

The Crystallization THE ORGANIC MYSTERY

What God does in the universe is not always as apparent as we may expect. Even His most basic action of creation is shrouded in mystery and eludes the full comprehension of all who study it. In fact, so elusive is His work of creation that many people do not believe that He is behind it or that He even exists to have done it in the first place. Watchman Nee once characterized Him as a God who hides Himself. Paradoxically, however, He desires to be known and to be expressed, and this is the whole intention of all that He does in time. The apostle Paul called God's will a mystery (Eph. 1:9), and we should not be too quick to assume that its contents come to us easily or naturally. What was hidden throughout the ages was manifested to the apostles by the revelation of God (3:5, 9), and they in turn tell us that we too need a spirit of wisdom and revelation to grasp all that God is doing (1:17).

At the core of the mystery of God's will is His economy, the plan that He made to accomplish His will in time. God's economy is directed toward His ultimate glory in the New Jerusalem and is carried out by and through Christ in His incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, ascension, and descension as the life-giving Spirit. The economy is according to His own being and takes His own being as its "capital." He is triune, and the revelation concerning His Trinity—that He is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—indicate that He is a God of life. His economy, therefore, is based on the life that He Himself is, the divine life. This life, which comes to humanity as His grace from the Father, in the Son, and as the Spirit, supplies His chosen people with the organic capacity and ability to fulfill His eternal plan. Certainly, God deals with all the negative things that have hindered His intention, but His more intrinsic activity is an organic one that will make His chosen people His expression in life and nature.

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On the night before He was crucified for our sins, the Lord Jesus offered His disciples a comprehensive yet simple presentation of God's endeavor with humankind. "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman....I am the vine; you are the branches....In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples" (John 15:1, 5, 8). The vine that He spoke of is the organism of the Triune God with His elect. It is intensely organic, and through the living relationship between Christ and His believers, it glorifies the Father to His satisfaction. In this arrangement, the believers are organically connected to Christ; they are not merely followers, nor are they imitators. They live and move because of their organic relationship with Christ. "Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me" (v. 4).

The mystery that was hidden in God throughout the ages is this organic mystery that places God and man in an organic relationship. John spoke of it as the vine; Paul spoke of it as the Body. From both we understand that we have been grafted into Christ by receiving the divine life in regeneration, and that through the divine life we will be fully transformed to be God's expression for eternity. God will gain what He is after, not in the way of merely declaring us righteous and overlooking our fallen condition, but in the way of bringing us back to Himself through His marvelous redemption and enlivening us to grow in His life unto the maturity of expressing what He is through our transformed and glorified humanity. May the Lord so enlighten all that they may see what the mystery is!

The Editors