

THE CENTRAL LINE OF THE BIBLE

(Saturday—First Morning Session)

Message Four

The Economy of God Revealed in the Book of Ephesians

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:17; 2:10, 15; 3:16-19; 4:3-6, 11-16; 5:2, 8-9, 26-27; 6:10-13, 17-18

- I. The economy of God (His household administration according to His heart's desire) revealed in the book of Ephesians is accomplished by the exercise of our mingled spirit for the dispensing of the Triune God into us unto the building up of the church as the Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:3-6; Eph. 1:5; 3:8-10; 1:10; 3:2; cf. 1 Tim. 3:9; Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4; 5:32.**
- II. Each chapter of Ephesians reveals the mingled spirit (our human spirit regenerated and indwelt by the compound, all-inclusive, consummated Spirit); when we turn to our spirit and exercise our spirit, we touch the Body, because the Body is in our spirit:**
 - A. Ephesians 1:17 reveals that we must pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to see the mystery of God's economy, which is to dispense Christ as the mystery of God into God's chosen people to make them the reality of the Body of Christ as the mystery of Christ—v. 18; 3:9; 5:32; 6:19; Col. 2:2.
 - B. Ephesians 2:22 reveals that our spirit is the dwelling place of God; we are "being built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit."
 - C. Ephesians 3:5 reveals that the mingled spirit is the means by which the revelation of Christ and the church is revealed to the apostles and prophets.
 - D. Ephesians 3:16 reveals that our spirit is our inner man, our new person, our new spirit, our new man; we need to pray to be strengthened with power into the inner man for the reality of the Body life, which is the inner experience of the indwelling Christ as life for God's glory in the church—vv. 16-21.
 - E. Ephesians 4:23 reveals that we must allow the renewing Spirit mingled with our regenerated spirit to become the spirit of our mind so that we can be renewed day by day to become as new as the New Jerusalem for the reality of the Body of Christ as the new man—v. 24; Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:10-11.
 - F. Ephesians 5:18 reveals that we must be filled with the beautifying, bride-preparing Spirit mingled with our spirit so that we can be prepared to be Christ's glorious church, His beautiful bride and the house of God's beauty, for God's expression—vv. 26-27; Isa. 60:7, 19; 62:3; Gen. 1:26.
 - G. Ephesians 6:18 reveals that we must pray at every time in our spirit in order to experience the slaying Spirit mingled with our spirit; in this way everything of God's adversary can be killed within us, enabling us to rule in the divine life of the Spirit over Satan, sin, and death for God's dominion—vv. 17-18.
- III. Each chapter of Ephesians, concerning the producing, existing, growing, building up, and fighting of the church as the Body of Christ, is composed of the divine economy, the dispensing of the Triune God into the members of the Body of Christ:**

- A. Ephesians 1 unveils that God the Father chose and predestinated these members in eternity (vv. 3-6), that God the Son redeemed them (vv. 7-12), and that God the Spirit, as a pledge, sealed them (vv. 13-14), thus imparting Himself into His believers for the formation of the church, which is the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all in all (vv. 18-23).
- B. Ephesians 2 shows us that in the Divine Trinity all the believers, both Jewish and Gentile, have access unto God the Father, through God the Son, in God the Spirit (v. 18); this indicates that the three coexist and coinhere simultaneously, even after all the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection.
- C. Ephesians 3 speaks of the apostle's prayer that God the Father would grant the believers to be strengthened through God the Spirit into their inner man, that Christ, God the Son, may make His home in their hearts, that is, occupy their entire inner being, so that they may be filled unto all the fullness of God (vv. 14-19); this is the climax of the believers' experience of and participation in God in His Divine Trinity.
- D. Ephesians 4 portrays how the processed God as the Spirit, the Lord, and the Father is mingled with the Body of Christ (vv. 4-6) so that all the members may experience the Divine Trinity.
- E. Ephesians 5 exhorts the believers to praise the Lord, God the Son, with the songs of God the Spirit and to give thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, God the Son, to God the Father (vv. 19-20); this is to praise and thank the processed God in His Divine Trinity for our enjoyment of Him as the Triune God.
- F. Ephesians 6 instructs us to fight the spiritual warfare by being empowered in the Lord, God the Son, putting on the whole armor of God the Father, and wielding the sword of God the Spirit; this is our experience and enjoyment of the Triune God even in spiritual warfare—vv. 10-11, 17.

IV. Each chapter of the book of Ephesians unveils the mystery of the Body of Christ as the organism of the Triune God from a particular point of view:

- A. Ephesians 1 reveals that the Body of Christ is the issue of the dispensing of the processed Trinity and the transmitting of the transcending Christ:
 - 1. The Father's dispensing in His choosing and predestinating issues in His many sons as His house in sanctification—vv. 3-6.
 - 2. The Son's dispensing in His redeeming and saving issues in the believers as God's inheritance in His transformation—vv. 7-12.
 - 3. The Spirit's dispensing in His sealing and pledging issues in God as the believers' inheritance unto their perfection—vv. 13-14.
 - 4. The transcending Christ's transmitting in His rising and ascending issues in His Body as His expression unto the believers' consummation—vv. 19-23.
- B. Ephesians 2 reveals that the Body of Christ is the masterpiece of the Triune God as the one new man—vv. 10, 15-16:
 - 1. On the cross Christ created the one new man in Himself by abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, all the forms or ways of living and worship that divide mankind—vv. 14-15.

2. The worldly people regard cultural differences as a source of prestige, but in the Body of Christ as the one new man we have lost this prestige; now our only prestige is Christ and the genuine oneness—4:3-4a.
 3. In the one new man there is only one person—the all-inclusive Christ; this one new man has one mouth to speak the same thing in one accord—Col. 1:18b; 3:10-11; Eph. 2:15; Rom. 15:6; 1 Cor. 1:10.
- C. Ephesians 3 reveals that the Body of Christ is the fullness of the Triune God by our being supplied with the riches of Christ and by Christ's making His home in our hearts—vv. 8, 14-19:
1. God has an economy to distribute the unsearchable riches of Christ into our being so that we become His fullness, His expression—vv. 2, 7-9, 19.
 2. We need to pray daily to be strengthened into our inner man so that the Triune God may carry out His unique work to build Himself in Christ into our hearts for Him to become our intrinsic constitution for the mutual abode of God and man—vv. 16-17; John 14:23.
- D. Ephesians 4 reveals that the Body of Christ is the mingling of the processed Triune God with the regenerated believers and that this one Body is built up by the one ministry:
1. The one Spirit, one Lord, and one God and Father are mingled together with the believers into one entity to be the organic Body of Christ—vv. 4-6.
 2. The Body of Christ is built up by the one ministry, which perfects us to grow up into Christ, the Head, in all things and to function out from Him in order to supply the Body for its building up in love—vv. 11-16.
- E. Ephesians 5 reveals that the Body of Christ is composed of the children of light to be the bride of Christ for the satisfaction of Christ:
1. We were once not only dark but darkness itself because we were one with Satan; now we are not only the children of light but light itself because we are one with God in the Lord—v. 8; Matt. 5:14.
 2. The lampstand signifies that the church as the reproduction of the Triune God is a living, golden tree, blossoming with resurrection life as the shining light, which is the fruit of the light for the full expression of the Triune God—Exo. 25:31-34; Num. 17:8; Rev. 1:11-12; Eph. 5:9; Gal. 5:22.
 3. As children of light, walking in love and light, we will be prepared to be Christ's glorious bride by the life-giving Spirit's sanctifying us, cleansing us by the washing of the water in the word—Eph. 5:2, 8, 18, 26-27.
- F. Ephesians 6 reveals that the Body of Christ is the corporate warrior of the Triune God for the defeating of God's enemy:
1. Spiritual warfare is not an individual matter but a matter of the Body; the church as the Body is a corporate warrior, and only the corporate warrior can wear the whole armor of God—vv. 10-20; cf. Matt. 16:18.
 2. All warfare has its source in the conflict between Satan's will and God's will; we must have our will subdued and transformed by Christ through sufferings so that it is submitted to the headship of Christ to choose God's will and to be rich in the defending power of Christ in resurrection—Isa. 14:12-14; Matt. 6:10; 26:42; Phil. 2:13; S. S. 4:1, 4; 7:4a, 5.

3. Prayer is the unique and vital means by which we apply the whole armor of God, making every item of the armor of God available to us—Eph. 6:18.