

The Secret of Feeding

Feeding is the second section of God's organic salvation. In God's organic salvation feeding is the continuation of regeneration. As all mothers know, after a baby has been delivered, the baby needs feeding. Mothers also know that the best way to comfort and satisfy a baby is to nurse him, feeding him with milk. Feeding is, therefore, the continuation of birth, of regeneration.

Regeneration brings us into a divine existence and makes us divine persons. As the continuation of regeneration, feeding enables us to maintain and develop our divine existence. Feeding is an ongoing process that will continue through all the following sections of God's organic salvation—sanctification, renewing, transformation, building up, conformation, and glorification. Feeding, therefore, will continue all the way from regeneration to glorification. If we see this, we will not look down on the matter of feeding. It is by feeding that we receive the element with which God sanctifies us, and it is by feeding that we receive the riches with which God renews us, transforms us, builds us up, conforms us, and glorifies us.

We feed the newborn babes, the new believers, with the milk of the word, which is the Spirit (John 6:63; Eph. 6:17), for their growth in the divine life unto their daily salvation (1 Pet. 2:2). In John 6:63 the Lord Jesus said, "The words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." The fact that the word is life implies that it contains nourishing milk. According to 1 Peter 2, we feed on the milk of the word in order to "grow unto salvation." This salvation is not the eternal salvation, which we have already, but the daily salvation.

The Continual Feeding

The initial feeding is followed by the continual feeding. The continual feeding is to feed the growing believers with the solid word, which is the Spirit of life (Heb. 5:14), for their maturity in the divine life unto transformation and conformation to the image of Christ. At first, a mother feeds her baby with milk, but as the child grows, she feeds him with solid food. The principle is the same in feeding the growing believers. Certain portions of the Bible are solid food. For example, the word concerning the New Jerusalem in Revelation 21 and 22 is not milk but solid food. If we drink only milk, we cannot mature. In order to mature, we need solid food.

A mother does not put all the food that she has into the mouth of her small child. Rather, she gives him the proper proportion daily, and after one, two, and eventually eighteen years, he grows up. This is the right way for the church as a family, a home, to bring up the new converts.

The proper way is that we first feed on the word so that our spirit will be nourished. Then we study, we learn the word, so that our mind may be renewed and enlightened. We are not beings who are only spirit, like the angels. We are persons with a spirit and a mind. For our spirit we need nourishment, and for our mind we need enlightenment, teaching, and education. We should not be unbalanced. We have to be balanced. In this way our mind will be enlightened day by day by learning the word, and also our spirit will be nourished day by day by feeding on the word. We need to practice these two sides.