual—He is the Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17). The pneumatic Christ is the Spirit who was not yet in John 7, the second Comforter in John 14, and the holy breath in John 20. In John 7:39 the Spirit, as the Spirit of Jesus (Acts 16:7), the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8.9), and the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19), was “not yet” because Jesus had not yet been glorified in and through His resurrection. After His resurrection the Spirit

of God became the Spirit of the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Christ. In John 14:16-20 the Lord promised that He would return to His disciples as another Comforter, no longer just abiding with them, but abiding in them. In John 20:22 He fulfilled this promise by returning in His spiritual body of flesh and bones to breathe Himself into them. The apostle Paul also unveils that the incarnate Christ died and resurrected to become the pneumatic Christ, the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45), so that He could dispense Himself into us to organically save us in His life for the building up of the Body of Christ.

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A minimal response to the view that Christ is pneumatic would be to label it as odd doctrinal variation on orthodox views of the Trinity. A more vitriolic response would assert that such a teaching is heterodox in nature. Such responses, however, fail to recognize the intrinsic trinitarian reality that is presented in the Scriptures. Our God is triune. The Father, Son, and Spirit eternally coexist and coinhere both in their essential being and in their economic involvement with humanity. While we must recognize the distinctions within the Trinity, we should never carry these distinctions to the point of separating the Father from the Son or the Son from the Spirit. Maintaining that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are both distinct and separate is, in fact, a heresy, and it must be repudiated because it is a view that fails to account for the full scope of the biblical data. We do not have three separate Gods. We have one God who generally reveals Himself to and interacts with humanity as Father, Son, and Spirit, and who specifically indwells the believers as the Spirit, who is the reality of the Son with the Father. The indwelling, pneumatic Christ is not for our objective study but for our subjective experience. This experience begins in our human spirit which is, in grace and through faith, regenerated by the divine Spirit. As such, our human spirit is now a mingled spirit, serving as both the dwelling place of God and our very inner man. Out from this mingled spirit, our experience of the pneumatic Christ will issue in the church being filled unto the fullness of God, corporately apprehending the universal dimensions of the pneumatic Christ.

*by the Editors*