

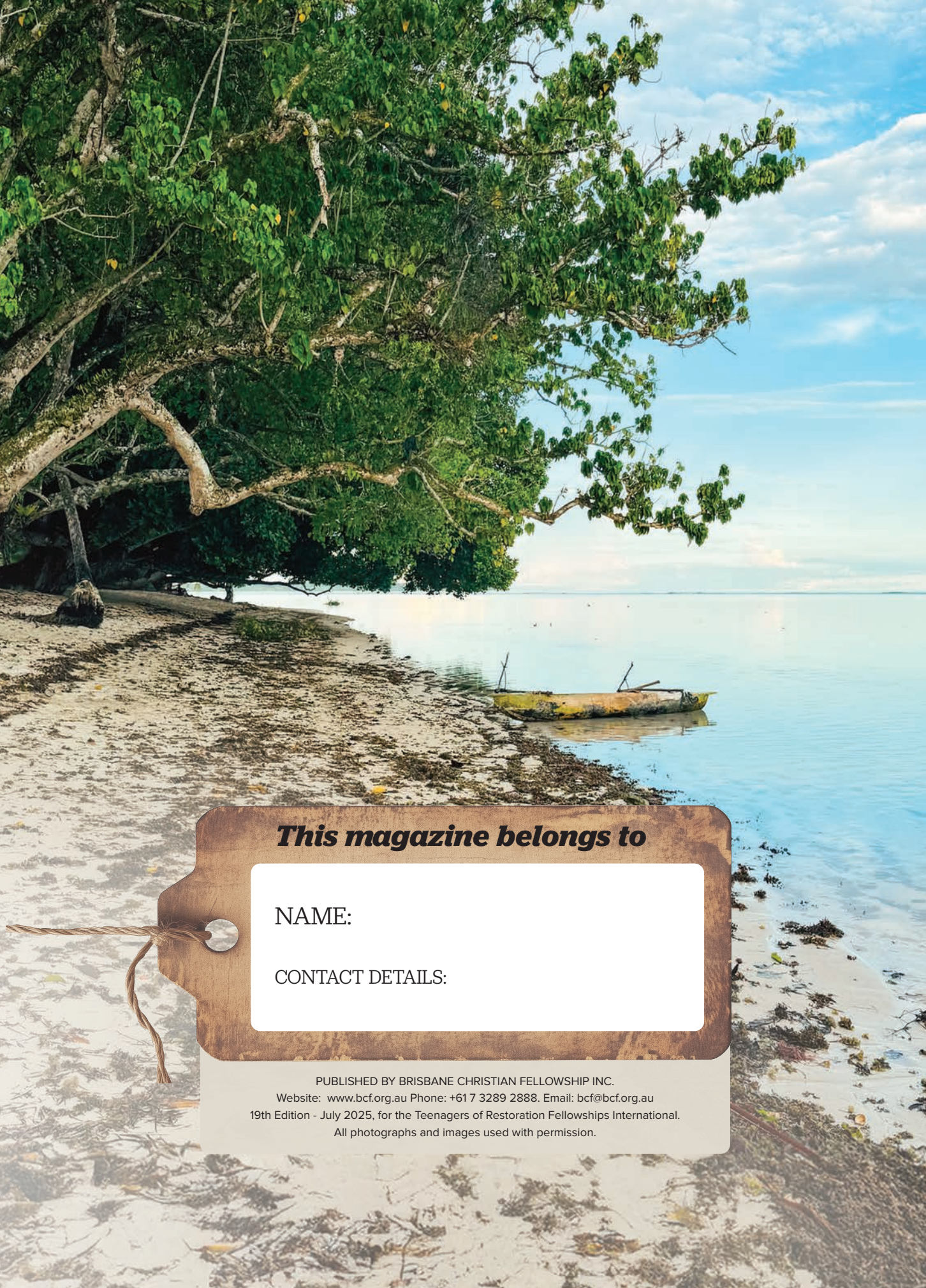


teens

2025

Behold!
New Creation

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17



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EDITORIAL

Behold! New Creation

Welcome to the 19th Edition of our 'Teens' magazine! The magazine has been prepared in fellowship as a part of the overall initiative of the presbytery toward teenagers and their families.

It is a new season! There are two, three-day seminar weekends for teenagers and their families. There is a Northern *Teens Families Seminar* and a Southern *Teens Families Seminar* in July this year. These seminar weekends will provide a great time of ministry and fellowship with our teenagers and their families. The same word will be declared and expressed at both the Northern and Southern Teens Families Seminars.

The Lord has been drawing our attention to the need for every household to be a worthy house, proceeding to become a firstfruits house whose culture is increasingly an expression and ministry of the gospel of God. In the context of house-to-house fellowship and ministry within the body of Christ, the Holy Spirit is ministering to families to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers. This ministry is enabling families to grow and mature, and to make relational adjustments necessary to becoming godly households.

The evidence of receiving this ministry is *the conversation that belongs to repentance and faith*. As families give themselves to this, a truly Christian relational culture will be expressed in their homes and from family to family within the church.

We are all receiving faith to respond to the initiative of the Lord, particularly towards the establishment, equipping and strengthening of families and households.

Theme

This year's theme is *Behold! New Creation*.

The apostle Paul wrote, *'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.'* 2Co 5:17. In the beginning, when God created the world and all that is in it, He said, *"Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness."* Gen 1:26. Yahweh *Elohim's* covenant purpose for every person is for them to be born as a son of God and to also grow and mature to become a fully glorified man in the image and likeness of God. Jesus Christ is the first Man fully made and glorified in the image and likeness of God.

The ten articles in this magazine consider and discuss the key steps of the process through which a person is born as a new-creation son of God, and is joined to the process of regeneration and renewing in order to grow and mature to become *'a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'*. Eph 4:13.

Artwork

The front cover image was created from a photograph taken at the Nonga church property of Restoration Fellowships International (PNG) in East New Britain,



Papua New Guinea. The view is from the beach, looking North-West to Watom Island in the Bismarck Sea. The sun is shining across the face of the water. Other photographs throughout the magazine are also from Papua New Guinea.

In the Scriptures, 'water' is referred to in relation to judgement, the word of God, and the Spirit of God. Water is also a key aspect of baptism. Baptism by water joins you to the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection and to the process of regeneration and renewing.

The apostle Peter wrote that Jesus Christ 'received from God the Father honour and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: *"This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* And we [the disciples] heard this voice which came from heaven when they were with Him on the holy mountain. And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.' 2Pe 1:17-19.

We are thankful for the fellowship we have with the church in Papua New Guinea. As Paul said in relation to the Thessalonian church, we too can say of our brethren in Papua New Guinea, *'We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father, knowing, beloved brethren, your election by God.'* 1Th 1:2-4.

Songs and testimonies

I trust that you will be encouraged and blessed as you read the selection of personal testimonies which we have included in the magazine. These testimonies have been written by the teenagers as a letter

to their friends, testifying about the word that they have been hearing, their faith and commitment to grow in the ways of the Lord, and the highlights and challenges of their year so far.

Many of our teenagers have also waited on the Lord and written original songs from the word that they have heard declared to them. This year, we have received 103 songs! More than this, every one of these songs has an accompanying testimony from the teenager who has written the song. The testimonies have flowed out of the fellowship that the teenagers have sought out, as they gave themselves to express the word of God in song. This is the expression of the word which is 'dwelling richly' in them. Col 3:16.

The rich and clear expression of the songs, and the abundance of songs received, are evidence of the abundant, fruitful life of God in our midst, which is being nurtured in each one's home. We look forward to opportunities throughout the coming year to receive and join the ministry of these songs, as we continue in *agape* fellowship at our Sunday communion gatherings, and from house to house.

Our teenagers continue to 'grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ'. 2Pe 3:18. They are giving themselves to be known in fellowship, and they are growing in their confidence to bless others with their testimony. We are also witnessing the multiplication of grace and peace from house to house.

What a great blessing it is that we are joined in the one fellowship of the word of God, across the nation and overseas! We thank the Lord for the provision of His word, and for the understanding and life that He is bringing to us.

Yours in Christ!

Bruce Hamilton



Overview of the steps of salvation

Peter Hay

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit's purpose and plan for you and me is truly amazing! We were predestined to be born of God's divine nature and brought to glory as men and women who have been made in Their image and likeness. The apostle Peter rejoiced in this purpose, describing it as 'exceedingly great and precious promises'! 2Pe 1:4.

Wonderfully, as a child born to believing parents, you are a recipient of these great and precious promises! In fact, you were born of God and made a member of the body of Christ following your conception in your mother's womb. You are a partaker of the divine nature!

Although you have already received these tremendous promises, it is important for you to know and understand the steps of salvation. This is because you must choose what God has already chosen for you in order to live and mature as the son whom God has made you to be. The second reason for applying yourself to the details of these steps is so that you are equipped to share this message with your friends in the

world and to support them as they respond to God's call upon their life.

In this article, we will overview the key steps of the process through which a person is born as a son of God and then journeys with Christ to be progressively glorified as a man in the image and likeness of God. The articles that follow will then give further detail to each of these key waypoints on the pathway of salvation.

The proclamation of the gospel of God

The proclamation of the gospel of God is the beginning of salvation. This is the word declaring Yahweh *Elohim's* covenant purpose for each person. As we have already noted, His purpose and plan for every individual is that they are born of God and made in the image and likeness of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Gen 1:26.

John described this message as 'the commandments of Christ'. Joh 14:21. The commandments of Christ are proclaimed by

the Holy Spirit, through the ministry of Christ's messengers. They declare to a hearer that they can be redeemed from their bondage to sin and death as a citizen of the kingdom of darkness. Moreover, they declare that a hearer can fulfil their predestination by being born as a son of God and brought to glory as a man or a woman in the image and likeness of God.

This message ministers faith to a hearer so that they can believe for, and participate in, God's covenant purpose for them. Rom 10:17. This is the first dimension of faith that a person receives on the pathway of salvation. Faith is then ministered at each step of this journey, enabling the hearer to believe, and to choose, God's call upon them. Explaining this provision, the apostle Paul wrote, 'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith"*.' Rom 1:16-17.

Made alive as a son of Abraham

Christ's message is the water of the word, and it begins to minister regeneration to a hearer. Regeneration is not the new birth; rather, it is the ministry of the Spirit, through the word, to the humanity of a believer. This regenerative work, associated with the Spirit of grace and supplication that accompanies the commands of Christ, makes a person who was formerly dead in trespasses and sins, alive. They are made alive so that they can hear and respond to the gospel. 1Co 2:9,14.

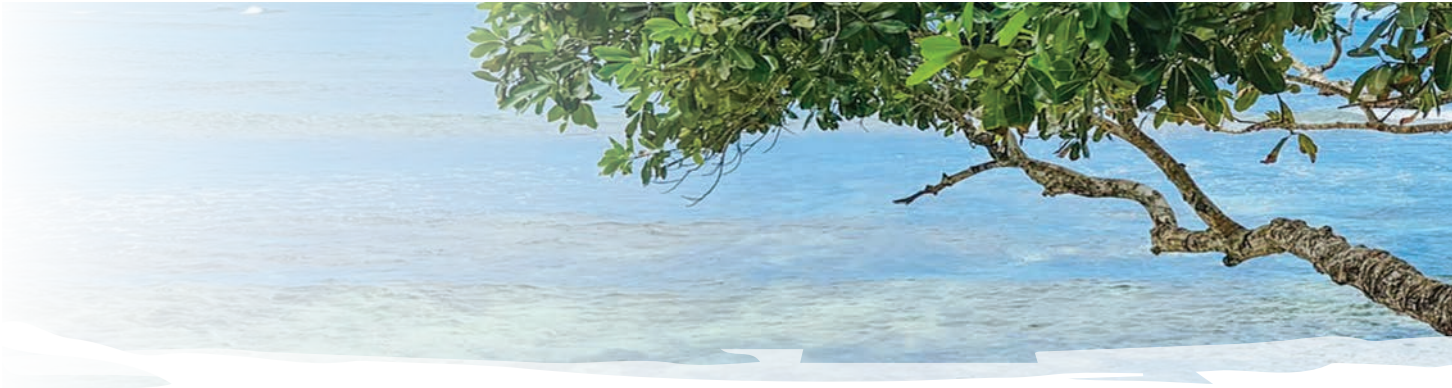
Explaining this initial regenerative effect of grace and supplication upon a hearer, the apostle Paul said, 'And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience.' Eph 2:1-2.

When a person is made alive by regeneration, they are no longer dead in trespasses and sins as a son or daughter of *Adam*. Although they are still of the dust of the earth as a natural person, they have become a son or daughter of *Abraham*. This is because they have received the same faith that Abraham received when he believed the word that contained the exceedingly great and precious promises of God. Rom 4:16-17. He believed the word that was spoken to him by Christ. We recall that the Lord said to Abraham, 'I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth.' Gen 13:16. Importantly, as we noted above, they are *now* able to hear and receive the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. 1Co 2:9,14. They can see the kingdom of God. Joh 3:3.

The hearer demonstrates that they have not resisted the prevenient grace of God when they are enabled to look on Christ whom they have pierced through their sin. That is, they see the implications of their sin and that Jesus died *with them* under the resulting condemnation. Zec 12:10. They begin to mourn with godly sorrow, leading to their works of repentance. 2Co 7:10. They are able to do this by the prevenient grace of God, and by the regenerative capacity of the word.

As a person keeps Christ's commands, there will be notable changes in their life. They will find deliverance from addictions; healing of past hurts; relief from spiritual torment, and so on. Because of the deliverance they are finding, they will love Christ and will glorify God. They are rejoicing in 'amazing grace'!



The Son and the Father abide

The hearer loves Christ by keeping His commands. For this reason, Jesus said that the Father would love them and that He would also love them. Furthermore, Jesus said that He would personally make Himself known to them, saying, 'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.' Joh 14:21.

The Father demonstrates His love for the hearer who loves Christ, by sending the Spirit of His Son, Jesus Christ, *into their heart*. Note that the Spirit of the Son is sent into their heart *first*. This is when Jesus, *in identity*, makes Himself known to them. He comes to *abide* in the *heart* of the hearer, which is distinct from their spirit. When the Spirit of Christ comes into a person's heart, the Father also comes to abide in their heart, for the Son and the Father are one. Joh 14:10.

The Spirit of adoption

The Son, when sent into a believer's heart, *prays* to the Father, asking Him to give to them the Holy Spirit. Described by Jesus as 'another Helper', the Holy Spirit is sent to them to be *with* them, and then *in* them. Joh 14:15-17. This is when a person receives 'the promise of the Spirit', whom the heroes of faith saw from afar, but did not receive. It is the fruit of the *second* dimension of faith that comes by hearing the gospel of God. Gal 3:14.

The distinction of the Holy Spirit being *with* the believer and *in* them is important. He is *with* a believer when He comes into their heart. They now have the Father, Son and Holy Spirit dwelling *with* them. The Spirit comes into their *heart*, convicting them of sin, righteousness and judgement. Joh 16:7-11. Through this conviction, they are being asked, 'Do you want to be a son of God?'

If a hearer does not resist the conviction of the Holy Spirit, He gives to them the faith to believe for what is totally *impossible and unthinkable* – they are able to believe that they can be born again of the Father's divine nature as His son. This is the *third* dimension of faith.

Revising the steps of faith through which a person arrives at this understanding, we note that the first dimension of faith and grace makes them alive again from the death of sin. The second dimension of faith is when the hearer receives the Holy Spirit. His work is to convince them that what God has promised He will give to them. The Spirit then convicts them to choose to become a son of God – first, by adoption, and then as a son of God who is born again of the seed of the divine nature that comes from God, through Christ. This is the fruit of the third dimension of faith.

In response to their acceptance of this amazing invitation, the Holy Spirit comes into the believer's *spirit* as 'the Spirit of adoption', enabling them to call God, 'my Father'.



Summarising this wonderful waypoint of salvation, the apostle Paul declared, 'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage *again to fear*, but you received the *Spirit of adoption* by whom we [as an identity] cry out, "Abba, Father".' Rom 8:15.

When the Holy Spirit comes into the spirit of a hearer, enabling them to cry, 'Abba, Father', they are *sealed* with the Spirit and become *a temple* for the Holy Spirit. 1Co 6:19. Summarising the steps leading to this significant waypoint, Paul wrote, '[1] In Him [Christ] you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; [2] in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is [3] the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory'. Eph 1:13-14. It is amazing to consider that the Holy Spirit, whom a person receives in a firstfruits measure, is a guarantee of their eternal salvation! Rom 8:23. 2Co 1:21-22. He is committed to leading them in all truth.

The conception of a son of God

In response to the believer's cry, 'Abba, Father', which is enabled by the Spirit of adoption, the Father sends forth the seed of the Spirit of Christ *into the spirit* of the believer. This is the unique seed of their name, which was brought forth through the travail of the one Seed, Christ. This is what Paul meant when he said, 'And because you are sons [by adoption], God has sent forth

the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" Therefore, you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.' Gal 4:6-7.

It is important to recognise that while the Son, in identity, *dwells in a believer's heart*, the seed of their sonship, brought forth through the travail of Christ, is sent forth by the word of God and then germinated *in their spirit* by the Holy Spirit. By this means, they are conceived as a son of God, having been born of the divine nature. Through new birth, Christ's life has become their life, but the expression of this life *is unique to their name as a son of God*. Gal 2:20. They have become a totally new creation! Moreover, through new birth, the believer receives a heavenly body, which is reserved for them in heaven.

After a person has been born again as a son of God, the Father then places them into the church, *by* making them a member in particular of the body of Christ. Col 1:18. This immersion into Christ is one of *three dimensions of baptism*. 1Co 12:13,18. Having become Christ's, they are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise made to Abraham. Gal 3:29. That is, their spirit, which is the lamp of the Lord, has been lit, and they are manifest as one of the stars that Abraham saw when the Lord said to him, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them ... so shall your descendants be.' Gen 15:5.

Significantly, a new son of God is raised by the Father to heavenly places as a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem, the church. The psalmist prophesied of this amazing implication of new birth and baptism by the Father, writing, 'And of Zion [where the heavenly Jerusalem has been established] it will be said, "This one and that one were born in her; and the Most High Himself [that is, the Father] shall establish her"'. Psa 87:5.

The heavenly Jerusalem is the context where sons of God are to lay down their life in love for one another according to their name as a son of God. 1Jn 4:7. It is helpful to note that while a son of God is a resident of the heavenly Jerusalem on Earth as part of the church, their heavenly body is with Christ who is seated at the right hand of the Father in the third heaven.

The washing of regeneration

Although a believer has been born of the Spirit, and is in Christ, *'the body is [still] dead because of sin'*. Rom 8:9-11. This is the implication of the other law that is still in their heart. This law, fathered in mankind by Satan, causes a person to think and to act in a manner that is inconsistent with their obedience as a son of God. Rom 7:15. On account of the other law, they are brought into bondage to 'the law of sin and death'. Rom 7:23.

Deliverance from 'the body of death' is through regeneration and renewing in the fellowship of Christ's dying and living. We

are joined to this pathway, upon which our salvation is progressively obtained, when we are baptised by water. *This is a second dimension of baptism*. Writing to Titus, the apostle Paul explained that we are 'saved through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit'. Tit 3:5. As we noted earlier, the washing of regeneration through the ministry of the Holy Spirit applies specifically to our *humanity*.

Once we have been born of God and baptised by the Father into the body of Christ, this washing and renewing work continues in our life as we walk each day in the reality of our baptism by water into the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Our participation in this process, which includes the circumcision of our heart, delivers to us a new heart and a new spirit. Eze 36:25-27. The effect of regeneration is a *new heart*, from which 'thorns' and 'the stones' of the other law are being removed, and a *spirit that is made new* through new birth and growing to maturity. This is the pathway of salvation upon which we journey through obedience to the word of Christ. Heb 5:9.

As we embrace the process through which our carnality is being removed, and we walk in the word that we are hearing, the divine nature, which is planted in the soil of our spirit, continues to take root, grow and become the expression of our identity as a son of God. We are progressively changing from one degree of glory to another, into the image of the Son. 2Co 3:18. Notably, the



parable of 'the seed and grounds' teaches us that if the soil of our heart is not being changed through this process, we, as a new-creation 'plant', can die, even though what is born of God does not sin. 1Jn 3:9.

Baptism into the Holy Spirit

It is important to recognise that baptism into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are three dimensions of *one baptism*. A believer who is progressively obtaining their eternal salvation will continue to walk in these dimensions of baptism as a disciple of Christ. Mat 28:19-20. Significantly, the three dimensions of baptism are not merely a *sequence* of sacramental actions or procedures that a person must experience.

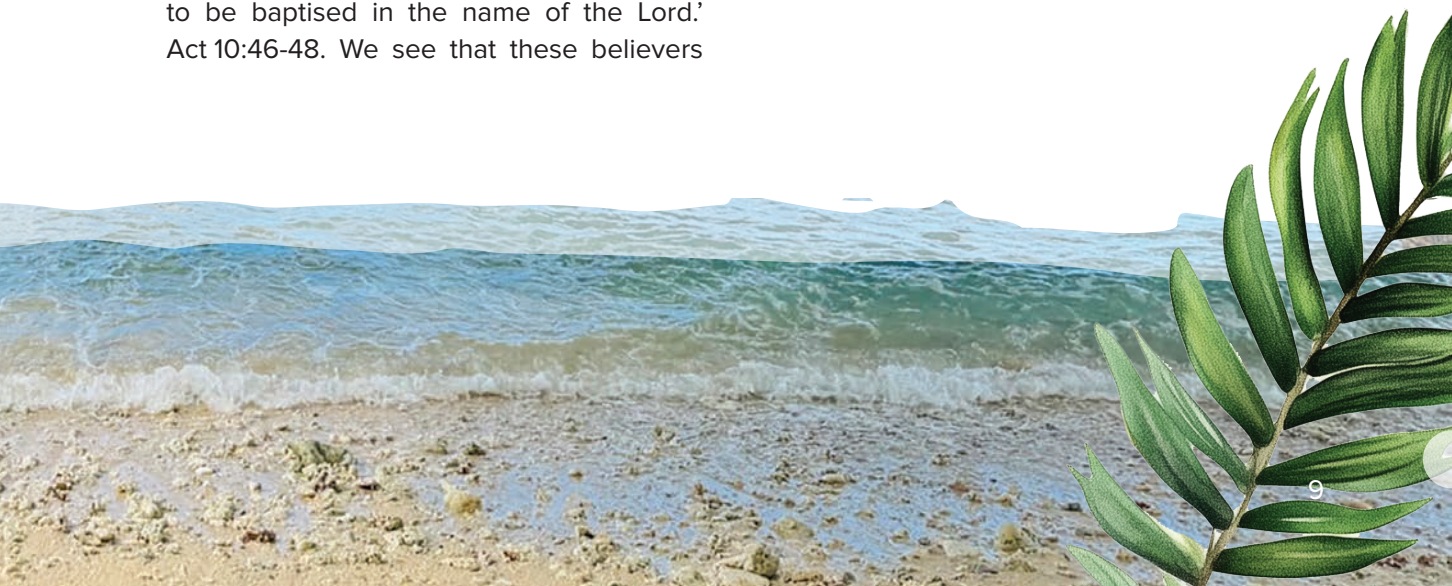
Demonstrating this point, we note the example of the ministry of the apostle Peter in the house of Cornelius. The book of Acts recorded that, as Peter was speaking, 'The Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.' Act 10:44-46. Having witnessed this sovereign action of the Holy Spirit, 'Peter answered, "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptised who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" And he commanded them to be baptised in the name of the Lord.' Act 10:46-48. We see that these believers

were sovereignly baptised into the Holy Spirit before they were baptised by water.

After the Father has baptised us into Christ and His love, the Son, likewise, baptises us into the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist prophesied of Christ's initiative, saying, '*He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.*' Mat 3:11.

Immersion into the Person of the Holy Spirit commences when He comes into a believer's spirit as the Spirit of adoption. Rom 8:15. The inheritance that they receive, once they have chosen adoption as a son of God, is the divine nature as 'a seed' from the Father, which is Christ. Having been sealed with the Holy Spirit, the believer then also receives from the Spirit the inheritance of the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim*, manifest by and through the seven Spirits of God.

Christ Himself received this anointing of the Spirit at His baptism, signified by a dove descending upon Him. Joh 1:32. Luk 3:22. Jesus later testified, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor.' Luk 4:18. Isa 61:1-2. The prophet Isaiah explained that the Spirit of the Lord is the seven Spirits of God. Isa 11:-2. Jesus received this anointing without measure in relation to His name as the Father's Firstborn Son. Notably, He has the seven Spirits of God when He speaks to lampstand churches. Rev 3:1.



The Holy Spirit takes what belongs to Christ and gives it to a person who is born again and is in Christ. They are now a son of God who is being led by the Holy Spirit. Rom 8:14. As we noted earlier, they have the firstfruits of the Spirit, which is the portion necessary for the expression of their name as a born-again identity, while living on Earth as a member of Christ's church in their mortal body.

After a believer has been baptised in the Holy Spirit by the Son, the Son then consults with the Holy Spirit in relation to the needs of the believer. Christ inquires of the Spirit regarding how they are connecting to Him in obedience to the instructions that the Holy Spirit takes from Christ. Rom 8:26-27. The Spirit uses these instructions to lead them upon the pathway of their sanctification, enabling them to do the works that Christ has accomplished for them on His offering journey.

The Son, then, in prayer, reports to the Father about the believer's progress as His son. Rom 8:27. As we just noted, if they are obediently following the leading of the Holy Spirit, they are truly a son of God. God the Father is then *for* them, so who can be against them? Rom 8:31. The Father is freely giving to sons of God all things as they walk and live in this way. 2Pe 1:3. They then proceed to understand that nothing can separate them from the love of Christ as they journey with Him in the fellowship of His sufferings. Rom 8:35-39. These sufferings are part of their experience from Him who is I AM. As a believer is led by the Spirit in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, they are able to be more than a conqueror through Christ who loved them. Rom 8:37.

Baptism into the Holy Spirit is indicated by the capacity to speak in tongues. Act 2:4. By the Spirit, a believer is able to join the

intercession and travelling prayer of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and to journey with Christ, through obedience to the word, on the pathway of salvation that He pioneered for them. Significantly, a son of God is granted the same strength that Christ received from the Holy Spirit for His offering and suffering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. Luk 22:43-44. Heb 9:14.

The seven Spirits of God is the power to enable a person's journey on the pathway of salvation. Journeying with and in Christ, they are able to be His witness in the world. Explaining this implication of baptism by the Holy Spirit, Jesus said to His disciples, 'But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' Act 1:8. By the Spirit, they are able to pray and prophesy, and to testify, as a son of God.

In this regard, any Christian who has received the baptism of the Spirit is then able, as part of a community of believers, to be a co-worker with Christ. That is, through the seven Spirits of God, they are able to proclaim the gospel and to support those who are responding to the gospel so that they are brought to birth as sons of God. Noting this implication of baptism by the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' Joh 7:38. It is the seven Spirits of God that flows out of the innermost being of a son of God as a river of living water. This is the ministry of the word through which their hearers can be born again and nourished as sons of God.



Overview of the steps of salvation

The purpose and plan of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit for each of us is wonderful! We were predestined to be born of God's divine nature and brought to glory as men and women who have been made in Their image and likeness. The apostle Peter rejoiced in this purpose, describing it as 'exceedingly great and precious promises'! 2Pe 1:4.

On account of the faith of your parents, you were a recipient of the exceedingly great and precious promises of God in your mother's womb. After you were conceived, you received the Spirit of adoption and were then born of the divine nature from the Father, through Christ, and were made a member in particular of the body of Christ.

Scriptures for reference

Joh 20:19-22. Rom 8:15-16. Tit 3:4-7



Take some time

If you are already born of God and established in Christ, why is it necessary for you to know the details of the steps of salvation?

Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit.

Pray for illumination and understanding concerning the waypoints of salvation and their implications for your life each day.

Thank the Lord for the blessing of His word and for the privilege of proclaiming this gospel as His witnesses in the world.

Sing

'Reigning in life' (*Michael Fox*)

'Walk by faith' (*Lachlan and Melanie Perrin*)



First steps on the pathway of salvation

OBEDIENCE AND A SPIRIT OF GRACE

Tim Maurice

The covenant and the word

The Everlasting Covenant is the loving fellowship of offering which gave rise to the initiative of the word of God. This word was brought forth from Their agreement to make man in the image and likeness of God. The word of Their Covenant is not an *idea*; it is not a form of *logic*; and it is not a *concept*. The word of the covenant is the Son of God, Jesus Christ. He is the full expression of all that God has to say to every person. He is also your personal Advocate for the word of *your* name, which was given to you by the Father.

‘The LORD possessed me at the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I have been established from everlasting, from the beginning, before there was ever an Earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth.’ Pro 8:22-25.

Yahweh Son emptied Himself to become the Father’s Son, as well as the full expression of the Father’s will. In this way, He became the Word of God. In that word, your name was

known, fellowshipped, planned and brought forth. Therefore, the word of your name carries with it the faith and initiative of the Godhead. Their word for you is made up of *commandments*. These commandments are your obedience.

This obedience was made substantial in the offering of Jesus Christ, as the Son of God and Son of Man. You are able to walk in this obedience because of the faith of God by which you live, because the grace (or enabling) of God has been granted to you as a free gift. This gift is offered to every person.

The gift is offered via the preaching of the word. The word is something that we must *hear*. If we did not hear the word, we could not join the faith of Yahweh toward us; and the faith of Christ could not become our faith. However, by hearing, believing and obeying the word which comes to us from God, we can persevere to the end of our faith - the salvation of our soul. 1Pe 1:9.

The word, then, is not information or data ‘about’ God. *The word is the initiative of the love of God toward you* - toward your adoption as a son of God. The kind intention

of God is that you would be conformed to the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. He is the fullness of what every son of man who becomes a son of God, is to be.

The word to an unsaved person

The ministry of the word, therefore, which first comes to an unsaved person for their salvation, is a specific and tailored initiative of the Godhead's love and faith. The word of Their Covenant comes calling a person's name, before they even know that God has given them a name. The word that a person hears is the word 'from the beginning', which was with God. (Note that, at this point we are referring to someone who does not know God.)

A person rejects the word because they do not believe it. They are disobedient, and are an enemy of God. Unbelief is the cause of an unregenerate heart. Jesus told us what this looks like: 'He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.' Joh 3:18-19.

Unbelief means that a person does not believe in Jesus as the *expression* of their sonship. And the condemnation, or judgement, of this unbelief is that men prefer the darkness of their own heart, rather than the light of God. In the passage quoted above, Jesus used the word '*agape*' (*love*) to describe the way in which an unbeliever *loves* the darkness of their own perspective. They install the worshipful love of themselves where the love of God should abide.

As a result, they cannot believe anything except the lie which has been sown in their

heart by Satan. The lie of Satan establishes the idea in a person's heart that they can be like God; and that they can personally judge good and evil, and privately apply it. In other words, they believe that they can live by their own law. More than that, they believe that they can live by the Law of God according to the assessment of their own 'other law'. This is darkness. This state of darkness is the evidence that a person is *spiritually dead*.

Now, remember that God has given every person a choice as to whether or not they will obey God. But how is a spiritually dead person able to make a choice? Not only that, even if they could make a choice, how could they help choosing anything except what their other law tells them is true. You see the problem? A spiritually dead man can only make bad choices. They are a slave to sin. The situation seems hopeless. However, God is able to revive someone through His word: 'My soul clings to the dust; revive me according to Your word'. Psa 119:25. Instead of clinging to the dust in darkness and death, a person's spirit can be revived, through the grace of God, to *believe*!

This is possible because of the initiative of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit toward that person! As we know already, this initiative springs from the faith of Their covenant discussion about that particular person. Their initiative takes the form of a word given to a messenger of Christ, who is sent to that person. Importantly, a messenger of Christ is not someone who simply knows a lot about the Bible; or who can preach a good sermon; or who can tell a person that they need to repent.

A messenger of Christ is someone who has been born of the word of the Father; who abides in the daily fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings; who is thereby being regenerated; and who is also daily

sanctified by the Holy Spirit to do the will of God. A messenger of Christ is a certain kind of, or specific, firstfruits of the unique, incorruptible seed of their name from the Father. They are spiritual and alive, and are therefore 'qualified' to minister the word of life.

Obeying the commandments

A person hears from such a messenger that they must obey 'the commandments of Christ'. As we have said, these commandments concern the unique obedience of each son of God. These commandments manifest as 'works', which were ordained 'beforehand that we should walk in them'. Eph 2:10. The Father entrusted these commandments to Christ on our behalf. We learn what these commandments are, and receive the capacity to obey them, in the fellowship of Christ's travail.

But let's slow down a bit. Before learning to travail, a person must receive and obey the commandments of God. As a culture, these commandments are summed up by Jesus as 'loving the Lord our God with all of our heart', and 'loving our brethren as ourselves'. These two commandments comprise the message which reveals God as light - the only One in whom there is no darkness.

A person who receives this message by faith will meet the God who *commanded* light to shine out of darkness. They will then find that He is *commanding* light to shine into their heart. In this way, the commandments reveal the *love* of God to this person, not a law. We are not talking about the Ten Commandments.

With these commands comes the faith of Christ. Suddenly, the person is able to believe that the God who is commanding them has also created them for a purpose. This purpose gives them hope - the hope of

their calling. It also communicates to them that they are loved - not generically, but as a unique person with a name.

They begin to see that the purpose for which they were created is to be made in the image and likeness of God. The word of this message shines as light into their heart. Along with faith, they begin to see the righteousness and love of God. They therefore love Jesus. They are no longer in a state of death because of their sin. They believe.

Prevenient grace

At the same time, they see that they, personally, are not righteous at all. They are not living in the way that God wants them to live. So they begin to obey God as His love compels them to turn from their own way. At the same time, the person receives the prevenient grace of God as a gift, so that they are *able* to obey God. They are able to turn from addictions, from sin which previously had power over them, and from ways of living which led them into godlessness.

This grace is a *spirit* of grace and supplication, which was poured out upon Earth at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. We call this grace 'prevenient', because it comes before being asked for; before a person even knows that they need it. God mercifully sends a spirit of grace and supplication to a person along with the message of the gospel, so that a person's humanity is revived and strengthened to believe and obey.

Grace comes 'clearing the pathway' before a person, smoothing out the valleys and the mountains, so that the new believer can continue on the journey to be born as a son of God. Even in this wonderful, early flush of grace and obedience, however, new birth has not yet come. At the same time, there is great rejoicing as the person receives faith,

and begins to love the Lord, to obey His commandments, and to enjoy the fellowship of other believers.

The ongoing ministry of grace

The Spirit of grace and supplication which flows from Christ is described in the Scriptures as 'a fountain'. This fountain continues to flow from Christ to us. This is wonderful news. It means that God's grace is forever moving in advance of our need of it. This is the nature of its prevenience. The grace of God is not reliant upon our initiative. The initiative is all His.

It works this way. Christ has authored all of our days in His finished work - in seven wounds - which includes the provision of all of the grace that we will need to come to full fruit. As such, the overcoming in our lives will always need grace to believe for what we don't yet know; to hold on for what we don't yet see. This is the case because it has not entered into our hearts all that God has in store for us. So unless we go on receiving grace for what we don't yet see, we will 'dig in', as it were, to a fixed position.

The apostle Paul is very clear that this is not the nature of faith: 'But we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.' Rom 8:23-25.

The hope of our calling is not fully seen. It is a *living* hope which must continually unfold, like a burgeoning plant. The activity of *believing* daily will be marked for us by 'grace upon grace'; just as we are being *saved* 'from grace to grace'. The good thing is, we don't have to keep asking for grace,

and very often we don't know that we need it. But God has given it freely to us. We didn't have to merit this grace: He gives it because He loves us as His son.

We understand and know His love as we choose not to despise His chastening hand upon us. Instead, we accept that our chastening is just and necessary for our maturity as a son. More than that, we see in our chastening the expression of the Father's initiative toward our name, and we therefore see His burning love for us.

It is in this light that we must see the nature of His commandments and our obedience to them. He does not give His commands because He likes being obeyed: He gives His commands to lead, instruct, train and care for us, because He loves us. Without His commands, we would be cut loose to be the source of our own obedience. That is lawlessness.

But far from being cut loose, we are, if we so choose, bound in a yoke to Christ who is the perfect Son. In this way, the obedience that He learned becomes our obedience, and the grace that He received He gives to us. As such, the word of the covenant is not ministered to us as an aspiration, but in all of its substance - length, breadth, depth and height. Instead of loving our darkness, we grow in love of the light which has shone into our hearts, increasing in power and intensity, until the day of our perfection.





The fountain is open for you

The grace of God is Their initiative toward every son of God. This initiative is specific to our circumstances, name and works. In the Covenant of Yahweh, the word of your name was spoken as a word of faith by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Their provision of grace toward you is available today, and every day, so that you can hear, believe and obey the unchanging word of God.

This is good news! The grace of God is available to every person who is joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. This means that you are enabled to perform your sonship works, not only by the word, but also by the life of Christ which is in His blood. In other words, you don't have to hear the word and then try to work out how to obey it. The faith in the word should lead you to be joined, through the fellowship of prayer, to the seven wounds of Jesus Christ. And to help you stay in this fellowship, you have the Holy Spirit to strengthen and help you. In this way, you can walk day by day, receiving grace upon grace.

Scriptures for reference

Zec 13:1. 1Jn 5:6-8. Joh 1:16



Take some time

Discuss the nature of the 'fountain' which was opened for us on Calvary.
What is your access to this fountain?



Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit. Pray for one another to be illuminated today.
Thank the Lord for the blessing of His immeasurable grace toward us.



Sing

'Your grace is sufficient' (*Lachlan and Melanie Perrin*)
'We have a great High Priest' (*Joshua Hay*)



The Son and Father abide

David Baker

In this article, we will focus on the third step on the pathway of salvation. This step is when the Son and the Father come to *dwell in a person's heart*. We will consider the significance of this step from the perspective of a person who has not yet been born as a son of God. We will then consider the ongoing implication of the Spirit of Christ dwelling in our heart as we continue to walk each day on the pathway of salvation as a son of God.

Jesus described the third step on the pathway of salvation by saying, 'He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and *manifest Myself to him*.' Joh 14:21. Furthermore, Jesus said, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and *We will come to him and make Our home with him*.' Joh 14:23.

Let us begin by asking the question: 'How does a person demonstrate that they love Christ by keeping His word?' In the first case, the prevenient grace of God enables a person to look upon 'Jesus Christ whom they have pierced'. When they see the impact of their sin upon Christ and upon others, they begin to mourn. Godly sorrow leads to repentance. The fruit of their repentance will be clearly seen in their life. The way that they speak and behave will change.

In addition to this, a person who is keeping the word of Christ will guard it like a treasure in their heart. The lesson of the 'wayside ground' is that the birds of the air will try to pluck the word out of their heart. The birds of the air represent the messengers of Satan who proclaim false gospels. In the same way that Abraham drove the vultures away from his offering, a person must keep the word of Christ by refusing to trade it for another gospel.

Rather than looking for a religious position or presuming that the outcome of prevenient grace is sufficient for salvation, a person who loves Christ will want to know Him personally. They will become a *true seeker*. The Lord declared through the prophet Jeremiah, 'And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.' Jer 29:13. During the phase of prevenient grace, a person is enabled to look upon Christ whom they have pierced, but they have not yet *met* Christ.

A person meets Christ personally, for the first time, when the Father sends the Spirit of Christ to dwell in their heart. Jesus said, 'I will love him and *manifest Myself to him*.' Joh 14:21. Jesus reveals Himself to be our great Shepherd and our great High Priest. As the great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus comes into a person's heart and calls them personally by their name. This is the name

that was discussed by the Father, Son and Holy Spirit before the foundation of the world.

It is important to recognise that the Spirit of Christ first comes to abide in a person's *heart*, which is distinct from their spirit. The heart is the very centre of a person's being. It is the meeting point of soul and spirit. A person's spirit is their identity. Their identity is expressed through the faculties that belong to their soul. Notably, when Christ first dwells in a person's heart, their spirit has not yet been reborn.

We know that it is possible for the Spirit of Christ to dwell in a person's heart without their spirit being reborn, because this was the case for Abraham and all the believers who lived prior to the offering of Christ. 1Pe 1:10-11. The Spirit of Christ did join the believers of old to the fellowship of His sufferings and to the grace of His resurrection life. However, it was not possible for any person to receive the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of adoption, and to be born again as a son of God, until the day of Christ's resurrection.

When the Spirit of Christ comes into a person's heart, the Spirit of the Father also comes to abide in their heart. Joh 14:10. Speaking about Himself and the Father, Jesus said, 'We will come to him and *make Our home with him.*' Joh 14:23. This is an amazing point! It is the expression of the Father's love and the Son's love to make Their home in the heart of a person even before they have been born again as a son of God.

The believing thief on the cross

The believing thief on the cross is a helpful illustration of a person who moved beyond the phase of prevenient grace to receive the Spirit of Christ into their heart by faith. We know that Jesus was crucified between two

thieves. The prevenient grace of God was available for both of those men. They were both given the opportunity and freedom to make a choice in relation to the offering of Christ for them.

The spirit of grace and supplication enabled one of the thieves to look upon Jesus whom he had pierced. He realised that the hands and feet of Jesus had been pierced with nails because of his transgressions. He saw the impact of his own sin upon Jesus and began to mourn. His godly sorrow led to repentance. The fruit of repentance was demonstrated in his life because he immediately stopped reviling Jesus.

The believing thief was illuminated to see that Jesus had fully identified with his sin, and was dying *his death*. He understood that Jesus was crucified with him, so that he was crucified with Jesus! The love of Christ compelled him to make this judgement. The apostle Paul described this same illumination by saying, 'The love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died.' 2Co 5:14.

In contrast to the unbelieving thief who remained a son of Adam, the believing thief was made alive again as *a son of Abraham*. He was justified by faith, with Abraham, who is the father of all who believe. The believing thief articulated his faith when he said to his unbelieving friend, 'Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.' Luk 23:40-41.

In the same way that Abraham drove the vultures away from his offering, the believing thief had to resist and overcome the false gospels that were proclaimed by all the people who surrounded the cross. 'The birds of the air' who surrounded the cross on that day included his unbelieving friend,

the soldiers, the chief priests, and all the people who passed by and mocked Jesus.

In this manner, the believing thief guarded the faith that he had received from Jesus as a precious treasure. He expressed his love toward Jesus when he said, 'Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.' Luk 23:42. His prayer demonstrated his desire to know Jesus personally. In response to this request, the Father loved the believing thief by sending the Spirit of Christ to dwell in his heart by faith.

Significantly, as soon as the Spirit of Christ came into the thief's heart, the nature of his sufferings changed. His suffering and death on the cross became his fellowship in Christ's sufferings and death. Having been yoked to Christ, in fellowship with Him, the thief began to receive and manifest the grace of Christ's resurrection life in his mortal body.

To the believing thief, Jesus revealed Himself as his great Shepherd. He called him by name to follow Him all the way home to the Father's house. Having the Spirit of Christ in his heart, the thief knew that Jesus was with him on every step of his journey. Even though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, he had no fear, because Jesus was with him. Psa 23:4. Jesus proclaimed the end of the journey by saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise.' Luk 23:43.

What does this mean for you?

What does this mean for you as a teenager who has already been born as a son of God within the context of a family that belongs to the bride of Christ? After you received your identity through procreation, the Spirit of Christ came to dwell in your heart, and you received the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of adoption. The Holy Spirit then enabled the immortal seed of the divine nature,

which Christ brought forth for you on His offering journey, to germinate in your spirit.

It is wonderful to know that the Spirit of Christ continues to abide in your heart as you grow and mature as a son of God. The Spirit of Christ will remain in your heart as long as you continue to walk in the light of His word on the pathway of regeneration that He has pioneered for you. As your great High Priest, Jesus is seated at the right hand of God and is ministering to you a participation in His finished offering. As your great Shepherd, He is also *walking with you* each day on your journey.

After they had already been born as sons of God, Jesus reminded His disciples, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Mat 28:20. Likewise, the apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrews, 'Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you". So we may boldly say: "The Lord is my Helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?" ' Heb 13:5-6.

As a son of God, the Lord wants you to be content in relation to who you are and what you have. Php 4:11-12. He also wants you to know His peace in the middle of all your circumstances. 2Th 3:16. It is important to embrace your circumstances as coming from the hand of the Lord. It is equally important to recognise that every circumstance is an opportunity to *know the Lord* as you walk with Him each day. If the Spirit of Christ is in you, it means that He is *walking with you* on every step of your journey.



The Son and Father abide

Jesus revealed Himself to the believing thief as his great Shepherd. He called him by name to follow Him all the way home to the Father's house. Having the Spirit of Christ in his heart, the thief knew that Jesus was with him on every step of his journey. Even though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death, he had no fear, because Jesus was with him. Psa 23:4. As *your* great Shepherd, Jesus is also *walking with you* on your journey each day.

As a son of God, the Lord wants you to be content in relation to who you are and what you have. Php 4:11-12. He also wants you to know His peace in the middle of all your circumstances. 2Th 3:16. It is important to embrace your circumstances as coming from the hand of the Lord. It is equally important to recognise that every circumstance is an opportunity to *know the Lord* as you walk with Him each day. When the Spirit of Christ is in you, it means that He is *walking with you* on every step of the journey.

Scriptures for reference

Php 4:11-12. 2Th 3:16. Heb 13:6-7. Joh 10:4. Exo 33:15



Take some time

Discuss the difference between the two thieves on the cross who were in the same circumstance. How is the response of the believing thief an example for you in your circumstances?



Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit. Thank the Lord that He is walking with you as your great Shepherd, so that you can know Him personally as you walk with Him each day.



Sing

'You are our good Shepherd' (*Joshua Hay*)

'No longer I who live' (*Jessica Durie*)



The promise of the Spirit

Victor Hall

In the previous article, we learnt that the Son and the Father come to live in the heart of a hearer. This happens when, through the prevenient grace of God, the hearer demonstrates their love for Christ by keeping His word. Joh 14:21. This means that they turn from the form of conduct that belongs to the kingdom of darkness and receive instruction from Christ's messengers concerning the culture of the Father's kingdom. Although this is an amazing time of deliverance for them, it is not the new birth.

Within the heart of the believer, the Son prays to the Father, asking Him to send the Holy Spirit to them. Joh 14:16. Jesus described the Holy Spirit as 'another Helper' who is sent by the Father to be *with* the believer, and *in* them. Joh 14:15-17.

The Holy Spirit is with us

The Holy Spirit is *with us* when He takes up residence with the Father and the Son in our heart. The Spirit's initiative is to make us spiritual by freeing us from our bondage to the way of the flesh. He is against our flesh and its motivations. Gal 5:17. We live by the flesh when we presume to be the measure of what is good and evil for us. Having this attitude, or spirit, we pursue an expression of who we think we are, or who we want to be. This is sin and falls short of the glory of God's predestination for us. Rom 3:23.

The actions that we take, and the emotions that are aroused within us when these expectations - of ourselves, our life and others - are unfulfilled, signal that we are living by the flesh. These works and emotions may include, for example, uncleanness, immorality, idolatry, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, and dissensions. Gal 5:19-21.

The conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement

The most fundamental expression of the Spirit's initiative to make us spiritual is to convict us of sin, righteousness and judgement. Explaining this work of the Spirit, Jesus said, 'And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement: of sin, because they do not believe in Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgement, because the ruler of this world is judged.' Joh 16:8-11.

When we are being convicted of sin, the Spirit is bringing to our attention our fleshly desire to define the expression of our identity and works. We do this because we are *unbelieving*. We do not believe that Jesus has fulfilled the works that belong to our sonship and that He is to be the substance of our life as a son of God. 1Jn 5:11-13. Unless we receive the conviction

of sin, we will believe the lie that our own way is true and leads to life. 2Th 2:11. Instead of living as a son of God, we will live as a son of disobedience and remain under condemnation. Eph 2:2.

Through the conviction of righteousness, the Spirit is illuminating to us the pathway of salvation that Jesus pioneered for our regeneration and renewing as a son of God. Following His resurrection from the dead, and manifestation as the first Man made in the image and likeness of God, Christ, our great High Priest, ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father. Heb 10:12. He now priests to us a daily participation in His offering and sufferings so that, as we walk in obedience to His word, we can be progressively made like Him. Heb 5:8-9. The Holy Spirit desires to lead us on this path, and to enable our obedience to the word of the Son so that our spirit can be regenerated and we can progressively mature as a son of God.

Convicting us of judgement, the Spirit affirms that we no longer need to be afraid of death nor be subject to the accusations of Satan. Rev 12:10. The Spirit is convincing us to live by the love of God that He pours into our heart. By this love, we no longer judge ourselves according to the knowledge of good or evil. Rather, we are compelled by love to judge that we died with Christ and that, as we receive His life, we are no longer to live for ourselves but for Christ who died for us and rose again. 2Co 5:14-15. The apostle John said that when we live in this way, the love of God is perfected in us so that 'we may have boldness in the day of judgement'. 1Jn 4:17.

In summary, when the Spirit, who is with us, convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement, He is asking us, 'Do you want to be a son of God?'

The Holy Spirit is in us

If we do not resist the conviction of the Spirit, He gives to us the faith to believe for what is totally impossible and unthinkable. We are able to believe that we can be a son of God!

Before we consider the implications of this expression of faith, it is important to recognise that a person can *resist* the conviction of the Holy Spirit and choose to live according to the flesh. In his address to the Jews, Stephen noted this response, saying to his hearers, 'You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! *You always resist the Holy Spirit*; as your fathers did, so do you.' Act 7:51. Even after we have begun to walk by the Spirit, we can turn back to living according to the flesh. Gal 3:1-4. In doing so, we are at risk of losing our salvation, for Paul said, 'If you live according to the flesh you will die.' Rom 8:13.

The Holy Spirit comes into a person's *spirit* when they choose to accept the amazing invitation of sonship. He is now *in* them, as well as being *with* them. The Holy Spirit comes into the believer's spirit as 'the Spirit of adoption', enabling them to call God, 'my Father'. Summarising this wonderful waypoint of salvation, the apostle Paul declared, 'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage *again to fear*, but you received the *Spirit of adoption* by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father".' Rom 8:15.

When the Holy Spirit comes into our spirit, enabling us to cry 'Abba, Father', we have been *sealed* with the Spirit. Eph 1:13-14. By this means, the Father has marked us as belonging to Him as a son of man. The Spirit is the seal of ownership by the Father, even before our spirit has been born again of incorruptible seed. Wonderfully, having been sealed with the Spirit, we become a temple for the Holy Spirit. 1Co 6:19. He worships the Father and the Son at the altar

of our conscience, which is a faculty of our spirit, enabling us to participate in this same fellowship of worship!

Receiving the Holy Spirit, who dwells in us, is the first implication of baptism, or immersion, into the Holy Spirit. This is what it means to receive the firstfruits of the Spirit. Rom 8:23. Wonderfully, Paul said that receiving the firstfruits of the Spirit is a *guarantee* that, if we walk by the Spirit, we will receive our eternal inheritance as a son of God and be brought to glory as a man in the image and likeness of God. 2Co 1:21-22. Eph 1:13-14. Heb 2:10-11.

The beginning of the assurance that belongs to those who are immersed in the Spirit and are becoming spiritual, is that the Holy Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are a son of God by adoption. Moreover, once we are born again as a son of God by incorruptible seed (which we will discuss in our next article), the Spirit confirms that we are a joint heir of the divine nature, with Christ, on the condition that we join the process of regeneration by being co-crucified with Christ. By this, we mean that our life in the flesh, in this world, is replaced by the *zoe* life of Christ. Gal 2:20. Paul was highlighting this implication of receiving the Spirit when he wrote, 'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together'. Rom 8:16-17.

The adoption

When we have become a temple of the Holy Spirit, we have received the 'promise of the Spirit' through faith. Gal 3:13-14. Amazingly, this is the first of the promises that the faithful men and women in the Old Testament saw from afar, and believed for, even though they were unable to receive them. Heb 11:13.

The promise of the Spirit was not available to a believer until Jesus died on the cross and then rose from the dead after three days and three nights. The apostle Paul highlighted this point when he wrote, 'Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")', that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith*'. Gal 3:13-14. Clearly, the promise of the Spirit could be received only after Jesus died on the cross and rose again.

This promise delivers to a believer 'the adoption'. Making this further point, Paul said that 'when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law [through the cross], *that we might receive the adoption as sons*'. Gal 4:4-5. We see that, on account of Christ's offering on the cross, we can receive the Holy Spirit, and this delivers to us the adoption!

The adoption is not merely a waypoint on the pathway of salvation. It describes the process through which sons of men receive the Holy Spirit of promise; are born again of God's divine nature; and then are progressively made men in the image and likeness of God. This process is complete on the day of resurrection when those who have been born as sons of God, and saved through regeneration and renewing as men, receive a spiritual body. Paul actually called this event 'the adoption, the redemption of our body'. Rom 8:23. On this day, our physical body will be made immortal and incorruptible by the word of the Son. It will then be clothed with our heavenly body from the Father. This spiritual body is as physical as it is spiritual, and as spiritual as it is physical.

The promise of the Spirit

Jesus described the Holy Spirit as 'another Helper' who is sent by the Father to be with the believer and in them. Joh 14:15-17. The Holy Spirit is with us when He takes up residence with the Father and the Son in our heart. The Spirit's initiative is to make us spiritual by freeing us from our bondage to the ways of our flesh. The most fundamental expression of the Spirit's initiative to make us spiritual is to convict us of sin, righteousness and judgement. Through this conviction, He is asking us, 'Do you want to be a son of God?'

The Holy Spirit comes into a person's spirit when they choose to accept the amazing invitation of sonship. He is now in them, as well as being with them. The Holy Spirit comes into the believer's spirit as 'the Spirit of adoption', enabling them to call God, 'my Father'. Rom 8:15. When the Holy Spirit comes into our spirit, enabling us to cry, 'Abba, Father', we have been sealed with the Spirit. Eph 1:13-14. By this means, the Father has marked us as belonging to Him as a son of man.

Scriptures for reference

Rom 8:15. Eph 1:13-14. 1Co 6:19



Take some time

What does it mean to live 'according to the flesh'?

Consider how the Spirit endeavours to free us from our bondage to the flesh.

What is the difference between the Holy Spirit dwelling *with* us and *in* us?

Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit. Pray to the Spirit, acknowledging His lordship and His initiative to make us spiritual.

Thank the Lord for the Holy Spirit and the seal of the Father identifying you as belonging to Him.

Sing

'Lord of my life' (*Michael and Sophie Fox*)

'Abba, Father' (*Lachlan and Melanie Perrin*)



Born of incorruptible seed

Victor Hall

Receiving the Spirit of adoption is an essential step on the pathway of salvation. However, this is not new birth. New birth is a particular miracle through which a son of man is born again of God's divine nature! It is the fulfilment of the truly magnificent promise that the Lord made to Abraham when He said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them ... so shall your descendants be.' Gen 15:5.

As we considered in our last article, having received the promise of the Spirit through faith, a believer is enabled by the Spirit of adoption to cry, 'Abba, Father.' Rom 8:15. This is their acknowledgement that they have been sealed with the Spirit by the Father, and that they belong to Him. God is their Father!

In response to this confession, the Father, through the ministry of His word, sends forth the Spirit of the Son into *the spirit* of the believer. This is not the Person of the

Son; He continues to dwell in our heart. Rather, it is the unique seed of our name and life as a son of God, which Christ brought forth through His travelling journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. Jesus was the one Seed who fell into the ground and died, and rose again as a sheaf of firstfruits.

Before the creation of 'the heavens and the earth', when Yahweh Son emptied Himself and was begotten by the Father as the Son of God, the sonship names of every person who would ever live were written in Him. When He rose from the dead, these names were now individual seeds in Christ, the one Sheaf of firstfruits. 1Co 15:20. Although the name in each seed is unique, every seed contains the life of the first Seed, Christ. This is the divine life of the Father, which He granted to the Son to have in Himself when the Father brought Him forth as the Son of God, *before*. Joh 5:26.

The seed sown in our spirit

The incorruptible seed of the divine nature is sown in our *spirit* by the word of the Father proceeding from Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The word itself is not the seed but, rather, the seed is carried by the word. Marking this distinction, the apostle Peter said that we are born again, ‘not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, *through* the word of God which lives and abides forever’. 1Pe 1:23.

When this seed is planted in ‘the ground’ of our *spirit*, it is germinated by the Holy Spirit and we are conceived as a son of God, having been born anew of the divine nature. We have become a totally new creation, depicted by Jesus in His parable of the seed and grounds as a new plant! Mat 13:5,20. Through new birth, Christ’s life has become our life, but the expression of this life *is unique to our name as a son of God*. Gal 2:20. Although the divine nature of God is now our life, we are not God. Rather, we have become the offspring of God.

The apostle Paul explained this tremendous step on the pathway of salvation, writing, ‘And because you are sons [by adoption], God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” Therefore you are no longer a slave but a [new creation] son, and if a son, then an heir of God [God’s divine life] through Christ.’ Gal 4:6-7. Significantly, when this germination happens, Christ has become our life and the substance of our expression as a son of God. Gal 2:20. This is why it is the Son who cries out ‘Abba, Father!’ within us.

If Paul said that the Spirit of the Son, which is the seed of our sonship, is sent into our *heart*, why are we saying that this seed is planted in our *spirit*? Our heart is the meeting point of our spirit (identity), soul and body. It is the very essence, or centre, of our person

and expression. Together, our spirit and soul are our inner man, and they are indivisible. We can liken these two aspects of our heart to two sides of one coin. Our spirit is our identity. It is who we are. Our conscience is the faculty of our spirit through which we are able to know ourselves. 1Co 2:11. Who we are, or want to be, is expressed through the faculties of our soul. These faculties include our will, mind and emotions; and they influence how we behave, make decisions, communicate, and interpret our environment in and through our body.

The Scriptures describe the word of God as being sharper than any two-edged sword. When it is proclaimed, it makes a division between the spirit and the soul, revealing the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Heb 4:12. Although our spirit is part of our heart, this division means that the seed, carried by the word, is able to be planted specifically in our spirit. We know that it is planted here, because the spirit of a man, which is the innermost being of the heart, is identified by the Scriptures as *a lamp*. As Solomon explained, ‘The *spirit* of a man is the *lamp* of the Lord, searching all the inner depths of his heart.’ Pro 20:27. This lamp is lit when the seed of our sonship is germinated in our spirit by the Holy Spirit. This is when we are manifest as one of the stars of heaven that Abraham witnessed!

A heavenly body

In addition to receiving the seed of our sonship through new birth, we also receive a heavenly body, which is reserved for us with Christ in God’s house. Jesus prepared this body for each of us as He fulfilled the works of our name in the course of His offering and suffering journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. At the last Passover, He said to His disciples, ‘Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.' Joh 14:1-3.

Receiving a heavenly body highlights that, through new birth, we are raised with Christ to become a citizen of the heavenly Jerusalem. The psalmist prophesied of this amazing implication of new birth and baptism by the Father, writing, 'And of Zion [where the heavenly Jerusalem has been established] it will be said, "This one and that one were born in her; and the Most High Himself [that is, the Father] shall establish her":' Psa 87:5.

The heavenly Jerusalem, the church, is the context where sons of God are to lay down their life in love for one another according to their name as a son of God. 1Jn 4:7. The desire to abide there and to express love through serving, which is the nature of God's life, is the evidence that a person has been born again. Gal 5:13. Highlighting this implication of new birth, the apostle John said, 'Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.' 1Jn 4:7.



Born of incorruptible seed

In response to the confession, 'Abba, Father', enabled by the Spirit of adoption, the Father, through the ministry of His word, sends forth the Spirit of the Son into the spirit of the believer. This is not the Person of the Son; He continues to dwell in our heart. Rather, it is the unique seed of our name and life as a son of God, which Christ brought forth through His travailing journey from Gethsemane to Calvary. Jesus was the one Seed who fell into the ground and died, and rose again as a sheaf of firstfruits.

The incorruptible seed of the divine nature is sown in our spirit by the word of the Father proceeding from Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. When this seed is planted in 'the ground' of our spirit, it is germinated by the Holy Spirit and we are conceived as a son of God, having been born anew of the divine nature. We have become a totally new creation, depicted by Jesus in His parable of the seed and grounds as a new plant! Mat 13:5,20. Through new birth, Christ's life has become our life, but the expression of this life is unique to our name as a son of God. Gal 2:20.

Scriptures for reference

1Pe 1:22-23. Gal 4:6-7. Gal 2:20



Take some time

What is the evidence that a person has been born of the divine nature?
How are they different from a person who has not been born of God?



Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit.
Pray to continue to grow as a son of God through obedience to the Spirit.

Thank the Lord for the treasure of the divine nature,
which is our inheritance as sons of God.



Sing

'I was born in Zion' (*Penelope Smith*)
'Because of His great love' (*Joshua Hay*)



Baptism by the Father and by water

Bruce Hamilton

God's covenant purpose for you is accomplished in your life through baptism. There is only one baptism, but we recognise that there are three aspects to baptism: by the Father; by water; and into the Holy Spirit.

Baptism by the Father establishes you as a member of the body of Christ, to live by His life as a son of God. You are baptised into the Person of Jesus Christ.

Baptism by water joins you to the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection – the new and living way. When you are joined to Christ's offering and sufferings, you are joined to the process of regeneration and renewing so that you grow and mature to become 'a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'. Eph 4:4-6,13. Joh 1:14,16. 1Jn 5:6. You have the testimony of Jesus.

Baptism into the Holy Spirit is when Christ baptises you into the Person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit Himself then fills you with the sevenfold Spirit of God. This enables you to join the offering, travailing work of the Holy Spirit. We join this work when we pray in the Spirit, in tongues. Isa 11:2. Rom 8:6,9,11.

The evidence that these three aspects of baptism are active and effective in your life will be clearly seen as you overcome the Devil by laying down your life to forsake all that the world offers, so that you may gain Christ by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of your testimony. Rev 12:11. Joh 12:23-26.

The root meaning of the word 'baptism' is, literally, 'immersion'. Immersion is more than simply getting wet through the action of dipping or sprinkling. If you are immersed in water, you are completely under the surface; you are surrounded on all sides by the water. To be immersed means that you are in a completely new environment, or context. Baptism immerses you into a completely new life and way of living.

To illustrate this, imagine that you have been immersed in water. It is important that you do not remain there too long! You could remain indefinitely in that environment only if you were able to breathe under water, eat under water, sleep under water, and so on. We know that we cannot do any of those things so, if you are immersed, being completely

under water, it is important to hold your breath to ensure that the water remains only outside of you. If the water were to be both outside you and inside you, then you would be dead. You need to breathe air to stay alive. God did not create man to be able to live under water. When ‘the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, [He] breathed into his nostrils the *breath* of life; and man became a living being’. Gen 2:7.

Our life requires extremely specific conditions in order for us to stay alive. Something known as ‘the 3-3-3 survival rule’ states that an average person can live for only 3 minutes without air (oxygen), 3 days without water, and 3 weeks without food. Our lives are very dependent upon even these basic things – air, water and food. Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, mankind was subjected to death. Even though we are mortal, we often think that we can control our environment and circumstances to keep ourselves alive. Whilst we are able to manage our circumstances to minimise the risk of death, and potentially to improve our condition of life, we do not keep ourselves alive.

Mankind is alive only because of the mercy of God. Job declared that ‘in [God’s] hand is the life of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind’. Job 12:10. The apostle Paul stated in the book of Acts that ‘[God] gives to all life, breath, and all things ... He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being’. Act 17:25, 27-28.

Baptism in water is not merely a ceremony or sacrament, and it is more than just temporary immersion in water. The apostle Paul testified to the church in Galatia, ‘The world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For *in Christ Jesus* neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.’ Gal 6:14-15. In other words, Paul was saying that an outward sign or action

done in the flesh, or the rejection of such an action, does not change you and is of no benefit to you. The only true change occurs when you are *in Christ* – then, you are a new creation.

Paul further explained this in his letter to the Roman church. ‘For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter [i.e. not in the fulfilment of laws, rules, or sacraments as an outward showing in the flesh]; whose praise is not from men but from God.’ Rom 2:28-29. In a comparable way, we can say that neither being baptised nor *not* being baptised is of any benefit to you unless you have been made a new creation, in Christ.

Baptism is immersion into a completely new way of life. There is no part of you that is not affected. You are baptised into the full offering of Christ: His death, burial and resurrection. Christ offered Himself through the power of Eternal Spirit – the seven Spirits of God. Heb 9:14. He was fully immersed in the Spirit of God. For the whole of Christ’s offering journey, the Spirit of God gave Him the power to fulfil His ministry as our great High Priest. The Spirit of God also gave Him the power, as a son of God (God’s Firstborn), to fulfil His predestination to become the first Man in the image and likeness of God.

When you are *baptised*, you are completely surrounded, *and* you are also filled – not with water, but with the sevenfold Spirit of God. ‘For by one Spirit [also, in one Spirit] we were all baptised into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.’ 1Co 12:13. When you were *born again*, you were born as new creation! You were born of the divine nature. However, when you were baptised, you were baptised into

the end result of Christ's death, burial and resurrection which He accomplished for you. You have died to the ways of the flesh, and you now live completely by another life – the life of God; you live and walk according to the Spirit. You are not just a better version of your old self. You are living as new creation, walking out your salvation daily, and learning how to overcome sin and the Devil and, by patience, to possess your soul. Luk 21:19.

Baptism by the Father

The first aspect of baptism is baptism *by the Father into the body of Christ*. 'God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.' 1Co 12:18.

Paul wrote, 'Therefore, if anyone is *in Christ*, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, *all* things have become new'. 2Co 5:17. The picture of the vine and branches was used by Christ to explain that eternal life is possible only for those who abide in His body – 'I am the Vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.' Joh 15:5. Having been born again as a son of God, you see 'the kingdom of God'; and so, as the first aspect of your baptism, the Father then places you into the church, by making you a member of the body of Christ. Christ is 'the Head of the body, the church'. Col 1:18. This is when you are born of water and of the Spirit to enter 'the kingdom of God'. Joh 3:3,5.

The fellowship of Christ's body, the church, is the context where you are to lay down your life in love for another. 1Jn 4:7.

Baptism by water

The second aspect of baptism is baptism by water, which joins you to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. It is important to know that it is the new-creation 'you' who joins Christ's death through baptism by water. You, as a new-creation son of God, are enabled through baptism to put off sin. Unless you are joined to the second aspect of baptism, you will not be able to overcome sin and the Devil, and you will not be delivered from slavery to sin.

Baptism by water joins you to the circumcision of Christ. 'In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.' Col 2:11-12.

Baptism, however, is more than simply the process of dealing with sin. Jesus knew no sin, yet He was baptised. He was not baptised for repentance from any sin. In fact, John the Baptist tried to prevent Jesus from being baptised, because he recognised that Jesus was 'the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' Joh 1:29. Jesus said to him, 'Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness.' Mat 3:15.



So, baptism is not just for cleansing. Baptism *joins you* to Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is the process by which you are joined to the offering journey of Christ, which is much more than merely dealing with your sin. This journey, or pilgrimage, is the expression of your sonship, and is also your service as a slave-priest in the house of God the Father, the church, as you are being joined to the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, being conformed to His death, and are living by the power of His resurrection. Joh 14:2-6. Joh 2:16-17. Php 3:7-11.

Highlighting that baptism is not a ceremonial washing or cleansing, and is also not a sacrament, the apostle Peter explained that Noah and his family were saved through water, so 'there is also an antitype [or corresponding action] which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.' 1Pe 3:21.

It is through your continually abiding in fellowship with the Father and the Son, by the Holy Spirit, and fellowshiping with Christ's brethren, that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses you from all sin. 1Jn 1:1-7. That is, Christ sprinkles your conscience with His blood, cleansing you from all sin. You are being cleansed in a process of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit through obedience to the word of God proclaimed

to you. Jesus said to the disciples, 'You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you.' Joh 15:3-4. He also said to Peter, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean.' Joh 13:10. Paul, speaking of the process of regeneration and renewing – not of baptism – wrote, 'Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God'. 2Co 7:1.

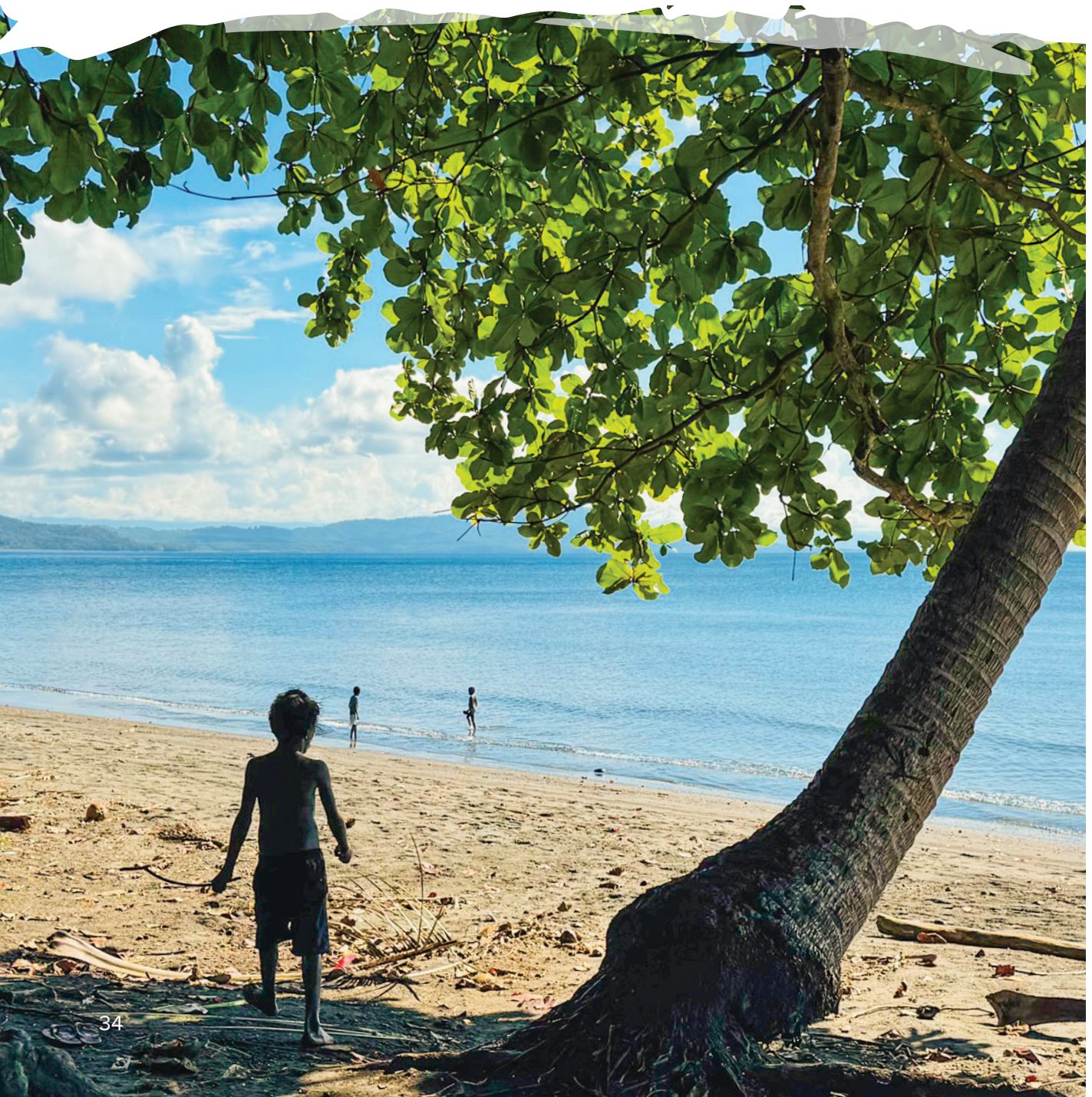
In the book of Romans, Paul clearly explained what is accomplished through baptism. That is, through baptism into Christ's death, the body of sin (the old man) was killed, freeing you from slavery to sin; you were buried with Christ; and you have been raised from the dead with Him to walk in newness of life, which is *exanastasis* life. Rom 6:3-14. You are joined to the hope of glory, the hope of eternal life. Col 1:27. Tit 3:7. Heb 6:19. You are living by resurrection life!

Through the ministry of the word of God by His messengers, you receive the faith of the Son, and you are joined to His offering. In the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, the process of regeneration becomes operative in your life, maturing and perfecting you in the image and likeness of God. Tit 3:4-7. 2Co 3:18. You will know very real power and capacity for change. Your testimony will be, 'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Gal 2:20.



Paul wrote to Titus, 'But when the kindness and the love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that having been justified by His

grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.' Tit 3:48.



Baptism by the Father and by water

God's covenant purpose for you is accomplished in your life through baptism. There is only one baptism, but we recognise that there are three aspects to baptism: by the Father; by water; and into the Holy Spirit. Baptism by the Father establishes you as a member of the body of Christ, to live by His life as a son of God. You are baptised into the Person of Jesus Christ. Baptism by water joins you to the fellowship of Christ's death, burial and resurrection – the new and living way. When you are joined to Christ's offering and sufferings, you are joined to the process of regeneration and renewing so that you grow and mature to become 'a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ'. Eph 4:4-6,13. Joh 1:14,16. 1Jn 5:6. You have the testimony of Jesus.

The evidence that these three aspects of baptism are active and effective in your life will be clearly seen as you overcome the Devil by laying down your life to forsake all that the world offers, so that you may gain Christ by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of your testimony. Rev 12:11. Joh 12:23-26.

Scriptures for reference

Eph 4:4-6,13. Rev 12:11. Joh 12:23-26



Take some time

Consider, in a very practical way, how you are being renewed and regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit.

Thank the Lord for the blessing of His word. Pray that you will know that you have eternal life and that the life of Jesus will be manifest in your mortal flesh.

Sing

'We Have Been Raised With Christ' (*Joshua Hay*)

'The Kindness and Love of God' (*Joshua Hay*)



Baptism into the Holy Spirit

Nathan Smith

The third aspect of our baptism is baptism into the Holy Spirit. Being baptised, or immersed, in the Holy Spirit is also the final element of the Lord God's covenant initiative toward us as sons of God. As we consider the steps of being born again and brought to glory as men in the image and likeness of God, it is important to note that the Holy Spirit is sent into our heart to be the Spirit of adoption through whom the grace of God is given to us, enabling us to choose to be adopted as a son of God.

Having been born again of God's divine nature, we are then baptised into the Holy Spirit. These are two very different things! While the Spirit of adoption makes us a son of God by adoption and a child of Abraham, baptism in the Holy Spirit immerses us into the Holy Spirit. In the same way that the Father immerses, or baptises, us into Christ, so the Son immerses, or baptises, us into the Holy Spirit. Mat 3:11. The Holy Spirit then gives to us the sevenfold Spirit of God. This is the water of life that comprises the river of life flowing out of our heart. The sevenfold Spirit of God enables us to fulfil God's will for our life each day.

Earlier in this publication, we considered that at the beginning of the process of new birth, the Holy Spirit comes into a believer's spirit as the Spirit of adoption. Rom 8:15. The Holy Spirit gives them faith to believe for something

that is totally impossible – that God can be their Father, and they can be His son. As they cry out, 'Abba, Father', they are sealed with the Spirit, and their body literally becomes His temple! 1Co 6:19. In response to the believer's cry, the Father sends the Spirit of Christ – the seed containing their unique sonship name – into their spirit. The Holy Spirit then germinates this seed, causing them to be conceived as a new-creation son of God, who is born of the divine nature.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit is a subsequent immersion with the Holy Spirit, occurring as a key step in the process of salvation unto eternal life. When a believer is baptised into the Holy Spirit, the Spirit Himself fills a believer full of the sevenfold Spirit of God. Many church denominations reject the need to be baptised with the Holy Spirit or they consider it to be an 'optional extra'. The truth is that baptism with the Holy Spirit is completely essential for our salvation! This is because, after a believer is baptised with the Holy Spirit, He ministers to them the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God. Act 1:8. The Scriptures also refer to the sevenfold Spirit of God as 'the seven Spirits of God' or 'Eternal Spirit'. Rev 4:5. Heb 9:14. The sevenfold Spirit of God is the complete sum of the full capacity of God, who is Spirit. Isa 11:2. With this understanding in view, we can see that this aspect of our baptism is an incredible gift!

Jesus was strengthened by the Holy Spirit

It's amazing to consider that even Jesus Himself needed the Holy Spirit to minister this power and capacity to Him, in order to complete His offering journey. To understand this, let's go back to the fellowship of Yahweh before the creation of 'the heavens and the earth'. Gen 1:1,26. In the fellowship of Their Covenant, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit agreed together to make man in Their image and according to Their likeness. To accomplish Their covenant purpose, the Father and the Son gave the seven Spirits of God to the Holy Spirit. This is when He became 'the Helper'. Joh 14:26.

As the Helper, the Holy Spirit enabled the Son, with the capacity of seven Spirits, to empty Himself to be begotten as the Father's Son. The Holy Spirit then enabled the Son of God to empty Himself further to the womb of the virgin Mary, to be born as the Son of Man. Luk 1:35. Mar 10:45. Finally, the Holy Spirit helped Christ to empty Himself yet again on His offering journey from Gethsemane to the point of death on a cross. Php 2:7-8.

As the Son of Man, with a physical body just like ours, Jesus experienced the full force of each wounding event on His offering journey. In fact, each wound that He suffered was sufficiently traumatic to have killed Him. We could say that Christ was being 'put to death' in each wound – yet He didn't die until His appointed time on the cross. Rom 5:6. How was this so? It is because He received the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God from the Holy Spirit to fully lay down His life to the death at each wounding event. Joh 10:18. Christ's seven suffering events were impossible for Him to survive without the Holy Spirit helping Him in this way. This strengthening power was revealed in His mortal body as *exanastasis*. *Exanastasis* is God's resurrection life being manifest in a mortal body. Through *exanastasis*, Jesus

was being physically sustained throughout His entire offering journey, enabling Him to continue to offer Himself in obedience all the way to His death on the cross. Luk 22:42-43.

The Holy Spirit is our Helper

If Jesus needed to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit to walk the path of obedience set before Him, how much more do we need the Holy Spirit to strengthen us on our sonship journey as well? Thanks be to God that the Holy Spirit is eager to help us in our weakness! Rom 8:26. He equips us with the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God to journey with Christ on the pathway that He has pioneered for us, and He personally leads us on this pathway, each day. Receiving this help from the Holy Spirit is the *only* way in which we can walk in obedience to the Father's will for our life.

Part of the Holy Spirit's work as our Helper is to bring the word of God to our remembrance. Joh 14:26. What a relief that we don't need to anxiously memorise every word from the Scriptures, last Sunday's sermon, or even the content of this Teens Magazine! Rather, as we humbly receive and believe the word coming to us, the Holy Spirit is faithful to bring it to our remembrance at the exact moment we need it. Jas 1:21. This word will always call us to join Christ in the fellowship of His offering, in each specific circumstance in which we find ourselves.

Having brought the word to our remembrance, the Holy Spirit then gives us the choice – either to obey this word or to continue to live and walk according to our own sight and understanding. Amazingly, the Holy Spirit continues to be our Helper even when we choose to reject His leading! He does this by resisting us in our fleshly and self-righteous endeavours. This will undoubtedly cause the emotions of sin to arise within us. Rom 7:5. We will begin to complain that we are 'the victim' of our circumstances and we will feel frustrated, agitated and discontented.

These responses are a sure indicator that we are resisting the Holy Spirit and He is resisting us! However, His resistance is not condemnation but, rather, is a call for us to humble ourselves and to come back to our obedient participation in Christ's offering.

If we *do* choose to obey the leading of the Holy Spirit when He brings the word to our remembrance, He strengthens us with the capacity of the sevenfold Spirit of God. This enables us to walk obediently with Christ on the path that He has already pioneered for us! The Holy Spirit equips us with resurrection life, which enables us to join Christ in the fellowship of His death, burial and resurrection. Php 3:10. This is how a son of God is led by the Spirit and can walk in the light of the word each day. Rom 8:14. Psa 119:105.

The Holy Spirit continues to help us as we walk in this fellowship, by bringing regeneration to our spirit and renewing to our mind. Tit 3:5. Rom 12:2. This is a huge help to us – without the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, we simply *cannot* be saved! We could describe the regeneration of our spirit as 'cleaning up the soil of our heart'. The 'thorns, thistles and stones' in our 'soil' will eventually kill God's life in us, unless they are removed. Thankfully, the Holy Spirit is doing this regenerative work in our heart as we receive the washing of the water of the word. Our mind is also being renewed by the Holy Spirit as He delivers us from walking after the flesh to living by the Spirit. Rom 8:4. As the Holy Spirit helps us to abide in the process of regeneration and renewing each day, the seed of Christ's life in us will grow and mature, until we eventually receive our full redemption as a son of God and son of man in a glorious, spiritual body!

The Holy Spirit also helps us by enabling us to be a witness of Christ. In fact, we cannot be a witness of Christ until we've been baptised with the Holy Spirit. Act 1:8. Through this aspect of our baptism, we receive the

capacity to pray, prophesy and testify as a son of God. We can be a witness of Christ only from the basis of our testimony; and we obtain a genuine testimony only by walking with Christ on the path He's pioneered. And we can walk on that pathway only if the Holy Spirit empowers us with the sevenfold Spirit of God! The Holy Spirit equips us to travail with Christ and to proclaim the word of our testimony as His witnesses, so that others also can be born of God. As we engage in this work of evangelism alongside our fellow believers, we are co-workers with Christ, labouring with Him to see others brought into the kingdom of God. 1Co 3:9.

Speaking in tongues

The ability to speak in tongues is the most obvious demonstration that a person has been baptised with the Holy Spirit. Act 2:4. However, it is important to understand that speaking in tongues is not, in and of itself, the primary goal of this aspect of our baptism. We do not receive some sort of divine 'super-power' through the physical act of uttering another language! To approach speaking in tongues in this way is akin to the wicked practice of 'reciting mantras', which is one of the many old gospels from which the Lord is cleansing us in this present season. So, what is the purpose of speaking in tongues?

Speaking in other tongues is an anointing that we receive so that we can obtain help from the Holy Spirit. It is a precious gift which enables us to edify ourselves, and to join the intercession and travail of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. 1Co 14:4. We do not know how to join the Lord's prayer meeting as we ought, but Paul taught us that, when we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings that are far deeper than the words of our native language. Rom 8:26. These groanings are the travail of the Holy Spirit to see us joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering, and to become the full expression of who He has named us to be.

The Holy Spirit is the source and capacity of all prayer. He is delivering us from our own fear-driven, anxious prayers, to our sanctified participation in the ongoing conversation of intercession and travail of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Through this participation,

we are hearing the truth of our name and are receiving the grace to walk in the obedience that Christ has already fulfilled for us. Praise the Lord!



Devotional *focus*

Baptism into the Holy Spirit

Thanks be to God that the Holy Spirit is eager to help us in our weakness! He equips us with the power of the sevenfold Spirit of God to journey with Christ on the pathway that He has pioneered for us, and He personally leads us on this pathway, each day. This power is seen in our mortal bodies as *exanastasis*, or resurrection life. It enables us to join Christ in the fellowship of His death, burial and resurrection. Receiving this help from the Holy Spirit is the only way in which we can walk in obedience to the Father's will for our life.

The Holy Spirit continues to help us as we walk in this fellowship, by bringing regeneration to our spirit and renewing to our mind. This is a huge help to us – without the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, we simply cannot be saved! The Holy Spirit is carrying out this regenerative work in our heart as we receive the washing of the water of the word. Our mind is also being renewed by the Holy Spirit as He delivers us from walking after the flesh to living by the Spirit. As the Holy Spirit helps us to abide each day in the process of regeneration and renewing, the seed of Christ's life in us will grow and mature, until we eventually receive our full redemption as a son of God and son of man in a glorious spiritual body!

Scriptures for reference Joh 14:26. Rom 8:4, 26. Php 3:10. Tit 3:5. Rom 12:2



Take some time

Discuss the different ways in which the Holy Spirit is our Helper. Testify of how He has helped you recently.



Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit. Give thanks that He is enabling us to join the fellowship of intercession and travail of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Give thanks that we can know Him as our Helper, and ask Him to keep leading us on the pathway that Christ has pioneered.



Sing

'You are Lord, Holy Spirit'

(Michael Fox)

'Pray in the Holy Spirit'

(Bryan Kaa)



What counts is new creation

Julianne Hamilton

In a world of around eight billion people today, it is comforting to know that the Father in heaven knows those who belong to Him. 2Ti 2:19. He lovingly delivers each person who is born of the divine nature into the kingdom of God, which is the fellowship of Yahweh *Elohim*. Col 1:12-14. He baptises them into the church, the body of Christ, so that they can join the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, to become sons of men in the image and likeness of God. Tit 3:47. They are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God's special possession! 1Pe 2:9-10. Rom 10:13.

When a person is born of the seed of the divine nature and is baptised by the Father into the body of Christ, Jesus explained that they have been born by water and by the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. Summing up this first step of baptism, the apostle Paul declared, 'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.' 2Co 5:17.

New creation is *in Christ*

The church, the body of Christ, is not a particular church denomination. Neither does attending a particular church mean that you are part of the body of Christ. The church, the body of Christ, is one global 'flock' of *sanctified* people, with one Shepherd. Joh 10:16.

As members of that one flock, we have been predestined by God to the *new-creation* image of the Son of God. Rom 8:29. No other religious image, activity or projection can achieve for us the righteousness of God. Rom 1:16-17. Rom 10:1-4. The apostle Paul wrote, 'May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; *what counts is new creation.*' Gal 6:14-15 (NIV).

The apostle Paul described our sinful and perishing state as being foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. Tit 3:3. He wrote that Jesus Christ *appeared* among humankind in their sinful state as 'the kindness and love of God'. Tit 3:3-8. This is a beautiful description of the *new-creation image* of the Son of God, to which we have been predestined as sons of God.

Christ's travail for new creation

Christ's travail for new creation is expressed in His *emptying*. He began His emptying journey *before* the beginning. As Yahweh Son, He was *Spirit*. He was the full and only expression of all sonship, without a *body*.

Joh 4:24. He emptied Himself as Yahweh Son to be begotten by the word of the Father as the Son of God, by the Holy Spirit, thereby receiving *a heavenly body*. Joh 1:14-18. The *heavenly body* of the Son of God was something 'new' in the Godhead, and occurred when the Father declared, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You.' Heb 1:5.

This emptying action was the travail by which the Son of God was brought forth as the one *Seed*, in whom were written all the names of the sons of God who were predestined to be made in the image and likeness of God. Gal 3:16. They were written in Him when He was begotten by the Father as the Son of God, through Eternal Spirit, and by the Holy Spirit.

The Son of God 'appeared' among humankind when He further emptied Himself, through Eternal Spirit, to be born from the womb of the virgin Mary, thereby receiving *a human body*. Php 2:5-8. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person *in a human body*. Luk 1:26-38. Heb 1:3. As the express image of the Father's glory, He was unable to sin, or even to be tempted to sin. Heb 1:1-4. After His water baptism, part of fulfilling all righteousness was to overcome Satan by becoming subject to temptation by him. He was led by the Spirit to face and overcome temptation. He was sealed by the Holy Spirit as the new temple of God for this work, namely, to destroy the works of the Devil. Mat 3:15. Mat 4:1-11. Luk 4:1-13.

Christ is the beginning of the 'new'

Jesus then further emptied Himself, as the Son of God and Seed of the Father, to become the first Son of Man to be made in the image and likeness of God, with an incorruptible and immortal, *spiritual body*. As a seed falls into the ground and dies, He, too, emptied Himself to death through

His offering and suffering journey from the garden of Gethsemane to His death on the cross. Joh 12:24-26.

When Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross, He *descended* into 'the lowest parts of the earth', and *ascended* far above all the heavens. Eph 4:9-10. His *descending* and *ascending* are the two sides of His cross. The entire world was crucified with Jesus Christ when He descended to the lowest parts of the earth to suffer the eternal judgement of God upon our iniquity and sin. On His ascension journey, He learned our obedience and fulfilled our righteousness as sons of God. Heb 5:8. As the apostle Paul declared, we are crucified with Christ! The life we now live, we live by the faith of the Son of God who loved us, and gave Himself for us. Gal 2:20.

At three o'clock in the afternoon (the ninth hour), Jesus proclaimed from the cross, 'It is finished!' Joh 19:30. He had suffered the eternal judgement of every son of perdition, and then also fulfilled the righteousness of every son of God. He declared the end of the old creation and the beginning of the new creation through the pioneering work of His cross. Then He was buried in the tomb for three days, after which God raised Him from the dead. Act 2:24. Rom 8:11.

Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, was brought forth, by resurrection, as the first Man made in the image and likeness of God, with an incorruptible and immortal, *spiritual body*. He is *the New Creation*, and we are a new creation, *in Him*. He now upholds all things by the word of His power, which is the word of His cross. Heb 1:1-4. We read in the book of Revelation that Jesus declared, 'Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.' Rev 22:12-13. Jesus Christ is the 'Beginning' of *new creation*.

Knowing new creation

How do we know who belongs, and who does not belong, to the fellowship of the body of Christ? What does a new-creation person 'look like'? Jesus said, 'You will know them by their fruits.' Mat 7:16-20. As the Vinedresser, the Father looks for the fruit of the divine nature in our life. He is not at all interested in our projections of religious good works.

Further to this, Jesus explained that it is the heavenly Father's work to remove all those who do not belong to the body of Christ because they are unwilling to put off their iniquitous ways. Like a skilled Vinedresser, the Father cuts them down and throws them into the fire to be burned. Joh 15:1-6.

Those who belong to the Father, and are known by Him, call upon the name of the Lord and depart from their iniquitous ways. 2Ti 2:19. The Lord spoke to the prophet Samuel, saying, 'The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.' 1Sa 16:7.

When we trust in our own understanding and walk according to the sight of our own eyes, we are walking in 'iniquity'. Our 'iniquity' means that we are going astray from the pathway of salvation that Christ pioneered, because we are walking according to the sight of our own eyes. Pro 3:5. Isa 5:21.

However, when we set the Lord before us and trust only in Him, we are easily led upon the pathway of salvation that Christ has pioneered. We are continually in His presence each day, where we know His fullness of joy, which is the demeanour of our faith as a new creation. Psa 16:11. This, metaphorically, looks like the trusting relationship between sheep and their shepherd.

The sheep of His pasture

A key indicator that a person belongs to the church, the body of Christ, is that they are like a sheep who hears and responds to the voice of their great Shepherd. By the Holy Spirit, Christ

leads His people in the gospel of the kingdom as the great Shepherd of the sheep. They hear His voice when He sends His messengers to proclaim His word to them.

The proclaimed word of God is the gospel of the kingdom of God, and is His will for His sheep. A son-of-God 'sheep' has the divine nature. The unique expression of each son-of-God sheep is their *sanctification*. 1Th 4:3. This simply means that they trust in God and live according to His will for their life.

Further, they are willingly gathered with their brethren into the fellowship of Yahweh, which is the kingdom of God. Jesus said, 'My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one.' Joh 10:27-30.

As the great Shepherd of the sheep, Jesus Christ keeps us by His word. We are in His hand, every day. By the greatness of His might, He keeps every son of God in His name; not only those who have already been born in history, but also those who are yet to be born in times to come. Isa 40:26.

Conclusion

When the Father takes His seat, the new-creation company of individuals and families who have fully matured in the divine nature, and who manifest the resurrection life of God in their mortal bodies, will be revealed. Just as Jesus 'appeared' as *the kindness and love of God*, so, too, will this company be 'revealed' as the firstfruits of *the kindness and love of God* in the world. Tit 3:4. Rom 8:20-23. That is, they will be human beings who are being perfected in the image and likeness of God. However, they will look significantly different from other human beings in the world who continue to walk in the way of iniquity.

In the book of Revelation, this company is known as 'the 144 000'. This is a symbolic number that represents an overcoming company, comprising the firstfruits of the true Israel of God. Rev 7:38. Rev 14:15. The Father knows them, and they know Him, because they are His sons who are serving blamelessly as priests in the temple of the Father. They have washed their robes and serve in complete obedience. They are without spot or wrinkle and without guile or fault. They are living by resurrection life in their mortal bodies and

are mature, bringing forth fruit that remains, 'fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.' Heb 6:1. Joh 15:16. Rom 6:22.

As they proclaim the gospel of the kingdom as a testimony to all the nations on Earth, they will reveal and glorify the Father in heaven. Rom 15:5-6. This is what new creation looks like - it looks like 'Christ in you', manifest as an obedient, sanctified son of God, who sincerely loves their brethren. This is what counts!

Devotional focus

Knowing new creation

What does a new-creation person 'look like'? Jesus said, 'You will know them by their fruits.' Mat 7:16-20. As the Vinedresser, the Father looks for the fruit of the divine nature in our life. Joh 15:1-2. It is comforting to know that the Father in heaven knows those who belong to Him. 2Ti 2:19. Those who belong to the Father, and are known by Him, call upon the name of the Lord and depart from their iniquitous ways. 2Ti 2:19. He is not at all interested in our projections of religious good works.

A key indicator of a new-creation person is that they are like a sheep who hears and responds to the voice of their great Shepherd. By the Holy Spirit, Christ leads His people in the gospel of the kingdom, as the great Shepherd of the sheep. They hear His voice when He sends His messengers to proclaim His word to them. The proclaimed word of God is the gospel of the kingdom of God, and is His will for His sheep. A son-of-God 'sheep' has the divine nature. The unique expression of each son-of-God sheep is their *sanctification*. 1Th 4:3. This simply means that they trust in God and live according to His will for their life. Further to this, they are willingly gathered with their brethren into the fellowship of Yahweh, which is the kingdom of God.



Take some time

Consider, in a very practical way, how we, as new-creation believers in Christ, are led in the gospel of the kingdom, every day.



Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit. Pray that we will have ears to hear the Lord's voice when He sends His messengers to proclaim His word to us.

Thank the Lord for the blessing of His word which is washing us and renewing our hearts and minds, day by day.



Sing

'The Redeemed of the Lord'

(Joshua Hay)

'The Kindness and Love of God'

(Joshua Hay)

Scriptures for reference

2Ti 2:19. 2Co 5:17. Gal 2:20.

Tit 3:3-8. Rom 10:13. Eph 4:9-10.

Gal 6:14-15. Joh 10:27-30.

1Th 4:3



Bringing forth godly fruit

Ross Wills

At the last supper, Jesus continued to prepare His disciples for the coming events, teaching them many important lessons. One of these lessons was the imperative to bear fruit. He said, 'I am the true Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.' Joh 15:1-2. This is a critical point. If we do not bear good fruit, we will be removed from Christ, the true Vine. Mat 7:19. He further noted that if we abide in Christ, we will bear much fruit.

A disciple of Christ who is born of God's divine nature, baptised into the offering, suffering pathway of Christ, and immersed in the Holy Spirit will show forth the fruit of the seed of Christ growing in them. By this, the heavenly Father is glorified. Joh 15:8. The apostle Paul urged the Colossians to 'walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God'. Col 1:10. Jesus has chosen and appointed every disciple to bear good fruit that will remain. Joh 15:16.

What is 'fruit'?

In the Scriptures, the bringing forth of fruit in our lives is likened to fruiting trees and vines. A good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit; nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Mat 7:15-17. Matthew noted that a false prophet (a carnal Christian) is like a bad tree, and they are known by their bad fruit. Mat 7:15-16.

Fruit cannot be added to or attached to a tree. Fruit is of and from the tree, produced during seasons of growth and maturity. Jesus illustrated this point when He asked, 'Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?' Mat 7:16. So it is with man: the fruit of the divine nature is not able to be added to our life by inheritance, good intentions or diligent work.

Fruit, therefore, is the outward manifestation of what is growing within. Thus, we are able to identify the type of tree by the fruit it bears. The seed of the divine nature must grow in our hearts, and we will bear the

fruit of the divine nature through seasons of growth and maturity as our own precious possession. We will know what is growing within a person by the fruit that is displayed by their behaviour.

Natural and godly fruit

What is the fruit, and how do we bear it? In nature, fruit is the fleshy, or mature, ripened part of a flower that has been pollinated. In our life, we could consider good grades at school to be the outcome, or natural fruit, of diligent study; the provision of houses, food and the needs of life to be the fruit of hard work; or children to be the fruit of a husband and wife. Godly fruit is more than merely outcomes. It is produced by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. Fruit is shown in our reactions and behaviour in the circumstances of our life.

James, the brother of Jesus, when writing to the twelve tribes scattered abroad, described the fruit of friendship with the world. He wrote, in effect, 'Where do the unending quarrels and conflicts among you come from? Has not this fruit [fighting and quarrels] grown from your choice to make a name for yourself and pursue your own pleasure?' Jas 4:1. Therefore, this fruit is the outcome of the war in a person's members - their mind, emotions and will. Jas 4:2.

The apostle Paul could say that though he was hard pressed, perplexed and persecuted, he was not fighting and reacting, but was at peace. This was godly fruit that Paul was bearing as a result of the treasure of the divine nature that was growing in him. 2Co 4:7-9. This godly fruit is brought forth only as we abide in Christ.

In the wider community, the teenage years are typically known for negative behaviours and emotional instability. Teenagers may be disgruntled, lazy, superior and reactive.

This is the bad fruit of the conflict within themselves. As a teenager enters these years, there can be a great conflict between making a name for themselves and learning to embrace the name that the heavenly Father has for them. Wise parents are able to walk with them through these years, guiding and helping them to choose the Father's will for them, enabling them to bear good fruit.

Let us return to Jesus' instruction that is recorded in John's Gospel. Jesus declared that He is the true Vine, and we are the branches. Branches must abide in Christ, 'the Vine', to bear fruit. Jesus noted that 'without Me you can do [or bear] nothing'. Joh 15:5. We must abide in Christ, the Vine, in order to bring forth godly fruit. To presume that we are able to bear good fruit without abiding in Christ is attempting to add good fruit to a bad tree. Make the tree good by abiding in Christ, and you will bring forth godly fruit! Mat 12:33. To abide in Christ is to abide in His corporate body. This is an implication of our baptism. 1Co 12:13. Our capacity to express this godly fruit is because we are joined to Him.

The fruit that is borne by those who have been brought forth as new-born sons of God, and who are walking by the Spirit, is *sanctification*. That is, they have been separated to Yahweh's covenant purpose for them and are walking on the pathway of regeneration and renewing as members of Christ's body. Walking in this manner will ensure that they will bear good fruit.

As we have noted, to be joined to Christ is to be joined to His offering and suffering journey. We do this through baptism. The works that Christ did in the course of His offering journey from Gethsemane brought forth fruit. These are the works and fruit that belong to the sonship name of every identity who has been brought forth by the Father. Isa 26:12.

We bear the fruit that Christ has already borne for us. Isaiah declared, 'Lord [Jesus], You will establish [the fruit of] peace for us, since You have also performed for us all our works.' As has been noted in other publications, we could describe Christ's seven wounding events as being seven name-developing steps. We could also describe them as being seven fruit-bearing events.

Christ's fruit-bearing journey

Let us now consider the fruit of these events of Christ's offering, suffering journey. In the garden of Gethsemane, as Jesus earnestly prayed, He cried, 'Not My will, but Yours, be done.' He was travelling to bring forth the fruit of sanctification of every person who would join Christ on this pathway. Our sanctification is to be separated with Christ to the Father's will, which is for us to be made in His image and likeness. 1Th 4:3.

The fruit of Christ's second wound is seen in the disciple Peter's response to the events that he was witnessing. As he witnessed Christ being mocked and beaten, his self-confessed, self-righteous loyalty vanished as he wept, and he was able to return home in humility to join the other disciples. Jesus continued to receive the mocking, the beating and the bruising in the court of Caiaphas. Isaiah prophesied that 'the chastising [chastisement] for our peace was upon Him'. Isa 53:5. The fruit of peace was brought forth in Him.

The prophet Isaiah continued, 'And by His stripes we are healed'. Isa 53:5. We know that this healing occurred when Jesus was scourged with the cat o' nine tails whip that tore the flesh from His back. In this event, Christ brought forth the fruit of patient endurance without one word of complaint.

When the kingship and authority of Jesus was mocked, as the soldiers placed a crown of thorns on His head and as they placed on Him a purple robe at the sixth wounding event, Jesus bore the fruit of submission and gentleness as He demonstrated that their tormented response to His authority could not spoil the godly fruit that He was bringing forth.

When Jesus' hands and feet were pierced and He was lifted up on the cross, He said, 'Father, forgive them.' Jesus bore the fruit of forgiveness so that we may forgive; so that our heavenly Father will forgive us. Mat 6:14-15.

The seventh wound was when a soldier thrust his spear into Jesus' side, and out flowed blood and water. Note carefully as Jesus Himself explained this event. Speaking through the prophet Zechariah, He said, 'I [Christ] will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me [Jesus Christ] whom they pierced.' Zec 12:10. This was the fruit of His offering, suffering journey – grace and supplication flowed from His side; this was of Him and from Him.

As we have noted, natural fruit is the fleshy, or mature, part of a flower that has been pollinated. Godly fruit is demonstrated in our flesh as the outcome of the seed of Christ in our spirit having been germinated by the Holy Spirit. This fruit is the expression of the travail of Christ. The fruit that He bore will be the fruit that we bear, and this will bring glory to God the Father.



Godly fruit

The fruit that is borne by those who have been brought forth as new-born sons of God, and who are walking by the Spirit, is sanctification. That is, they have been separated to Yahweh's covenant purpose for them and are walking on the pathway of regeneration and renewing as members of Christ's body. Walking in this manner will ensure that they will bear good fruit.

As we have noted, to be joined to Christ is to be joined to His offering and suffering journey. We do this through baptism. The works that Christ did in the course of His offering journey from Gethsemane brought forth fruit. These are the works and fruit that belong to the sonship name of every identity who has been brought forth by the Father. Isa 26:12. We bear the fruit that Christ has already borne for us. Isaiah declared, 'Lord [Jesus], You will establish [the fruit of] peace for us, since You have also performed for us all our works.' As has been noted in other publications, we could describe Christ's seven wounding events as being seven name-developing steps. We could also describe them as being seven fruit-bearing events.

Scriptures for reference

Joh 15:1-2. Isa 26:12



Take some time

Consider, in a very practical way, how the word of your sanctification is being revealed to you so that you might be fruitful.

Prayer

Spend time praying in the Holy Spirit.

Thank the Lord for the blessing of His word that is lighting your path and bringing you to fruitful maturity.

Sing

'The manifestation of the sons of God' (Tyler Green, Joshua Green, Caleb Green, Liam Green)
'Look up and see' (Michael Fox)

A tropical beach scene featuring a large palm tree on the left, a white boat on the sand in the foreground, and a sunset over the ocean in the background. The sky is filled with large, white clouds, and the water reflects the golden light of the setting sun. The overall mood is serene and peaceful.

+

teenagers

counting the cost

Luke 14:27-33