

THE WORD BECAME FLESH

I go through dry periods in my walk with Christ. The Lord seems remote and I miss Him more than I can say. I don't know all the reasons for this awful fact. Maybe it is a growing sense of demonic evil in the church and in the world or of a similarly growing awareness of my own depravity. Whatever the reasons, I have been thinking about that walk, which is increasingly more precious and fragile to me.

Look again at the title of this letter from John 1. In four words the infinite divine became a finite man. Having accomplished His redemptive work on earth, Christ sent the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers and to inspire the New Testament canon. The quickening and revealing Spirit within then discloses the Logos to us. We come to know the Bible and Christ.

But the Logos , Divine reason, has become flesh. He is a Person. Knowing a book of conceptual truths like the Bible is different from knowing a person. A book is not a person. Yet we believe that we have a personal, not a conceptual relationship with Christ. How does knowledge of conceptual truth become a personal relationship?

The process begins with the work of the Holy Spirit communing with our broken-willed soul. Without these two ingredients all is futility and doomed to failure. The Holy Spirit will do His part; ours is to break our will. For His part, the transformative work of the Holy Spirit operates chiefly through two features of our personalities, reason and imagination.

Through reason aided by the Holy Spirit we comprehend the truth of scripture by faith. But faith is directed to the future and the unseen, which are apprehended by imagination. Reason and imagination are **both** prerequisites for biblical faith. Reason apprehends truth, the Logos; while imagination, directed by the Holy Spirit, transports us to the unseen spiritual world and fellowship with the Person of Christ.

Imagination must not be confused with imaginary. We love Christ whom we have not seen with our physical eyes (1 Peter 1:8). To love Him as a person requires imagination, which is the eyes of the soul. The truth of scripture discerned by reason gives a true picture of reality, not something imaginary. Imagination must be constrained and governed by truth, lest it wander onto unholy ground.

Admonitions like fixing our eyes on Jesus, entering Christ's yoke, and taking up God's armor are obeyed through our souls, which itself we have not seen. It requires imagination to commune with the risen Christ, who has seated us in the heavenly places with Himself.

Furthermore, the white stone (Revelation 2:17) given to the overcomer, bearing a name known only to him, speaks of the deeply personal relationship which Christ has with each

child. As His children we need many things, including comfort, love, and encouragement. Sanctified imagination may aid our ability to receive these things from our Lord. To imagine oneself held in His comforting arms when suffering despair or great loss not only ministers to us but enriches our ability to comfort others (2 Corinthians 1). It may even be one of the ways that the Holy Spirit produces the fruit of the Spirit in us.

Knowing Christ is qualitatively different from anything that has ever been. It is about God living in us, communing with our souls to free us from sin and make us His grateful slaves.

To accomplish this blessed task He bequeathed us with both reason and imagination. Together they connect us to Christ, the only source of blessing there is.

Unless and until we are caught up to the third heaven, we see through a mirror dimly. Might it be that until we see Him face to face that God grants Spirit-inspired reason and imagination to see Him more clearly now, in order that we may minister in His name, receive aid and comfort, and develop the fruit of the Spirit?