

# The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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*"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5*

## In THIS ISSUE

- 1 LETTER FROM LIVING STREAM MINISTRY
- 1 WHAT IS THE BELIEVERS ORGANIC UNION WITH CHRIST?
- 2 HIGHLIGHTS FROM LIFE-STUDY OF GALATIANS
- 2 VERSE AND FOOTNOTE FROM THE HOLY BIBLE RECOVERY VERSION
- 4 THE PATH OF LIFE—THE ORGANIC UNION IN GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MAN

*Dear Life-study Listener,*

Many of you have recently asked us for more information about our ministry and how you can contact others in your area who also appreciate this ministry. We respond to each of you when you make such inquiries, but we would like to take this opportunity to announce in a broader way that Living Stream Ministry will be conducting a Memorial Day conference in Kansas City, Missouri from May 28-31, 2004. Each year we hold conferences during the Memorial Day and Thanksgiving weekends. This year the Thanksgiving conference will be in San Francisco, California. In addition to the two conferences, which are held in different cities each year, we also conduct two six-day trainings here in Anaheim, California at the end of June and December. These trainings in Anaheim require prior registration through your local church, but the conferences are open to the public and provide a good way for you to meet thousands of other believers who love the Lord Jesus as they joyfully gather together around God's Word.

For those of you in southern California, we want to draw your attention to the fact that 590 AM out of San Bernardino increased their power from 1,000 watts to 2,000 watts. If you tried to listen to our broadcast at 4:00 p.m. each Lord's Day and were unable to hear it, we encourage you to try again.

*Living Stream Ministry*

## WHAT IS THE BELIEVERS ORGANIC UNION WITH CHRIST?

The Lord Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This simple picture of a vine and its branches mutually abiding in one another reveals the organic union between the Lord and His believers.

*(continued on page 3)*

### **Life-Study of the Bible**

W E L C O M E S

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

KTIE  
4:00 P.M.

590 AM  
SUNDAYS

# Highlights

## FROM LIFE-STUDY OF GALATIANS

### APPRECIATING THE LORD JESUS

Proof that the faith in 2:20 is both the faith of Christ and the faith in Christ is found in Paul's words at the end of the verse. He concludes the verse by referring to the Son of God as the One "Who loved me and gave Himself for me." In writing these words, Paul was filled with appreciation of the Lord Jesus. Otherwise, at the end of such a long verse there would have been no need for him to speak of Christ loving him and having given Himself for him. He could have concluded with the expression, "the faith of the Son of God." But as he was speaking of the way he now lived, his heart was filled with gratitude and appreciation. Faith comes from such an appreciation of the Lord Jesus. The faith in Christ and the faith of Christ issues from the appreciation of Christ.

In 2 Corinthians 5:14 and 15 Paul says, "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." As we consider these verses, we can see that Paul's faith came from an appreciation for the constraining love of Christ. The more we appreciate Christ's constraining love, the more faith we shall have. This faith is not produced by our own ability or activity. Rather, it is produced by the working in us of the very Christ whom we appreciate. In our appreciation for the Lord Jesus, we shall say, "Lord Jesus, I love You and I treasure You." As we speak such words to the Lord, He operates within us and becomes our faith. This faith brings about an organic union in which we and Christ are truly one.

I would like to tell you a true story which confirms the point that the faith which operates in us comes from our appreciation of the Lord Jesus. During the Boxer Rebellion in China, hundreds of Christians were martyred. One day in Peking, the old capital of China, the Boxers were parading down the street. Sitting in the back of a wagon was a young Christian woman who was being led away to be executed. She was surrounded by executioners with swords in their hands. The atmosphere was terrifying, filled with the shoutings of the Boxers. Nevertheless, her face was glowing as she was singing praises to the Lord. The stores were closed because of the rioting. However, a young man was observing this scene through a crack at the front of a store. Deeply impressed with the young woman's glowing face, happiness, and songs of praise, he decided at that moment that he would find out the truth about the Christian faith. Later, he did learn the truth and became a believer in Christ. Eventually, he gave up his business and became a preacher. One day, when he was visiting my home town, he told me this story of how he had become a Christian.

The point here is that this young woman could be filled with praises in the midst of such a terrifying situation because faith was working within her. She was filled with appreciation of the Lord Jesus. Because she loved Him so much, He spontaneously became the faith within her. This faith produced an organic union in which she was joined to the Lord. This organic union is a basic and crucial aspect of God's New Testament economy.

*Life-study of Galatians*, pp. 91-93, by Witness Lee

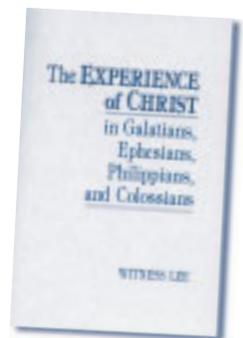
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## ORGANIC UNION WITH CHRIST (continued from page 1)

In the term *organic union*, *organic* refers to something of life, and *union* refers to a kind of relationship. Our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ results not in our having only an objective and distant belief in Him but in our being brought into a subjective relationship with Him in the divine life. This is the life union with our precious Lord that He spoke of in the picture of the vine and the branches. The apostle Paul portrayed this organic union by speaking of grafting in Romans 11. There he speaks of an inferior branch being grafted into a superior tree that the two may be joined together to share the same life. The branch is not artificially attached to the tree by lifeless means. Rather, the tree is cut to make a place where the branch can be grafted into it. The two are joined together and grow together by the life of the tree flowing into the branch and becoming the life of the branch. When we believe into the Lord Jesus, we are joined to Him and become one spirit, sharing His divine life and nature in a life relationship, or organic union, with Him (1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Pet. 1:4). Just as the grafted branch partakes of all the riches of the superior tree, we believers partake of all the riches of Christ.

Romans 6:3-5 speaks of our baptism into Christ and His death and our having “grown together” with Him through baptism. From the time of our believing and being baptized into Christ, His life must continue to grow in us. Paul said that he labored to present every man full-grown in Christ (Col. 1:28) and that Christ’s Body grows with the growth of God (Col. 2:19). Through this growth of His life in us, Christ can be expressed through us branches who have been grafted into Him.

Our life relationship with Christ is an intimate one. The healthiest

expression of our intimate relationship with Christ is a life full of fellowship with Him through unceasing prayer (1 Thes. 5:17). This contact with Christ cultivates our organic union with Him. He dwells in us (John 14:17; 17:23; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 13:5) and we dwell in Him (John 15:4; 17:21; Rom. 8:1;

### *Our faith in the Lord Jesus*

*Christ results not in our having only an objective and distant belief in Him but in our being brought into a subjective relationship with Him in the divine life.*

1 Cor. 1:30). Prayer strengthens our mutual indwelling, and by it we express our love for Him. The Lord Jesus promised that He and the Father would come to make an abode, to dwell, with those who love Him (John 14:23). By the apostle Paul’s word in Ephesians 3, we see the development of our organic union with Christ as He makes His home in our hearts through faith (v. 17).

By being grafted into Him, we share the divine life of Christ and are brought into a life relationship with Him. Then this life grows in us and we abide in Him and He abides in us. Thus, the term *organic union* to describe our life relationship with the Lord Jesus is both fitting and accurate.

For further reading on this subject, please see *Life-study of Galatians*, messages 8, 9, and 10 and *The Organic Union in God’s Relationship with Man*, by Witness Lee, published by Living Stream Ministry.

## VERSE *and* FOOTNOTE

FROM THE HOLY BIBLE  
RECOVERY VERSION

GALATIANS 2:16

**Galatians 2:16**—*And knowing that a man is not justified out of works of law, but through <sup>1</sup>faith in Jesus Christ, we also have believed into Christ Jesus that we might be justified out of faith in Christ and not out of the works of law, because out of the works of law no flesh will be justified.*

<sup>1</sup>Lit., faith of Jesus Christ. See note 22<sup>1</sup> in Rom. 3. Faith in Jesus Christ denotes an organic union with Him through believing. This is related to the believers’ appreciation of the person of the Son of God as the most precious One. The believers are infused with the preciousness of Christ through the gospel preached to them. This Christ becomes in them the faith by which they believe and the capacity to believe through their appreciation of Him. This faith creates an organic union in which they and Christ are one.



# The PATH OF Life

*Below are excerpts focused on matters and practices of the spiritual life as revealed in God's Word. May the Lord show us "the path of life" (Psa. 16:11) that we may have a daily living of enjoying, experiencing, and gaining Christ.*

## THE ORGANIC UNION IN GOD'S RELATIONSHIP WITH MAN

### GROWING UNTO SALVATION BY DRINKING THE MILK OF THE WORD

First Peter 2:2 says, "As newborn babes, long for the guileless milk of the word in order that by it you may grow unto salvation." For our physical growth, we need to drink milk. Likewise, for our spiritual growth, we need to drink the divine milk from the Word. Every morning we need to drink a cup of milk from the Word. If you will do this, you will see the blessing. You will be healthy and will be a tree of life growing. This tree will bear fruit, and all the fruit will nourish your wife, your children, your grandchildren, your neighbors, your colleagues in your office, or your classmates in your school. You will become the tree of life to all the people in your community. Today, America needs this. America needs Christ to grow in the neighborhoods, in the schools, in the offices, and among the families and the in-laws.

We should not merely attend the church meetings; we need to grow that we may be a tree of life to nourish today's communities in America. I am very grateful to the Lord that I live in America. Here I have the full liberty to speak what I want to speak for the Lord. I am grateful for this, but whenever I look at today's situation, I am saddened because of the shortage of Christ. Needless to say with the unbelievers, even with the believers there is the shortage of Christ, the lacking of the growth of Christ.

Peter said that if we drink the milk of the word, we will grow unto salvation. We should not think that we are fully saved and have no need of any further salvation. Such a concept is wrong. We still need to be saved every day, even every minute, from our temper, from our sorrows, and from our anxiety. We need to be saved from many things. I

am a quick person. It is easy for me to lose my temper. When I was young, my temper was a trouble to me. But later on I learned that I can be saved, and I have been saved through the drinking of the milk of the word. Drinking the milk of the word causes us to grow unto salvation from our anger, our temper, our anxiety, our worry, our fear, and our trembling. Every day we need a daily salvation. We need today's salvation in our daily walk.

### GROWING UNTO MATURITY BY EATING THE SOLID FOOD

Among today's Christians it is difficult to find one who is mature. Many Christians are still childish. In their joking with one another we cannot sense God. Also, they are too free in having contact with the opposite sex. It is no wonder that there is fornication even among Christians. A sister should not speak lightly to a brother. For a female to speak lightly is to sell herself cheaply. A sister must keep her female dignity (1 Tim. 2:9-10). This female dignity protects her from many sinful things. Furthermore, in order to avoid falling into sin, a sister should not get too near a member of the opposite sex. Our need is to grow unto maturity, to be matured. Even one who is still a teenager in his physical age can be a mature believer in Christ. I have seen some young people like this.

We need to grow unto maturity to know God, to know the Bible, to know the church, and to know today's situation and condition in a mature way. We should not be childish. In order to grow unto maturity, we need to eat solid food (Heb. 5:14; Col. 1:28). Drinking milk is for babes. Every day we need to drink a cup of milk from the Word. We also need to take some solid food from the Word.

In the Bible words such as "God so loved the world" (John 3:16) and "Husbands, love your wives" (Eph. 5:25) are like milk. In contrast, those portions of the Word concerning God's creation of man in His image and according to His likeness, His preparing a human spirit by breathing His breath of life into man's nostrils, and His putting man in front of the tree of life, a figure of God Himself as life, are solid, like diamond. Nevertheless, we need to eat these portions. We need spiritual teeth that can eat such solid food, and we also need a spiritual stomach to digest such words. We need to grow unto maturity by eating the solid food.

*The Organic Union in God's Relationship with Man, pp. 55-57, by Witness Lee*

## THE HEARING OF FAITH

is a publication of Living Stream Ministry. All subscriptions are free. In addition to portions of ministry, this newsletter features broadcast updates and other items of interest. We hope that this newsletter will not only inform you of current news but will also nourish and refresh your spirit. Please be sure to read our reply card and feel free to use it to make comments or ask questions.

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