

Introduction

The Matter of Maturity

It has always been the case that young people think they know more, or at least as much as, those who are older in years. The book of Proverbs has numerous references to the need for children to learn, particularly from their parents, and to grow into mature adults. This maturity is not merely ‘age’, as if being forty or fifty years old, or more, might qualify a person as having reached the goal. Rather maturity was understood in terms of wisdom.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines wisdom as ‘experience and knowledge together with the power of applying them critically or practically; common sense’ and so much of Proverbs is this practical application of experience. Indeed, so practical is it that some of the instructions are in terms which are sometimes quite ‘earthy’, without ever becoming soiled of course¹. In contrast to the seductive call of the prostitute (Prov. 7:6-27), wisdom is personified as a pure woman calling out with the offer of life which is completely at one with all the principles of creation, life which we call ‘ontological’ (Prov. 7:1-5; 8:1-36; 9:1-18).

It is not only the young who need wisdom. It is quite possible to be an old fool, living immaturely when all the wisdom of God is there to be known and enjoyed. Wisdom starts with ‘the fear of the LORD’ (Prov. 9:10), a good, healthy respect for God and his will. With such a ‘controlling principle’² a person will be set to receive the wisdom which is from God.

For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;
⁷he stores up sound wisdom for the upright; he is a shield to those who walk blamelessly,
⁸guarding the paths of justice and preserving the way of his faithful ones.
⁹Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path;
¹⁰for wisdom will come into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul; (Proverbs 2:6-10).

Being mature, then, is not so much the product of many years of hard work as it is the way human beings are to live at *every* point. Hence Proverbs 9:6 has, ‘Lay aside immaturity, and live, and walk in the way of insight’ (NRSV). The NIV has ‘Leave your simple ways’. We might say, ‘Wise up! Be mature!’ (cf. 1 Cor. 14:20). It is true that you cannot put an old head on young shoulders, but the young and the old together can be mature right where they are. Of course the young must learn; the question is *how* they learn. Jesus told the disciples to ‘pay attention to how you listen’ (Luke 8:18). There is a hearing which is alert in faith while there is immature hearing, something akin to a person who looks in a mirror but then immediately forgets what was seen — hearing but not doing (James 1:22-24).

That does not imply that we have ‘arrived’. Far from it; Paul wrote that he himself was still advancing to the goal:

¹ See Proverbs 29:3: ‘A child who loves wisdom makes a parent glad, but to keep company with prostitutes is to squander one’s substance.’ To be involved in immoral living is, if nothing else, to ‘blow your dough’!

² Derek Kidner, *The Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*, T.O.T.C, The Tyndale Press, London, 1964, p. 59.

¹²Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:12-14)

The words ‘have ... reached the goal’ (verse 12) translate a Greek verb, *τετελείωμαι* (*teteleiomai*). It is part of a whole network of words meaning ‘perfection’, ‘maturity’, ‘completion’, ‘finishing’ and so on. Translations will vary simply because contexts differ. In the next verse (v. 15) Paul then speaks to those who are ‘mature’ and uses a word from that group.³

It is here that we again encounter the issue we have just noticed. It is possible to be mature and to see that we must press on to maturity. Indeed, I would suggest that one mark of maturity is just that: being ‘goal-directed’.

THE CORINTHIAN EXAMPLE

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. ²For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. ⁴My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

⁶Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. ⁷But we speak God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. ⁸None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. ⁹But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” — ¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God’s except the Spirit of God. ¹²Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. ¹³And we speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God’s Spirit, for they are foolishness to them, and they are unable to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. ¹⁵Those who are spiritual discern all things, and they are themselves subject to no one else’s scrutiny. ¹⁶“For who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

¹And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ²I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, ³for you are still of the flesh. For as long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving according to human inclinations? ⁴For when one says, “I belong to Paul,” and another, “I belong to Apollos,” are you not merely human? (1 Corinthians 2:1–3:4)

The apostle’s pain, his ‘anxiety for all the churches’ (2 Cor. 12:28), is, in the Corinthians’ case, caused by the fact that he has something for them and that they are simply unable to receive it. He had told the Romans that he wanted ‘to share with [them] some spiritual gift to strengthen [them]’ (Rom. 1:11) and the same was true in Cor-

³ There is a possibility that Paul was using irony when describing some of the Philippians as ‘mature’ after having declared that he himself had not reached the goal. However, while it is possible, there is no need to limit the meaning to this. As we will see, both ‘maturity’ and moving to the goal are elements of being in Christ. For a discussion of the issues in Philippians, see Peter T. O’Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, N.I.G.T.C., Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1991, p. 433ff.

inth. There were rich things to be known and enjoyed but the church was functioning outside the framework where receiving these things was possible.

In 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, Paul reminded them that he had not preached the gospel to them using human techniques. He had not come as a 'motivational speaker', winning responses by hype, using 'lofty words or wisdom'. In the first chapter the words 'wisdom' or 'wise' occur thirteen times⁴ and the reason for this frequent use seems reasonably clear. The world in which the Corinthians lived had its own wisdom and, though persuasive, that wisdom was actually opposed by the wisdom of God which is displayed in the cross of Christ.

Corinth was a relatively new city. Once a Greek city-state (5th. cent. B.C.) it had been destroyed by the Romans in 146 B.C. and was not rebuilt until 44 B.C. when it became a Roman colony. It was a seaport with all the commerce, prosperity and vice that such cities have. The population was initially Roman freedmen, manumitted slaves, a class just above slaves themselves.⁵ Hence:

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; (1 Cor. 1:26-27)

Into this atmosphere there had come a new wave of 'sophistry'.⁶ The word 'sophist' means one who teaches wisdom, but in practice it usually came to mean a paid teacher who could instruct in the ways of gaining material success. They 'were able to argue for any viewpoint, true or not'⁷ by means of persuasive speech, a skill they would pass on to their pupils.

Then the gospel of Christ had come. Paul had spoken the word of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18; 2:2) and the power of God was demonstrated as men and women had been born again and received the Holy Spirit. Jews were horrified at the suggestion that they should identify with a crucified Messiah. The Greeks, on the other hand, thought the suggestion of a god revealing himself through a crucified Jew stupid. What was even worse, the preacher, Paul, refused to speak according to the rules.

My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God. (1 Cor. 2:4-5).

What had happened? The church which had experienced the power of God, which had 'been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind ...so that [they were] not lacking in any spiritual gift' (1 Cor. 1:5, 7), had left the great things of the cross of Christ and become factionalised. They became like the world around them, devoted to human teachers and divided into various parties (1 Cor. 1:10-17). They had opted for human wisdom once again.

Of course, Paul knew he had a wisdom for them, but it was a wisdom for the mature and not for those content to ignore all that God had done. The wisdom he had was not human wisdom, the wisdom of the rulers of this age who are doomed to perish

⁴ In the writings of Paul, the words wisdom and wise appear 45 times; 28 of the appearances are in 1 Cor. and 26 in the first 3 chapters. This would indicate that the word was one that the Corinthians were using and to which Paul was responding. See, Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, N.I.C.N.T. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1987, p. 48, and p. 64, n.79.

⁵ Note the language of 1 Cor. 7:21-24; Fee, *First Corinthians*, p. 318.

⁶ Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Doubleday, New York, 1997, p. 90f.

⁷ Brown, *Introduction*, p. 90. See also A. H. Armstrong, *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, University Paperbacks, London, 1957, p. 22ff.

(1 Cor. 2:5-6). The rulers of this age are those who hold sway in this world, but such is their wisdom that they actually crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2:8)!

The wisdom of God is all there for them, but it is always and only ‘in a mystery’ (1 Cor. 2:7), which English translations usually render as ‘secret and hidden’. It may well be ‘secret and hidden’, but that is not the whole point. All the hidden wisdom of God is ‘in a mystery’, and that is what Paul proclaimed (1 Cor. 2:1 *NRSV*)⁸. It is all in the mystery of the cross.

The cross of Christ was set before the ages (and their doomed rulers) for our glory! These rulers crucified the Lord of that glory. But look into the mystery!

But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him” — ¹⁰these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. (1 Cor. 2:9-10).

The things which are quite beyond human measure, all the things which God has prepared for those who love him, have all been revealed by the Spirit. When the Corinthians received the Spirit they were given direct access into the depths of God. Now they can see precisely what God has prepared for them and can participate in that. This what Paul wants to say and the Corinthians, having received the Spirit, ought to understand the things⁹ bestowed on them by God (1 Cor. 2:12). Paul is communicating the great things of God, interpreting spiritual things to those who are functioning as men and women of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:13).

But! Far from rising up in faith to what is being communicated the Corinthians are *as* those who do not possess the Spirit.¹⁰ It just does not make sense to them (1 Cor. 2:14). Here is the problem: they have received the Spirit but they are not functioning as men and women of the Spirit. They are as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1). By ‘flesh’ he means that they are living as people pre-occupied with ‘self’, me, my plans, my group, my whatever. All the jealousy and quarreling, the divisiveness is the way of the ‘merely human’.

This is seen later, too, in their indifference to immorality (ch. 5), their willingness to take their disputes with other believers before the city magistrates (ch. 6) and so on. Paul is not concerned to be pragmatic about these things. He sees it all in the light of what God has done and what therefore must be seen. In chapter 5 he answers the presence of uncleanness with this:

Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, *as you really are unleavened*. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. (1 Cor. 5:7).

In chapter 6, the issue of evil behaviour is answered in this way:

Do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, ¹⁰thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers--none of these will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹*And this is what some of you used to be. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.* (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Wise up! Be mature! See what God has done and so what you are and then live in that. Know the great things of God which are for our glory.

⁸ Many translations have ‘the testimony of God’ at verse 1, and it is finally impossible to determine which is the original word used by Paul. The two words are almost identical in Greek which may account for a scribal error at some point.

⁹ Translations often have ‘the gifts’ here and in verse 14, but the Greek has only τὰ πρὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν (v. 12) and τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 14), the things given, the things of the spirit.

¹⁰ He calls them ψυχικός, *psuchikos*, those functioning on the level of the ‘soul’ but not the level of the Spirit.

FOR OUR GLORY

The Scriptures speak much of ‘glory’. To a certain extent, many believers also speak much of ‘glory’. While perhaps not descending to the level of simply treating glory as the halo behind the head of august ones,¹¹ sometimes we hear God’s glory treated as if it were only his honor. To ‘do all for the glory of God’ (1 Cor. 10:31) might, in some cases, become a motive which stops far short of the full riches which such glory entails. It might only be regarded as a goal which is intended to rob us of the glory which we think *our* efforts deserve, as if God’s glory and our glory were opposed to each other.

When Paul wrote ‘But we speak God’s wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory’ (1 Cor 2:7), or, as I indicated, ‘we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery’, he was saying that before the ages the wisdom of God, hidden from the wise and understanding by the deliberate purpose of God (1 Cor. 1:21, 27; Matt. 11:25-27), had determined our glory and had set ‘the mystery’ as the means by which that glory would be brought to its fulfilment. That would mean that the practical wisdom which we saw in Proverbs relates to the eternal wisdom of God in the cross of Christ. And this it does, for we noted that the practical wisdom is primarily the wisdom which relates us to the whole truth of creation. To live in that wisdom is our glory. So for any human being to try to establish their own glory is the height of foolishness. Jesus himself said, ‘If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, he of whom you say, “He is our God”’ (John 8:54). Here is the truly wise man.

MAN’S GLORY: GOD’S GLORY

I am the LORD, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. (Isaiah 42:8).

Within the context of Israel’s judgment because of their idolatry and the attendant corruption, God declared that he would brook no rivals. But his glory is more than his personal jealousy. Were he to stand by unmoved when idols or counterfeit gods claim his glory, he would be denying himself, since his glory is the fulness of his being, particularly as that relates to his moral being.

Scriptures describe him as being rich in mercy, grace, goodness and forbearance, glory, wisdom and knowledge and these are elements of his being which all issue from his holiness and love. None of these elements have any independent existence; rather each is a facet of God’s character and being which we as human beings encounter in varying ways. But for something which is ‘not-God’ (Gal. 4:8) to claim glory of equal standing is to call down the judgment of God. Thus:

How you are fallen from heaven,
O Day Star, son of Dawn!
How you are cut down to the ground,
you who laid the nations low!
¹³You said in your heart,
“I will ascend to heaven;
I will raise my throne
above the stars of God;
I will sit on the mount of assembly

¹¹ The Concise Oxford Dictionary calls it the ‘ideal glory investing person etc’.

on the heights of Zaphon;
¹⁴I will ascend to the tops of the clouds,
I will make myself like the Most High.”
¹⁵But you are brought down to Sheol,
to the depths of the Pit. (Isa. 14:12-15)

Far from being jealous as we might understand it, that is as resentfully protecting his own rights, God is jealous for his own glory because it is his glory to give from his fulness to all that he has made. It is true, therefore, that ‘The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork’ (Psalms 19:1)’ because they are full of that glory and, ‘The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof, the world, and those who live in it’ (Psalms 24:1). All the fulness of creation flows out of the fulness of God and is richly dynamic as a result. This certainly explains the ‘frustration’ presently within the creation and its eager longing for the restoration of its appointed expression.

Not only is creation full of all the riches of God, mankind is likewise created for amazing fulness of living. When Jesus said, ‘I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly’ (John 10:10), he was pointing to far more than simply satisfaction or a sense of personal fulfilment. The issue is far richer than that. The question, ‘What is Man that you are mindful of him, or the son of man that you care for him?’ (Ps. 8:4), understood in the light of mankind’s deprivation and degradation, is answered with the stunning announcement:

Yet you have made them a little lower than God, and crowned them with glory and honor.
⁶You have given them dominion over the works of your hands; you have put all things under their feet,
⁷all sheep and oxen, and also the beasts of the field,
⁸the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, whatever passes along the paths of the seas. (Ps. 8:5-8)

Mankind has been crowned with glory and honor. To say that Man is the image of God means, then, more than just that he is the reflection of God, in some passive sense. It means that created Man is dynamic with *given* glory. He may never take glory for himself, as in John 8:54 above, but he may receive glory from God and should do so with great freedom and joy. The psalmist says also that he was crowned with honor. If we ask who, then, honors him, the answer is that God does! It is immense honor for mankind to be given dominion over all the works of God’s hands. That is why God’s jealousy is unlike any self-protecting defensiveness we may show. Psalm 8 begins and ends with the affirmation: ‘O LORD, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!’ (Psalms 8:1). In giving glory to mankind, God’s splendour is revealed.¹²

FALLEN FROM THE GLORY

The full sentence in John 10:10 reads: ‘The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly’ (John 10:10). The thief who kills refers us back to the story of Genesis 2 and 3, where there is the prohibition against eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the warning that ‘in the day that you eat of it you shall die’ (Gen. 2:17). The temptation by the ser-

¹² Most translations continue in verse 1, ‘You have set your *glory* above the heavens’ but it should be noted that this is not the word for glory used in verse 5, כְּבוֹד. Verse 1 has הוֹדָה while verse 5 has כְּבוֹד. Perhaps ‘splendour’, as in the *NASB*, may be more helpful in maintaining the distinction.

pent, a creature, is actually intended to kill the man and the woman (Gen. 3:4)! It was also intended to rob them of all that they had, namely, their glory, and so to destroy the harmony of the whole creation which expresses the glory of God. This serpent, later defined as Satan, the name means 'adversary', is immediately exposed in all his vicious hatred of God and of anything or anyone who shows out the glory of God. (See Revelation 12, 1 Peter 5:8; John 8:44; Matthew 6:13 etc.)

The sin of mankind is quite plainly not the triviality that it is so often portrayed. Certainly it is far greater than the 'wrong things we have done' so often described as sins by many people. The statement that 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' (Rom. 3:23) shows that the fall of Man degraded humanity and therefore so deeply offended the glory and holiness of God, offended God personally. Furthermore, when this is recognised, then there is no problem understanding why the wrath of God becomes such an issue in human experience (Rom. 1:18—5:9). Of course, recognising it is beyond the capacity of fallen humanity, since degraded men and women are immediately thrust into the maelstrom of blindness, corruption, self-justification and self-glorification (cf. Titus 1:15). 'If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing' (John 8:54), but only a person who knows the freedom of the glory of the children of God could understand that. That is what is meant by such statements as

How can you believe when you accept glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the one who alone is God? (John 5:44) *and*

Those who speak on their own seek their own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and there is nothing false in him. (John 7:18)

We must understand that the enemy who comes against us with tantalising temptations is actually setting out to de-glorify us and the whole creation. This is because the wisdom of God has purposed the restoration of our glory, the glory that comes from the one who alone is God. Thus we have Romans 8:28-30:

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also *glorified*.

But how can God glorify us? In terms of our goal, Paul wrote that 'we rejoice in our hope of the glory of God'¹³ (Rom. 5:2). It is only in the glory of God that we have our glory. If he is not glorified then we may not ever be glorified.

THE RESTORATION OF GLORY

Our glorification is spelled out in the life of Jesus. John wrote: 'And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). If we ask where Jesus (the word *in the flesh*) obtained his glory then the answer is given in John 8:54, as we have seen: 'It is my Father who glorifies me'. This glory was already the domain of the eternal Son

¹³ So *NIV, AV* etc, and not 'our hope of sharing the glory of God' (*NRSV, RSV*), where the word 'sharing' has been added.

(John 17:5) but for that to be known in human experience¹⁴ there must be mutual glorifying. So John 17:1-5:

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, “Father, the hour has come; *glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you,* ²since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. ³And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. ⁴*I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do.* ⁵*So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.*

Likewise, John 12:28-33:

“*Father, glorify your name.*”¹⁵ Then a voice came from heaven, “*I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.*”²⁹ The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, “An angel has spoken to him.”³⁰ Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. ³¹Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. ³²And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”³³ He said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

The Father is glorified in the cross of Christ. There his full majestic splendour is declared, in a mystery. There the guilt and shame of unglorified humanity is purged in the glory of holy sacrifice and holy judgment (see Isa. 6:1-7). So if the Father is glorified at the cross, the Son is also glorified. This is what Jesus was referring to when promising that rivers of living water would flow out of the inner being of anyone who believes in him. At the time he spoke, that could not take place; he was speaking of the great flow of the Spirit and the Spirit was not given until Jesus was glorified (John 7:37-39).

It is certainly true that we are saved in hope (Rom. 8:24). We do not see the glory now, we only see the mystery—the cross—which is still a scandal to the Jew and foolishness to the Greek. The glory is yet to be revealed in us (Rom. 8:18) when we will be glorified with Christ (Rom. 8:17). But is equally true that the mystery of the cross is being worked out in us now, as we walk by faith even if not by sight. However, that walk by faith should not be reduced to something merely cognitive. Peter wrote that we are being guarded though faith for the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time and that when the great process is complete:

the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and *glory* and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. (1 Peter 1:7)

He then added:

Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and *glorious* joy, ⁹for you are receiving the *outcome of your faith*, the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:8-9)

The joy is the joy of the glory. Later he added:

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. ¹³But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy *when his glory is revealed.* ¹⁴If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because *the spirit of glory, which*

¹⁴ We could argue that within the Godhead there is a constant giving, receiving, serving and honouring as the very life of the Persons. They are each concerned with the glory of the others which the glory of the one. Theologians have called this *perichoresis*.

¹⁵ Note the contrast with John 12:43, where the Pharisees ‘loved human glory more than the glory that comes from God’.

is the Spirit of God, is resting on you. ¹⁵But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. (1 Peter 4:12-15)

The Spirit, poured out when Christ was glorified,¹⁶ is the Spirit of glory and that same Spirit dwells in us and that is the Spirit who searches everything, even the depths of God, and revealed them to us. For us it is all there to be known. We should say that the Spirit who came to us takes us into the intimacy of the Godhead so that we might know the dynamics of the hidden wisdom of God by which he has determined our glory and that we might see what no eye has seen, hear what no ear heard, and understand what the human heart could never of itself conceive, what God has prepared for those who love him (1 Corinthians 2:9).

The mature man or woman is the one who, having received the Spirit, goes on being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18), by faith goes on living in the ongoing giving of the Spirit (Gal. 3:1-5), and so goes on, richly supplied, in anticipation of the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1:4-7). The mature man or woman is not a *gnostic*, that is one who has progressed to some higher level of knowledge of spiritual things; on the contrary, maturity is living day by day and moment by moment in rich intimacy with the triune God, being what we are, sons of God, participating in the Sonship of Christ and knowing the Spirit of sonship in his work in us (Gal. 4:4-7, Rom. 8:14-17) and moving towards the goal when faith gives way to sight.

¹⁶ By this I mean that the cross, the resurrection, the ascension and Pentecost are all constituents of the one great even of salvation. Were one aspect to be missing there would be no glory.