

Restoring my Soul

A five day devotional guide

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Contributing Authors:

Victor Hall

Peter Hay

David Baker

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10 Old Goombungee Road

Toowoomba QLD 4350

Phone: +61 1300 885 048

Email: info@rfipublishing.org

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The God of glory

Stephen proclaimed that the God of glory appeared to Abraham. God blessed Abraham with the promise that he and his children would be born of the Spirit and be partakers of the divine nature. Why is it significant that it was 'the God of glory' who appeared to 'the father of all who believe'? The glory of God is the expression and revelation of who God is and what He does. The Son received this glory from the Father when the Father brought Him forth as His Son by His word – 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'. The Son received the Father's glory through a birthing process. The Son's glory was revealing what it meant to be 'of God'. It is notable that Paul called this glory, 'the glory of His grace'.

In the same way that the Son received the glory of God's grace when He was begotten as the Son of God, a person's birth as a spiritual son of God *also* depends upon receiving the glory of sonship. This is the glory that the Son received. Paul taught that this glory of sonship shines from the face of Christ and into a believer's heart by the Holy Spirit.

When the word of grace is proclaimed to a person, it carries within it the four dimensions of God's grace. The first effect of this word of grace upon the hearer is that they are able to behold the glory of sonship and begin to lay hold of the promised blessing of God. The capacity to behold the glory of sonship is described in the Scriptures as a 'blessing'. The first element of this blessing is the illumination that comes by the Spirit, so that we can see and take hold of what God wants to give to us.

References:

Act 7:2
Gal 3:7, 14
Joh 3:5-6
2Pe 1:4

Rom 4:11
Heb 5:5
Eph 1:6

Further Study:

Acts 7

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 3

The writings of John

When Jesus came in the flesh, He revealed the sonship that we were predestined to receive through the process of being born from above. The apostle John summarised the process of becoming a son of God, by saying that ‘of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace’.

It is interesting to note that the word ‘grace’ is only mentioned once in the synoptic Gospels. This single reference to ‘grace’ is made in the Gospel of Luke. Luke recorded that Joseph and Mary had circumcised Jesus on the eighth day and then presented Him to the Lord at the temple in Jerusalem. ‘So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the *grace of God* was upon Him.’

In contrast, the apostle John addressed the subject of ‘grace’ in the opening verses of his Gospel. He then developed this content throughout the rest of the book, as well as in his three letters. While John’s writings on the subject of ‘grace’ are highly integrated, they are also wholly consistent with the teachings of Paul, Peter, and James, who also address this subject.

It is widely accepted that John wrote his Gospel and letters after he had received the Revelation of Jesus Christ. This is significant for at least two reasons. First, his writings were the last statements of the Scripture and were, therefore, the most advanced and well-developed statements of the gospel message. Second, they were written in light of the Revelation of Jesus Christ that was foretelling the events of the time of the end. It included the letters that Christ had written to His own churches to prepare them for His coming at the end of the age.

References:

Joh 1:16-17
Luk 2:39-40
Rev 1:4, 9-16
Rev 22:21

Further Study:

Revelation 1

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 4

The glory of sonship

The Gospel of John opens with the statement, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. John was explaining how God's covenant plan to create and bring to glory a multitude of sons of God, proceeded from the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Word was with God when the Son emptied Himself, was begotten by the Father, and received the fullness of God. As the Word, He had become the expression of Their fullness, as well as the means through which Their purpose would come to pass.

Explaining this further, John said that the life of God – all that He is – is in the Word. This is how it was communicated, or shared, from Their covenant fellowship. The Word became flesh and dwelt among men when the Son of God was born to the virgin Mary. The life of God was now in the flesh of a man. Men and women, among whom He dwelt, were able to behold the glory of *a new and unique kind of humanity*.

From the womb, Jesus Christ was a unique son of man because He was *full of grace and truth*. The Son of God had been conceived in the womb of Mary as the Holy Spirit came upon her, and the power of the Most High (the Father) overshadowed her. Jesus was full of grace because He had been born of the Father, whom the apostle Peter referred to as 'the God of all grace'. The grace of God was also upon Jesus after His parents had performed all that was required of them by law concerning the Child. Jesus was full of truth because He had been conceived of the Holy Spirit. The apostle John explained that 'the Spirit is truth'. Jesus also received the anointing of the Spirit of God, by the Holy Spirit, when He was baptised by John the Baptist.

References:

Joh 1:1, 14
1Pe 5:10
Luk 1:35
Luk 2:40

Further Study:

John 1

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 5

Full of grace and truth

The apostle John declared that Jesus Christ was 'full of grace and truth'. To be full of grace and truth is to be 'of God'. Jesus was unique because He was the first Person to be born of God. He was a new creation; a truly spiritual son of God in a mortal body. Paul explained that Christ had come as the last Adam. We all received our natural identity through the fatherhood of the first Adam, who was a living soul. Christ was 'the last Adam'. He came as a life-giving spirit so that, through this fatherhood, we would be made spiritual as He is spiritual.

Christ was never going to remain as the only One of His kind. He was the Firstborn of many sons who were predestined to be made like Him. Through a birthing process, the sons of men are born again as sons of God who are in the image of the Son of God. We know this because John wrote, '*Of His fullness [grace and truth] we have all received, and grace for grace*'. Furthermore, John explained that 'as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God'.

The Son had come in the flesh to reveal the *glory* of the sonship that the Father had predestined for all the sons of men. He had received this glory from the Father. This was so that we would behold the glory of sonship from His face and begin the process of being born anew as a spiritual son of God.

References:

1Co 15:45-49

Rom 8:29

Joh 1:12-13, 16

Joh 17:1, 4, 24

Further Study: 1 Corinthians 15

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 6

Four dimensions of grace

What does it mean for Jesus Christ to be 'full of grace'? The apostle Paul described the Son of Man's fullness as 'all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in bodily form'. This is a most remarkable point. 'Grace' is the fullness of the Godhead. The Godhead is three Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – who are one Spirit and one life. Their name 'Yahweh' communicates that They are fully One. The Scriptures use the term 'seven Spirits' to describe, or communicate, Their fullness as one Spirit.

The apostle John taught that Yahweh (who is one God) is word, life/light, love, and Spirit. He declared that God is word, God is life and light, God is love, and God is Spirit. These four statements are not merely descriptions of what God is like. They are the four elements, or attributes, of Yahweh's *corporate identity*. This is His fullness. These attributes are four dimensions of the *grace of God*. It is important to recognise that God's grace is not separate from Himself. God's grace is who He is.

The Greek word that is translated 'grace' in the Scriptures is '*charis*'. This word means 'favour' or 'gift'. The unmerited favour of God is by no means limited to the reconciliation that was achieved through the offering of the Son while we were yet enemies of God. The favour of God was revealed in His covenant desire to create, and bring to glory, many sons. This favour was declared, and provided for, *before* the heavens and the earth were even created. God's favour is realised because His love, word, life and Spirit are given to us by the Spirit and result in our transformation in glory from one degree of sonship to another, into the image of the Son.

References:

Col 2:9
Deu 6:4
Joh 1:1, 5
1Jn 1:5

1Jn 4:16
Joh 4:24
Gen 1:26

Further Study:

John 17

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 7

The four faces of Christ

How does a person behold the glory of sonship and begin to receive Christ's fullness? Paul taught that it is from the face of Jesus Christ. He wrote, 'For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness", is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God *in the face of Christ*'. More specifically, it is the *glory of God's grace* that shines from the face of Christ.

Just as there are four dimensions of the glory of God's grace, there are four corresponding dimensions of Christ's face. These four faces are an administration of the Son, through which, God's Everlasting Covenant purpose is communicated and achieved. They include the face of a lion, the face of an ox/calf, the face of a man, and the face of an eagle. As we begin to understand the four faces, it has profound implications for how we read the Scriptures and understand God's purpose for us, and how He is bringing His purpose to pass.

The first *specific* mention of these four faces is in the book of Ezekiel. The prophet Ezekiel saw a vision of four living creatures. Each creature had the face of a man, the face of a lion, the face of an ox, and the face of an eagle. These four living creatures represented an angelic administration that was *under the throne*. Notably, in his vision, Ezekiel saw a figure with the appearance of a man on the throne. This was a pre-incarnate revelation of the Son of God, and demonstrated that the four living creatures were expressing what was proceeding from Him who was on the throne.

When the Word of God became flesh, Jesus Himself expressed the glory of God's grace as He personally ministered on the earth for three and a half years. The operation of the four faces had moved from the angelic administration and were now embodied in the Son of Man.

References:

2Co 4:6

Isa 9:6

Eph 1:6

Isa 7:14

Eze 1:10, 22, 26

Further Study:

2 Corinthians 4

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 10

Grace, grace to it

The prophet Zechariah prophesied concerning the grace of God that would be revealed and ministered from the headship of Christ, saying, 'And he shall bring forth the capstone [headstone] with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"' This passage is referring to Christ. He is both the foundation stone and the capstone, or Head, of the temple of His body, the church.

The shouts of '*Grace, grace*' to the Head of the body, correspond with the apostle John's statement that men had beheld the glory of the only begotten Son who was full of grace and truth. This is the fullness of grace that God is, as love, life, Spirit and word. Moreover, John explained that sons of God are those who receive of this fullness, as *grace for grace*. Zechariah's prophecy reiterates the point that the grace of God comes from the face, or headship, of Christ.

The offering of God, through which Their Everlasting Covenant was inaugurated, established an order by which God's grace would be made available to the sons of men so that they could be born as sons of God. This offering occurred before the creation of the heavens and the earth. It established both the beginning of Their unfolding covenant plan and the order by which it would come to pass. Through offering, the Father became the Head of the Son. It pleased the Father for all the fullness of God to dwell in the Son. The Son became the Head of a corporate body of sons of God. The grace of life flows from the headship of Christ to every believer by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Access to grace depends upon a believer honouring, and remaining within, the order of headship that God has established.

References:

Zec 4:7
1Pe 2:7
Joh 2:19, 21
Joh 1:16

Php 2:5-7
1Co 11:3
Col 1:18-19

Further Study:

Zechariah 4

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 11

The word from the beginning

Paul made it clear that ‘the grace of God that brings salvation *has appeared to all men*’. John further clarified the truth that this grace was manifest when the Word became flesh and *dwelt among men*. When the Word became flesh, the glory of sonship – that which is full of grace and truth – was able to be seen. The point to note is that ‘the word’ is a dimension of God’s grace. However, through this one dimension, all four dimensions of grace are revealed from the four faces of Christ’s administration.

The beginning point of the ministry of the gospel is the proclamation of ‘the word of life from the beginning’. This is the word of grace that is first ministered by the Spirit from the face of the lion. We recall that, on the Day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter, who was full of the Holy Spirit, stood up and proclaimed the gospel to the Jews. In the authority of Christ, he said to them, ‘Let this be known to you, and heed my words’. In his second letter, Peter affirmed that the preaching of the gospel was *by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven*. This reiterates the point that the ministry of the gospel is first from the face of the lion.

The gospel that brings salvation is the word of present truth that is laid down in the presbytery by those with apostolic grace from Christ. John explained that the message that he and his fellow presbyters were declaring, was *the Word of life that was from the beginning*. Specifically, he wrote, ‘That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, *concerning the Word of life ... we declare to you*’.

References:

Joh 1:14 Act 20:24, 32
Tit 2:11 Act 2:14
1Jn 1:1, 3 1Pe 1:12
Act 14:3

Further Study:

1 John 1

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 12

The light of life

Jesus declared that He would draw all men to Himself if He was 'lifted up from the earth'. Through offering, the life that Jesus was giving for the world was manifest as a great light that was shining from His severely marred face. The life, which was expressed as light, was made available through this offering. Paul explained that this is the same principle through which Christ's messengers minister the life of God to others. He testified that, as he was made weak in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, the power and life of God was being made available to those who heard and received the gospel that he preached. Life was being transferred to his hearers.

Addressing the relationship between 'life' and 'light', King David wrote, 'For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light'. In this statement, David was conveying the point that the life of Yahweh was expressed from Them to us as light. The first effect of Their light upon us is illumination; that is, we are able to see light.

John explained that Christ (the Word in whom is life) is the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. Christ is the expression of the life of Yahweh, and illumination is the beginning point of receiving this life. When the true Light comes and enlightens a person, they are beginning to receive of the fullness of God; that is, the Light expresses the fullness of God to them. This is why John said that 'of His *fullness* we have all received, and grace for grace'. The Light of this glory is being shone from the face of Christ into the believer's heart by the Holy Spirit.

References:

2Co 13:3-4

Psa 36:9

Joh 1:9, 16

Joh 12:32

2Co 4:6

Further Study:

John 8

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 13

Grace and blessing

In the first instance, the grace of God preveniently grants to an unsaved person, the capacity to see and hear the word of God. Prevenient grace is simply God's grace that comes to an unsaved person before they choose to receive it. God's grace is necessary for them at this point because they are dead in sin and have no capacity to hear the word, or even to choose whether or not they will receive it. Prevenient grace enables every person to receive the light of the gospel. This is because it frees a person from any influence that may otherwise affect their capacity to choose the call of sonship that God is offering to them. However, the grace of God is not irresistible. A person can still choose to close their ears and harden their heart to the word.

Through grace, the entrance of God's word gives light; it gives understanding to those who have not known Him before. By this means, the unsaved hearer begins to receive the blessing of God. We learn through the example of Peter that the *first blessing* is sight, or illumination. Jesus said to Peter, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven'.

Through sight, a person is able to look into the face of Christ and become aware of their spiritual bankruptcy. This is the *second dimension of blessing*. Jesus said, 'Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'. This blessing leads to the next dimension of blessing, which is the capacity to mourn. Through the travail of mourning, a person is able to repent and then cry out to God for help to believe for the sonship that the gospel promises them.

References:

Tit 2:11

Mat 16:17

Act 7:51

Mat 5:3-4

Psa 119:130

Further Study:

Matthew 5

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 14

The example of Peter

When Jesus asked His disciples who they thought He was, Peter responded by declaring, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God'. Jesus said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven'. The natural man, who is simply flesh and blood, cannot reveal Christ, because he cannot see the things of the Spirit of God. Only the Father in heaven can reveal it, and He does this by the Holy Spirit. This illumination is the outcome of the prevenient grace of God.

Illumination is the first element of blessing. Peter had been blessed because something that did not belong to flesh and blood had broken in upon his life and perspective. He had been enabled by the Father to recognise who Christ is. This was the *beginning* point of Peter's journey to becoming *meek* and to inheriting the kingdom of heaven on earth. Illumination was the initial effect of the prevenient grace of God upon him.

Having received illumination, Peter still needed to be converted from living by the flesh to living and walking by the Spirit. The next step in this journey occurred when Peter denied the Lord three times. As the rooster crowed, 'the Lord turned and looked at Peter'. In this moment, Peter knew that he was denying the Son of God, having earlier been illuminated concerning who Christ was. Furthermore, he knew that by denying Christ, he was now sinning against his own sonship.

Peter received an illumination of *conviction* that wounded him at the point of his other law. Prior to this point, the operation of another law within him was evident through his self-righteous religious assertions that he would not stumble, but would follow Christ to the death. As he looked into Christ's face, his idealism was broken and he became *bankrupt in spirit*. This was the second step on Peter's journey to meekness.

References:

Mat 16:13-17

1Co 2:9-11

Mat 5:3-5

Luk 22:61-62

Rom 7:23

Mat 26:33

Further Study:

Matthew 16

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 17

Conversion to first love

Jesus ministered the word to Peter when He commanded him to 'feed My lambs', 'tend My sheep', and 'feed My sheep'. Jesus was defining Peter's name and, by this means, sanctifying him to his sonship, including the specific nature of his suffering, weakness and death. When Peter 'turned again' to first love and a life of offering by faith, he was then able to strengthen his brethren.

Through illumination, Peter learned what he needed to repent of. He needed to be converted from his mode of ministry that was based only on friendship (*phileo*), or collegiality, to the way of offering that is revealed by faith that works through love (*agape*). Peter received sight, once grace through mercy had broken in upon him.

As sons of God, we are in a process of proceeding from grace to grace, and from glory to glory. This is unless, of course, we are turning aside from the way of the Spirit that we were established in when we were born to see and then born of water and the Spirit. To turn away from the Spirit is to become carnal and to revert to living according to the principles of the flesh. When we do this, we fall below the spiritual state that we were in when we first believed. Those who are carnal have gone back under the power and control of sin.

We note that *from mercy comes grace*. As Paul explained, we come to the throne of grace 'that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need'. The prophet Jeremiah reminded us that the Lord's mercies are new every morning. Grace, therefore, is available to us every day so that we find sanctification to our name and sonship. Our sonship is the expression of the divine nature, which is ours as we are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering.

References:

Joh 21:15-18 Rom 7:23-24
Luk 22:32 Heb 4:16
Gal 5:6 Lam 3:22-23

Further Study:

John 21

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 18

Falling short of the grace

A person falls short of the grace of God when they cease looking carefully and purposefully into the face of Christ. They cease looking into Christ's face when they refuse to receive Him who is speaking to them from heaven through His administration on earth. A person who is falling short of the grace of God is selling their spiritual birthright as they pursue their own religious aspirations and fleshly expectations of life. Instead of being rooted and grounded in love as a fruitful son of God, a root of bitterness will inevitably spring up in them, causing trouble and defiling many.

Paul likened the religious mode of living, which denies the necessity for receiving grace from the face of Christ, to having a veil over one's own heart. This veil impedes the true light that is shining upon the carnal Christian from the faces of Christ's administration. Consequently, they become darkened in their understanding of the way of life, and fall back under the yoke of bondage to fear. They become like the children of Israel who were afraid to enter the land of promise. This land symbolised their inheritance as sons of God. Paul described them as rebellious and having an evil heart of unbelief that departed from the living God.

The Holy Spirit, who is the One who shines the light from Christ's face into our hearts, warns us, saying, 'Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers tested Me, tried Me, and saw My works forty years. Therefore, I was angry with that generation, and said, "They always go astray in their heart, and they have not known My ways". So I swore in My wrath, "They shall not enter My rest".'

References:

2Co 3:16

Eph 4:18

Heb 12:15-16, 25

Rom 8:15

Heb 3:7-12

Further Study:

Hebrews 4

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 19

Illumination not regulation

The Spirit has been impressing upon us the importance of being ministers of illumination by the Spirit, rather than ministers of 'the letter'. The carnal approach of ministering 'the letter' involves using the word of God to regulate the behaviour of others. Those who minister in this carnal manner, misappropriate the word to establish cultural standards to which others must aspire. This approach to ministry is based in control. It is devoid of the Spirit and unable to bring illumination that leads to repentance and faith.

We do not preach a word, and then follow through to enforce it, after the flesh by counsel. When a word of adjustment is being ministered in the Spirit, we who hear it may not then take it and apply it to others, using the power of condemnation to motivate them to action. To do this is to attempt to conform them to what we think they should be doing, in light of what was preached. This is the way of a babe in Christ, and of those who are carnal. This is not the priestly order of Melchizedek that is among us.

If a person only hears the word with the ear of condemnation, and does not see with the sight that comes from illumination, then they cannot proceed until grace has been given to *them*. This is because the sight that comes from illumination causes conviction, and conviction is the doorway to faith. Faith, then, gives us our introduction to grace in which we stand, and exalt in the hope of the glory of God. Those instructing must also only speak according to the grace given to them. Condemnation enforced by anger and the censure of man, will not produce the righteousness of God. The apostle Paul said that the ministry of the Spirit was a new covenant that gave the glory of God's own life and righteousness to mankind.

References:

2Co 3:6 Jas 1:20
Heb 6:1 Jas 4:11
Heb 5:10-14 Jas 5:9
Rom 5:2

Further Study: Matthew 7

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 20

The ministry of life

When the gospel of sonship is preached to an unsaved person, they are to turn to the Lord. Paul explained that the Lord is the Spirit. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify them. As they turn to the Holy Spirit, He brings them to Christ. Christ draws them to Himself and removes from their heart the veil that is blinding them. He then opens their mind to understand the Scriptures. When they join themselves to Christ's offering through baptism, their mind is released from the veil of ignorance and their own self-righteousness. They are transformed by the renewing of their mind.

The Holy Spirit then continues His sanctifying work in their life by reflecting and shining into their heart the glory of their sonship, which comes from the Father and is revealed in the face of Christ. By this means, they see the image and glory of who they really are as a son of God. As we all continue to behold the glory of sonship that the Father has caused to shine upon us from the face of Christ by the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed into the same image of sonship, from glory to glory.

Christ's face is a mirror from which the glory of our sonship, which comes from the Father, is reflected into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. As Christians who have no veil upon our hearts, we are able to reflect the glory of sonship that the Spirit is revealing in and through us, to others. We have been given this treasure from the Lord, the Spirit, and the excellency of the power is from God and not from ourselves. It is for this reason that we are able to be effective ministers of the New Covenant.

References:

1Th 2:13

2Co 3:6, 14, 18

Luk 24:32, 45

2Co 4:1, 6-7

Further Study: 2 Corinthians 3**Daily Proverb:** Proverbs 21

The conviction of the Holy Spirit

Jesus explained the role of the Holy Spirit in the work of bringing sons of men to birth as sons of God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth. Jesus said, 'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you'. When we receive Him, we become a temple of the Holy Spirit. He is given to us as the firstfruits of our sonship; that is, He is the expression of our sonship in a firstfruits measure. In this regard, it is the Holy Spirit who empowers and motivates us to live as Christians and preach the word.

The Holy Spirit is in us and revealing our sonship. Because of this, as we speak the word to others, He brings conviction and understanding to them through the words that we speak. In other words, conviction by the Holy Spirit is not a mystical phenomenon that a person experiences apart from the ministry of a disciple-messenger. The Holy Spirit is convicting our hearers as we preach the word by the capacity of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said to His disciples that it was to their advantage that He went away. This was because He would send the Helper (the Holy Spirit), who would convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgement. We remember, for example, the ministry of Stephen who was full of the Holy Spirit. Through Stephen's preaching, his hearers experienced the conviction of the Spirit as Stephen brought the glory of God to their attention. He declared to them, 'Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!'

References:

Joh 14:6, 17

Joh 15:26

Joh 16:7-8, 13

1Co 6:19

1Co 7:54-56

Further Study:

John 14

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 24

Conviction of sin, righteousness, judgement

Jesus explained that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, because they do not believe in Him. As the word is preached, the Holy Spirit illuminates the hearer concerning the sin of not believing in and receiving Jesus, who is the Word made flesh. They receive the understanding that Jesus is the spiritual New Creation. It is sin to pursue life apart from that which is from Christ and in Christ. The Spirit comes with the word to deliver a person from their fears and anxieties that are the evidence of their fallen, natural state. The Holy Spirit then enables them to receive the faith of God so that they are able to believe in the Son.

When the Holy Spirit convicts of righteousness, it is because *Jesus has gone to the Father*. This is the conviction of the righteousness and justification that Christ made available for us through His atoning work. Jesus accomplished our salvation through His offering and suffering. Christ left His disciples for a little season (three days and three nights). He then returned to them, justifying and birthing them as sons of God by giving them His Spirit. This was Christ's first ministry action after He was raised from the dead. The conviction of righteousness is the understanding that justification and righteousness are available through Christ's offering. The conviction of righteousness extends to urging those who are born from above to come into Christ through baptism, and to remain hidden with Him in the bosom of the Father.

Further to this, the word of God, by the Holy Spirit, convicts the heart of the hearer that they do not need to remain under bondage to Satan and sin. When Christ was lifted up on the cross as a sin offering, judgement came upon the whole world. Satan, as the ruler of this world, was cast out, and the fear of death was broken.

References:

Joh 16:8-11
Act 3:13-15
Zec 12:10
2Ti 1:7

Rom 5:5
Joh 14:1-3
Rom 6:18
Heb 2:15

Further Study:

John 16

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 25

A share in His life

As Christ priested Himself as an offering, He made His life available to us. He did this by pouring out His life through the sufferings of death. Through baptism and our ongoing participation in the communion, we join Christ's physical body and the event of His death in history. This is what it means to be joined to the fellowship of His sufferings. As we suffer with Him, Christ's life becomes our life and purges our heart from the motivations that are used by sin to control our life.

Christ is the context for our participation in the travail, through which the divine nature is being *formed* within us. As Christ is formed in us, we are able to express Him. Christ, the Word, is now in our mouths and hearts to be expressed. By this means, the new creation is seen, or beheld. We serve God, then, as son/priests in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. This is because we have received the capacity to travail, or labour, for others to be birthed from above. This travail involves filling up that which is lacking in the afflictions of Christ for the sake of others. Through participation in Christ's offering, we are able to transfer the life of Christ to others.

Once personally joined to Christ through baptism, we are placed by the Father into His corporate body, the church. Paul explained that God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. According to the grace that is given to us, we express the divine nature as the particular member of the body that the Father has made us to be – be it a hand, an eye, a foot, etc. This expression is by the Holy Spirit who is given to us as the firstfruits of our inheritance as a son of God.

References:

Php 3:10 2Co 5:17
Gal 2:20 Col 1:24
Heb 10:22 1Co 12:18
Rom 10:6-8

Further Study: 1 Corinthians 12

Daily Proverb: Proverbs 26

Our confession of faith

The ministry of the grace of God from the face of Christ is for the purpose of birthing and then establishing us, as fruitful sons of God. This is the Everlasting Covenant desire of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They Each have an initiative toward us in relation to the fulfilment of Their covenant purpose.

The Father gave us our new birth as a new creation son. He is the source and provider of everything that we need to live as sons of God. As the apostle Peter noted, the divine power of the Father ‘has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue’. This is the glory that shines from the face of Christ and into our heart by the Holy Spirit.

Because the Father has given us everything we need for sonship, we can trust our lives to Him. He is the source and provider of our needs. ‘Therefore do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?” or “What shall we drink?” or “What shall we wear?” For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.’

As we trust ourselves to the Father, we can expect that He will train us through discipline. We should not be surprised, then, when we experience suffering. As Paul exhorted us, ‘My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives’. The discipline that we receive from the Father is specific to our sonship. In this regard, He answers the prayers of Christ who tests our motives by searching our hearts.

References:

2Pe 1:2-3

Rev 2:23

Mat 6:31-33

Rom 8:26-27

Heb 12:5-6

Further Study:

Romans 10

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 27

The life we now live

Having been baptised into Christ, we are to live by Christ's life. He gives us the faith of God so that, by His faith, we are able to continue in the fellowship of His offering. Our faith works by the love of God, giving us the capacity to overcome fear. As the apostle John declared, 'There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment'. Baptism is, firstly, the faith to die with Christ. As those who have received the faith of the Son of God, our trust is not in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead. We should have the same boast as Paul: 'I die daily'. We can be confident that, if we have died with Christ, we shall also live with Him. The Son is our life!

As we continue in the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, we are weak in Him. However, in our weakness, His strength is being made perfect. Christ is strong in us, motivating us as He ministers to others through us. This is how Christ is continuing His ministry on earth. It is through the members of His corporate body. Christ has become our life so that we might preach Him among the Gentiles. Christ is in us. However, it is by the Spirit that we minister and preach in Christ. Our sanctification and name is revealed by the Spirit in a firstfruits measure.

We know that we are a temple of the Holy Spirit. Jesus called the Holy Spirit 'the Helper'. He is our Helper because He makes the substance of Yahweh's Covenant substantial in us. The Holy Spirit is the expression of our name. He, with the Father, sanctifies us to our expression. We are able to speak in Christ, according to the sanctification of our name, by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

References:

IJn 4:18 Joh 14:26
1Co 15:31 Joh 16:7
Rom 6:8 1Co 6:19
2Co 12:9 2Co 7:3

Further Study:

2 Corinthians 5

Daily Proverb:

Proverbs 28