

## *The Crystallization*

### **The Good News of Image and Dominion**

When the Triune God spoke of His eternal plan to satisfy the desire of His heart in Genesis 1:26, saying, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion,” His speaking was good news related to His desire for the corporate expression of His image in humanity and for the corporate representation of His authority through humanity. Despite humanity’s fall into sin, disobedience, and death, God continues to articulate His will through the good news of the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor. 4:3-4), the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 4:23; 24:14), and the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). Consequently, when Paul declared in Romans 16:20 that the God of peace would crush Satan under the feet of the corporate Body of Christ shortly, his speaking signaled the imminent accomplishment of His plan for the expression and enlargement of His image and dominion through redeemed and regenerated humanity.

The imminence of this accomplishment hinges on several factors in time. First, the Triune God initiated particular procedures to carry out His plan, including the creation of humanity as vessels with a human spirit to receive and contain His ever flowing divine life in order to reproduce divinity in humanity and to thereby build a corporate counterpart with the precious materials of His divine attributes so that redeemed and regenerated humanity could express and represent Him in an organic union with Him. Second, in His person and work, the incarnated Son, Jesus Christ, the embodiment of the fullness of the Triune God (Col. 2:9), passed through a process that began with His incarnation in the fullness of the time (Gal. 4:4). With His incarnation, a human vessel was filled with the divine life for the first time in human history. And with this filling, the image attendant to the divine life was fully expressed in the humanity and living of Jesus. In His living, which was also His working, Jesus exercised the authority of God through His submission to God and His will, fully manifesting and enlarging the realm of God’s dominion on the earth.

As the image of God and with the authority of God, Jesus accomplished an eternal redemption to counteract the effects of the fall, involving the condemnation of sin in the flesh, the destruction of the works of the devil, the termination of the old creation, the crucifixion of the old man, and the abolishment of the dividing ordinances. After dealing with the negative repercussions of humanity’s

organic corruption with the satanic nature of sin in His incarnated-status as the last Adam, Jesus Christ in His resurrected-status as the life-giving Spirit is now applying the incorporated elements of His incarnation, human living, death, resurrection, and ascension into the many sons who have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and regenerated by the life of Christ. As such sons, we are being transformed into the image of Christ and conformed to the image of Christ to participate in the economical operation of the Triune God to enlarge the corporate realm of His image for the corporate exercise of His dominion.

The enlargement of the corporate realm of His image and dominion is the intrinsic focus of the gospel of God—a gospel that will fulfill God’s eternal purpose concerning image and dominion, for which He created humankind in Genesis 1:26-28. God’s intention is to have on earth a corporate person to express Him with His glory and to represent Him with His authority so that He may establish on earth a kingdom in which His glory is manifested and His will is done. Since human beings fell from this purpose, coming short of God’s glory and living a life of lawlessness, God sent Christ as the second man to fulfill His purpose and to give His life as a ransom for many so that His chosen ones could be redeemed, reconciled, and regenerated. The gospel of God is the gospel of the glory of Christ and the gospel of the kingdom of God. Through the proclamation of this gospel, we, the believers in Christ, have been brought back to God for the fulfillment of His purpose. God saved us for His own purpose, and now His purpose should become our purpose as we present ourselves to the Lord to live personally and corporately as His expression and for His representation.

In Matthew 24:14 the Lord declared that the gospel of the kingdom has to be preached in the whole inhabited earth for a testimony to all the nations before the end would come. On this occasion, He did not speak of the gospel of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, because such a limited gospel, the gospel of today’s Christianity, reveals only the initial step in God’s economical operation to bring redeemed and regenerated humanity into the reality of the good news of His eternal purpose—image and dominion. May the Lord’s words and our experience of them become ever deeper and more precious to us. **AFC**

*by the Editors*