

The Crystallization

Organically Joined to the Lord

In a chapter seemingly devoted to dealing with some of the most defiling forms of conduct, chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians, Paul utters one of the most uplifting revelations related to carrying out God's eternal purpose: "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (v. 17). *Joined to the Lord* and *one spirit* unveil the relationship that God desires with humanity; it is a relationship based upon the organic union of the life of the Triune God with the life of redeemed and regenerated humanity. Being joined to the Lord is not merely an objective declaration based on an objective operation of God; it is a matter involving the life of God in the divine Spirit being joined to and mingled with the human life in our human spirit, a joining and mingling that produces one spirit.

On the one hand, our relationship with Christ is objective, for He is the Lord of all, transcendent, sitting at the right hand of God in the heavens. On the other hand, our relationship with Christ is subjective, for He indwells us in a deep, spiritual way, seeking to have one life and one living with us in a relationship of coinherence, of mutual indwelling. Such an indwelling involves a union in life between the resurrected Christ and the regenerated believers. When Christ as the life-giving Spirit dwells in the believers' regenerated spirit, the two spirits become one spirit, a mingled spirit. The most appropriate term for this joining and mingling is *organic union*. *Organic* implies and indicates life, and *union* denotes oneness in and of life. God desires that our human life and His divine life be joined together to become one life, and He created humanity with a human spirit for the purpose of entering into us to be one with us and to make us one with Him for His corporate expression. While the potential of an organic union between God and His chosen and redeemed people exists in virtue of our being created as vessels with a human spirit, the organic union actually takes place through our experience of regeneration. When we believed into the Son of God, we were regenerated, born of God to be children of God with the life and nature of God. Our human spirit was born of the divine Spirit.

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This organic union is fully unveiled in the Epistle to the Romans, especially in Paul's speaking in chapter 11 concerning the grafted life. In order to have an accurate and balanced understanding of the organic union revealed in Romans, we need to see that God has justified us by both Christ's judicial redemption and Christ's organic indwelling, that we have been divinely and organically transferred out of Adam into Christ, that we can live in our organic union with the Lord because of our mingled spirit, and that we can express our organic union in the manifestation of the Body of Christ through the local churches.

In order to live according to our organic union with the Lord, we need to realize that there are many distractions

that vie for our attention and beckon us to live according to the life of our old man. In order to remain in Christ, we must avoid the distractions of many negative items, such as heresies, philosophies, traditions, and teachings other than God's economy. We should also be aware of the distractions related to sinful things, such as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the vainglory of life. Even conditions related to our human existence, such as anxiety, murmuring, anger, and agitation, can be distractions. Perhaps the most insidious distractions are related to good things, such as culture, religion, ethics, morality, and character improvement. These distractions, especially the categories comprising good things, clearly frustrate our enjoyment of our organic union, because they distract us from living according to faith, ensnaring many in human works apart from faith.

In order to be liberated from these works of the flesh, we need to clearly see that faith itself is experienced only in and through our organic union with the Lord. In our initial experience of faith, we receive the Spirit who brings the faith of Christ through the word of Christ into our sin-deadened human spirit, enlivening it and making it a mingled spirit of faith. From such a spirit, there is an appreciative response and an acceptance of Christ, who has been dispensed into us as the Spirit through the word. Our appreciation of Christ is

an organic response to hearing the gospel of the glory of Christ, and our acceptance of Christ is an organic response to receiving the content of the gospel of the glory of Christ. The organic union that issues from appreciating and accepting Christ through His word is realized in our experience as faith, which substantiates the redemption of Christ in us based on His righteousness and thereby justifies us before God. The Christ to whom we are organically joined is the source, content, and object of our faith.

The faith by which we live, the faith that saves us, is the faith of Christ, and the faith of Christ becomes our faith through a hearing of faith that imparts Christ as the Spirit into our human spirit through His word. Through the hearing of faith, the faith of the Son of God is organically activated in our human spirit because Christ with all His divine attributes, including His righteousness and faithfulness, is organically joined to our human spirit. In our organic union with the Lord, His faith becomes the faith by which we believe and the faith by which we are justified.

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Our justification involves a “happy exchange” in which He bears our sinfulness and we partake of His righteousness. The application of this happy exchange is dependent upon our organic union with Christ. He truly became sin in order that we could become the righteousness of God in Him. In His person the organic union of divinity and humanity was initially realized, and in His person the happy exchange of our sin for His righteousness was initially accomplished. Consequently, when we are organically joined to the Lord in our regenerated human spirit through the hearing of faith, the faith of Christ becomes our faith, and the happy exchange that occurred in the person of Christ is organically extended to include our sinful but redeemed humanity.

Through our continuing experience of the organic union, Christ becomes the hope of glory in us. This matter is fully revealed in Colossians, and the essence of Paul’s message in this Epistle concerns the union of Christ with the believers, which involves His dwelling within us as our life for His enlarged expression through the church. This Epistle unveils our union in the divine life as a union of coinherence, a union of identification in which we are one with Christ in His crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, a developing union in which Christ as the divine life grows within us, and a corporate union, which issues in the church as the Body of Christ

for the corporate expression of the Triune God in Christ.

Christ passed through the process of incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection to become the life-giving Spirit for the purpose of entering into and indwelling us as our hope of glory in an organic union with us. Christ being our hope of glory implies the expansion of this union through an organic process in which He, the Spirit of life, is sown into us as a seed of life through the regeneration of our spirit, grows within us through the transformation of our soul, and will blossom forth from within us through the transfiguration of our body. The revelation concerning our life union with Christ is the key to unlocking the divine truths in Colossians, and the revelation concerning the mingling of the divine Spirit with the human spirit as the reality of our organic union with Christ is an implicit premise that is foundational to the experience of this union.

In order to build upon this foundation in the way of life, we need to abide in Christ so that we can experientially maintain our organic union with Him. Our organic union with the Lord in our spirit is

illustrated by the branches with the vine in John 15. Christ is the true vine, and we are His branches. Just as the vine’s life is in the branches, and the vine lives through the branches, so Christ is our life, and we are His living. In order to maintain our organic union, our life union, with the Lord as His branches, we must abide in Him so that He may abide in us.

As believers who have been organically joined to the Lord as one spirit, we must maintain this organic union by abiding in Him so that He can abide in us. This mutual abiding is the practical realization of our organic union, which protects us. When we abide in the Lord, He is our protection from all of the enemy’s attacks and schemes. This abiding brings us into and keeps us in the divine light through His divine word, which becomes the teaching of the anointing. In such a condition of abiding, the Spirit is neither quenched nor grieved, the cross is continually applied, and the Lord’s commandment to love becomes new in our experience of its application and enjoyment. If we would be those who abide in the Lord and who let Him abide in us, the reality of our organic union with the Lord will become practical to the uttermost. **AFC**

by the Editors