

# Our Need: Life and Light

The truth that God created human beings as tripartite vessels to receive, contain, and express the divine life is neglected, and the revelation that the purpose of God is carried out by the life of God dispensed into His chosen and redeemed people is ignored. Furthermore, the words *eternal life* in the New Testament are commonly, and mistakenly, understood as referring to everlasting existence in heaven, a theological error of great magnitude. Ignorance regarding eternal life results in ignorance concerning the only true God, the One who is life, and ignorance of the One who is life results in a Christian life devoid of experience and fellowship with the Triune God.

Our Triune God is a God of life, a living, organic being, who desires to impart His life into His people. This impartation, or dispensing, reflects His axiomatic being, and the process of His dispensing can be seen within Himself and within His economy. Mirroring the eternal

*The life-giving Spirit is the economic realization of the true God of life.*

begetting of the Son in the Trinity, the only begotten Son was born in time through incarnation. Thus, the life of God was manifested in the Son (1 John 1:2). And mirroring the begetting of the Son in incarnation, Christ was begotten on the day of His resurrection in His humanity as the firstborn Son of God (Acts 13:33; Heb. 1:5). Thus, the life of God is manifested in the many sons, the church (Col. 3:4). When God manifests Himself, He manifests Himself in and through life.

The manifestation and experience of God as life always brings us into the realm of the divine light: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). We need to remain in personal and intimate fellowship with the One who is the light of the world, following Him inwardly and daily so that we might have Him as the light of life (8:12). We need to keep our hearts single toward the Lord, taking Him as the unique goal of our life so that our inward being would be full of light, not having any dark part, and so that "the whole will be full of light as when the lamp with its rays illuminates you" (Luke 11:33-36).

In order for us to experience the Triune God more as life and light, it is important that we understand and appreciate the role of the life-giving Spirit in the economy of God. In the stage of His first becoming, Christ, the God-man, passed through human living and died on the cross,

shedding His precious blood for our redemption. Then in resurrection Christ, the last Adam, became a life-giving Spirit; now the Lord is the Spirit, even the Lord Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17-18). The last Adam is Christ in incarnation and in redemption, and the life-giving Spirit is Christ in resurrection. Most of the emphasis in Christian doctrine is on the incarnation of Christ for redemption (John 1:14, 29); now we need to place equal emphasis on the fact that as the last Adam—the One who became flesh—Christ became the life-giving Spirit in resurrection and through the process of resurrection. This life-giving Spirit is none other than the Spirit who gives life (2 Cor. 3:6), the economic realization of the God of life and light.

This economic realization is the issue of a process, which can be seen in John 7:39, which says, according to the Greek text, "The Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified." This certainly does not mean that the Spirit of God did not exist eternally; the Spirit is the eternal Spirit, and thus He always was and always will be. *The Spirit was not yet* means that with respect to the process of the Triune God in His economy, the Spirit as the all-inclusive Spirit of Jesus Christ was "not yet" until Jesus was glorified through His resurrection.

When the Lord Jesus died on the cross, the element of the divine glory that was concealed and confined within the shell of His humanity, His flesh, was released. Then in His resurrection this glory permeated His crucified humanity, uplifting and transfiguring it, so that by the Spirit of holiness, Christ in His humanity could be designated the Son of God "out of the resurrection of the dead" (Rom. 1:3-4). On the day of the Lord's resurrection, the day on which He was transfigured into the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit of God with divinity became "the Spirit," the all-inclusive Spirit, the Spirit of the glorified Jesus.

In this Spirit the Triune God is glorified, and in this glorification there will be the full manifestation of God. Our Triune God does all things unto the praise of the glory of His grace, and when, through our experience of Him as life and light, this goal is achieved, the universe will redound with praises unto His glory, both revealing and testifying of His ever-flowing, ever-supplying life.

*The Editors*