

# FAITH, REGENERATION, and the NEW CREATION

by Witness Lee

**R**egeneration is the center of the experience of salvation, because God's central purpose in saving us is that we may have His life. It is for this that He has forgiven our sins and cleansed us; it is for this that He has sanctified and justified us; it is for this that He has set us free. He has accomplished all these things for one purpose—to regenerate us. Regeneration, therefore, is the central part of God's salvation.

By regeneration we begin to experience the very life of God. Before we were regenerated, we had no dealings with the life of God. But now we have many experiences of the life of God because the moment we were regenerated, His life came into us.

## Regeneration

In John 3:5 the Lord Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be born of water and the Spirit. What does this mean? In his ministry, John the Baptist told people that they had to repent and to realize that they were sinful and were good for nothing except burial. Those who heard John's preaching and repented were baptized in water. This meant that, as sinful, fallen men of the old creation, they were being terminated. Repentance and baptism with water were the central point of John the Baptist's ministry. This is what it means to be born of water.

Regeneration, then, is to terminate people of the old creation with all their deeds and to germinate them in the new creation with the divine life. Whenever a person repents, confessing that he is a sinner who is good for nothing except burial, he is accepting John's ministry. After repenting, he must believe in the Lord Jesus and accept His ministry of life in order to be germinated. For salvation, we need both repentance and faith. This is what it means to be born of water and of the Spirit, and this is regeneration.

John told people that his ministry was for the ministry of the Lord Jesus. The termination of our old life is for the germination of His life in us. The center of the ministry of the Lord Jesus is the Spirit, that is, to germinate people with a new life in the new creation.

"Born of water and the Spirit" does not imply regeneration through or by means of baptism. While the Bible does speak of being *saved* through water (1 Pet. 3:20-21), it never speaks of *regeneration* through water. These are not equivalent terms. To be saved through water refers mainly to being separated from this present evil age. During the time of the flood in Genesis 6—8, Noah and his family were saved from the judgment of God by being in the ark, which is a type of Christ. On the other hand, they were saved from that perverted and evil generation by the waters of the flood. The waters terminated that generation, separating and saving Noah and his family from its corruption.

## The Beginning of the New Man

Regeneration is also the beginning of the new man within us. All our experiences of spiritual life are matters of the new man, who begins within us at the time of our regeneration. Before we were regenerated, we were in Adam, a fallen sinner, an old man. Once we were regenerated, God's life in Christ entered into us. This life is a new element, and when it mingles with our spirit, it becomes the new man within us. Therefore, every one of us who has been regenerated is a double man. We are, on the one hand, the old, fallen man in Adam, and we are, on the other hand, the new, regenerated man in Christ.

## Born of the Spirit

According to the Bible, to be regenerated is to be born of the Spirit (John 3:3-6). Before regeneration our spirit

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was dead. “And you, though dead in your offenses and sins” (Eph. 2:1). But at the time we believed, God’s Spirit came into us and mingled with our spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:16). Thus, our spirit obtained God’s life and was made alive. Whereas our parents gave us our natural birth, God’s Spirit has given us our spiritual birth.

### **Born Again**

Regeneration also means to be born again or born anew. Originally we were born of our parents, but now we are born once more, this time of God. The Bible calls this experience being born again. When we were born of our parents, we obtained human life. When we were born of God, we obtained God’s divine life.

### **A Matter of Life**

Regeneration is not self-improvement or better behavior. It is a rebirth which brings in a new life. It is absolutely a matter of life, not a matter of doing. We have already received the human life from our parents; now we need to receive the divine life from God. For us to have another life, we must have another birth. When we have the life of God, we are the sons of God. The life of God gives us the right and authority to become the children of God (John 1:12). By this life we possess the divine nature of God and have a life relationship with God (2 Pet. 1:4). We do not need religious or ethical teachings to regulate and correct us; we need another life, the life of God, to regenerate us.

### **Why Do We Need to Be Regenerated?**

#### *Because We Are Corrupted*

We need to be regenerated because of two conditions. From the negative side, we need to be regenerated because our life has been corrupted and has become evil, and cannot be improved from evil to good. “The heart is deceitful above all things, / And it is incurable; / Who can know it?” (Jer. 17:9). “Can the Cushite change his skin, / Or the leopard his spots? / Then you also may be able to do good, / Who are accustomed to do evil” (13:23). “For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, nothing good dwells” (Rom. 7:18).

#### *Because We Lack God’s Life*

From the positive side, however, we need to be regenerated because we do not have the life of God. Of all God’s creation, man has the highest development of life. No plant or animal has a higher life than man. Yet man, the highest created life, needs to receive another life for his completion. He needs the uncreated, eternal life of God. When Adam was created, he obtained only the created life; he did not at that time obtain God’s uncreated life.

Likewise, when we were born of our parents, we obtained only the natural, created human life. That birth gave us an entrance into the human kingdom. But for us to enter the kingdom of God, we must have another birth from another source. We must be born of God. By our first birth we were born into the kingdom of darkness, but by our second birth we are transferred into the kingdom of the Son of His love (Col. 1:13).

God’s purpose is that we may obtain His own uncreated life and be transformed by this life into His image to be like Him. Even if our human life had not been corrupted by the fall of man in Genesis 3, we would still need to be regenerated. In Genesis 1 and 2, Adam was without sin, yet he was void of God’s life. Thus, God placed him before the tree of life that he might receive the life of God and be regenerated. God’s purpose in creating man is not merely to obtain a sinless man, but even more to have a God-man, one who has God’s own life and nature.

### **An Example of Regeneration—Nicodemus**

John 3 speaks of the new birth. It also contains a wonderful example of one who needed a new birth—Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a person of excellent virtue. He was a teacher with a high attainment in education. As a teacher of the Jews, he taught the Old Testament, the sacred Word. Nicodemus was a ruler of the Jews. He had a position of honor and authority. As an old man, he was full of experiences, and morally, he was an honest and good man. Nicodemus was also a man who was truly seeking after God. Although he was somewhat fearful of the Pharisees, he still came to the Lord Jesus by night. This indicated that he was seeking God. Nicodemus was an old man of perhaps sixty or seventy years of age, yet he came to see the Lord Jesus, who was only a little over thirty years of age. This indicated his humility. Although he was a teacher, he addressed the Lord Jesus as Rabbi. Among the Jews, to call a person Rabbi implies that you are humbling yourself. Could you find a better person than Nicodemus? Surely he was a man of superior standard, great attainment, and high morality.

#### *The Basic Need of Man*

When Nicodemus came to the Lord Jesus, the Lord took the opportunity to reveal the basic need of man. In His conversation with Nicodemus, the Lord revealed that regardless of how good we are, we still need regeneration. Regeneration is the primary need of man. Moral people, as well as immoral people, need to be regenerated. Some Christians hold the mistaken concept that people need regeneration simply because they are sinful and fallen. However, if Adam had never fallen into sin, he still would have needed regeneration because he was lacking the life of God. That is why God put Adam before the tree of life

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(Gen. 2:9). The tree of life represents the very life of God. If Adam had partaken of the tree of life, he would have received the life of God and been regenerated.

Since we are human beings, we all have human life. The question is not whether our human life is good or bad. Regardless of the kind of human life we have, as long as we do not have the divine life, we need to be regenerated. To be regenerated simply means to receive the divine life *in addition to* our human life. God's eternal purpose is for man to be a vessel to contain the divine life. We are earthen vessels to contain God as life (2 Cor. 4:7). This is the true meaning of regeneration.

### *Not Teachings*

Due to the influence of human culture and the Jewish religion, Nicodemus thought that men needed to behave properly. He supposed that in order for men to have good conduct and worship God in a proper way, they need much teaching. Since Nicodemus considered Christ to be a teacher who had come from God, he may have thought that he needed better teachings to improve himself. But the Lord's answer in the following verse unveiled to him that his need was to be born again. To be born again is to be regenerated with the divine life—a life other than the human life received by natural birth. His real need was not better teachings, but the divine life. We do not need religion or teachings to regulate and correct us; we need another life—the life of God—to regenerate us.

### *Another Kind of Birth*

When Nicodemus heard that he had to be born again, he thought it meant that he had to return to his mother's womb and come out again. Then the Lord Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). He was saying to Nicodemus that even if he could go back into his mother's womb and be born a second time, he would still be the same. He did not need another birth in time, but another birth in nature.

### *The Best Example*

The Lord Jesus was very wise in using Nicodemus as the example of regeneration. If He had used the sinful woman in John 4 as the example, we might conclude that only sinful people need to be born again. Outwardly, Nicodemus had no moral or sinful problems. But he lacked the life of

God. Because the Lord used a good man, Nicodemus, for His example, we can see that whether we are good or bad, we all need regeneration—we all need to receive the life of God.

## **The Results of Regeneration**

### *Becoming the Children of God*

Since regeneration means to be born of God, it automatically causes us to become the children of God (John 1:12-13). We are His children and He is our Father. The divine life we receive through regeneration is our authority to be His children. It is also a guarantee that one day, through the transformation of our soul and the glorification of our body, we shall enjoy full sonship.

### *Becoming a New Creation*

The old creation has nothing of God's divine element in it. That is why it is old and decaying. By regeneration, God's element is added into us, and we become a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). This new creation is a marvelous mystery, for it is the very mingling of God and man. It is both man and God, and it has both the human and the divine elements within it.

### *Becoming One with God*

By regeneration we not only obtain God's life with its divine elements, but we are also united with God as one. God the Spirit enters our spirit, causing us to be joined to Him as one spirit. "But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). What a marvelous and deep relationship is this—that in at least one part of our being—our spirit—we are fully one with God! This oneness with God is deepened and increased by the transformation of our soul, and it will reach its full development by the glorification of our body, which will cause even our body to be one with God.

## **What We Receive through Regeneration**

### *The Life of God*

The first and primary thing we receive through regeneration is the life of God. All of the capabilities, functions, and activities of a living being originate with its life. Even its appearance and outward expression are determined by its life. God has the highest life. All that God is and all that is in God are in the life of God. The divine nature of God



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is also contained within the life of God. All that He is—whether truth, holiness, light, or love—is derived from His life.

Included also in the life of God is that great power which resurrected the Lord Jesus from the dead. When the Lord Jesus entered into death, death used all its power to hold Him, but the Lord broke through the holding power of death and arose. He was not restrained by death because in Him is the powerful life of God (Eph. 1:19-20). This is the very life we receive when we are regenerated.

### *The Law of Life*

A law is a regulation, a constant and unchanging rule. The law of life is the natural characteristic, the innate, automatic function of a certain kind of life. The higher a life is, the higher is its law. Since the life of God is the highest life, its law is the highest. This highest law is the functioning of the divine life. With every kind of life, whether it is vegetable, animal, human, or divine, there is an automatic and innate function. That function is the law of that particular life. For example, a peach tree has a life-law that causes it to bear peaches. A peach tree does not need someone to teach it to bring forth peaches rather than apples. There is an inward law which does not allow the peach tree to produce apples and which causes it spontaneously to bear peaches.

**T**he law of life which the life of God brings into us contains the laws mentioned in Hebrews 8:10, which God has put into our minds and inscribed on our hearts. These laws are different from the laws of the Old Testament. The laws of the Old Testament were written on stone tablets outside of man (Exo. 34:1, 28). The laws of life are the laws of God which God has written with His Spirit on our heart. The laws which were written on the stone tablets are outward laws, laws of letter, dead laws, and laws without power; they are laws which are unable to accomplish anything within man (Rom. 8:3; Heb. 7:18-19). But the laws which are written on the tablet of our heart are inward laws with great power; they enable us not only to know the heart's desire of God and to follow His will, but also to know God Himself and to express God Himself.

The divine life we receive by regeneration is living, spontaneous, active, and aggressive within us. It is always regulating our behavior from within, enabling us to know how God desires us to act and behave. Because of this, even the youngest Christian does not need outward teachings and rules, but rather needs to pay his fullest attention to the regulating of the inward law of life.

“The law of the Spirit of life” mentioned in Romans 8:2 is the law of life which is in us. Because this law is derived

from the life of God and cannot be separated from the Spirit of God, Romans 8 calls this law “the law of the Spirit of life.”

### *A New Heart*

Ezekiel 36:26 tells us that when God cleanses us, saves us, and regenerates us, He gives us a new heart. What is a new heart? A new heart is an old heart that God has renewed. After this verse says that God gives us a new heart, it says that He takes away our heart of stone and gives us a heart of flesh. Thus, God gives us a new heart by renewing our old heart. Before we were saved, our heart opposed God, did not desire God, and was as hard as stone toward God. So it is called a “stony heart.” But when the Holy Spirit regenerated us, He caused our heart to repent of sin and to become soft toward God.

Our heart represents us with regard to our inclination, affection, delight, and desire toward things. Before we were regenerated, our heart was inclined toward sin and the world, but it was cold and hard toward God and spiritual things. Once we are regenerated and saved, our heart inclines toward God, loves God, and desires God. It also desires and delights in spiritual and heavenly things. Whenever such things are mentioned, our heart rejoices.

### *A New Spirit*

Ezekiel 36:26 also says that God puts a new spirit in us. This does not refer to the Holy Spirit, but to our human spirit. What is a new spirit? Just as the new heart is the old heart made new, so the new spirit is the old spirit made new. The old spirit, when it is renewed, is made alive. “Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ” (Eph. 2:5). The problem with our old heart is its hardness; the problem with our old spirit is its deadness. But praise the Lord! After regeneration our heart is soft toward God, and our spirit is alive toward God.

The spirit of man was originally created to be the organ for man to contact God. In Genesis 1 and 2, man had fellowship with God and communed with God through and by his human spirit. “The *spirit of man* is the lamp of Jehovah, / Searching all the innermost parts of the inner being” (Prov. 20:27). “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship *in spirit* and truthfulness” (John 4:24). “For God is my witness, whom I serve *in my spirit* in the gospel of His Son” (Rom. 1:9). Philippians 2:1 says, “If any *fellowship of spirit*.” In Genesis 3, because of man's fall, his spirit was damaged by the defilement of sin and, having lost its function toward God, became a dead spirit. When man's spirit became dead, God considered the whole man as dead (Eph. 2:5).

When we are regenerated, the blood of the Lord Jesus

cleanses the defilement which our spirit suffered. The Spirit of God then puts the life of God into our spirit and enlivens it (Col. 2:13). By this, our dead, old spirit is renewed and becomes a living, new spirit. When God regenerates us, He works from two sides. On one hand, He uses the blood of the Lord Jesus to cleanse away the defilement of our spirit so that our spirit became clean. On the other hand, by His Spirit He puts His life into our spirit so that our spirit could have His divine element. He thus renews our old spirit making it a new spirit. Since at the time of our regeneration God has already given us a new heart, why does He proceed further to put a new spirit in us? It is because our heart can only desire and love God; it cannot contact God or touch Him. He must put a new spirit in us so that we may contact Him and fellowship with Him.

### *The Holy Spirit*

Ezekiel 36:27 goes on to say that God puts His own Spirit within us. When God regenerates us, He puts His life into our spirit, enlivening our dead spirit, and He also puts His Spirit into our spirit. Romans 8:9 says, "The Spirit of God dwells in you," and verse 16 says, "The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit." These two verses show that the Spirit of God dwells in our spirit. Once the Spirit comes into our spirit, we are one spirit with the Lord. First Corinthians 6:17 says, "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit."

"But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him. But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness" (Rom. 8:9-10). These two verses show us that the Spirit of God dwelling in us is the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us and the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us is Christ Himself dwelling in us. The Spirit of God in us is the reality of Christ. When we believe, God through His Spirit reveals Christ in us (Gal. 1:16). Once we receive Christ as Savior, He as the Spirit dwells in us (2 Cor. 3:17; 13:5). Christ is the incarnation of God, the embodiment of God. All that God is and all the fullness of the Godhead dwell in Christ bodily (Col. 2:9). Therefore, Christ dwelling in us causes us to be filled unto all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:17-19).

### *God*

Since Christ is the embodiment of God, and since regeneration causes us to receive Christ, it also causes us to have

God. Furthermore, the Spirit is the reality of Christ. God is in Christ, and Christ is the Spirit. We know that God dwells in us by the Spirit whom He gave to us (1 John 3:24; 4:13). The Lord Jesus also told us that He and God together abide in us (John 14:23). When we have the Spirit dwelling in us, we have Christ and God dwelling in us. The Spirit, Christ, and God dwell in us as *one*.

When the Bible mentions the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, the emphasis is on His anointing us (1 John 2:27). When it mentions Christ dwelling in us, the emphasis is on His living in us as our life (Gal. 2:20), and when it mentions God dwelling in us, the emphasis is on His working in us (Phil. 2:13; Heb. 13:21; 1 Cor. 12:6). The Spirit, by anointing us, anoints the element of God into us. Christ, by living in us, lives the life of God both in us and out from us. God, by working in us, works His will into us that it may be accomplished upon us.

**Once we are born of God, we are eternally His children, regardless of our condition. Though we might turn away from the Lord temporarily, the birth relationship can by no means be terminated.**

**H**ow wonderful are the items we receive through regeneration! We obtain the life of God and the law of this life, a new heart and a new spirit, the Holy Spirit, Christ, and God Himself. This is surely all we need! These are sufficient to make us victorious and transcendent above our problems and to cause us to grow and mature in life.

### **Regeneration Being Eternal**

Regeneration is an eternal birth relationship and can never be dissolved. No birth can be reversed. No one can become unborn once he is born. Just

as this is a fixed principle in physical life, it is even more solid and substantial in the spiritual realm. Once we are born of God, we are eternally His children, regardless of our condition. Though we might turn away from the Lord temporarily, the birth relationship can by no means be terminated. This great fact gives us much confidence and boldness in the face of our failures and sin. No failure can terminate the birth relationship we have with God. Once our heart is turned again, we can come boldly to our Father as His dear child.

### **The Position of Regeneration in God's Purpose**

God has a purpose. That purpose is to have on the earth a corporate new man. This new man is in God's image to express Him and has been committed with God's authority to exercise dominion over the Satan-usurped earth (Gen. 1:28; Col. 3:10-11). God's purpose cannot be accomplished apart from God's life. Only God's life within us enables us to be in the reality of God's image. Only God's

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life within us enables us to exercise dominion over the enemy, Satan. Regeneration is our first experience of God's life. The salvation of God is not primarily to save us from hell and to bring us into heaven, but rather to impart His divine life into us. By regeneration, we receive His divine life into our spirit. From our spirit, He is spreading into our soul by the process of transformation, and at His second coming, He will even saturate our body. That will be our glorification. This is God's full, all-inclusive salvation.

### The New Creation

The most crucial matter in God's full, all-inclusive salvation is His making us a new creation. Our being made a new creation is, therefore, a vital part of God's salvation. We may even say that God's making us a new creation is the lifeline of His salvation. The term *new creation* is not a symbol. Rather, this is an expression conveying the plain and real fact that we have been saved to be made a new creation. Furthermore, this new creation, like the old creation, is not something individual but something corporate. In the old creation God did not create millions of men; on the contrary, He created one man, Adam, who includes all men. The principle is the same with God's new creation. In the new creation we all are parts of the new man (Eph. 2:15), the church, composed of the many sons of God.

God's intention is to make us a new creation, and this new creation is composed of sons. In a very practical sense, the corporate sonship is God's new creation. Those in the old creation are sons of Adam in the fall. But through God's redemption, regeneration, and dispensing of Himself into us, we who once were sons of Adam have now become sons of God. Here in this divine sonship we are corporately the new creation.

There is a basic difference between the new creation and the old creation. God's life and nature are not wrought into the old creation, but the new creation does possess the divine life and the divine nature. Although the old creation came into being through the work of the mighty God, He Himself does not reside in it. Hence, the first creation has no divine content. The divine nature does not dwell in the old creation, and that is why it has become old. Adam did not have the life of God or the nature of God. We can receive the divine life and nature only by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and being regenerated by the Spirit. When we believed in Christ, God's life and nature were imparted to us and caused us to become a new creation.

Second Corinthians 5:17 says, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new." Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old things of the flesh have passed away through the death of Christ, and all has become new in

Christ's resurrection. To be in Christ is to be one with Him in life and in nature. This is of God through our faith in Christ (1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 3:26-28). The words *Behold, they have become new* are a call to watch the marvelous change of the new creation. The word *they* refers to the old things. The old creation does not have the divine life and nature, but the new creation, the believers born again of God, does (John 1:13; 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:4). Hence, the believers are a new creation, not according to the old nature of the flesh but according to the new nature of the divine life.

Galatians 6:15 says, "Neither is circumcision anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creation is what matters." The old creation is our old man in Adam (Eph. 4:22), our natural being by birth, without God's life and the divine nature. The new creation is the new man in Christ (v. 24), our being regenerated by the Spirit of God (John 3:6), having God's life and the divine nature wrought into us, with Christ as its constituent (Col. 3:10-11). It is this new creation that fulfills God's eternal purpose by expressing God in His sonship. Whereas circumcision is an ordinance of the law, the new creation is the masterpiece of life with the divine nature. Circumcision is of the dead letter; the new creation is of the living Spirit. Hence, it avails. The Son of God who has been revealed in us (Gal. 1:16) enlivens us and makes us a new creation, and the Christ who lives in us (2:20) affords us the riches of His life to live the new creation. Therefore, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything, but a new creation with Christ as its life is what matters.

The new creation spoken of in Galatians 6:15 is the old creation transformed by the divine life, by the processed Triune God. The old creation was old because God was not part of it; the new creation is new because God is in it. We who have been regenerated by the Spirit of God are still God's creation, but we are now His new creation. However, this is real only when we live and walk by the Spirit. Whenever we live and walk by the flesh, we are in the old creation, not in the new creation. Anything in our daily life that does not have God in it is the old creation, but what has God in it is part of the new creation.

If we would be in the new creation, we must enter into an organic union with the Triune God. Apart from such a union, we shall remain in the old creation, but now, by the organic union with the Triune God, we are in the new creation. Here in the new creation neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything or avails anything. As believers in Christ, we are the new creation through an organic union with the Triune God.

### By Being Regenerated

The believers have been made a new creation by being

regenerated. Regeneration causes us to become a new creation, something which has the element of God within it. The old creation has nothing of the divine element in it. That is why it is old and decaying. Originally, we did not have God's element; therefore, we were the old creation. It was not until God's element was added into us that we became a new creation. This is what regeneration has accomplished in us. Regeneration causes us to have God's life and His very element, thereby making us a new creation. This new creation is a marvelous mystery, for it is the mingling of God and man. As the most wonderful thing in the universe, the new creation has both the human and divine elements. By regeneration God's element was added into us, and we became a new creation.

**S**ince we are made a new creation by being regenerated, we need a clear and accurate understanding of regeneration. To be regenerated simply means to receive the divine life in addition to our human life. God's eternal purpose is for man to be a vessel to contain the divine life. Our being with our human life is a vessel to contain God as life. God's goal is that we receive the divine life as our real life. This is the meaning of regeneration.

By regeneration we not only obtain God's life, but we are also made one with God. God the Spirit enters our spirit and causes us to be joined to Him as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). What a marvelous and deep relationship this is! Now in at least one part of our being—our spirit—we are one with God. This oneness of God is deepened and increased by the transformation of our soul, and it will reach its full development by the glorification of our body, which will cause even our body to be one with God.

#### *By God the Father according to His Purpose and His Great Mercy*

The believers have been regenerated by God the Father. By regenerating us, God the Father enlivens us with His life and brings us into a relationship of life, an organic union, with Him. Through regeneration God imparts His life into us. We all have been born of the divine life. This is to be regenerated by God.

As believers, we have been regenerated by God the Father according to His purpose and His great mercy. James 1:18, speaking of God, says that having purposed, "He brought us forth." This refers to the divine birth, our regeneration, which is carried out according to God's eternal purpose. The fact that God purposed means that He

brought us forth of His own will, by His intention, to carry out His purpose by begetting us.

**F**irst Peter 1:3a says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has regenerated us." Here we see that regeneration is according to God's great mercy. God's mercy is more far reaching than His grace. Grace extends only to a situation that corresponds to it, but mercy goes much further, reaching to a situation that is poor and unworthy of grace. According to our natural condition, we were far removed from God, totally unworthy of His grace and eligible only to receive His mercy. We were so poor and pitiful that there was the need for God's mercy to extend to our fallen condition. God's mercy has reached us, and according to it we were regenerated by God.

#### *Through the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead*

First Peter 1:3 reveals that our regeneration took place "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." It is crucial for us to realize that we were regenerated when Christ was resurrected. This means that, in the sight of God, we were regenerated before we were born, since Christ's resurrection was our regeneration. Before we became part of the old creation through our natural birth, we were already a part of the new creation through Christ's resurrection. Thus, our regeneration was accomplished once for all more than nineteen centuries ago. In our experience we may have been reborn some

years ago, but from the divine perspective our regeneration was fully accomplished when Christ was resurrected. Our experience of regeneration is based fully upon the fact that it has already been accomplished through the resurrection of Christ.

When Christ was resurrected, we, His believers, were all included in Him. Thus, we were resurrected with Him (Eph. 2:6). In His resurrection Christ imparted the divine life into us and made us the same as He is in life and in nature. This is the basic factor of our regeneration.

Christ's resurrection was a birth both for Him as the firstborn Son of God and for us as the many sons of God. Therefore, the resurrection of Christ may be considered a universal delivery, a universal birth. In this birth Christ as the firstborn Son of God and the believers as the many sons of God were brought forth. Of course, as the only begotten Son, Christ was the Son of God from eternity past. Nevertheless, in His humanity He was born as the



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firstborn Son of God through His resurrection. It was through this resurrection that the believers were regenerated by God the Father.

*Of Water to Terminate the Old Man  
and of the Spirit to Germinate the New Man*

The believers in Christ are regenerated of the water of baptism to terminate the old man. In John 3:5 the Lord Jesus tells us that we need to be “born of water and the Spirit.” Here water refers to the water of baptism, which terminates and buries our old man. After our old man has been terminated and buried, we can be reborn as part of the new creation. Regeneration, then, is to terminate people of the old creation with all their deeds and to germinate them in the new creation with the divine life.

The believers who have been regenerated also need a further washing from all the old, negative things. This washing refers to the “washing of regeneration” spoken of in Titus 3:5. The Greek word for *regeneration* here is different from that for *born again* in 1 Peter 1:23 (KJV). The only other place this word is used is in Matthew 19:28 for the restoration in the millennium. In Titus 3:5 this word refers to a change from one state of things to another. To be born again is the beginning of this change. The washing of regeneration begins with our being born again and continues with the renewing of the Holy Spirit as the process of God’s new creation to make us a new man. The washing of regeneration organically and metabolically purges away the old things of our natural life and of our old man, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit imparts something new—the divine essence of the new creation—into our being. In this is a passage from the old state we were in into a wholly new one, from the old creation into the status of a new creation. Hence, both the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit are a continual working in us throughout our life until the completion of the new creation.

**T**he believers in Christ have been regenerated of the Spirit to generate the new man. According to the Bible, to be regenerated is to be born of the Spirit (John 3:6). Before regeneration our spirit was dead (Eph. 2:1). But at the time we believed in Christ, God’s Spirit came into us and mingled with our spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:16). Thus, our spirit obtained God’s life and was made alive. Whereas our parents gave us our natural birth, the Spirit has given us our spiritual birth.

In John 3:6 the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” The Lord spoke this word in reply to what Nicodemus had said in verse 4: “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?” In verse 6

the Lord makes it clear that the new birth has nothing to do with the flesh. To be born again, to be regenerated, is to be terminated and to have a new being produced. What is terminated is of the flesh, and what is generated to become the new being is of the Spirit.

**R**egeneration of the Spirit is the beginning of the new man within us. All our experiences of spiritual life are matters of the new man, who begins within us at the time of our regeneration. Before we were regenerated, we were in Adam, a fallen sinner, an old man. Once we were regenerated, God’s life in Christ entered into us. This life is a new element, and when it mingles with our spirit, it becomes the new man within us.

In John 3:8 the Lord Jesus went on to say, “The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it goes; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” The Greek word for wind, *pneuma*, is the same word as for *spirit*. Whether it means wind or spirit depends on the context. A regenerated person, a person born of the Spirit, is like the wind, which can be realized but which is beyond understanding.

*From Above*

The believers have been regenerated from above. John 3:3 says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” The Greek word rendered *anew* can also be rendered “from above.” We have not only had an earthly birth; we have also been born from above, from the heavens.

*In the Believers’ Spirit*

Regeneration takes place in the believers’ spirit. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” (John 3:6). This indicates that regeneration is of the Spirit in our spirit. The divine Spirit regenerates the human spirit with the divine life. Regeneration, that is, receiving the divine life, is a matter that takes place in our spirit, not in our body or soul. The function of the human spirit is to contact God. Our spirit was made by God for the purpose that one day we would exercise it to contact Him and receive Him into our being. In our spirit we have been regenerated of the Spirit.

Regeneration takes place in the realm of our spirit. Regeneration takes place in the human spirit by the Spirit of God with the divine life. Hence, regeneration is not a birth of the flesh that brings forth flesh; it is a birth of the Spirit, God’s Spirit, that brings forth spirit, our regenerated spirit. Flesh is our natural man, our old man, our outward man, born of our parents, who are flesh. But spirit, our regenerated spirit, is our spiritual man, our new man, our inward or inner man (2 Cor. 4:16; Eph. 3:16), born of God, who



is Spirit (John 4:24). When we were born of our parents, we were born flesh. When we were born again of God the Spirit, we were born spirit. The nature of the flesh is born human, but the nature of the spirit is born divine. Before we were regenerated, we lived by our flesh and had our being in our flesh. By regeneration the divine life was imparted to our spirit by the Spirit of God, and our spirit was made alive, regenerated.

*To Receive the Eternal Life—the Divine Life—  
as the Seed of God*

The believers in Christ have been regenerated to receive the eternal life—the divine life—as the seed of God (John 3:15-16; 1 John 5:11-13; 3:9). Regeneration is a rebirth which brings in a new life, eternal life. Regeneration, therefore, is absolutely a matter of life, not a matter of self-improvement.

**T**o be regenerated is to receive another life, eternal life, the life of God. Before we believed in the Lord Jesus, we did not have this divine life. But from the time we believed in Him and called on His name, we have had the life of God. When we were regenerated, the divine life was imparted to us to make us a new being. With our old being we have the natural life, and with the new being we have the divine life. What we were was of the old life, the human life. What we have received through regeneration is a new life, the divine life.

The divine life received through regeneration is the seed of our new being. Speaking of the one who has been begotten of God, 1 John 3:9 says, “His seed abides in him.” The seed here denotes God’s life, which we received of Him when we were begotten of Him. This life as the divine seed abides in every regenerated believer. This seed is actually the Triune God Himself. In regeneration the Triune God was sown into us as the seed of life. The believer has the divine seed in his spirit. It is a marvelous fact that this seed of God now abides in us.

*Through the Living and Abiding Word of God,  
the Word of the Divine Reality as the Incorruptible Seed*

The believers have been regenerated through the living and abiding word of God, the word of the divine reality, as the incorruptible seed. First Peter 1:23 says, “Having been regenerated not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, through the living and abiding word of God.” This verse says that we have been regenerated through the living and abiding word of God. We have not been regenerated of

corruptible seed. A seed is a container of life. The word of God as the incorruptible seed contains God’s life. Hence, it is living and abiding. Through this word we have been regenerated. It is God’s living and abiding word of life that conveys God’s life into our spirit for our regeneration.

We have been regenerated of the organic, divine seed through the divine word. Actually, the Triune God is the seed. In our experience, however, the Triune God as a seed is conveyed in His word as a seed. Therefore, the word as the seed conveys the Triune God as the seed, and by receiving the word we were reborn.

**G**od is mysterious and abstract, and for this reason it is difficult for us to receive Him. But the abstract, mysterious God is embodied in the word, which has been preached to us. When we heard the word and received it, we received God, who is embodied in the word. The embodiment of God in the word is the very seed of life sown into our being for our regeneration.

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James 1:18 tells us that God “brought us forth by the word of truth.” The word of truth is the word of the divine reality, the word of what the Triune God is (John 1:14, 17). This word is the seed of life by which we have been regenerated. When we heard the gospel, we heard the word of God’s reality. When we received this word, we were reborn. Through this divine birth the divine life was imparted into our being.

*To Be the Children of God*

The believers have been reborn to be the children of God. “As many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12-13). To be regenerated is to be born of God, and to be born of God is to have the life of God, that is, the eternal life. If we have the life of God, we are the children of God, for the life of God gives us the authority, the right, to become the children of God, because by this life we have the nature of God and a life relationship with Him. Since regeneration means to be born of God, it automatically causes us to become the children of God. Now we are God’s children, and He is our Father.

We have been begotten of the Father, the source of life, to be the children of God. It is the greatest wonder in the universe that human beings can be begotten of God and that sinners can be made children of God. Through regeneration, an amazing divine birth, we have received the

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divine life, the eternal life. This life, obtained from God through regeneration, enables us to be His children. Now the Spirit witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16). Even at times when we are weak or backsliding we still have the deep conviction that we are children of God, for once we have been born of God we are His children forever.

### *To Be the Firstfruit of God's New Creation*

James 1:18 says, "He brought us forth by the word of truth, purposing that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." Here we see that we have been regenerated to be the firstfruits of God's new creation. God's new creation is organic, altogether a matter of life, and the regenerated believers are the firstfruits of this new creation. God will renew His entire creation to have a new heaven and new earth with the New Jerusalem as the center (Rev. 21:1-2). He first regenerated us to be the firstfruits of His new creation by imparting the divine life into our being through the implanted word of life. This life will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the living center of God's eternal new universe.

### **The Way of Regeneration— Believing into the Son of God**

How can we receive regeneration? The Lord said, "That every one who believes into Him may have eternal life"; "that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life"; "he who believes into Him is not condemned"; "he who believes into the Son has eternal life" (John 3:15-16, 18, 36). These emphatic words spoken repeatedly by the Lord tell us clearly and definitely that the way for us to be saved and regenerated is simply to believe into the Lord. To believe is the only way for us to receive salvation and regeneration. It is absolutely a matter of faith. Regardless of how much we can work or how good our work may be, we cannot be saved and regenerated by our work. Our work does not count in this matter. Only faith counts. Salvation and regeneration must be by faith. It is by faith in the Lord, by believing into the Lord, that we receive the forgiveness, the release from God's condemnation negatively. It is also by faith, by believing into the Lord, that we receive eternal life, the divine life of God, positively for our regeneration. The Lord has accomplished the redemptive work for us. By His redemptive death on the cross, He has met all of God's righteous demands on us and has fulfilled all the requirements of God's righteousness, holiness, and glory for us. By His death on the cross in the form of the serpent, the Lord has even destroyed Satan, the devil who usurps us and enslaves us, that we might be delivered from the evil one's slavery and power of death (Heb. 2:14). All negative things have been solved by His all-inclusive death on the cross. We do not need to do anything except believe in what the Lord has

accomplished. He has dealt with and solved all of our problems. He has left no room for our doing or work. So, there is no need of our work, only of faith in His finished, completed, and all-inclusive redemptive work.

After passing through death, by and in resurrection, the Lord has released His life and has become a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). Now, in resurrection, He is the Spirit of life (2 Cor. 3:17), with all the virtue of His redemptive work, waiting for us to believe into Him. Once we believe into Him, we not only receive the forgiveness of sins and the deliverance from Satan's evil power of darkness, but we also receive the Spirit of life, that is, the Lord Himself, with the eternal life of God. In this way we are saved and regenerated. It is by the way of believing into the Lord with His all-inclusive redemptive work that we receive God's life and are born of Him to be His sons.

**T**o believe into the Lord means to receive Him (John 1:12). The Lord is receivable. He is now the life-giving Spirit, with His complete redemption, waiting for and expecting us to receive Him. Our spirit is the receiving organ. We can receive the Lord's Spirit into our spirit by believing into Him. Once we believe into Him, He, as the Spirit, enters into our spirit. Then we are regenerated by Him, the life-giving Spirit, and become one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). When we believe in the Lord, we believe into Him. By believing in Him, we get into Him to be one with Him, to partake of Him, and to participate in all that He has accomplished for us. By believing into Him, we are identified with Him in all that He is and in all that He has passed through, accomplished, attained, and obtained. As we become one with Him by believing into Him, we are saved and regenerated by Him as life. It is by believing into Him that we partake of Him as life and are regenerated in Him.

The believers have believed into the Son of God, who has the eternal life, and into the Son of Man, who was lifted up as the bronze serpent on the cross, to have an organic union with Him. John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that every one who believes into Him would not perish, but would have eternal life." This verse speaks of believing into the Son of God which signifies union with Christ by believing into Him.

First John 5:11 tells us that eternal life is in the Son of God. The testimony of God is not only that Jesus is His Son but also that He gives us the eternal life which is in the Son. The Son of God is the means for God to give us His eternal life. Because the life is in the Son (John 1:4) and the Son is the life (11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4), the Son and the life are one. If we have the Son of God, we have eternal life, because eternal life is in the Son. Actually, eternal life is the Son, and the Son is the embodiment of the

Triune God. Therefore, when we receive the Son of God by believing into Him, we have the eternal life that is in Him.

John 3:14 and 15 say, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that every one who believes into Him may have eternal life." These verses speak of having eternal life, the divine life, the uncreated life of God, by believing into the Son of Man. Here the Lord Jesus applies to Himself the type of the bronze serpent (Num. 21:4-9), showing that when He was in the flesh, He was in "the likeness of the flesh of sin" (Rom. 8:3), which likeness was the form of the bronze serpent. It had the form of the serpent but not the poison. Christ was made in the likeness of the flesh of sin, but He had no participation in the sin of the flesh (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15). When in the flesh He, the Son of Man, was lifted up on the cross, He dealt with Satan, the old serpent (John 12:31-33; Heb. 2:14). Now we may have eternal life by believing into Him. The Greek word rendered *that* at the beginning of John 3:15 is better translated "so that" or "in order that." This indicates the goal of the lifting up of the Son of Man. The Son of Man was lifted up in order that every one who believes into Him may have eternal life.

**T**he issue of our believing into Christ as the Son of God and the Son of Man is that we have an organic union with Him. When we believe in the Lord Jesus, we believe into Him. By believing into Him we enter into Him to be one with Him organically, to partake of Him, and to participate in all that He has accomplished for us. This means that by believing into Him we are identified with Him in all that He is and in all that He has passed through, accomplished, obtained, and attained. Therefore, by believing into Christ we have an organic union with Him and thereby become one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). This is the meaning of the expression *organic union*. By faith in the Son of God and the Son of Man we have been brought into an organic union with Him.

### **Believing into Christ Jesus to Be Justified with the Righteousness of God**

We have believed into Christ Jesus to be justified with the righteousness of God. Justification is God's action in approving us according to the standard of His righteousness. We may justify ourselves according to our standard of righteousness, but this does not enable us to be justified by God according to His standard. We need justification by faith. Justification by faith means that we are approved by

God according to the standard of His righteousness. God can do this because our justification is based on the redemption of Christ. When Christ's redemption is applied to us, we are justified. If there were no such redemption, it would not be possible for us to be justified by God. Redemption is the basis of justification.

Acts 13:39 says, "From all the things from which you were not able to be justified by the law of Moses, in this One everyone who believes is justified." Here *this One* is the Lord Jesus, the One who has been resurrected to be God's firstborn Son and our Savior. Through Him we are justified from all the things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. Actually, the One by whom we are justified is Himself our justification. Today Christ in His resurrection is our justification. Hence, we should not regard justification as something apart from Christ.

Galatians 2:16 says, "Knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified." The word *flesh* here means fallen man who has become flesh (Gen. 6:3). No such man will be justified out of the works of law. Furthermore, in Galatians 3:11 Paul tells us, "And that by law no one is justified before God is evident." In these verses Paul tells us clearly that no one is justified by the works of law.

**When we believe  
in the Lord Jesus,  
we believe into Him.  
We become one with  
Him organically,  
partake of Him,  
and participate  
in all that He has  
accomplished for us.**

**I**n God's New Testament economy we are justified by faith in Christ. We may be so familiar with the expression "justified out of faith in Christ" that we take it for granted. Faith in Christ denotes an organic union through believing. The proper preaching of the gospel is the preaching not of a doctrine but of Christ, the Son of God, the One who is the embodiment of the Father and who is realized as the Spirit. The faith in Christ by which believers are justified is related to their appreciation of the Son of God. Actually, this appreciation is their faith in Christ. Out of their appreciation for the Lord Jesus, they desire to possess Him. The Christ who has been preached to them will become in them the faith by which they believe. Therefore, faith is Christ preached into us to become our capacity to believe through our appreciation of Him.

This faith creates an organic union in which we and Christ are one. The expression *out of faith in Christ* actually denotes an organic union accomplished by believing into Christ. The term *into Christ* refers to this organic union.

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Before we believed into Christ there was a great separation between us and Christ. But through believing we have been joined to Christ and have become one with Him. Now we are in Christ, and Christ is in us. This is an organic union, a union in life.

**I**t is by means of our organic union with Christ that God can reckon Christ as our righteousness. Because we and Christ are one, whatever belongs to Him is ours. This is the basis on which God counts Christ as our righteousness. Through the organic union with Christ, we share whatever Christ is and has. As soon as this union takes place, in the sight of God, Christ becomes one with us and we become one with Him. Only in this way can we be justified before God.

We should not have a mere doctrinal understanding of justification by faith. According to the concept of some Christians, Christ is the just One, the righteous One, on the throne in the presence of God, and God reckons Christ to be our righteousness when we believe into Christ. This understanding of justification is not adequate. In order to be justified by faith in Christ, we need to believe into Him out of an appreciation of Him. As the Lord Jesus is infused into us through the preaching of the gospel, we spontaneously appreciate Him and call on Him. This is genuine believing. Through such a believing we and Christ become one. As a result, God reckons Christ as our righteousness.

When we believed into the Lord Jesus, we had this kind of experience, although we did not have the terminology to explain it. First, we began to sense the Lord's preciousness. This gave rise to the faith that joined us to Christ organically. From that time onward, Christ and we became one in life and in reality. Therefore, justification by faith is not merely a matter of position but also an organic matter, a matter in life. The organic union with Christ is accomplished spontaneously through the living faith produced by our appreciation of Him. This is to be justified by faith in Christ.

### **Such Believing Is the Faith Given by God as a Gift**

Our believing is a gift given to us by God. This means that faith is something initiated by God, formed by Him, and given to us by Him. Therefore, it is of God that we could believe through hearing the word of the gospel.

Ephesians 2:8 says, "By grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Faith is the substantiating of invisible things. It is by faith that we substantiate all the things Christ has accomplished for us. Through such a substantiating ability, we have been saved by grace. The free action of God's grace saved us through our substantiating faith.

Ephesians 2:8 indicates that faith is not of our works, nor of our endeavor or strife; rather, faith is God's gift, that no one should boast (v. 9). Faith is not of ourselves. Although we believe, the faith with which we believe does not originate with us. In ourselves, we do not have any faith. However, at the time we repented and made confession to God in the name of the Lord Jesus, the believing ability was put into us. Before we were saved, we were utterly unable to believe. But on the day we were saved, faith was imparted to us, and we believed. Although we have never seen the Lord Jesus, we cannot help but believe into Him. This faith is not of ourselves but is part of the grace transmitted into us.

Faith is actually an aspect of Christ. This is the reason the New Testament speaks of the faith of Christ (Rom. 3:22). In Galatians 2:20 Paul says, "The life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith of the Son of God." Faith is Christ Himself. The faith which is given to us is the faith common to all believers (Titus 1:4). Faith is given, faith is received, and faith is common. When we put all these facts together, we see that this faith is Christ Himself.

**O**ur faith in Christ comes not out of us but out of Him. We have faith in Christ because He is absolutely believable. When we appreciate Christ, faith is imparted to us. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to say that faith is Christ. This is like saying that holiness, love, righteousness, patience, and endurance are Christ.

Because the unique faith is Christ Himself, we who believe into Him have a common faith. You do not have one kind of faith and I, another kind. When Christ came to you, you believed; and when He came to me, I believed. Whenever Christ comes to a person, that person believes into Him. This is a further indication that faith comes not out of us but out of Christ. Because faith is a gift of God and is not of our works, none of us has the right to boast. On the contrary, we all should humbly thank the Lord and praise Him that we have received Him as our faith.

*Through the Divine Revelation of the Word of the Truth in the New Testament, Conveying as Its Contents the All-inclusive Christ in His All-inclusive Person and His All-inclusive Work as "Scenery" to Our View*

The faith which is the gift of God is through the divine revelation of the word of the truth in the New Testament economy, conveying as its contents the all-inclusive Christ in His all-inclusive person and His all-inclusive work as "scenery" to our view. God forms the gift of faith and gives it to us through the divine revelation of the word of truth in the New Testament. The whole Bible reveals Christ. Especially the book of Revelation, as the conclusion, completion, and consummation of the whole Bible, is "the



revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:1). Through the preaching of the gospel, the all-inclusive Christ in His all-inclusive person and work was presented as scenery to our view. When we heard the gospel, we heard the speaking of the word of the truth of the New Testament. As this speaking was taking place, a revelation came to us conveying the all-inclusive Christ as the scenery for us to view. We may say that we were a camera, that our spirit was the film, and that the divine revelation as the scenery was the object to be photographed.

*Through the Hearing of the Word of the Divine Revelation, the Seeing of the Divine Scenery Being Generated by the Spirit within the Hearers*

Through the hearing of the word of the divine revelation (Eph. 1:13), the seeing of the divine scenery is generated by the Spirit within the believers. First the scenery of the all-inclusive Christ is revealed in the word of the gospel. Then the seeing of this divine scenery is generated within the believers by the Spirit.

Faith implies all the items in the scenery of the New Testament. In the New Testament there is a complete picture of this scenery. But how can this scenery get into us? It comes through the seeing generated by the Spirit’s work. This was our experience when we were saved and regenerated. We heard the preaching of the gospel, there was a “click” of the “shutter” of the “camera,” and the light came into us. As a result, there was a seeing of the divine scenery.

*This Seeing of the Divine Scenery Bringing the Pneumatic Christ into the Hearers to Become the Believing Element and Ability within Them So That They Believe into Him Spontaneously*

The seeing of the divine scenery brings the pneumatic Christ into the believers, and He becomes the believing element and ability within them so that they believe into Him spontaneously. In this way He becomes their faith in Him and thus the Author of their faith (Heb. 12:2), a faith that is called the faith of Christ (Gal. 2:16, 20; Phil. 3:9). First the divine revelation as the scenery is presented to our view. Second the seeing of this scenery is generated in us by the Spirit. Then the seeing of the divine scenery brings the pneumatic Christ into us to become our faith. This is the faith with which we believe. This is our believing.

One day, we, typical sinners in Adam, heard the preaching

of the word according to the New Testament, a word telling us about Christ, His death, and His resurrection. Spontaneously, the divine revelation as the scenery was presented to our view. Without our being conscious of it, the “cover” of the “lens” of the “camera” was removed. This means that our mind was opened to the scenery of the divine revelation. Then at a certain point there was a “click,” and the Spirit, the heavenly light, generated a seeing of the scenery within us. The scenery was impressed on the “film” of our spirit, and we believed into the Lord Jesus. This believing was produced by the pneumatic Christ, who is the enlightening Spirit, revealed through the preaching of the word of the divine revelation. Once this pneumatic Christ came into our being, He became our believing element and believing ability. This is the faith formed by God and given to us by God as a gift. This gift is actually Christ Himself.

The faith with which we believe is not ours but God’s.

This faith is formed by God and given to us by Him. When the pneumatic Christ was revealed in us through the preaching of the gospel, He became the believing element and ability within us. In this way we believed into Him, having received the gift of faith through the hearing of the word and the seeing of the divine scenery.

Because Christ is the believing element and ability within us, He is the Author of our faith. Hebrews 12:2 says, “Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of our faith.”

As the Author of our faith, Christ is

the Originator, Inaugurator, the source, and the cause of faith. According to our natural man, we do not have any believing ability. However, we obtain faith by God’s gift. When we look unto Jesus, He, as the life-giving Spirit, transfuses us with Himself as the believing element. Then spontaneously a kind of believing arises in our being, and we have the faith to believe into Him. This is not of ourselves but of Him who imparts Himself as the believing element and ability into us to believe for us. Hence, it is Christ Himself as our faith.

**T**his faith is called the faith of Christ. Galatians 2:16 speaks of the faith in Christ, and verse 20, of the faith of the Son of God. In Philippians 3:9 Paul again mentions the faith in Christ. This faith denotes our believing into Christ. Such faith issues from our knowing and appreciating Christ. It is Christ Himself, infused into us through our appreciation of Him, who becomes our faith in Him and brings us into an organic union with Him. LFC