

Partaking of the Divine Nature: A Dying and Living Sacrifice



Yielding Jonathan Farrell

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, that through these you may escape from the corruption that is in the world because of passion, and become partakers of the divine nature

2 Peter 1:3-4

What does it mean to be a partaker of the divine nature?

Does it mean that if we are partakers of the divine nature, we have supernatural power and that we can walk down the street and snap our fingers and turn the trees into stone?

Often people think that having divine nature might mean having supernatural wisdom so that we can read people's minds and foretell the future.

Now, there may be times when supernatural power, supernatural wisdom attend the ways of the children of God. But that's not God's nature.

To have God's nature, simply, is that now, instead of having a nature which is set upon taking, we become like God, with a nature that is set upon giving.

All the time, giving.

Instead of following the corrupt human nature... always trying to acquire, to increase, to hoard, to build up for ourselves....now the one thing that matters to us, the one thing we live for, is to constantly give.

When the divine nature which is to give, comes down into this sin warped human race, giving becomes a sacrifice.

It becomes a costly sacrifice.

It becomes a bloody sacrifice.

Because this sin warped human race will always trample on divine love and kill it.

And also because God knows that if we are ever to come into his fellowship again, a blood sacrifice is necessary.

So if we're ever really going to be able to get hold of the promises of God... by which we can escape the corruption which is in the world through passion...through lust, and become partakers of the divine nature...

We're going to have to see the divine nature.

We're going to have to have eyes that see what God is really like. How good he is.

We're going to have to see that he's giving us the very best he has, his treasure of treasures, his pearl of great price, his only begotten son.

God's nature is not seen in displays of power, or manifestations of force, or supernatural fireworks.

Gods' nature is seen in his unspeakable kindness, patience, and generosity.

There was once a man who owned a small factory and with it he made himself quite a fortune. The wages his workers received were more than fair. And yet his employees resented the fact that this man drove to work every day in a chauffeur driven Rolls Royce, and lived in a magnificent mansion on a hill overlooking the town.

"Sure, we're getting paid twice as much as all other factory workers in the land, but we don't drive a car like his, chauffeur driven, and we don't live in a mansion like he has, and our kids don't go to the best schools in the country as his son does".

One day, the economy took a sudden plunge and in a very short time, millions of workers across the land were unemployed. Unemployment insurance benefits quickly expired. Blue Cross coverage ran out. The famous soup lines of the Great Depression reappeared again. But somehow this little factory kept right on chugging along. Not one worker was laid off. Everybody got a paycheck each week.

Somebody wondered who was buying our product, since factory after factory were closing and businesses were going bankrupt all over the country. But after a while they just shrugged their shoulders and went back to work.

One day the boss appeared at the factory without his Rolls Royce. In fact, he walked and walked every day after that, but his smile was still the same. It was rumored that his son was brought back from university, for some strange reason. Then one day, five moving fans pulled

up in front of the mansion and emptied out all the fancy furniture and drove off with it. But the factory kept going and people got their paychecks every week. And then the boss sold the mansion and moved his family through a cheap flat on the lower side of town. That winter, his wife caught pneumonia and died. But his grief was not strong enough to keep him from taking care of business. The factory kept going, people got their paychecks. His son was now working in the factory. One day, one of the employees came in drunk and stumbled into a conveyor and in saving that employee's life, the son was killed. Still, the factory stayed open. The employees began to notice that the boss had lost quite a bit of weight and his suit was rather tattered.

"Surely, said his secretary to him one day, "if you can afford to keep this factory open, you can afford to buy yourself a new suit". "I can afford to keep this factory open one more week" he said. "Then what will you do, I suppose you'll close the factory and retire in Florida" she said. "Retire in Florida with what" he replied? "You mean you spent all your money to keep us working? You've lost your wife. You've lost your son. You've lost your money. Don't you regret it"? "Of course not", he answered.

Before the end of the week, a huge order came in, bringing with it enough money to keep the factory operating. But to this very day, there's a division among the employees as to the mystery behind 'the factory that never closed'. Many of them, the majority of them, attributed it to some kind of luck. Only a few knew who it was who paid the price. And paid it gladly. And those who know have never felt as safe again.



Wisdom Jonathan Farrell

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9

Though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

Philippians 2:6-8

Ever since the garden of Eden, Satan has been trying to mislead the human race as to what God is really like, has been trying to get us to be suspicious, untrusting, anxious, full of dread in our attitude toward God.

If it thunders, God is angry. If it's lightning God is really angry. If the sun comes out after the storm, God has been appeased.

But if you want to know what God is like you don't look at the thunder and the lightning. The thunder, the thunder, the sunshine, and the rain all belong to God.

If you want to know what God is like, you have to look into God's heart.

And God's heart is in his son.

"This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased".

"This is my beloved son, listen to him".

And what do you see when you look at God's son?

You see a sacrifice.

You see innocence offering itself for us.

You see love.

***Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.***

***But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities;
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,
and with his stripes we are healed.***



***All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way;
and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.***

Isaiah 53:4-6

Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

That's what God is like.

Do we really want to be partakers of the divine nature?

If we really want to be partakers of the divine nature so that it comes down and gets hold of our hearts, we must understand that for the divine nature to truly possess our hearts that each one of us and all of us corporately become together a living sacrifice.

So that now our lives are spent, and poured out, and given, even unto death...gladly... out of thanksgiving for him who laid down his life.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Romans 12: 1-2

Just as surely as the divine nature in this world becomes a dying sacrifice...

....so the divine nature in our hearts and bodies....becomes a living sacrifice.

If we are partakers of the divine nature, then we no longer are living to get, and acquire, and extend our influence and horn our power over others.

But now like God.... our purpose, our one purpose, is to give, to pour ourselves out, to spend ourselves... so that we might build, and save, and heal, and encourage, and strengthen those around us.

And we do this not in order to get to heaven, or to build up brownie points, or to sanctify ourselves...we do it because this is our nature.

Having seen God's love for us, what else can we do?

To present our bodies as a living sacrifice means forgiving with our hearts and minds

Becoming transformed by the renewal of our mind means first of all that we begin to forgive gladly as God has forgiven us. So that we take our rights, and our grudges, and the scars that have been put upon us by the wrongs wrought against us by other people and lay all of them on the altar.

And praise God as they go up in the flames and disappear.



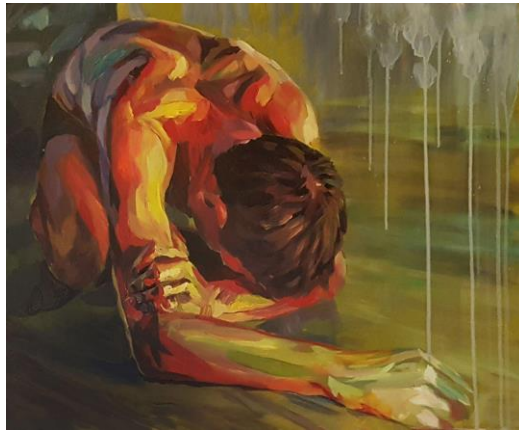
What a relief to be able to forgive as God has forgiven us.

To present our bodies as a living sacrifice means that we begin to forebear

We forebear the way God has been forbearing and patient with us. So that we give people a little bit of room... instead of crowding in on them, and jumping on them, and judging them, we pray for them. We even endure mistreatment from their hands.

When we remember the long years we walked on God's goodness, trampling on his very heart.

To present our bodies as a living sacrifice means that we spend ourselves



Fire and Water Jonathan Farrell

Now our one purpose in life is to spend ourselves and give ourselves to show God's mercy.... exactly in the place where we now find ourselves, touching the lives around us with it.

When people carry their Bibles around and talk about Jesus, but are stingy, self-conserving, quick to judge, cautious, unwilling to expose themselves to the pain and anguish around them, this means that their vision of Jesus, if they ever had one, has shriveled down to the size of their own withered spirits.

If we carry the nature of God in us, if we really share the divine nature, what else are we here for? What other purpose do we have but to give forth and spend and do mercy right where we are.... to give.

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

1 John 3:16-18

The test of anything that calls itself Christian, including your life and mine.

Does it bear the mark of the divine nature?

Does it give some evidence that it has been to the cross and been changed?

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The divine nature in this world.....Is a dying sacrifice.

The divine nature in our hearts....Is a living sacrifice.

May God today right now refresh our vision of his heart, that seeing what his heart is like....our hearts may break, melt, humble themselves and become like his.



Covered in Love Jonathan Farrell

Let's Pray: We're asking Lord Jesus that you would manifest yourself to us today, again. And by the power of the Spirit reveal to us who you are. That seeing you again afresh today we may be delivered from our obsession with ourselves. And in your power, mercy, forgiveness and grace may we become the Father's children once again. We ask it for your mercy's sake because of your shed blood. Amen.

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Prayer: Lord how wonderful you are that you would offer us the gift of partaking in your divine nature, this great gift to us which cost you so much. Oh Lord, make it so precious to us that we are able to rise up and offer a living sacrifice for your dying sacrifice. And yes give us hearts that break, melt and humble themselves like yours. That the love of what you have done for us causes us to take on your giving nature, causes us to spend ourselves for others, causes our hearts and minds to be ever willing to forbear the weaknesses of others, causes us to be ever willing to spend forth the mercy you have given to us.... And causes us to forgive completely, laying our bitterness and pain on the altar, as an offering to you, to be burnt up in the flames of your love. That our living sacrifice of giving all these things, of reaching into your heart becomes a daily act of worship to you and that we are filled with abundant life as we partake of your divine nature. Amen.

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