

Believing for Fulfilment

by Victor Hall

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Believing for fulfilment

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1st Edition: May 2008

Published by **visionone**

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Introduction

My theme in this booklet is Mary's faith. Our starting point will be the story of Mary's interaction with the angel Gabriel as he brought the word of the Lord to her. We will begin in the Gospel of Luke chapter one. The reports of these stories are short, but they are full of content to do with eternal consequences. So let's look at the detail of this interaction. Some of the statements I make may startle you a little as to the reality of Mary's faith as she responded to the word of the messenger sent from God. We are only just beginning to realise the full implications for all believers in her response to this word.

'Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.' Luke 1:26-29.

Mary's initial response gives us an early indication of her faith. She is not overawed, but has set herself to meet the messenger and his word.

'Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His

name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I do not know a man?” And the angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.” Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.’ Luke 1:30-38.

How long did this conversation take? We read it in just one or two minutes. Amazing! A heavenly visitor appears, and in the length of time it takes him to deliver the message, Mary embraces the amazing dimensions of the word she hears, and makes an instant faith response.

‘Now Mary arose in those days and said: “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour”.’ Luke 1:39, 46,47.

‘He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.’ Luke 1:54,55.

‘But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman [Notice those words: God sent forth His Son, born of a woman’. Gabriel is sent from God

to bring this word and, as he is coming, the Son is sent forth to be born of this woman.], born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.' Gal 4:4,5. In the context of this meditation, I will express it this way: God sent forth His Son, born of a woman that we might receive the adoption as sons.

To conclude this introduction we will note another important passage of Scripture. 'Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.' Rom 1:3,4.

The Faith of Abraham

In the light of this brief introduction, I can now make some comments and statements. You will be aware of some of the matters I raise, and some you will not. I'd encourage you to give yourself to further study of any points which are unfamiliar to you.

In order to help us understand Mary's faith, I will need to provide further definition of 'faith'. In that way we can see in essence how simple faith really is.

All faith proceeds from God Himself. Faith is first of all the substance of His own dialogue as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. In this dialogue, the Father communicated His faith and desire for many sons. In His faith, the Son emptied Himself to the bosom of the Father to become the firstborn Son. John 1:18. He became the Word of the Father. As the Word, He proceeded to declare the faith of Yahweh to us. It is Christ who proclaims the faith of God for all humanity. Faith is born in us when we receive the word of Christ. 'So faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.' Rom 10:17.

So then, when we believe His word, we participate in the faith of God. By this means, His faith becomes our faith. As Paul said, 'The life I now live, I live by the faith of the Son of God'. Gal 2:20. This is what the New Testament simply calls 'the faith'.

In our endeavour to understand Mary's faith, it is impossible for us not to consider the faith of Abraham. We can say without doubt that Mary found what Abraham found in terms of faith. Abraham was to be the 'father' of Christ according to the flesh; Mary was to be the mother of our Lord according to the flesh.

In the New Testament, Abraham is called 'the father of all those who believe'. Rom 4:11. His faith has become a primary example of the faith by which the promises of God are fulfilled. Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him for righteousness. Rom 4:3. He participated in the faith of God and believed to reveal the firstborn Son in the flesh. He believed that the Father's firstborn Son would become his son and that, in this Seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Gen 22:18. He believed that God would give life to the dead and call into being that which did not exist. Rom 4:17. As we will see, Mary showed this same faith in response to the word that came to her from the angel Gabriel. In like manner, we also are to have this same faith response to the word of the messenger as it comes to us.

The blessing of Abraham

Abraham became the father of faith, because he did not believe for himself alone. By believing that Christ would become his Seed, Abraham paved the way for the nations after him to be blessed. This was God's promise: that all those 'who are of faith [would be] blessed with Abraham, the believer'. Gal 3:9. By faith in Christ, we receive the same blessing as Abraham. Paul defined the blessing of Abraham in his letter to the Galatians. He spoke of Christ

redeeming us so ‘the blessing of Abraham might come ... that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith’. Gal 3:13.

So, being specific, the blessing of Abraham is the promise of the Spirit. Further still, this is the promise of receiving the Spirit of His Son or, we can simply say, the adoption. The Father sends forth the Spirit of the Son into our hearts crying, ‘Abba, Father!’ Gal 4:6. We are born from above as sons of the Father, and joint-heirs with Christ. Rom 8:17.

We are brought into the body of Christ, into the *position* of a son, where the Father sends forth the Spirit of the Son into our hearts. Abraham believed for the many nations, like the stars of heaven, to be adopted in the one Son.

The Lord imputed the substance of this blessing to Abraham when He met him as Melchizedek. It is clear from the book of Hebrews that Melchizedek is Christ Himself.

At the point when Abraham met Melchizedek, he was himself a king of kings. He had just subdued the current kings of the world, overcoming them all by faith. Now Melchizedek had come out to teach Abraham about offering and participation. He had come to impart the substance of the blessing to Abraham. Accordingly, He brought out bread and wine – the elements of participation in offering. We recall the words of Paul: ‘the cup of blessing, is it not the communion? The bread which we break, is it not the communion?’ 1 Cor 10:16. Bread and wine are the elements of participation. In the same way that the disciples were offered these elements at the last

supper, so also Abraham partook of the life of Christ. He was blessed.

Participation

In common with the disciples at the last supper, he didn't yet fully understand the nature of his participation. However, he did immediately understand the need to participate. He understood that God was the possessor of heaven and earth, and so responded by paying a tithe of all that he had. This was more than recognition of God's supremacy over creation and over the temporal spoils of battle.

Abraham received a revelation that Melchizedek – Yahweh Son and firstborn Son – was the Heir of all things. All things have been created through Him and for Him. He was before all things, without genealogy or beginning of days, and in Him all things consisted. Heb 7:3. Melchizedek was imparting the substance of the blessing to Abraham so that he could overcome through faith. He was to be possessor of heaven and earth, a joint-heir of all things. Abraham was able to believe and look forward to the revelation of many sons in the new heavens and new earth. However, this blessing would only be realised by the participation in Christ's offering, which is exactly how Abraham's story unfolds, shortly after his meeting with Melchizedek.

‘After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram¹ in a vision, saying, “Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward”. But Abram said, “Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?” Then Abram said, “Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!” ‘ Gen 15:1,2.

The promise of God

Abraham had become king of kings by faith but he was still unfulfilled with respect to the promise of God. He was yet to bring forth an heir from his own body. On this account, Abraham may have been apprehensive, or even fearful. But the Lord said, ‘Do not fear’. He preached peace to Abraham in the same way that He later preached peace to all men from the cross. The works were finished before the foundation of the world, and Abraham simply needed to participate in the word of the Lord’s faith.

‘And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir”. Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them”. And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be”. And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.’ Gen. 15:1-6.

1. At this point in his life, Abram had not been re-named by the Lord to be Abraham, the father of many nations.

The Lord had promised Abraham that he would have a son. So Abraham was looking for a son as the reward for his faith. Now here was Yahweh Son – ‘I AM’, the only begotten Son of the Father – who is the Lord God, speaking to Abraham. He was saying, ‘Don’t be afraid. I will be your reward. I will be your heir. I will be your seed.’ In this encounter, Yahweh Son was telling Abraham that He Himself would be his son. Paul spoke of ‘knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance, it is the Lord Christ whom you serve’. Col 3:24. When Abraham put forward the alternative that one who was at least born in his house could be the heir, the Lord quickly corrected him. ‘One shall come forth from your own body, He shall be your heir.’ Gen 15:4.

An amazing encounter

We can only imagine the astonishment of Abraham at this point. Think on what it is he’s being asked to believe here. God the Son, the Lord God, the only begotten Son of the Father, is proclaiming that He is going to become Abraham’s Son, the Son of Man. Not only was he being asked to believe that he would be quickened in his mortal body to have a son, he was also to believe that he could become the father, in the flesh, of the Father’s only begotten Son. He was going to reveal the firstborn Son in the flesh, in his body, in the same way that Yahweh Son emptied Himself to reveal the Father in the body prepared for Him. In fact, Abraham, by God’s faith and grace, was to become to the Son of Yahweh – exactly what Yahweh the Son was to the Father.

What an amazing encounter in faith! And it is meant to be no less amazing for every one of us. Through faith and by grace (that is, God's ability), Abraham was to become the father *in* the flesh and the father *of* the flesh of God (the Father's only begotten Son). He was to be the father of the Lord God who was standing before him, speaking to him in a vision. In effect, the Lord God was saying to him that from his seed, from his sperm, Mary would come, so that Abraham's flesh would be the flesh with which God would be clothed.

The word of promise

However, there is another marvellous dimension to this encounter as well. The Lord God said to Abraham, 'In you and in your seed, all the families of the earth will be blessed'. Gen 12:3. What does this mean? It means that included in this one Seed of the only begotten Son of the Father, standing before Abraham, were the names of *all* the sons of God. Your name was in that Seed. All the names of all the sons of God who would come forth from Christ to populate the new heavens and the new earth were included. God made known His word to Abraham and proclaimed it as His will and faith for the whole of humanity. Abraham believed and received the word of God and joined Them in the fellowship of Their faith. That is the fellowship of the faith of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Their covenant plan. The plan was called the 'word of promise'. Rom 9:9. Notice throughout the Scripture, the reference to a 'word of promise'. This plan put to Abraham was the word of promise, and through it he participated in the promise of God.

This is what Abraham heard and this is what he understood. This is what Abraham believed. That was some faith! *And*, it was accounted to him for righteousness.

We must never forget that we are to be of that same faith. This is what we believe in relation to our own sonship. Abraham believed to be both a son and a father. We too can participate in both of these dimensions of Abraham's faith.

Revealing Christ

Although we are not fathers in the same way Abraham was, we do participate in the faith of revealing Christ in our flesh, so that others are blessed. However, it is clear from Abraham's life, as the Scriptures record, that the revelation of his own sonship was not his first preoccupation. His primary faith was toward revealing Christ in the flesh. This is the answer to Paul's question, 'What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh, has found?' Rom 4:1.

Similarly, we must not be preoccupied with the revelation of *our* own sonship. Remember that our sonship is not revealed in the flesh until the day of resurrection. 1 John 3:2. The apostle Paul provides us with a clear example of the way we should live, in that he demonstrated the faith of the Father to form Christ in others. Gal 4:19. He also described himself as a priest, with the faith of the Son, for he found grace to be a 'minister of Christ Jesus, ministering as a priest the gospel of God'. Rom 15:16.

This was the faith of Abraham, a sojourner in the land, who believed to participate in God's purpose, and looked forward to a multitude of overcomers who would inherit all things. Rev 21:7.

So, in a nutshell, what is the sum and focus of faith? It is for the sonship purposed by God to be revealed in the flesh of men and women. As the apostle John tells us, 'as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God'. John 1:12.

The Faith of Mary

Let us now consider Mary's faith. It's clear that Mary and Abraham participated in the same work of God's faith. Mary was invited by Gabriel to participate with the Father in His begetting work. This the Father did to fulfil the 'good pleasure of His will'. 1 Cor 15:38. He was bringing His Firstborn into the world as the Son of Man, giving to Him a body of flesh through the motherhood of Mary. She was going to be the actualisation of the promise made to Abraham. She was going to provide the egg to which the Word would come. She was going to conceive. She was going to be the mother of our Lord, as Elizabeth had predicted. She was not the mother of God in the sense that some think, but the mother of our Lord as the handmaiden.

The conception process was by hearing, believing and receiving the word into her heart. She said, 'Let it be to me according to your word'. Luke 1:38. The word was conceived and made alive in her flesh by the work of the Holy Spirit. 'The Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory, full of grace and truth.' John 1:14.

Our resurrection bodies

Although this is not the main focus of our study, I want to draw your attention briefly to an important point. The flesh of the Son of God in Mary's womb is the flesh of our resurrection body. Now this may startle you! Let me show how we arrive at this amazing statement. This does not

make Mary the mother of us all, for the Scriptures declare that the Jerusalem which is from above, that is the church, is 'the mother of us all'. Gal 4:26.

The Scriptures record that we receive the adoption and become sons of God because Christ became flesh in the womb of Mary. Gal 4:4,5. Here is the key to understanding the adoption, the resurrection of the dead, the changing of our mortal bodies and their conformity to the substance of His glorious body.

We also read in the Scriptures that on the day that Christ raises the dead, 'He will fashion our resurrection bodies, conforming them to be like His glorious body'. Phil 3:21. Now, from where did He acquire this body? It all began when the Word that He was became flesh in the womb of the virgin Mary. He will fashion our resurrection bodies, conforming them to be like His glorious body because we are members of His body, flesh and bones. Eph 5:30.

Our bodies will be made of the substance of His glorious body. Christ told His disciples that when they saw Him after He was raised from the dead, they would see what they would be like. More than this, they were seeing themselves as they looked at Him. John says we will be like Him because we shall see Him as He is. 1 John 3:2.

Adoption

The adoption is completed on the day of our resurrection. This is the final phase of the adoption – the redemption of the physical body. Rom 8:23. Our bodies belong to Christ. 'The body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.' 1 Cor 6:13.

‘God raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power. Do you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ?’ 1 Cor 6:15. ‘Therefore glorify God in your body.’ 1 Cor 6:20. This is a wonderful verse. We glorify God in life, suffering and death. Christ’s life, sufferings and death are ours and are revealed in our mortal bodies. As we participate in His corporate body, His flesh becomes the bread of our life. His flesh and blood are partaken of through participation, communion and fellowship. The Word that became flesh in the womb of Mary is the word and flesh of our resurrection. He has said to us that He is our resurrection and life. John 11:25. He is the flesh. He, in the flesh, is a life-giving Spirit.

The glory of the Lord

In order to bring all this to pass, the power of the Highest was to overshadow Mary. This is what the angel said. As we look deeper into that statement, it means that the power of the Highest was to overshadow Mary as a shining cloud, and the glory of the Father – the only begotten Son – would become the son of Mary. Luke 1:35. The Father’s glory was revealed to Mary. This is the glory that was displayed before time, when He brought forth Yahweh the Son from Himself, as His only begotten Son. Heb 1:3. The only begotten Son is the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and has been made the Heir of all things, through whom He also made the worlds. Heb 1:2.

So Mary was to see the glory of the Son as the glory of the Father. She was called to join Him and participate in

seeing this 'begetting' become flesh. She was actually to view the person to whom she would be a mother after the flesh. For He did not begin to 'be' when He came forth from the bosom of the Father or when He came into the virgin's womb. He already 'was' – the Creator. In fact, we read that Mary, in her Magnificat sang, 'My soul doth magnify the Lord and my Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour'. Luke 1:46,47.

While the Son of Yahweh was in her flesh, she was in the Son of Yahweh. That is an amazing statement. She was participating. This is exactly the same truth about us. While Christ is in us, we are in Christ. The same principle of participation that was given to Mary is the participation that we enjoy in the body of Christ.

The Scriptures give us a picture of the glory that Mary saw: this glory of a fire, a light and a shining cloud enfolding itself.

Ezek 1. This was part of the vision Mary saw: One like the Son of Man, sitting on a throne, brought by the angelic administration. This is an amazing picture!

This is what the angel Gabriel said would happen. She would have this understanding. She would see this vision. Mary was called by the word to reckon in faith, with the Father, as His maidservant. She was to bring the Father's Firstborn into the world as a man of flesh and blood.

A work of believing

Now what was God asking? He was asking Mary to fulfil the work of believing. This is the work that we are doing as we hear the word declared to us. A work of believing! God

comes with a word of faith to us, about us, about our sonship.

So the work of believing is effective as the righteous work of God. We ask, 'Why is this so?' Just *believing* – how can this be the righteous work of God? Because when one believes what God is proposing and agrees to participate in God's plan, that person is participating in the faith of God toward them. For God has included them in His plan. He has faith for them.

The Scripture, in the book of Romans, discusses this whole principle. 'It is of faith that it might be according to grace.' Rom 4:16. Grace is God's ability and power to accomplish His plan. We sit, we hear, we believe, we receive, we commit; all because we believe that God has the ability to bring to pass the word of faith that He has for us.

Simple faith obedience

Mary's commitment to faith was to say, 'Behold the maidservant of the Lord. Let it be to me according to your word'. Her faith was defined and seen when she agreed to participate in the purpose of God by obeying His word as the maidservant of the Lord. By believing to participate in the birth of the only begotten Son, in the flesh, she established herself and her son Jesus in the lineage of Abraham and David.² The word concerning the Seed was promised to Abraham and it was fulfilled in Mary. It was in her womb that the Word actually became flesh. In this

2. We note here that this word concerning the Seed was confirmed in David, for the Lord was also the Son of David according to the flesh.

action of bringing forth, Mary followed the same steps of the faith as Abraham. She believed to reveal Christ in the flesh. Mary rejoiced, knowing that she was carrying her Lord in the womb, and that she was named in Him. By this means, He was in her, and she was in Him.

In this knowledge, she burst forth with the proclamation, 'My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour'. Luke 1:47. The Lord had regard for Mary's humble state, and she was blessed along with believing Abraham. Truly the lesser was blessed by the greater as she participated in the faith of God to bring forth Christ. Heb 7:7.

Mary demonstrated the simple faith-obedience that was necessary for participation in the Lord's salvation. When the Lord spoke, she simply said, 'Let it be to me according to your word'. Luke 1:38

The appointed time

Her cousin Elizabeth proclaimed that Mary was blessed for her believing, and called her 'the mother of my Lord'. Luke 1:43. Elizabeth would have known that her Lord was in the womb of Mary, and that she also was named in Him. Remarkably, even John the Baptist, who was still a babe in the womb of Elizabeth, leapt for joy! Truly, the heavens and the earth could erupt with rejoicing, for unto us a Child was born and 'of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end'. Isa 9:7. This was the appointed time. Christ was about to be born of a woman, born under the law so that we might be redeemed and receive the adoption as sons. The Lord had remembered His covenant

with Abraham. Luke 1:72,73. Christ was coming in the flesh to give life to the dead and call into being that which did not exist. Rom 4:17.

The angel who spoke to Mary proclaimed, 'with God, nothing will be impossible'. Luke 1:37. These were the very same words spoken by the Lord to Abraham and Sarah concerning the birth of Isaac. Initially, Sarah laughed when the Lord said she would have a son. She subsequently believed and received capacity to conceive. However, in contrast, Mary immediately believed. What amazing faith! She responded, 'Behold the bond-slave of the Lord; let it be done to me according to Your word'. The Lord had proclaimed His faith to her, and she believed His word. She believed that no word whatsoever was impossible with God.

Faith came by hearing, and so Mary was participating in the faith of God. The Lord was reckoning righteousness to her, not as some kind of legal qualification, for righteousness is in fact the irresistible proceeding of God's purpose. The righteousness of God was being fulfilled in her through her participation in faith – the faith of God's own purpose.

By the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High, the Word became flesh in her womb. The greater outcome than this, for Mary, was that later she herself would be born from above, to become a joint-heir with Christ. Mary was not born from above when the word became flesh in her womb. Christ was in her flesh, yet she had to wait until after His resurrection to receive from Him, through the Holy Spirit, the seed of her own birth as a son of God. She

received this when He breathed the breath of the new creation.

Place of no transgression

She became the blessed of the Lord because through faith she submitted herself to become the mother of our Lord. By doing this, Mary found the place where a person is justified before God – the place of faith, the place of no transgression.

I am introducing a new thought now. She found justification by faith. This is the same thing Abraham found. When we are listening to what God is saying, believing it and accepting it, we are, at that point, committing no sin. We are in the place of faith, which is a place of no transgression. This is the place where the grace of God is. This is what was happening to Mary when she said, ‘Let it be to me according to your word’.

It is no different for us as we receive the word coming to us about our sonship. We have to hear it and believe it. We also can know the place of no transgression in the same way that Mary and Abraham found the place of pure faith. It's the place where only the faith of God stands. By participation in the Lord's faith, we are reckoned to be in Christ and therefore dead to sin and alive to God. Rom 6:11. Of course, God is not ignorant of our sins. However, the blood of Christ is effective for the cleansing and removal of all sin. God freely justifies the ungodly. Rom 4:5.

David rejoiced in this revelation when he wrote, ‘Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin’. Rom 4:8.

When we believe God, it is evident that He is working for us in two ways. Firstly, He is *not* reckoning sin to us. And, secondly, He is reckoning righteousness to us. So, 'If God is for us, who can be against us?' Rom 8:31. This is the place of no transgression.

The truth is marvellously straightforward. Through participation in faith, the finished work of Calvary is imputed to us. The Lord imputes righteousness as the substance of the word to us. Faith is indeed the substance of things hoped for. Heb 11:1. The word will be fulfilled because the capacity is in the word to accomplish the purpose for which it was sent. 'My word shall not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire.' Isa 55:11.

Conclusion

The incarnation manifested and declared, 'the Father's kind intention to the world'. Eph 1:5. The Father's only begotten Son – He who was already born of God – came into creation, born of a woman. The Word was made flesh. This was Christ who was the sum and seed of new creation, demonstrating to us that the sons of men can be the sons of God. We, the human race, created flesh and blood, are invited to come and participate in the begetting process of the Father in Christ.

Mary's faith is the same faith that we must all demonstrate if we are to participate in the Father's plan. In his second epistle, Peter called this 'like precious faith'. 2 Peter 1:1. In a way not unlike the way He came to Abraham and Mary, the Lord comes to us by a messenger to proclaim this faith to us. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the Son draws us

into participation in His body, where the Father calls us by name. We are remembered in Christ.

When this word comes to us, we are to receive it, believe it, and reckon toward it. Like Mary, we must cry out, 'Let it be to me according to Your word'. This is the work of faith, whereupon the Lord reckons righteousness toward us. Accordingly, the word accomplishes the Father's desire in us. We are included in the body of Christ, and redeemed to the position of a son.

The Father sends forth the Spirit of the Son into our hearts and we cry out, 'Abba, Father!' We are born from above, and brought forth as heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. By faith, we now participate in offering, and overcome all obstacles to the revealing of Christ in our flesh. And by faith we look forward to the new heavens and new earth when we will be revealed with Him in glory.

We are being called at this time to participate in the begetting process of the Father, in Christ. This adoptive process that is in the Son is able to bring us forth as a new creation in Him, making us sons of God. As such, we may then go forth and inherit the new heavens and the new earth.