

The Crystallization

Seeing the Truths in the Gospel of John

The Gospel of John is simple in style but deep in spiritual revelation. Many of its deep truths, regrettably, have been lost to believers due to the neglect on the part of preachers, exegetes, and theologians, who are saturated with and directed by traditional, religious views to such an extent that they are unable or unwilling to question their opinions and open to the divine light in the Word of God. If, by the mercy of God, we humbly turn our heart to the Lord, acknowledging our need for Him to open our mind, the religious veils covering our heart will be taken away, and we will see the purpose of Christ's coming and going—as revealed in the Gospel of John—to impart the divine, uncreated, eternal life of God into redeemed and regenerated humanity to enlarge the Father's house as the mutual abode of God and man, that is, the church, which is symbolically presented in the Gospel of John, having been produced by His life-releasing death on the cross.

John reveals how God comes into man and brings man into Himself. By Christ's coming, He brought God into man, living as a man on the earth, and by His going, He brought man into God, causing man to be one with God and enabling man to live in God. The Gospel of John is divided into two main sections. The first section is composed of chapters 1 through 12, which show how Christ came through incarnation to bring God into man—this was His coming. The second section, chapters 14 through 21, unveils how Christ went through death and resurrection to bring man into God—this was His going. Chapter 13 is a turning point that divides the book into two parts.

Christ's coming and going are matters not of places but of persons. Christ's intention in coming to the earth was not to come to the earth as a place but to come into man. In principle, it is the same with His going. Christ's going was not a matter of bringing us to another, better, place. His going was to bring us into another person. Christ's going was not to bring us to a "mansion" in heaven but to bring us into another, wonderful, person, the divine person, God the Father Himself.

The concept of going to heaven to dwell in a physical mansion has, for centuries, misled countless numbers of believers, who have been deceived concerning the truth and deprived and defrauded of spiritual reality and

experiences that God, from eternity past and for eternity future, desires to impart. Traditional, religious views assert, even insist, that the Father's house is heaven and that the abodes are luxurious suites in heaven. There is, however, nothing in the actual text of John 14 to justify this view; rather, the notion of the Father's house being heaven is imposed upon the text by the religious mind with its concepts of and preoccupations with heaven.

The Father's house in John 14:2 is not heaven—it is a spiritual building, the house of God, the church of the living God. The Lord Jesus went away in death to accomplish redemption and to release His divine life. In resurrection He raised up an enlarged temple, the church as His mystical Body. His intention is to bring us into the house of God and to dwell with us by being in us. The Father's house is not heaven; the Father's house is the church. All the believers in Christ are abodes in the Father's house; this building is the Body of Christ, and all the abodes are members of the Body of Christ.

The result of Christ's coming and going is the mutual dwelling of the Triune God and the believers in Christ. Now in Christ we dwell in God as our abode, and in Christ God dwells in us as His abode. We are abodes, dwelling places. Apart from our subjective experience of the Divine Trinity, the Father's house, His dwelling place on earth, cannot exist. In and for the church as the Father's house, we must have certain crucial spiritual experiences of the Triune God both personally and corporately.

These experiences begin with our believing into God and into the Son of God, and because we have believed into the Son and have a spiritual and organic union with Him and because He lives in us, we can experience the reality of such a living. This living of a mutual abiding is a life of coinherence, a life in resurrection, light, glory, grace, reality, and prayer, all of which constitute the worship that the Father seeks in His house.

Such a living and mutual abiding is based on the impartation of God's eternal life; consequently, there is in the Gospel of John a crucial emphasis on the eternal life of the Triune God. *Eternal life* refers to the Triune God

Himself, who has been made available to the believers through the process of incarnation, death, and resurrection. Eternal life is God the Father in Christ Jesus as the Spirit being imparted into redeemed and regenerated humanity. Regrettably, John's understanding of eternal life is not the general understanding of most Christians today, who are largely taught to regard eternal life as a prosperous human existence that has the extra benefit of being everlasting in time. The emphasis in these teachings has no connection to the divine life and nature of God Himself.

In contrast to these teachings, *eternal life* and almost all instances of *life* in the Gospel of John refer to the divine, uncreated life of God and, thus, to God Himself. The Word, who was with God and who was God and in whom was life, came to make His divine life available to humanity. In order to accomplish this eternal intention, the Word became a genuine man through incarnation and passed through death and resurrection to redeem fallen humanity and release His divine life.

In resurrection this genuine God-man became a life-giving Spirit, the Spirit with all the mediating elements of Christ's person and work, making a divine and mystical union with humanity possible. By believing into Christ through the hearing of faith, we were regenerated with the divine life in our God-created human spirit and were produced as an increase and enlargement of God through our receiving of His divine life. This intention of God is encapsulated in John's references to the One in whom there was life, the One who came to give life abundantly, the One who is the true God, and the One who gives life in His name.

When the eternal life of God is received and experienced, it produces a corporate expression of the enlarged Christ, the church as His mystical Body, an enlargement that is symbolically presented in the Gospel of John as many grains produced through Christ's death and resurrection, the Lord's many brothers, the Father's house, the Son's vine, the Spirit's new child, the bride of Christ, and the flock of God. In His flesh Christ was pressed so that the shell of His humanity could be broken on the cross for the fire of His life and concealed glory to be released into many grains, which are His believers as His increase. In His resurrection the firstborn Son declared the Father's name to the church, His many brothers. His resurrection also enlarged the Father's house by producing many abodes, the believers, who become the Son's vine by being organically joined with Christ to be His

branches and who become a new child born of the Spirit to be a corporate new man as the increased Christ in order to carry out God's eternal economy. The church is also the bride of the Bridegroom, the increase of Christ, and the flock of God that is being shepherded out of the fold by the Lord who cares for our real inward person and oversees the true condition of our inward parts.

It is possible for the church to manifest these corporate aspects because of Christ's life-releasing death. Although His death has been traditionally understood as mainly an act of redemption, the Gospel of John reveals that the primary purpose of His death was to release His divine life. Not only blood but also water flowed from the Lord's side when He was pierced on the cross, signifying that there is a life-releasing aspect to His all-inclusive death in addition to its redemptive aspect. Although redemption serves as the indispensable judicial base for God's full salvation, it is the life of Christ released through His death that fulfills God's eternal purpose of gaining an increase of Christ that matches

Him in life, nature, and expression, an increase that will be His corporate counterpart for eternity. Just as Adam was put to sleep in order to produce his counterpart, Eve, from the bone that was taken from his opened side, so also Christ died on the cross primarily to produce the church as His bride by dispensing the divine life,

signified by the water that flowed from His wounded side, into us. Furthermore, just as a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, only to rise up again in resurrection, bearing much fruit, so also Christ's life-releasing death brought forth the believers as many grains, who could be blended together to form one loaf—the one Body of Christ composed of many members.

These truths from the Gospel of John—neglected and overlooked by Christianity—reflect the deep intention of the Triune God in His economy. To miss them by holding on to a material and physical understanding of the meaning of the eternal life, by promulgating misguided interpretations of the Father's house, by missing implicit references to the church as the corporate expression of the divine life, and by seeing only the redemptive aspect to Christ's death is to undermine the revelation of life and the corporate building in life, limiting and frustrating the economic realization of the purpose of Christ's coming and going, as revealed in the Gospel of John. **ATC**

by the Editors

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