

## LESSON FIVE

### THE ESSENTIAL AND ECONOMICAL TRINITY

**Eph. 1:3-13** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved; In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace, Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence, Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him; In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will, That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ, In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

**John 14:17** [Even] the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know [Him; but] you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

#### Outline

- I. The Triune God in His essence
- II. The Triune God in His economy
- III. God's economy being the dispensing of His essence (life and being) into us

Our God is wonderful and mysterious. We have seen that He is one, yet He is the Father, Son, and Spirit. He is one, yet three, three yet one. Although we cannot understand this great mystery, there is no question that the Bible reveals these two aspects of God, His oneness and His three-ness. This has puzzled people for nearly two thousand years. Our human mentality cannot grasp how our God can be triune, but in this lesson we will see why He is triune. God's being triune is not just an interesting fact, but it is for our experience and enjoyment! In order to see this we will use two helpful words—essence and economy.

#### I. THE TRIUNE GOD IN HIS ESSENCE

In His essence, God is one. That means in His life and His being He is one, always one, eternally one. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are never separated. They are always coinhering with one another, living within one another. They are distinctly three yet never separated into three, because in essence, life, and being, God is one. The Father sent the Son but also came within the Son. The Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father. The Son's name is even "the Father." The Son was conceived of the Spirit, lived by the Spirit, and eventually became the life-giving Spirit. The Son never departed from the Father, and the Spirit is what the Son became. These three always coexist from eternity to eternity. They always coinhere in oneness. Their essence, life, and being are one.

#### II. THE TRIUNE GOD IN HIS ECONOMY

If They are essentially one, you may wonder why the Bible talks about the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. This is because God has an economy. God's economy refers to God's plan, arrangements, work, and activities. God's heart's desire is that a group of people may be filled up with Him and express Him in oneness. His way to work this out is His economy. God's economy is to work Himself as life and everything into His chosen and redeemed people so that they may be His many sons and members of the Body of Christ to express Him. This is the church. In order to carry out this tremendous purpose, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit each have a distinct function.

Ephesians 1:3-13 clearly shows us the economical Trinity. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...according as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...having predestinated us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will...in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace...having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself...in Whom also we were made an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One Who operates all things according to the counsel of His will...in Whom you also, hearing the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Whom also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise."

Did you notice that all three of the Godhead are mentioned here? If you study these verses more carefully you will see something marvelous about the Triune God.

These verses tell us that it was God the Father who planned in eternity past how everything would work together to produce the church. He chose and predestinated many people to be His sons. Yet, to accomplish this required the work of the Son—"in Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses." The Lord Jesus accomplished this by dying on the cross. We know that His death was all-inclusive (included everything): it crucified our sinful nature, crushed the Devil's head, and released God's divine life (just as burying a grain of wheat releases the life within it). Hallelujah for the work of the Son! Finally, we read that we "were sealed with the Holy Spirit." This simply means that what the Father planned and the Son accomplished is applied to us by the Spirit. The Father is the planner, the Son is the accomplisher, and the Spirit is the applier. This is the Triune God in His economy.

### **III. GOD'S ECONOMY BEING THE DISPENSING OF HIS ESSENCE (LIFE AND BEING) INTO US**

Do not forget, though, that the Father, Son, and Spirit are essentially one. When the Father planned, He was coinhering with the Son and the Spirit. When the Son came to accomplish, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit. The Son was in the Father and the Father was in Him; He was even called the Father. After His death and in His resurrection, the Son became the life-giving Spirit. When the Spirit applies, He brings us both the Father and the Son. This Spirit is just the ultimate consummation of the Triune God applying to us all that the Triune God has planned and accomplished. Without this Spirit, man cannot enjoy the Father's selection or the Son's redemption. The Spirit is the application. Hallelujah! We are not a people who merely have the knowledge of God or some doctrine of the Bible. By this Spirit, we are able to enjoy all that the Father has planned and the Son has accomplished. Now all that God is, all that Christ is, and what Christ has accomplished, obtained, and attained is made real to us by the Spirit. That is why the Spirit is called the Spirit of reality (John 14:17).

Do you now see why God must be triune? He is essentially one yet economically three in order that we can enjoy Him. God's economy is to dispense His entire being into us, yet if He were only one essentially but not three economically, He could not carry out His purpose. Then on the other hand if the Father, Son, and Spirit were three Gods but not one, we could receive only the Spirit, one of the Three. We would miss all the riches of the Father and all the accomplishments of the Son. But praise Him, He is three-one! He as the Father has planned, He as the Son has accomplished, and He as the Spirit is now ready to apply the Triune God to us. When we call "Lord Jesus," the all-inclusive Spirit comes into us bringing us the whole Triune God. We get the Father, the Son, and the Spirit with all that He is and has accomplished. This Spirit is the all-inclusive package. Amen!

### **QUESTIONS**

1. What is God's economy?
2. What are the distinct functions of the Father, Son, and Spirit?
3. What does it mean when we say the Father, Son, and Spirit are "essentially" one?

### **Quoted Portions from (Lee/LSM) Publications**

*The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity in Ephesians, pp. 3-9.*

*The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity, pp. 5-6, 14-15, 26-28.*

*Concerning the Triune God, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, pp. 14-15.*

*The Economy of God, pp. 9-15.*