

Energized . . . Not Religionized

by David Morsey

Ionized particles in the vastness of space. That is a rather accurate, if demeaning description of what we humans are. The earth is a tiny marble. If you want a comparative analogy, put a quarter at the baseboard of a room. The quarter represents the earth and the height of the wall represents the diameter of the sun. If the earth is the size of a quarter, try putting 5 billion units of any kind on that quarter. If we could collect all the genes on all the chromosomes of all the inhabitants of the earth, they could be contained in a thimble. On the other hand, if we could collect all the atoms that make up the earth, we could hold them in a teacup. Whence then is the substance of the earth? According to Einstein, the intense speed of the particles within the atom gives the illusion of a solid mass ($E=mc^2$).

So if we are this tiny particle, how do we communicate with God?

The mystery is resolved in the work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God who occupies our little “cocoon” transcends them and we commune with God in the realm of the spirit. Think of the Spirit of God within us as a Seed of Divine Energy. We live in a sea of energy. Think of the energy it takes for light from a star that is a million light years away to maintain its brilliance so that we can see it with the naked eye. Even more remarkable is the story of the quasar. The word “quasar” is a contraction of “quasi-star”—so-called because it is like a star (not a half star). A quasar can have thousands of times more energy than an entire galaxy—which may be a million light years across. Incidentally, a light year is the distance covered by light in one year's time, travelling at the rate of 186,000+ miles per second. Some astronomers have now discovered quasars which, according to their calculations, have required a billion light years to reach us. (That, of course, is their calculation). Should it then be thought “a thing impossible with God” to grant us the energy to interact with Him on a level that completely transcends our earthly cocoon? Peter says that we are “**partakers of the Divine nature**”. (II Peter 1:4) The Seed of the Spirit within us gives us a touch of the nature of God, and lifts us quite beyond our space/time prison.

So what is the purpose of knowing all of this? It makes us feel very small.

It has a very important purpose. It gives us insight into the meaning of our salvation, as well as an understanding of how we maintain our relationship with Christ. Jesus alluded to this in His discussion with Nicodemus, when He said that he must be “born again.” He meant, of course, that he must be touched by the energy of God. This is what lifts us out of the shackles of religious exercise. The term “born again” has become so enmeshed in methods and systems and rules that it almost becomes a catch phrase for joining a religious group. The essence of salvation is receiving the Holy Spirit who brings with Him the Energy of God (since, of course, the Holy Spirit is God). And thus we become partakers of His Divine nature. This provides us with the energy required to identify with Him. It is in this energy that we receive the gift of faith. We can think of faith in terms of something of a “force field” within us from which we have the energy to communicate with God. If the

light energy of a star can be picked up by the nerve endings of our eyes, after travelling a million years, it is quite reasonable to assume that the force field within us can equally touch God.

So then what does the expression “born again” really mean?

It really means to receive the Spirit of God in us.

So how do we do that?

By asking Him.

Is that all there is to it?

According to John it is. **“As many as received Him to them He gave the power to become the children of God even to those that believe on His name.”** (John 1:12)

But what about all the steps?

John gives no steps. Religious tradition has surrounded the simple gift of God with steps. Actually the request is itself the admission of need and the belief or faith is provided by the coming of the Holy Spirit. Human efforts to merit salvation by religious exercises cannot possibly prevail to bring about faith. Once the Holy Spirit is within us, many changes take place which are based upon His power. But requiring these changes before one receives the Holy Spirit is absurd. All the human can do is cry, “Help!” When one advances “rules of membership” beyond this, one is declaring that humans have the capacity to participate in their salvation. Paul told the Ephesians that their salvation was a **“gift of God—not of works” . . .** (Ephesians 2:8) It is widely assumed that we cannot do good deeds to merit salvation, but less widely understood that we cannot even participate in the salvation process, except to ask for it. Paul further tells Titus that it is not by **“works of righteousness [righteous actions], but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”** (Titus 3:5) Everywhere in the New Testament we are told that we have no righteousness of our own. If we have no righteousness of our own, whence comes the righteousness by which we accomplish the alleged prerequisites?

But what of the earthly particle? It is like a capsule. It has no power to produce anything spiritual of itself. The human flesh is something of a “junkbox,” filled with all manner of human folly—mistakes, misconceptions, misdeeds—but the spirit indwelt by the Spirit of God in those who receive Him. That Spirit is like a seed implanted in the midst of the space/time capsule. Much of this “junk collection” will be around as long as we live. Some things get straightened out, but most things remain, to keep us mindful of our complete dependence on Christ. The perfect expression of this was made by Paul to the Corinthians—**“But God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the presence of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels [clay pots] that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.”** (II Corinthians 4:6,7)

This is the difference between becoming a religionist—(Christian or otherwise)—and being energized by the Spirit of Christ.

This Seed of the Spirit within us is what makes it possible to pray to God. Paul makes this very clear in Romans 8:26—***“Likewise also the Spirit helps us in our infirmities [weaknesses] for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us [meets God on our behalf] with groanings that cannot be uttered [unvoiced sighs].”*** The clear meaning of this passage is that via the Holy Spirit within us, our spirits meet God beyond the realm of our earthly cocoon. The earthly mind is not capable of communing with God apart from the Holy Spirit. Much of the communication that goes on between our spirits and the Spirit of Christ is not a part of our conscious experience. It is like the constant flow of energy that accompanies all of our sense-experiences, such as seeing the stars. Nor is it (contrary to much religious teaching) cut off by human inadequacy or folly. The support group for a deep sea diver hardly cuts his life line simply because they are not all that happy with his performance.

Unfortunately, this concept of energy has been obscured by translations that use the word “work” in place of energy. The Greek is ενεργεω (energeo) and is, of course, the word from which we get our word “energy.” We are going to deal with those passages throughout the New Testament that reflect this concept. They will be in the author's own translations and will bring out the Greek substance behind the words.