

COMING TO CHRIST AS CITIZENS OF THE KINGDOM

Peter Hay, prepared for word ministry, 14 February 2021

Transcription of recording, slightly edited

The progressive effect of birth pangs

Today we will continue with our subject from last week, where we were talking about birth pangs.

Last week, we noted that the progressive effect of birth pangs in this stage of God's Everlasting Covenant is twofold.

First, it is the sorrow, or travail, through which the sons of God are being brought forth into the perfection of Christ. The apostle Paul called this process 'the fellowship of Christ's sufferings'. Php 3:10.

The second progressive effect of birth pangs is that these sorrows are the distress of the sons and daughters of men who live by the principle of the flesh. For them, the sufferings of this present age are a foretaste of the eternal judgement that belongs to those who reject the salvation of God.

Coming to Christ – the Vine

These two implications of 'sorrows' that are coming upon the world depend upon our *connection* to what the Scriptures describe as two 'vines'.

This is our subject today, and particularly the focus is on *being part of the Vine*, which is Christ; and on *coming to Christ*.

As a symbol, the focal point of a vine is its *fruit*. The vine is useless without bringing forth fruit. Grapes, of course, are the fruit of the vine, which are crushed to produce *wine*. A vine has a specific, symbolic communication, and that is a focus on grapes and, specifically, the production of *wine*.

An invitation to fellowship at Yahweh's table

In the Scriptures, the most important use of wine was as a drink offering, or a libation. With the grain offering, the drink offering was added to 'the morning and evening lamb'. These lambs were offered every morning and every evening, and the Lord called it His 'offering', and His 'food for offering'. Num 28:2-8.

The *continual* burnt offering of the morning and evening lamb were the sum of the covenantal offerings – particularly the three main, or primary, covenantal offerings, which were the burnt offering, the sin offering and the peace offering.

The necessity of a grain offering, which is the 'bread', and the drink offering, which is the 'cup', being added to the morning and evening lamb, reveals that *true eating and drinking*, or *participating in the agape meal*, which has a meal offering and a drink offering, were a *fellowship at Yahweh's table*.

So, He called the morning and evening lamb, 'My offering, My food for offering'. And those lambs, in the morning and in the evening, were to have a libation, or a drink offering, and a grain offering offered *with them*.

The point of the morning and evening lamb was to symbolise the fact that the burnt offering was *continual, perpetual*. This means that the meal that belonged to Yahweh was an ongoing, *agape* meal that the people were *invited to join*.

Likewise, for us, the *agape* meal that we participate in is an invitation to Yahweh's 'table' – to His meal.

If you have the opportunity, please read the article in the National Youth Seminar booklet by Luke Pomery, where he has explained this principle in more detail. It would be great to listen to the recording, if you have the opportunity.

The drink offering symbolised the works of faith

As I focus on the vine, I will draw our attention to the principle of 'the cup'.

A portion of the drink offering was to be drunk; and the rest of it was to be *poured out* on the burnt offering that was on the altar. So, there were two elements of the 'cup'. There was *drinking* the wine, and there was *pouring out* of the wine on the sacrifice.

The pouring out of this wine or, you could say, the symbolism of the drink offering, was that *it symbolised the works through which the will of God was fulfilled*. The drink offering was being poured out on the burnt offering, and that *burnt offering* was *the will of God being done*.

This *enabled* the burnt sacrifice to ascend as a sweet savour, an acceptable participation. And this pouring out of the drink offering symbolised *the works of faith* that enabled the will of God to be done.

Do all things without complaining and disputing

This is the principle that Paul demonstrated in his letter to the Philippians. Php 2:14-18.

‘Do all things without complaining and disputing.’ Php 2:14. We will consider our connection to the Vine and, obviously, as branches who are supposed to be connected to the Vine so that we can bring forth fruit, the very thing that *disconnects* us from Christ is our complaining and disputing. Disputes are fundamental relational divisions.

‘Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may be *blameless* [That’s amazing!] *and harmless, children of God* [sons of God] without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may *rejoice* in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or laboured in vain.’

‘Poured out’ as a drink offering

‘Yes, and if *I am being poured out as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, *I am glad and rejoice* with you all. For the same reason *you also be glad and rejoice with me.*’ Php 2:14-18.

He said, in effect, ‘You also are to ‘pour out’ on one another, including on me.’

For Paul, being ‘poured out as a drink offering’ was labouring – it was his work – so that his brethren would be *blameless and harmless children of God*. To be ‘blameless and harmless children of God’ means that they were fulfilling the will of the Father, in Christ, *by offering*.

Paul wrote, ‘I am being poured out’. He was connected to the Vine – Christ. He had not run, or laboured, in vain, if he was being poured out. He was saying that there was a labour that was the action of ‘pouring out’, so that they would be blameless and harmless children of God, fulfilling the will of the Father, in Christ Jesus, by offering.

Paul was pouring himself out, or working, or labouring, so that their sonship would be fulfilled.

The joy associated with the drink offering

He said to them, ‘You are to labour and to *rejoice*.’ There is *joy* in this work, isn’t there? Joy is associated with the drink offering that comes by drinking the wine, and then being poured out.

He said that there is joy that we are to *participate in*. Joy in your life, rejoicing in your life, is not found

by your gaining your own desires. That is a lie! It is the lie that Satan spoke to Adam and Eve. And, if you believe that, you are deluded!

Paul said that our rejoicing is through a completely opposite way of living to that deluded way. He said that joy is found in *laying down your life to reveal another*. That is called ‘the drink offering’, and it demonstrates that you are part of the Vine, which is Christ, bringing forth wine.

And it makes your heart rejoice to see another’s name being revealed. This is the principle of ‘the vine’, and particularly the ‘fruit of the grape’, which is a drink offering.

The vine of the earth

There are actually two vines to which the Scriptures primarily refer.

The apostle John referred to the first of these vines, calling it ‘the vine of the earth’. This wasn’t the first reference to a vine, but it is the first one that we will consider.

‘And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.”’ Rev 14:18.

The ‘grapes’ refer to ‘works’. That is what we learned about the ‘cup’. There is a labour, or work. So, these grapes, associated with the vine of the earth, are a particular type of work.

The judgement and wrath of God on unrighteousness revealed; the vine of the earth

‘ “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” So the angle thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.’ Rev 14:18-19.

Now, what is the vine? This is the whole of humanity, the world, the old creation.

Their *fruit* is the *works* that they have brought forth, which are motivated by their knowledge of good and evil.

The knowledge of good and evil produces much activity, or work, that bears *fruit*. The Lord takes

that fruit, crushes it and creates wine, which is poured out to reveal the Lord.

And what does it reveal? How does it reveal Him?

It reveals Him *in His sovereignty as Judge*, bringing wrath upon the whole world.

Their own works of unrighteousness, motivated by their self-centred and rebellious knowledge of good and evil, produce, or reveal, the judgement and wrath of God.

So, that is *not* the vine that we want to be a part of. That is *not* the fruit that we want to produce.

Unless we are delivered from our other law as a primary motivation within us, that is the fruit which we will bring forth, and our works will not reveal the righteousness of God. They will reveal our own righteousness, and they will, as they are harvested and crushed, bring forth judgement and wrath.

So let us be delivered from being part of the vine of the earth.

The true vine, the true Israel of God – the children of Abraham bring forth the fruit of faith

Let us consider ‘the true vine’ that we are to be part of. Jesus described the true kingdom of Israel, or His covenant nation, as ‘a vine in a vineyard’.

The covenant nation of Israel refers to all of the children of Abraham. We are not focusing on the covenant nation of Israel simply according to biological descent. We are talking about *the covenant nation* of Israel who are children of Abraham. This is all of those persons from the nations of the earth who are ‘blessed in Abraham’s Seed’ - Christ. Gal 3:16,29.

Let us consider this vine that is the true Israel of God. The following passage focuses, in the first instance, on *natural* Israel.

‘Hear another parable: there was a certain landowner who planted a *vineyard* and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to *vinedressers* and went into a far country.

‘Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first,

and they did likewise to them. Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, “This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.” So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.’ Mat 21:33-39.

In this instance, the *fruit*, which is the focus of a vine, refers to the children of Israel. The fruit that the Father was looking for from them was their *works of faith as children of Abraham*.

Their mark as children of Abraham was not, primarily, their biological connection to the lineage of Abraham. If that were the case, the symbol would be a vine only, without fruit.

He was looking for something that was *produced*. And, as we have already understood, these are *works of faith*. Paul demonstrated this. He said, ‘I am being poured out by labouring on the service and sacrifice of your faith.’

The Father was not looking for a nation who were simply biologically or genetically connected to Abraham. He was looking for the fruit of faith that would *demonstrate* that they were the children of Abraham. He was looking for a people who wanted *relationship* with Him.

They sought all sorts of alternatives to that, didn’t they? But He wanted to bring them to Himself; to have a relationship with them.

The vinedressers to facilitate and encourage the people’s connection to God

The vinedressers, to whom He leased the vineyard, were the heads of the houses, or the fathers of the tribes and the clans, within the nation of Israel.

These heads of the houses, or tribes, sought to derive a ‘benefit’ from the labour and loyalty of the people.

They subverted the ministry of the Spirit that came through the prophets. They were sent to speak to, encourage, or to ‘get the *fruit*’ from the nation. The *faith* of the children of Israel would be evident only as they received the word, because faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word. Rom 10:17.

The Lord sent His servants to reap ‘faith’. By what means? It was by *proclaiming to them the word of faith* which they were to live by, coming from the prophets who ministered the word of the Holy Spirit.

The 'vinedressers' were the heads of houses, but they subverted the ministry of the Spirit of the prophets. That ministry, that word of the prophets, called for *repentance*, and then *faith toward God*.

We note that Stephen described the leaders of the Jewish counsel as 'the descendants of the fathers who killed the prophets'. Act 7:51-52.

We are becoming clear regarding who these ones were, and how they undermined the Father's desire to reap the fruit of faith, which was relationship with the children of Abraham. Addressing them as 'brethren' and 'fathers', Stephen spoke to the Jewish counsels, the Scribes and Pharisees and elders.

He said, 'You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears [They were unable to hear; unable to be awakened.!] You always resist [who?] the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.' Act 7:51.

He was saying, in effect, 'You leaders, who do this to the people, you are like the fathers.'

These were the vinedressers. Jesus said that the Father is the Vinedresser; and, in the nation of Israel, these vinedressers were supposed to facilitate and to encourage the people's connection to God Himself.

Stephen said, 'You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you have now become the betrayers and the murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.' Act 7:51-53.

We know that they were 'cut to the heart' by this word, and they rushed on Stephen and killed him. Act 7:54-59.

Jesus is the true Vine, and the Father is the Vinedresser

This vine that we have been referring to is the children of Abraham, the true Israel of God.

It is amazing that Jesus called Himself 'the Vine'. Joh 15:1. So, it was not only a genetic heritage from Abraham. Jesus was saying, 'I am the Vine.'

Everyone who is part of the true Israel of God needs to be 'in Him'.

Jesus identified Himself as the true Vine, and He identified the Father as the Vinedresser of the true vine. Joh 15:1.

'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. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.' Joh 15:5-6.

As branches of the vine, we are to bring forth the fruit of Christ's life as a ministry to one another

Christ is 'the true Vine'. And the corporate body of Christ, which is the church, is 'the true Israel of God'. When He referred to both the children of Abraham and the church as a 'vine', Jesus was talking about *the same vine*.

To be children of Abraham, they were to obtain their blessing through Christ, who was the Seed. Christ is the true Vine. The corporate body of Christ, the church, is the true Israel of God.

As the branches of Christ, who is the Vine, we are to bring forth *the fruit of His life as a ministry to one another*. That is amazing! We are the branches.

Where does the fruit grow? It doesn't grow from the root, does it? It grows from the *branches*, as long as the branches are joined to the Vine, because the Vine is its branches.

We have to be *in Christ* to be a branch that is able to bring forth *fruit*, which is a 'cup'. Paul said that the ministry of that cup is *poured out to one another*.

What a privilege it is to be part of Christ, the Vine!

Our works of faith enable the service of another's faith – the cup of blessing

As branches of Christ the Vine, we are to bring forth the *fruit* of His life as a ministry to one another.

So, how does that happen? What is this fruit? The fruit is *the works of faith*, which involve 'pouring out on', or 'enabling'. 'Pouring out on' means 'enabling'. or 'helping'. the sacrifice and service of another's faith to flourish.

It is an action of faith to reveal their faith as they 'pour out' and 'lay down life' for another. So, *everyone* is *pouring out* and *receiving* from one another. This is 'drinking' and pouring out.

This is what it means to *participate in the cup of blessing* which, Paul said, we 'bless' to one another. 1Co 10:16.

You are to be a *blessing* to another by pouring out on them; and they will be a blessing to you by pouring out on you. That is, *faith is being multiplied* and the *will of God is being done*.

If our activities are not of faith working by love, they are dead works

We are not part of the Vine, as a branch, *nominally*. We cannot be part of Christ the Vine 'by association'. Jesus said that if a branch does not bear fruit, it is cut off and it is good for burning; that is, it is not part of the Vine. Joh 15:6.

Another way of saying it is that the evidence, or the demonstration, of abiding in the Vine is the capacity to pour out on one another.

If our activities are not 'faith working by love' in this manner, they are dead works. Gal 5:6. All of our religious activity, all of the things we do that we think are the mark of our connection, if they are not 'faith which comes by hearing', 'working by love', which is the appetite of Yahweh for offering – it is His meal; He is satisfied by offering – they are *dead works*!

They are not a cluster of grapes growing on a branch, connected as part of the Vine. If our works are not 'faith working by love', we are branches 'by association' that do not bear any fruit.

Then these branches wither and die, and become wood, hay and stubble.

Building with works of faith or of self-righteousness

Paul said, 'Now if anyone *builds* on this foundation.' 1Co 3:12.

Building is a *work*; it is labour. We are connecting a few themes here – building is work, labour. And Paul said that his labour was to *pour out on another*; it was a *work of faith*.

'If anyone builds [does all of their activity] on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw.' 1Co 3:12.

Paul was not saying that *some* build with precious stones, and *some* build with wood, hay and straw. He was saying that it is *mixed* within us. *Some* of our activities are motivated by our other law; and *some*

are the expression of the divine nature, which is love.

The *divine nature* is symbolised in the Scriptures by these *precious stones*. Our work, or activities, which are the demonstration of faith, are either 'faith working by the divine nature' – gold, silver, precious stones – or they are self-righteous activities, from which we derive identity – wood, hay and straw.

How do you know?

The nature of each our work revealed by fire

How do you know, because none of us is going to say, 'You know what, today I'm going to build with straw and see how I go.'

When carrying out our activities as unto the Lord, believing that we are walking in His will, sometimes we find ourselves saying, 'Yikes! I was building with straw.' How do we know? It is because 'each one's work will become clear, for the day will declare it because it will be revealed by fire'. 1Co 3:13.

Now, isn't that what we have been talking about – birth pains? Birth pains are *sorrows* that are fiery trials upon us to bring forth sons of God who are living by the divine nature, and to bring to an end everything that is not of God – everything that is of the flesh.

If you are holding on to the flesh as your way of life, you will 'go out' by those works of the flesh under the judgement of God, by that fire.

However, when the fire burns on these works, if you will let them go, the fire purifies what does remain – which is what? It is the divine nature. You are able then to grow up as a son of God and to exemplify the culture of offering from which you are birthed.

He said, 'Each one's work will become clear; for the day will declare it because, it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work, which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward.' 1Co 3:13-14.

What is that reward? It is *your eternal inheritance as a son of God in Christ*.

'If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss but he himself will be saved [if he lets it all go] yet, so as through fire.'

Bringing forth fruit to pour out on another

So, we need to understand that the *fruit* that we are bringing forth is *Christ's life*, as long as we remain connected to the Vine. And the evidence of our connection to the Vine is the ability to do the work of pouring out on another. And it reveals another; it does not reveal ourselves.

So, we will do works throughout the day and throughout the week, and *some* of those works will be motivated by our other law within us. And the fire of the circumstances that we live in tests our works so that what is not connected to the Vine, or is not *fruitful* - because it is not faith working by love - will be burned up. And that is so that we can be saved. We need to become comfortable with the fact that the reality of connection to Christ is to bring forth fruit to pour out on another.

But our works are 'mixed'. And the only way that this mixture is revealed is under the conditions of the *difficulties* that we face where our works are revealed to be either wood, hay and stubble, or simply our own self-righteousness.

And we need to let those works go; we need to put them off. That is our point of salvation.

The true vine is the kingdom of heaven

Jesus described the true vine as 'the kingdom of heaven' when He described Himself as a king whose kingdom is *not of this world*.

We started today by speaking about the vine that is 'the vine of the earth'. Now we have moved to considering the true Israel of God, which is the body of Christ, because He is the Vine.

Christ spoke about this different kingdom. It is a kingdom not of this earth; not of the world.

This was 'the good confession of faith' that He made before Pilate. Jesus said, 'My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight so that I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now My kingdom is not from here.' Joh 18:36.

Pressing in to the kingdom of heaven

John the Baptist, who came ministering in the spirit and power of Elijah, proclaimed the coming of this heavenly kingdom.

Jesus Himself noted, 'From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by storm.' Mat 11:12.

When you first read that, it sounds a little aggressive, as though the kingdom of heaven is under assault. However, that is not what Jesus meant. He was saying that those who heard His word and believed it, and found repentance, began to *press into* the kingdom.

They were saying, 'We don't want to be part of the kingdom of the earth; we want to be part of the kingdom of heaven that You are proclaiming to us.' That is the evidence of *faith arising in the hearts of those who heard Him*.

By this, Jesus meant that as men and women received the ministry of John the Baptist and repented, they began to 'push into' the kingdom that Christ had come to establish on the earth.'

Pushing into the kingdom through repentance

Now, why is this important - this point of repentance being the mark of the violence taking, or the pushing into, the kingdom?

It is important because Jesus said that *everyone* would suffer and die under the condition of time and chance *unless they repent*. So, *everyone* who is part of that vine of the earth is under the condition of time and chance.

And this is true for us, unless we find repentance such that those sufferings now are bringing forth the divine nature. That is the context of our purification so that we are saved. Luk 13:1-3. This is the account about the Galileans whose blood was mixed with the sacrifices.

The nature and culture of the kingdom of heaven

We will now consider the nature and culture of the kingdom of heaven.

We will begin by looking at the kingdom under the rule of King David. Under King David, the city of Jerusalem - remembering that Jesus is the son of David - was established as the administrative centre of the kingdom of Israel; or, if you like, the 'vine' of the true Israel of God.

Having brought the ark of the covenant into the city, David desired to build a temple for the Lord in Jerusalem. We know that he wasn't allowed to do that because of the matter to do with Uriah and Bathsheba. This work was fulfilled by his son Solomon and, following the completion of the temple, the Lord spoke to Solomon.

'Then the Lord appeared to Solomon by night and said to him, "I have heard your prayer and I have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice".' 2Ch 7:12.

'Now My eyes will be open [He is there to be met face to face] and My ears attentive to prayer made in this place. For now, I have chosen and sanctified *this house that My name may be there forever*, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.' 2Ch 7:15-16.

That is where we go to meet Him. In other words, if you want to abide with the Lord as a branch who is able to bring forth fruit in the Vine, you have to *be where He is*. And He is where His eyes, which are like a flame of fire, are looking at us, and where His ears are open to hear our confession of faith back to Him.

So, the kingdom of natural Israel was 'a shadow' of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus established through His offering on the cross.

We need to come to the heavenly Jerusalem to meet Christ face to face

Now, the centre of the nation of Israel was Jerusalem as the administrative headquarters.

At the centre of the kingdom of heaven is the *heavenly Jerusalem*, to which we have all come by the Spirit through new birth and baptism into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

'But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven.' Heb 12:22-23.

The point is, have you come to that? Now, I do not doubt that anyone has come to it, but your testimony should be, 'I have come to the heavenly Jerusalem.'

And what do you see? You see Christ's face. You see Him and meet Him face to face. And, as that happens, you will find that it is initially a confronting experience because, for all of us, His eyes which are as a flame of fire expose our works, whether they be wood, hay, stubble, etc. And, initially, we feel exposed or under threat by that.

Paul said, in summary, 'Don't be like the children of Israel when they heard the voice of the Lord and saw the flashing lightning, and they drew back.'

Heb 12:25-26. He said that they chose to live according to a law.

We *have come* to Christ, and this is where we are to abide. And our abiding includes an activity called 'an *agape* meal'. It is eating and drinking, and ministering to one another.

So, the true temple of God is in the midst of the heavenly Jerusalem. This is the place of our fellowship with Yahweh, marked by meeting Him face to face and eye to eye.

Citizenship in the heavenly Jerusalem is not nominal; it is doing priestly works

It is also the context of *our service as a kingdom of priests*. Because we are king priests who serve God with Christ in the temple of His body, we are citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem and of the kingdom of heaven.

This is a fundamental point. Our citizenship as part of the heavenly Jerusalem is not *nominal*. We are not part of the city of Jerusalem just because we nominate ourselves as being such.

Rather, we are part of the city of Jerusalem because we are part of a kingdom of priests who are doing the priestly work of *presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice*.

There is *no nominal* connection to the Vine; or connection to the heavenly Jerusalem.

The mark of citizenship in His kingdom is *the work of faith*. It is actually the activity of *offering*, which requires the demonstration of *love* to one another by *laying down our lives* for one another.

So, our citizenship is not nominal; it is demonstrated, or known, through the priestly work of presenting ourselves as a living sacrifice.

The Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us

Now, fundamental to this – and this is the reason why Paul called the New Covenant 'the covenant of the Spirit' – is *the Holy Spirit*.

The Holy Spirit, who fills all things, humbled Himself to come and live in the hearts of men and women.

Thinking about this, I was struck by the truth that the Holy Spirit doesn't come to dwell within us because we call Him into our lives.

Jesus said that He would *pray for us*, and that *the Father would send* the Holy Spirit to us.

It is an amazing reality that then the Holy Spirit comes, and He dwells within us; He comes to live with us.

The Holy Spirit enables us to pour out on another

The Holy Spirit dwells within us, and becomes for us the expression and glory of our sonship. He *enables us to participate in the fellowship of offering*, through which we, by name, are able to lay down our lives to reveal another.

Now, if the Holy Spirit does not enable us to reveal another, we are able to reveal only *ourselves*.

Thus, He is absolutely fundamental to our capacity to participate in the culture of offering that describes the drink offering, and also the bread. He is the One who *enables* our eating and drinking.

So, the Holy Spirit who fills all things dwells within us, and has become for us the expression and glory of our sonship.

The Holy Spirit speaks the word of our sonship to us

He also *speaks to us as we abide* with Him in the fellowship of the Father and the Son. So, what does the Holy Spirit say to us?

The Holy Spirit takes the things that belong to the Son, which the Son has received from the Father – ‘all things’ from the Father – and He speaks those to us.

Referring to the work of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, ‘He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine, therefore, I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.’ Joh 16:14-15.

So, what has the Son *received*? He has received *the word of your sonship* that the Holy Spirit proclaims to you as the light of life as you look into the face of Jesus.

The Holy Spirit calls us to come to Christ where He is

In this present season, the Holy Spirit is speaking to us of the things that are about to take place on the earth. We have begun to speak about birth pangs and, in the coming season, we will learn about the prophetic destiny of mankind and the initiative of Yahweh toward us.

So He is showing us things to come. However, His first and primary focus of this message is not the events that will occur in the future.

Rather, His primary message is *the call to come to Christ*. That is what the Holy Spirit is saying.

This is the same word that He spoke to the prophet Ezekiel after Christ had called Ezekiel to speak His words to the children of Israel. We know that after Christ had commissioned Ezekiel as a prophet, He said to him, ‘Receive into your heart all My words that I speak to you, and hear with your ears.’ Eze 3:10. And the Spirit lifted him up into the dimension of the Spirit. Eze 3:12-14.

Ezekiel testified, ‘Then the Spirit [the Holy Spirit] lifted me up, and I heard behind me a great thunderous voice: “Blessed is the glory of the Lord [speaking of Jesus Christ] *from His place*!” I love this; this was the Holy Spirit, glorifying Jesus.

We have read in the book of John, ‘He will glorify Me [by what means?] by taking what belongs to Me and making it known to you.’

And we see how Ezekiel experienced the initiative of the Holy Spirit, who lifted him up, and spoke behind Ezekiel with a great, thunderous voice, saying, ‘Blessed is the glory of the Lord.’ The Holy Spirit was glorifying Jesus *from His place*.

Why did He say that? He was saying, ‘Ezekiel, for you to obtain the blessing, you have to go *where He is*; go to His place.’

So, where is the place of Christ that the Holy Spirit is revealing to us and calling us to, so that the things that He is showing us about the future are the waypoints of our obtaining the eternal salvation promised to us from the Father?

It is where Christ is *now* seated, enthroned at the right hand of the Father in the most holy place of the tabernacle.

Called to come to Christ at the right hand of the Father

We began by looking at the whole nation of God’s people. We see that to be part of that nation is to be connected to the administrative headquarters of the nation, which is the heavenly Jerusalem.

And now we have access, because the Spirit is lifting us up and bringing us to the very throne of God Himself, right where Christ is seated at the right hand of the heavenly Father. That is where

He is saying, 'Come to Him; come to Jesus,' not as a citizen out in a far country, but as a citizen who has an access right into the throne room of God Himself.

In this regard, Paul rejoiced in saying, 'Come boldly to the throne of grace that you may obtain mercy [for what purpose?], so that by the mercy of God you may present your bodies a living sacrifice.'

And what is the *grace*? It is the *life*. That grace is the evidence that you are joined to the Vine, and that you are multiplying that grace as life ministered to another by the works of faith, operating by love - right there at the heart of the fellowship of Yahweh Themselves. I don't know about you, but I'm absolutely thrilled about that.

The ministry of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

'Blessed is the glory of the Lord *from His place*', is the ministry, or proclamation, of the light of the knowledge of the glory of God from the face of Christ.

Do you know that that *light* is the knowledge of your sonship?

So don't draw back when the light feels confronting and exposing, because He does not do it to make you feel bad.

He does it to *deliver* you from the delusion that you want to hold on to, which is a lie, so that you will let go of the darkness and be a child of light, right where the heart of the light is.

Now, in view of our participation in the heavenly temple and our citizenship of the new heavens and earth, the apostle Peter said, 'Come to Jesus.' The Holy Spirit is saying this, and Peter, in view of this priestly work in our citizenship of the heavenly Jerusalem, implored us, saying, 'Come to Jesus.'

'Coming to Him as a living stone, rejected indeed by men [by the vine of the earth], but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.' 1Pe 2:4-5.

Coming to Christ is being built together into a spiritual house

To 'come to Christ' is to be built together as living stones into a spiritual house. Now, we cannot be part of the spiritual house of the Lord if we have relational reservations toward our brethren. We

cannot be built together. He didn't say, 'Getting built into'; he said, 'Being built *together*.'

This house is the true temple in the expression of Christ's fellowship, which is the *fellowship* of Yahweh.

As it was in the days of David and Solomon, the temple is in the midst of the Jerusalem from above.

We have access to the true holy of holies; come and be joined to Christ

In addition to being built into a spiritual house, coming to Christ means coming all the way into the holy of holies of the true temple, which is His presence beyond the veil. This is where Christ is now seated.

Now, those of you who know Old Covenant history know that, largely, no-one was allowed into the most holy place. On only one day of the year, the Day of Atonement, could the high priest go into the most holy place where the presence of Yahweh was, to offer incense, and to sprinkle the blood of bulls and goats on the mercy seat for atonement, seven times. And then, no-one else could go in.

But that *access* for each of us has been made *through Christ*.

And we do not have only the *opportunity* for access; we are being *urged by the Spirit to come to Him*. If we are hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit, we will be hearing our *participation in that fellowship*.

Our soul, the very essence of our being, is anchored in the most holy place when we receive His call to come and be joined to Him, our great High Priest.

As we journey with Christ in the fellowship of His offering, we are obtaining and living by the faith of the Son of God that He authored and perfected for us.

Serving as priests, blameless and without spot

Furthermore, our hearts are being sprinkled clean from an evil conscience by His blood, enabling us to *serve as His priests* to His God and Father. This is how we are able to be 'blameless and without spot until His coming'.

Paul said that this is fundamental to the activity of pouring out on one another. 'I have been poured out upon the sacrifice and service of your faith so that you may become blameless and harmless children of God.'

So, if we are receiving that ministry, the evidence is that we are participating in it as holy and acceptable, blameless and without spot.

Now, I had planned to speak about being blameless and without spot, but I will leave that for our next session. I will also speak more about how Christ has finished this work so that our participation is blameless and without spot, even though we haven't arrived yet at sinless perfection.

This is a great and it's an amazing principle. And it is a point that we are exhorted to by Peter, 'Inasmuch as you see the day approaching.'

So, let us continue in the fellowship of this word. We look forward to what the Lord has to share with us in the coming weeks.