

A
Plain Instruction
FROM THE WORD OF GOD, CONCERNING THE
SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION,
AND
NEW OR HEAVENLY BIRTH.

BY
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“Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power,” Rev. 20: 6.

“For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ,”
1 Cor. 3: 11.

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THE SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION.

“AWAKE thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light,” Eph. 5: 14.

The Scriptures point out to us two resurrections: namely, a bodily resurrection from the dead at the last day, and a spiritual resurrection from sin and death, to a new life and a change of heart.

That a man should die spiritually unto sin, be spiritually buried and rise again to a life of righteousness in God, is plainly taught in various parts of the Scriptures.

Paul also exhorted to the same effect, “Put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness,” Eph. 4: 22—24. “Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him,” Col. 3: 9, 10. Mortify your earthly, &c. Before a resurrection from the dead can take place, the death of the body is necessary, and before death, sickness, pain and tribulation must precede, which have a tendency to make death still more bitter to the flesh. Likewise in a spiritual sense, there can be no resurrection from sin and death, unless this body of sin be first destroyed and buried, and has sensibly endured pain and the burden of sin, that is sorrowfulness of heart, remorse and a sincere repentance on account of sin, as is evidently shown in the Scriptures. David says, “O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure. For thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of

my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over my head; as a heavy burden they are too heavy for me. My wounds stink and are corrupt, because of my foolishness. I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long. For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease, and there is no soundness in my flesh. I am feeble and sore broken; I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. O Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. My heart panteth; my strength faileth me; as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me,” Ps. 38: 1—10.

Endure sorrow and distress, according to James 4: 9, “Be afflicted and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.” Paul says, “Ye were made sorry after a godly manner,” to repentance, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death;” seeing that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, what clearing of yourselves, yea what indignation, what fear, vehement desire, and revenge.

Behold, thus we have to die with Christ unto sin, if we would be made alive with him; for none can rejoice with Christ, unless he first suffer with him; for this is a sure word. Paul says, “If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him, if we suffer, we shall also reign with him,” 2 Cor. 2: 11.

This resurrection includes the new creature, the spiritual birth and sanctification, without which none shall see the Lord, this Paul testifies in a few words, saying, “In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new

creature." Again, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new," and this is the first resurrection; "For, if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death," that is, through mortifying the sinful nature of earthly Adam, with all his members or wicked lusts; we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," and know that our old man is crucified with him, that the sinful body is destroyed, and keep the true sabbath in Christ, by putting off the sinful body in the flesh, circumcised with the circumcision of Christ, which is done without hands, buried through baptism, in which we have also risen with him through faith, which is the operation of God; we cease from all works of the flesh, are led by the Spirit, bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, henceforth, we do not serve sin; let it suffice that we have spent our former days after the manner of the gentiles, when we walked in vanity, wantonness, drunkenness, eating and drinking, and in abominable idolatry, and that we spend the remainder of our days not after the lusts of men, but live according to the will of God, that we may say with Paul, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me," Gal. 2: 20; therefore, "He died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again," 2 Cor. 5: 15.

To have a more correct knowledge of this resurrection and regeneration, we must bear in mind that all creatures, bring forth after their kind, and every creature partakes of the properties, propensities and dispositions of that which brought it forth, as Christ says, "That which is born of flesh, is flesh," and cannot see eternal life; and "that which is born of Spirit, is spirit," life and peace, which is eternal life; that which is born of flesh, out of the earth through corruptible seed, is carnally-minded, that is, earthly, and speaks of earthly things, is desirous after earthly and perishable things; all his thoughts, feelings and desires are directed towards earthly, temporal, or visible things, such things as those of which it is born, or

from which it proceeds. That which is born of flesh and blood, is flesh and blood, and is carnally-minded, "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore, those who are carnal cannot please God; for such are altogether deaf, blind and ignorant in divine things. A carnal man cannot apprehend or comprehend divine things, for by nature he has not that discernment; but on the contrary his mind is depraved; God is not in his mind. A carnal man cannot understand spiritual things, for he is by nature a child of the devil, and is not spiritually-minded, hence, he comprehends nothing spiritual; for by nature he is a stranger to God; has nothing of a divine nature dwelling in him, nor has communion with God, but is much rather at enmity with him; he is unmerciful, unjust, unclean, not peaceable, impatient, disobedient, without understanding and unhappy. So are all men by nature according to their birth and origin after the flesh. This is the first or old Adam, and is comprised in the Scriptures in a single word, ungodly, that is, without God, a stranger and destitute of the divine nature.

This is the nature and property of the earthly and devilish seed; for as the seed is, so is the fruit; for "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption," and bring forth fruit unto death; he sins like his father, of and through whose seed he is born, for he is the father of lies and sinned from the beginning, and did not abide in the truth; he, therefore, that sins, is of the devil, for sin is not of God, but of the devil, and he that sins has not seen God, nor known him; and we know that the son of God was made manifest to take away sins and destroy the works of the devil, and through his death deprive him of power, who had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage. For by the sin of one man all were made sinners. He that sins is the servant of sin; and does the will and works of him whose servant he is, and whose spirit leads him; for every one is a servant to him whom he serves, whether of sin unto death, or of obe-

dience unto righteousness; for he that does unjustly shall receive according to his works. To them Paul speaks, that they should awaken from the sleep of sin and death, so that the second death shall have no power over them; saying, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light," Eph. 5: 14.

On the other hand, all those who are born and renewed from above out of God, through the living word, are also of the mind and disposition, and have the same propensity for good, as he has of whom they are born and begotten. What the nature of God or Christ is, we may readily learn from the sacred Scriptures; for Christ has expressly portrayed himself in his word; namely, his human nature, which he would have us understand, and follow; not according to his divine nature; for he is the true image of the invisible God, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, who dwells in ineffable light whom none can approach or see, but that we follow him and conform unto him in his life and walk upon earth, as exemplified in words and works; that we, thereby, may become partakers of his nature in the Spirit. In the Scriptures Christ is every where represented to us as being humble, meek, merciful, just, holy, wise, spiritual, long suffering, patient, peaceable, lovely, obedient, and good, as the perfection of all things; for in him there is sincerity. Behold, this is the image of God, or Christ in the Spirit, whose example we should follow till we become like it in nature, and evince it by our walk; all the regenerated children of God are thus minded, for they partake of the nature of him who has begotten them; and are as the others, comprised in one word, namely, Godly, or godly persons, having communion with him, are of one mind and disposition with him, and have the image of God in them, as the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testaments, abundantly show, especially in the epistle of Paul to the Colossians, where he says, "Put off the old man with his deeds," and, "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him;" "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind,

meekness, long suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye; and above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness; and let the peace of God rule in your hearts to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful," Col. 3: 9—15. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you," "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," for Christ is the image of God to whom we must conform. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Those, therefore, who have conformed to the image of Christ Jesus, are the truly regenerated children of God, and have put off the old man, and put on the new which is created after God, in true righteousness and holiness.

When these have conformed to the image of God, have been born of God, and afterwards continue in God, they will not commit sin, for the seed of God remains in them; and they have overcome the world, are crucified to the world, and the world unto them; have mortified their flesh, and buried their sinful body with Christ in baptism, with their lusts and desires, and no longer serve sin unto unrighteousness, but much more righteousness unto salvation; for they have put on Christ, and are purified through the Holy Ghost, in their consciences, from dead works to serve the living God; bringing forth through the Spirit the fruits of the Spirit, whose end is eternal life. For since they, as above said, have renounced the devil, flesh, and the world, and have quitted the service of sin, they have, as faithful servants, voluntarily obligated themselves to God with David, to live, henceforth, according to his blessed will all their days. On the other hand the devil and his adherents, the world and flesh, being very envious, are waging war against them, and are their deadly enemies. The regenerated have now become enemies of sin and the devil, and have taken the field against all their enemies, with their Prince of life and faith, under the banner of the red cross, armed with the armor of God, and sur-

rounded with angels of the Lord, always watching with great solicitude, lest they be overcome by their enemies, who never slumber, but go about like roaring lions seeking whom they may devour; and although they receive occasionally a wound, and are overtaken by their enemies, still their souls remain uninjured, and this wound is not unto death: for they have the unction of God. They have the true Samaritan and the true physician with them, who binds up and heals their wounds; for he has compassion over our weakness and sickness. Through his stripes and wounds we are made whole. Nor are they so thoroughly overcome that they will cast aside their weapons, and surrender themselves again, to become servants of sin, and to be ruled by it; but being encouraged anew of the Lord, and in the strength of his power, they persevere valiantly in battle, till they, through him, by whom they can do all things, have gloriously conquered their enemy, and say to him, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And with Paul say, Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. "The Lord," says Jeremiah, "is with me as a mighty, terrible one, therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail," and say with David, "Blessed be the Lord, my strength, which teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight," and they are not moved till they have broken their enemies to pieces. "Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us as a prey in their teeth; our soul is escaped, as a bird out of the snare of the fowler: the snare is broken, and we are escaped" from our enemies, and out of the hand of those who hate us. The Lord is a rewarder of them that diligently seek, love and serve him; as it is written, "Behold the Lord cometh, and his reward is with him;" yea, his reward and the gift of God are eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. For, if you serve the Lord Jesus Christ, you will receive the reward of your inheritance, the crown of life, which God has promised those who love him.

As stated above, that every creature has the nature and disposition of that of which it is born, therefore, we will speak a few words concerning the nature, properties and

effects of the seed of the divine word, whereby we are begotten in the image of God; for where this seed is sown upon good ground, into the heart of man, there it grows and produces its like in nature and property, it changes and renews the whole man, from the carnal into the spiritual, the earthly into the heavenly, it transforms from death unto life, from unbelief to belief, and makes man happy, for through this seed all nations upon the earth are blessed. Therefore, says James, "Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls." It is also the pure, unadulterated milk, whereby the young and new born children of God are nurtured, till they attain to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, it is also strong food for the perfect and aged in Christ Jesus. In short, this seed of the divine word is spiritual food, whereby the whole inner man is ascertained, so that he perish and faint not in this wilderness and desolate world, as all have to starve and faint who do not daily gather the bread of the divine word to satisfy their starving souls, for "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Therefore, is he blessed who hungers after this heavenly bread, and receives the ingrafted word; for it will bring forth after its nature, in due time, an hundred fold. For, says the Lord, "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please," Isa. 55: 10, 11.

Behold, this is the nature, property and effects of the seed of the word of God, by which man is renewed, regenerated, sanctified and saved through this incorruptible seed, namely, the living word of God which abides to eternity; and that he is clothed with the same power from above, filled with the Holy Ghost, and thus united to God, that he may become a partaker of the divine nature, and be made conformable to the im-

age of his Son, who is the first of the regenerated, and those who rose with him from the sleep and death of sin, henceforth serve him not in the oldness of the letter, but in newness of the Spirit.

He that is sincere, and has this nature and disposition in his heart, has put on Christ Jesus, is become like unto him, has the image of God in his heart, and is spiritually minded, is led by the Spirit in his spirit, from whose spiritual body, spiritual fruits are brought forth, as a well springing up unto eternal life. For they are regenerated through the word which was sown in their hearts, begotten of God, and born anew to bring forth fruit of eternal life; they, therefore, as children born of God, are the same as the Father, of one mind and disposition; have the divine nature of their Father, who has begotten them; whose thoughts are heavenly, whose words are truth, well seasoned, whose good works are holy, acceptable to God and man; for they are holy vessels of honor, useful and ready to every good work.

Even as Paul exhorts those who are born of the corruptible seed of flesh and blood, who are earthly, carnal, without understanding and blind in divine things, yea, children of wrath, that they should die unto sin, mortify and bury the lusts and desires of the flesh, and then rise by virtue of the heavenly seed from the sleep and death of sin, and be regenerated, and walk in newness of life, which is the first resurrection, saying, "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." So does he also admonish all regenerated children of God, who have been changed in mind and disposition, through the eternal saving seed of God, who have been regenerated and are risen, that they should be godly, spiritually and heavenly minded, and strive for and desire heavenly, incorruptible things; and that their heart should be where their treasure is, and their conversation in heaven, as fellow saints of the house of God, telling them, "If then ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God, when

Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory," Col. 3: 1—4. Here we have an account how the regenerated children of God who have risen with Christ from the dead, and now live with him, converse upon heavenly things, and appear to the world as not living, for their life is hid in God, as St. John says, "Now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." 1 John 3: 2.

With these and the like words the Scriptures admonish the truly regenerated and those who have arisen, that they should take heed to their calling, and continue perfect in a new, godly walk, for if they have been made partakers of Christ, they should persevere to the end, lest they again depart from the living God through the deceitfulness of sin and an evil heart of unbelief; and they should remain steadfast and perfect, as the chosen children of God, and inherit the kingdom of their Father, and reign in eternity and rule over sin, death, devil and hell, and all the enemies of the kingdom, whom they overcome with Christ, as valiant men; therefore, will they also sit with Christ at the table of the Lord, and eat the bread and drink the wine of the kingdom of heaven; even as Christ overcame, and sitteth with his Father in his kingdom which is prepared for them; as a city well fortified; free from all care of their enemies; in full rest, full of life and joy; for they eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of Paradise; which pleasure garden is ever close to the unregenerated, who are still earthly and carnally minded, who still have by nature the vail and partition wall of sin before their hearts.

These are they, who died with Christ unto sin, and have truly risen; they are the new born, to whom the power is given to become the sons of God; were redeemed out of all nations; have on the wedding garments against the marriage of the Lamb; have received the sign TAU in their foreheads by which the servants of God are designated; these are the spiritual bride of Christ, his holy church, his spiritual body, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. They have come

to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God, which came down from heaven; have come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly of the church of the first born which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; they are fellow citizens in the household of God who have put off the corruptible garment, and put on the incorruptible; have acknowledged the name of God, and kept his commandments, and the faith of Jesus; the true sheep of Christ, who hear his voice, and follow no other: the first fruits of his creatures, who have the Spirit and mind of Christ, therefore, they know what the will of the Lord is; yea, the chosen generation, the spiritual and royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; who in times past were not a people, but now the people of God, for God had compassion on them; these are the souls who were slain, under the altar, for the word of God.

In short, with them old things have passed away; behold all things have become new; but this is all of God, who has reconciled us unto himself through Jesus Christ; these are they who stand before the throne of God, with palms in their hands, and clothed in white, saying, "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power and might be unto our God forever and ever, Amen," Rev. 7: 12.

This is a short instruction concerning the spiritual resurrection or new birth, and the difference between the natural and spiritual; between the earthly and the heavenly; and how every one is disposed, inclined, and of what mind he is, according to his birth or origin, and that he is of the same disposition, of the same mind and of such a nature as that is of which he is born, that which generated him; for the natural man is not spiritual, neither is that which is born of flesh and blood, the spiritual birth of God from heaven; but like produces like. As the natural man is, so are they, who are naturally born. Such as God is, who is a Spirit and dwells in heaven, such are also they who are spiritually born from heaven, who far exceed those naturally born of flesh.

Here, as in a mirror, one may view and examine himself, and judge of what birth,

mind, disposition, nature, life and conduct he is; for here a man, by taking a little pains, can judge and prove himself, for a man's walk, word and actions, and the thoughts of his heart, all show what he is; for man knows himself best, and no one knows what is in man, but the spirit which is in him.

Again: therefore, all those who find on proving themselves, that they are not renewed and regenerated after their first birth, according to the flesh, in mind, understanding, spirit and disposition, but are yet altogether carnally, earthly, worldly and devilishly minded; and from their depraved, inbred nature, are prone and willing to do all manner of evil, should humble themselves before God, with Jeremiah, saying, Let us examine and prove our ways, and let us turn unto the Lord, let us lift our hands and hearts to God in heaven, and say, We have sinned before heaven and in thy sight, and have excited thy wrath; Let us weep and let our eyes run over with water, and say with David, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker," and entreat him that he would make glad the work of his hands, and renew us whom he created; let us humbly entreat him for his Spirit, which is the great cause of all this, and say, Lord, send forth thy Spirit, and they will be created, and thou wilt renew the face of the earth, and thus they continue in prayer and in their desires to God, till they are clothed with the power of the Spirit from on high, converted and renewed in the spirit of their mind; and with astonishment say, This is the change wrought by the right hand of God, the most High, Ps. 104: 30; 95: 6.

Also let those, who, on examining themselves, find that they are born from above by the grace of God, and that they are new creatures in Christ, and have become a temple of God, take heed to themselves according to the counsel of the Scriptures, in order that, since they are washed, purified, regenerated and sanctified, they do not again defile themselves, and pollute the temple of God; for if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. They pray in the spirit with assured confidence, to God, their Father, with David, O God strengthen

us and confirm in us that which thou didst cause in us! He will then hear in his holy temple, according to his promise, For he is faithful who has begun the good work in you, he will also perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Peter says, "Give all diligence to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity; for if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins; wherefore, the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do

these things, ye shall never fall; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. 1: 5—11.

May the God of all grace, who will gather all his chosen in the last resurrection, into his kingdom, grant us such hearts, minds and dispositions, that we, through true faith, may die unto ourselves, deny and renounce ourselves, that we may have part in the first resurrection spoken of, which resurrection does not take place in the bodily resurrection from the dead, as will be the case in the other resurrection, at the last day, but this resurrection consists alone in dying unto, mortifying and burying the sinful body through putting off, and dying unto the old life, and to rise and be received into a new, divine conduct and pious life, Amen.

CONCLUSION.

HERE, kind reader, you have a brief instruction of the first, or *Spiritual Resurrection from death or the sleep of sin*, also some inducements to awaken and arise, and henceforth to live a new, godly, pious, unblamable life, according to the example of Jesus Christ, as the Scriptures abundantly instruct us, and as is partially related here; for the Father himself, in heaven directs us to Christ, and says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." He says, Ye shall hear him. Moses also testifies of him, and says, "The Lord, thy God, will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;" and "every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people," Deut. 18: 15; Acts 3: 23.

Thus we counsel and admonish all in general, of whatever name, rank, class or condition; that they would be pleased to take good heed to the word of the Lord, which we have here briefly presented, according to our limited gift; I hope, by the

grace of God, that you will find nothing in it but the infallible truth of Jesus Christ, for we have not directed you to men, nor to the doctrine, nor commands of men, but alone to Jesus Christ, and to his holy word which he taught and left upon earth, and sealed it with his blood and death, and afterwards had it promulgated throughout the world, by his faithful witnesses and holy apostles.

Besides, we say, that all doctrines, which do not agree with the doctrine of Jesus Christ and his apostles, if ever so fair in appearance, they are accursed. For his word is the truth, and his command is eternal life, therefore, we kindly entreat you, from our inmost souls, that you be pleased to accept and read with an understanding heart, this our *Instruction concerning the Spiritual Resurrection and New Creature*, and compare and prove it with the doctrines of the apostles; if it does not agree with theirs, let it be accursed, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."