

Partakers of the Divine Nature

His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3).

Christ shared our *human* nature so that we might share His *divine* nature. We do not become God, but we do become sons of God. We never become Almighty, but we do become mighty in Christ. We will never know more than Christ, but “we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16).” “As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I will be satisfied with Thy likeness when I awake,” says David in Psalm 17:15. Even in this lifetime we can be changed into that glory little by little: “But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18).”

Ephesians 3:19 indicates the degree to which we will become like God. Paul prays that you will “know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to *all the fulness of God*.” The book of Ephesians emphasizes Christian fulness and maturity. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:13 that those who minister to us will continue to do so “until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the *fulness of Christ*.” Because of these promises, namely that we will be filled up to the fulness of God and the fulness of Christ, Paul can then command us in Ephesians 5:1, “Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.” This command would be utterly impossible were it not for the previous promises.

In fact, the *whole gospel* would be utterly impossible without these promises. Though we are required to have a change of nature, we have no ability to change our *own* nature. Jeremiah 13:23 says, “Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? Then you also can do good who are accustomed to doing evil.” Since “no one is good except God alone (Mark 10:18),” only when God’s nature is imparted within us can we become good.

Without the impartation of God’s nature there is no cleansing of sin. The Old Testament

allowed sin to be covered over and ignored (Hebrew: kaphar), but sin could never be removed under the Old Covenant, only swept under the rug (see Hebrews 10:1,4). There is only one way to finally overcome all sin: that is by exchanging our nature with God's nature; exchanging our miserable strength for His power; replacing our rightness, or lack thereof, with God's righteousness; and substituting our emotions and desires with God's love.

Selfish creatures that we are, we cannot love selflessly the way God requires until we give up trying on our own, come to the cross, surrender to Christ, and receive His nature and His love within us. Christ said in one of His final prayers to the Father before going to the cross, "I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them (John 17:26)."

We cannot love, not with the love God requires, but we can allow the love of God to flow into us and then through us. 1 John 4:17 says, "By this, *love is perfected* with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because *as He is, so also are we in this world.*" This is how things can, and should, be; through faith, as we allow God's nature to enter ours.

God's nature is love. To be filled with God's nature is to be filled with the love of God. 1 John 4:16 says, "God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." To walk in God's love is to walk as God walks. We cannot do this on our own power. 1 John 4:19 says, "We love, because He first loved us." We receive His love. Then, and only then, can we love as God loves; not as the world loves, but in a way which results in total victory over all sins against God and others, as 1 John 5:3-4 describes: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world." To truly have God's love within us is to have God's nature within us. Victories over the world, sin, and Satan become easy as we have His love within.

Every attribute of God's nature is a part of His love. When we walk in God's love we walk in all His other characteristics. God's love is powerful, it is forgiving, it is patient, and it is kind. God's love creates goodness.