

#277 Kingdom: Union and Incense and Reigning

Consecration is our introduction to a process that should culminate in union with Christ. This is a mystical union that the pragmatist will deny because he can find no physical evidence. However, if we are “being changed into His same image” there must be some kind of a mystical transformation taking place.

2Cor 3:12 Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, [13] and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. [14] But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Christ. [15] **But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart;** [16] but whenever a man turns to the Lord, **the veil is taken away.** [17] Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. [18] **But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.**

There must surely be a “veil of pragmatism” over our spiritual minds that is keeping us from beholding Him and being transformed into His same image. Until this “veil” is removed in Christ we will be limited to this Outer Court light. That means that which is just logical to the natural mind. Paul said “But we have the mind of Christ.” Paul’s mysticism is difficult to understand but it is obvious that there is TRUTH that is beyond the natural mind that can only be understood in the spirit.

I am speculating that the transition from the Outer Court natural light to the Spiritual Light of the seven Spirits of God will require a transformation of the inner man that is way beyond our anticipation at this time. There may be no understanding in the Holy Place that does not come by revelation. There may be no real ministry that does not take place in the Spirit. No natural Incense can be burnt there. No natural Showbread that can be eaten in that dimension. No oil for the seven Lamps that does not originate in the Spirit of Christ and the Holy Spirit, the two olive trees! No natural veils that separates the Holy Place from the Outer Court.

It is my opinion that these three veils over the Tabernacle and the Veil that is the doorway to the sanctuary is not removed but that we must enter “into” that dimension to be able to experience these things. These things that are “inside” can only be seen and experienced from “inside.” If these veils were removed in Christ through our primary experience with Him then multitudes would see into these spiritual realms.

In certain ways our self-life and natural thoughts creates a veil that prevents us from seeing into those things that the natural eye cannot see and to hear what the natural ears cannot hear. For that reason it seems that when we make the Consecration Offering that this begins a process that removes everything that cannot come into union with the Lord Jesus Christ. Our initial surrender to Christ comes long before our total surrender is realized. I am guessing that total surrender precedes union and fruit bearing in that dimension. Many assume that the John 15 union is part of our initial experience in Christ but it surely first requires that we are delivered from our

independence and brought into a total dependence upon the Vine for everything. In other words this “grafting into the Vine” will severely limit our mobility and independence.

The “intimacy of grafting” exceeds the “intimacy of prayer.” Intimacy has become a buzz word to speak about something that is abstract and beyond the natural. My theory is that the “intimacy of union” is the “intimacy of the Incense.” Another example may be clearer. The Lampstand has no wood and is not like the other “furniture” that is wood overlaid with gold. Since the Lampstand is hammered out of one piece of gold and the Lampstand speaks of the church, it indicates the church has merged into union with Divinity. [one piece of gold]

Wood and gold are of two different substances that cannot merge into one another. Therefore, if there is to be total union, the wood qualities must be removed and transformed into gold. Gold has no problem merging with Gold. Merging can take place when the substance and essence are the same. For example two glasses of water will thoroughly mix together. However, metal in water will remain metal.

Deep and lasting “Union with Christ” can only be realized when we become like He is. What is the application for this truth? The Head and the body are of the same substance and of the same essence.

substance >noun 1 a particular kind of matter with uniform properties. 2 the real physical matter of which a person or thing consists. 3 solid basis in reality or fact:

essence >noun 1 the intrinsic nature of something; the quality which determines something’s character.

From this inadequate example it may clarify the extent to which our consecration must transform us. Of course this “Consecration Offering” is our permission for God to do whatever is necessary to conform us to the image of Jesus. Obviously, this is not just one work but a series of changes and a process where God changes us from what we are to what we must become to be united to Jesus Christ. “**Merge**” is more accurate but it seems too radical for this time.

Trying to adjust this understanding to the modern gospel or trying to adjust the modern gospel to this understanding may seem impossible. Martin Luther soon realized that his understanding of justification by faith would not create a reformation in the Catholic church. Still, it did create a whole new movement outside of the Catholic gospel. The Anabaptists could not “reform” the Lutherans to accept believer baptism. If this understanding of union is correct then God must accomplish the restoration. As the church gravitates toward the Incense Altar it will become more and more difficult to convince the casual believer that such mystical stuff is not foolishness. If believer baptism became such a radical truth what will the Lampstand teaching be?

Then are these things experiences that we need to have to be “saved?” Certainly we are not speaking about being saved from hell but being saved into God’s eternal purpose. We are sharing that the purpose of God is for Christ to possess us more and more completely each season. This process of continuous personal change, so He can possess us more and more completely, is our

“coming to perfection.” At first we think about God “communicating” with us while we are here and He is there. We don’t think about Him communicating Himself to us. Distance communication is temporary and for the moment. When He communicates Himself to us it is eternal and there is no distance in this communication.

This of course is very radical theology but when Jesus said that He and the Father are one and if you see Him you are looking at the Father this was radical for His day.

radical >adjective 1 relating to or affecting the fundamental nature of something. 2 advocating thorough political or social reform; politically extreme. 3 departing from tradition; innovative or progressive.

Radical is a departure from what is considered normal, logical and understandable. To even think that man could build a contraption in which he could fly was radical then. Today we are flying everywhere. To imagine that we could see things that were happening on the other side of the world at the instant it was happening was radical years ago but today it is normal. There are as many realms of the “impossible” still to come in the natural. Then why should it be thought a thing incredible that “impossible” things are still to come to the church?

True union with God is not outward in the flesh but is inward in the spirit and in the Life. We speak of Christ in us our hope of glory as if that were normal. We speak of being possessed by the Holy Spirit as something doctrinally correct. It is logical that if we can be “possessed by a demon” we can also be possessed by God but most people draw the line with such things as too radical. If we share that the Holy Spirit possess our spirit most Christians will agree. If we share that Christ is our Life most Christians will agree. Still, when we speak about “union with Christ” or “merging with Christ” it sounds strange even when it is saying the same things.

Is complete union with God our final destination? If God and the Lamb are the temple which IS the New Jerusalem then those who are in the New Jerusalem are “in God.” If God is in them and they are in God then there has been a total merger. A total union that is eternal. If God is Spirit and we are spirit then merger is possible because the essence of both is the same. Union is normal. If Christ is Life and we are of His Life then union is not incredible at all.

Trying to understand some of these mystical things that Paul is speaking about is beyond the natural ability of man. In fact man’s natural ability wants to reject such things because he cannot understand them. One area of overcoming will be transcending the natural, the logical, the sensual and the intellectual.

We discover that as we try to attach ourselves to the ethereal and the eternal that these things are beyond our grasp. The frustration is perceiving spiritual things but not having the ability to participate in them. We might call this the “frustration of the second Veil.” Our hope is that since God put this desire in us that He will develop us so our substance is of the same kind as the spiritual dimension we want to enter.

The question I am raising is this; If we are only of the Outer Court substance, will we be

comfortable in the Holy Place and will we fit? If our eyes are only adjusted to natural light of the Outer Court, will the spiritual Light of the Lampstand reveal anything to us?

I think it was Preston Eby who spoke about the dimness of the light of the Lampstand as if we needed to grope around in there. Maybe it isn't the dimness of the Light but the dimness of our spiritual eyes to see in that dimension. The point is this; Our consecration must be a process where nearly everything must be adjusted to a totally different substance in order to participate in that dimension. Therefore, we should not get discouraged because we know this will take some time to complete. The frustration comes when we try to speed up the process which is line on line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little.

Our goal is not a quick fix but a lasting union with God. For that we must be transformed into the same substance and essence as Christ. The "oneness" of John 17 must be our goal. Some theological explanation that we are already there must be rejected because we seek for the reality. Not empirical evidence but the reality of the mystery by participation.

While it is not clear what our "union with Christ" will mean in eternity we take comfort in enjoying our "union of spirit with Spirit and our union of life with Life." It is in this dimension that we can burn Incense and eat of the Showbread. We overcome the distance problem by this union and receive the confidence to begin this ministry to God of burning Incense. This "salvation" is more glorious than the original creation which was far short of this reality.

To expand these thoughts we could say that God, Himself, is communicable to man by His essence and by His substance. For example; God IS Love! This degree of Love [Agape] is far above the capacity of man to demonstrate. Still, the Love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit. That attribute of God is "communicated to man." Trying to create or manifest this kind of Love is very frustrating because it is far beyond the capacity of humanity. Man can isolate himself from this Love or he can surrender to it but he is powerless to create it. In this same way man may reject the infusion of God's uncreated Life [Zoe] but without it he cannot participate in God's eternal purpose. Man may make a doctrine against the infusion of the Holy Spirit but in doing that he is rejecting the anointing and the subjective nature of the spiritual teaching offered by the Holy Spirit.

When man submits and surrenders to God he is removing some of the obstacles and hindrances to the infusion of God into our being. God CAN communicate Himself to man but this is in a mystical realm that is rejected by the natural man because it is foolishness to him. The flip side of that is this; If God does not communicate Himself to man then these future restorations will be impossible. The reason is because everything beyond the Second Veil is beyond the capacity of man. Not just the natural man but also the redeemed man. As man opens his heart [inner man] to new dimensions of God's purpose the grace of God to fill that dimension is released. The solution is found when God, Himself, communicates Himself to fill that dimension. The full capacity of man to receive, hold and manifest God is not known but the clear example is Jesus Christ. The more the soul is opened to God the more abundant His attributes are received. Opening and then surrender is followed by opening and more surrender until Christ be formed in us. That is true communication or koinonia! A sharing in what He is! The truth is that we cannot manifest what

we don't have. The problem is we can preach what we don't have as though we had it. To preach the Kingdom is one thing but to manifest the Kingdom is quite another.

Another mystical fact is that what we think our capacity is to receive God is too small because God enlarges us to receive more and more. We learn this when we are "filled with the Spirit." What we thought was our capacity 35 years ago is now embarrassing today. When we spoke in tongues we thought we were "filled." because that was our capacity then. Since then God has enlarged us and being "filled today" means something different.

In Acts they were "filled" and spoke in tongues. In acts 4:31 they were "filled" and spoke the word of God with boldness. In both instances they were "filled" but their capacity was changed. At this point in our Christian life we have no idea what our capacity could be if we continually opened our self to God and surrendered more and more. It is my opinion that if we become the fulness of Him who fills all in all that our capacity will have to stretched far beyond where we are today.

Therefore, the longer we delay in opening ourselves up to God more and more and the longer we wait before we come to a total surrender to God the less we will have to manifest Christ to the world. Of course we can still preach Christ who Paul manifested.

When we share the Consecration Offering we show how the priest took the Mosaic and opened up the sacrifice to expose all the inward parts to the light of God.. We assume that this all happens at once. However, in actual experience we discover that He only opens that which we open and surrender to Him line on line and precept upon precept. He stops when we stop!

Much of the emptiness that we feel now is an indication that God is ready and willing to fill us with Himself. Being filled with something "abstract" is not the same thing.