

## The Crystallization

### The Gospel of the Organic Union in Galatians

Galatians focuses on the truth of the gospel, but contrary to most theological considerations, this truth is not focused primarily on justification by faith versus works of law, especially as it relates to circumcision. Paul addresses these issues only so that he could remove a misguided adherence to the law as a major impediment to the believers' experience of the Spirit as the promised blessing. Through the hearing of faith, an organic union between God and redeemed humanity is initiated and maintained by the Spirit for the producing of a new creation as the corporate manifestation of the church as the Israel of God. This is the gospel in Galatians.

According to the truth of the gospel as it relates to justification, fallen man cannot be justified by works of law. When God gave the law, He knew that man would not be able to keep it. God's purpose in giving the law was to expose man as to what he is and where he is. As the law with its testimony of the divine attributes exposes people, it keeps them. The law was used by God as a custodian to keep His people. By exposing man's transgressions, it guarded God's people until Christ came.

Before we believed in Christ, there was a great separation between us and Christ. We were we, and Christ was Christ, but through believing we were joined to Christ and became one with Him. Now we are in Christ, and Christ is in us. This is an organic union, a union in life. We have been given the divine, eternal life of God by faith. Rather than living to the law, we have Christ living in us in an organic union of life initiated by the faith of the Son of God.

Paul's ultimate intention in presenting the truth of the gospel was to foster a deeper understanding of the way in which the divine life is given and subsequently operates to produce and build up a corporate, organic Body of Christ as the household of the faith. The giving of life is realized in hearing and receiving the faith of Christ in the word of Christ. Many read *the word of Christ* as *the Word of God*, the logos (λόγος) Word in the Bible, and thus, associate the hearing of faith with an acknowledgment of the objective facts concerning Christ contained in the Bible. However, in this instance, the Greek *word* is *rhema* (ῥῆμα), His instant, living, and operative word. The word of Christ is Christ's

speaking instant *rhema* words through speakers using particular and often varied spiritual words initiated by Christ's faith during a divinely arranged instance for speaking the contents of the gospel. When such speaking is heard, the divine life is imparted through the Spirit's regeneration of and organic mingling with the human spirit. This hearing imparts the faith of the Son of God, which becomes the initiating source of both our believing and our organic union in the human spirit that is mingled with the divine Spirit as one spirit.

The supplying of the divine life through the organic union follows the same process of hearing that initiated our faith. In this hearing, there is a further and deeper appreciating, calling, receiving, accepting, joining, partaking, and enjoying as we let the *rhema* word of Christ dwell in us richly, furthering the extension of the organic union by enabling Christ to make His home in our hearts through faith and thereby allowing His life to transform the focus and functions of the elements of our soul into His same image. In the same way that we received the Spirit through the faith of the Son of God, we are supplied bountifully by the Spirit. The organic union that frames our participation in the economy of God is both sourced and supplied by the faith of the Son of God.

This organic union also rescues us from the present evil age. *Age* refers to a section, an aspect, the present or modern appearance, of the world as a satanic system, which is used by Satan to usurp and occupy God's people in order to keep them from God and His purpose. According to the context of Galatians, the present evil age refers to the religious world, which at Paul's time was the religion of Judaism with its law. Even today, our natural being, our natural man, has the tendency to focus on religion with laws, trying to be good and using methods of self-improvement, instead of living according to the revelation of God's Son in us. We need to be extricated from the current evil age so that the Lord can bring us more into the focal point of His economy, which is to work Himself in Christ as the Spirit into our being by revealing His Son in us. He extricates us from the present evil age by inwardly revealing the living Son of God in us. In the eyes of God, there is no place for religion or tradition—only the living person of His Son has a place.

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God cares only for this living person, the all-inclusive Christ, not for anything else. We need a new “seeing” of this living person—more and more and day by day. The more He is revealed in us, the more we see Him; and the more we see Him, the more we are extricated out of the current evil, religious age.

**T**he organic union that rescues us from the present evil religious age is described in Galatians 2:20. *I am crucified with Christ* delineates the pattern of the normal Christian experience. Our crucifixion with Christ is an accomplished fact. However, we need to apply this fact in our practical experience and living. The term *exchanged life* has often been used to define this experience. Galatians 2:20, however, does not refer to an exchanged life but, instead, to a grafted life, as described in Romans 11. Prior to being grafted into Christ, we, as wild branches, derived our life and living from the base of a wild olive tree and, in turn, expressed and lived out the “wild” life of that tree. However, once we, the wild branches, were cut off through our crucifixion with Christ, we had no life to live or express. The root of the cultivated olive tree has the divine life, and this life is lived out through the branches of the tree. In this grafting, the rich life of the cultivated olive tree swallows up the defects of the poor life of the wild olive tree, transforming the branches into the image of the cultivated olive tree.

Paul appends *in the flesh* to the phrase *the life which I now live*. *In the flesh* is a strong counterpoint to the teaching of the eradication of the flesh or sinless perfection after regeneration. *I live in faith* indicates that the spiritual realities available through our organic union with Christ are appropriated and made real by faith. The life that we live is in and by the infused faith of the Son of God. This faith originates in the mingled spirit, that is, the human spirit indwelt by the Holy Spirit. *The Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me* speaks of an atmosphere of love and appreciation, in which the love of the Son is reproduced in many sons who then express the Father’s love.

The organic union fulfills the promise of the Spirit given to Abraham. The gospel that Paul presents in Galatians corresponds to the gospel that God announced to Abraham concerning blessing all the nations through him and his seed in order to restore the fallen and cursed human race to participating in His eternal purpose to produce a corporate man bearing His image and exercising His dominion. Galatians reveals that Christ, as the long awaited seed of Abraham, annulled the effect of the fall, the curse of death, by fulfilling the demand of the law through His redemptive death and that in resurrection He was transfigured from

the flesh into the life-giving Spirit to bless all the families of the earth with Himself. Through faith and baptism into such a Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles have been joined in an organic union with this wonderful person to receive the Spirit of life. This Spirit is the transfiguration of Christ, that is, the all-inclusive realization of the processed and consummated Triune God in Christ as the unique blessing of the gospel. By the operation of this indwelling Spirit, Christ is revealed in the believers, lives in them, and is formed in them to constitute them full-grown sons of God expressing their Father and the Israel of God representing Him on earth. The promise that God gave to Abraham involves nothing less than the expression of His eternal desire to give Himself as the real blessing to man in order to gain a new creation in His image with His dominion.

**T**he ultimate issue of the organic union is the producing of the new creation. Paul was extricated from the present evil age of religion and crucified to it to become part of God’s new creation. The religious world was crucified to him and he to it; this opened the way for him to see the vision of the new creation, become part of the new creation, and proclaim the new creation. Although the old creation was created by the living, righteous, and holy God of glory, it did not have the life and nature of God. The new creation has God within it as its life, nature, appearance, and expression. The new creation is the old creation transformed by the divine life.

As believers who are in Christ Jesus, we have been made a new creation. *New creation* conveys the perspicuous and real fact that we have been saved to be made a new creation. God’s eternal purpose is not merely to redeem, restore, and repossess the fallen old creation but to regenerate His chosen and redeemed people to make them a new creation. Like the old creation, the new creation is corporate; in the new creation all believers are parts of the universal, organic Body of Christ composed of the many sons of God.

The new creation is the new man in Christ Jesus. God’s creation of man in Genesis 1 is a picture of the new man in God’s new creation; the old creation is a type, a figure, of the new creation. Eventually, the church as the one new man will be the corporate man of God’s intention and as a full-grown, corporate new man will fulfill the twofold purpose of expressing God and dealing with God’s enemy. As those who are a new creation in Christ, we all must, and eventually will, be thoroughly and absolutely renewed so that we may be the new creation of God for God. **AC**

by the Editors