

THE CENTRAL LINE OF THE BIBLE

(Friday—Evening Session)

Message Three

Experiencing the Triune God— Having Access through Christ in One Spirit unto the Father

Scripture Reading: Eph. 2:16-18; Luke 15:3-32; Rev. 21:13

- Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
- Eph 2:17 And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near,
- Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
- Luke 15:3 And He told them this parable, saying,
- Luke 15:4 Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?
- Luke 15:5 And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.
- Luke 15:6 And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.
- Luke 15:7 I tell you that in the same way there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance.
- Luke 15:8 Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one silver coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek carefully until she finds *it*?
- Luke 15:9 And when she finds *it*, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost.
- Luke 15:10 In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner repenting.
- Luke 15:11 And He said, A certain man had two sons.
- Luke 15:12 And the younger of them said to the father, Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to *me*. And he distributed to them his living.
- Luke 15:13 And not many days after, the younger son, having gathered everything together, went abroad to a distant country and there squandered his estate by living dissolutely.
- Luke 15:14 And when he had spent all, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he began to be in want.
- Luke 15:15 And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed hogs.
- Luke 15:16 And he longed to be satisfied with the carob pods which the hogs were eating, and no one gave him *anything*.
- Luke 15:17 But when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants abound in bread, but I am perishing here in famine!
- Luke 15:18 I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.
- Luke 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.
- Luke 15:20 And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately.
- Luke 15:21 And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.
- Luke 15:22 But the father said to his slaves, Bring out quickly the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.
- Luke 15:23 And bring the fattened calf; slaughter *it*, and let us eat and be merry,
- Luke 15:24 Because this son of mine was dead and lives again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to be merry.

- Luke 15:25 Now his older son was in the field. And as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing,
- Luke 15:26 And calling to *him* one of the servants, he inquired what these things might be.
- Luke 15:27 And he said to him, Your brother has come, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has received him back healthy.
- Luke 15:28 But he became angry and was not willing to enter. And his father came out and entreated him.
- Luke 15:29 But he answered and said to his father, Behold, so many years I have been slaving for you and have never neglected a command of yours, and you have never given me a goat that I might be merry with my friends;
- Luke 15:30 But when this son of yours came, who devoured your living with harlots, you slaughtered for him the fattened calf.
- Luke 15:31 And he said to him, Child, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.
- Luke 15:32 But we had to be merry and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life, and he was lost and has been found.
- Rev 21:13 On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

I. Through God the Son, who is the Accomplisher, the means, and in God the Spirit, who is the Executor, the application, we have access unto God the Father, who is the Originator, the unique source—Eph. 2:18:

- Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
- A. Positionally, we were reconciled to God; experientially, we have access unto the Father—vv. 16, 18:
- Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
- Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
1. To be reconciled to God is to be saved; to have access unto the Father is to enjoy God.
 2. Both the Jewish and the Gentile believers have access unto the Father through Christ—John 14:6; Eph. 2:18:

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

 - a. Both the Jewish and the Gentile believers were reconciled in one Body to God; this was a positional matter—v. 16.

Eph 2:16 And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.
 - b. Now they both have access in one Spirit unto the Father; this is experiential, and in order to enjoy experientially what we have positionally, we need to be in the Spirit—v. 18.

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
 3. To have access unto the Father is to contact God for our enjoyment; having been reconciled to God once for all, we now have access unto the Father for continual enjoyment—John 14:6.

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.
 4. When we contact God, we come to Him through Christ in the Spirit unto the Father; this is the Triune God in our experience and enjoyment—Eph. 2:18.

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
- B. The Father came to us through the Son in the Spirit, and now the Spirit brings us back to the Father through the Son; through this wonderful two-way traffic, we enjoy the dispensing of the Triune God—2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 3:16-17a.

- 2 Cor **13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- Eph **3:16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph **3:17a** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- C. When the Son comes to preach the gospel to us, the Spirit also comes; when we receive the Son in His preaching, we receive the Spirit, and then the Spirit brings us back to the Father through the Son—2:17; John 14:16-18; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17a.
- Eph **2:17** And coming, He announced peace as the gospel to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near,
- John **14:16** And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever,
- 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.
- John **14:18** I will not leave you *as* orphans; I am coming to you.
- 1 Cor **15:45b** ...the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.
- 2 Cor **3:17a** And the Lord is the Spirit; ...
- D. When we call on the Lord, passing through the Son, we are in the Spirit, because the Son and the Spirit are one and because the Spirit is the reality of the Son's name; when we are in the Spirit, we have access unto the Father, because the Father and the Son are one—1 Cor. 12:3; John 10:30.
- 1 Cor **12:3** Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking in the Spirit of God says, Jesus *is* accursed; and no one can say, Jesus *is* Lord! except in the Holy Spirit.
- John **10:30** I and the Father are one.
- E. According to the truth, there are three steps—access through the Son, in the Spirit, and unto the Father; in our practical experience, however, these are three aspects of one experience:
1. When we believe in the Lord, we are in the Spirit and we have access unto the Father—Eph. 2:18.
Eph **2:18** For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
 2. Once we call on the Lord's name, we immediately have access in the Spirit unto the Father, because the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one.
- F. Through the Son is through the Triune God, in the Spirit is in the Triune God, and unto the Father is unto the Triune God; this is how we experience the Triune God—v. 18.
- Eph **2:18** For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

II. The sequence of the Divine Trinity in Luke 15 is the same as that in Ephesians 2:18:

- Luke 15 (be omitted)
- Eph **2:18** For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.
- A. In the entire New Testament, Luke 15 is the chapter that most clearly reveals the mystery of the Divine Trinity, with a particular emphasis on the love of the Triune God toward sinners.
Luke 15 (be omitted)
- B. The Lord Jesus spoke three parables depicting how the Divine Trinity works to bring sinners back through the Son by the Spirit unto the Father.
- C. In Luke 15 the sequence begins with the Son, goes to the Spirit, and leads to the Father; this wonderful sequence is according to the steps of God's salvation, which is based on Christ's redemption.
Luke 15 (be omitted)
- D. The Son comes as the Shepherd to seek after the lost sheep (vv. 3-7), the Spirit as the woman enlightens the house and eventually finds the lost coin (vv. 8-10), and the Father receives the returned son (vv. 11-32); this shows the divine economy of the Divine Trinity

with the redeeming Son, the sanctifying Spirit, and the receiving Father—Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; 2 Thes. 2:13:

Luke 15:3 And He told them this parable, saying,

Luke 15:4 Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

Luke 15:5 And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

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Luke 15:20 And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately.

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- Luke 15:29 But he answered and said to his father, Behold, so many years I have been slaving for you and have never neglected a command of yours, and you have never given me a goat that I might be merry with my friends;
- Luke 15:30 But when this son of yours came, who devoured your living with harlots, you slaughtered for him the fattened calf.
- Luke 15:31 And he said to him, Child, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.
- Luke 15:32 But we had to be merry and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life, and he was lost and has been found.
- Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;
- Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,
- 2 Thes 2:13 But we ought to thank God always concerning you, brothers beloved of the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth,

1. The reason the Son is mentioned first is that in God's salvation the One who comes, practically speaking, is the Son; the Son comes to accomplish redemption, the foundation of our salvation—Gal. 1:4.

Gal 1:4 Who gave Himself for our sins that He might rescue us out of the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father,

2. Then the Spirit comes to find us; because of the Spirit's finding of us, we repent and come back to the Father, who is waiting to receive us.

E. The parables in Luke 15:3-32 unveil the love of the Triune God toward sinners:

Luke 15:3-32 (be omitted)

1. The Lord's word here emphasizes the love of the Divine Trinity more than the fallen condition and repentance of the penitent sinner.
2. The divine love is fully expressed in the Son's tender care as the good Shepherd, in the Spirit's fine seeking as the treasure lover, and in the Father's warm receiving as a loving father—John 16:27; Eph. 2:4.

John 16:27 For the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from God.

Eph 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

III. The Divine Trinity revealed in Ephesians 2:18 and Luke 15:3-32 is the triune entrance into the New Jerusalem:

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

Luke 15:3-32 (be omitted)

A. The Triune God is our entrance into Himself; the three gates on each of the four sides of the New Jerusalem signify the entrance through the Triune God—Rev. 21:13:

Rev 21:13 On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

1. The three persons of the Godhead are the three gates, which form one complete entrance—Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:4-6.

Matt 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Rev 1:4 John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the Firstborn of the dead, and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has released us from our sins by His blood

Rev 1:6 And made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the might forever and ever. Amen.

2. The Son's redeeming, the Spirit's seeking, and the Father's receiving are a threefold entrance into the New Jerusalem.

B. Ephesians 2:18 and the parables in Luke 15 unveil a complete triune entrance, one entrance in three steps:

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father.

Luke 15 (be omitted)

1. The Son died on the cross to find us outwardly, the Spirit came to seek us by searching within our being, and due to the Spirit's inner searching, we repented and came back to the Father.
2. Based upon the Son's redemption and through the Spirit's searching, the Father is ready to receive us back to Himself so that we may enjoy Him; this is the triune entrance into the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:13.

Rev 21:13 On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

THE DIVINE TRINITY IN THE DIVINE MOVE AND IN OUR EXPERIENCE

Luke 15:3-32

In Luke 15 there are three parables: the parable of a good shepherd finding a lost sheep, the parable of a fine woman seeking her lost coin, and the parable of a loving father receiving back his prodigal son (vv. 3-32). These three parables in Luke 15 give us a full picture of the Divine Trinity in saving lost sinners. First there is the Son's finding (vv. 4-7) as the good Shepherd. The Son came to find us by accomplishing His all-inclusive redemption. Then there is the Spirit's seeking (vv. 8-10). The Spirit comes as the fine woman to do her seeking work. The Spirit enters into our heart to enlighten us, to search us, and to sweep away all the "dirt" in order to find us, to gain us. After being caught by the Spirit, we repent and come to ourselves. Then we make up our mind to come back to the Father, typified by the prodigal son coming back to his father. The father, who was waiting for the prodigal son's return, saw his son and ran to him. He clothed him with the best robe, which typifies our Father clothing us with Christ as our righteousness. Then the father gave the command to kill the fattened calf for their enjoyment. This signifies the rich Christ (Eph. 3:8) killed on the cross for the believers' enjoyment. Luke 15 presents a full picture of the Divine Trinity in saving sinners by His divine love. Again we can see a marvelous coordination among the Three of the Divine Trinity. These Three—typified by a shepherd, a woman, and a father—cooperate together as one person in saving sinners.

Ephesians 2:18

Ephesians 2:18 speaks of our access through Christ [the Son] in one Spirit unto the Father. Why can we not come to the Father directly? Why do we have to approach the Father through Christ in the Spirit? We should not forget that the very God whom we are approaching is triune. As we have seen, none of the Three in the Divine Trinity would be individualistic. If we would come to the Father without the Son and the Spirit, the Father would not be happy. The Father desires that we come to Him through the Son and in the Spirit. Through God the Son who is the Accomplisher, the means, and in God the Spirit who is the Executor, the application, we have access unto God the Father who is the Originator, the source of our enjoyment.

Again, we need to realize that the Three of the Godhead are one. When They act, They act in oneness with one another. If we want to enjoy the Holy Spirit, we must love the Lord Jesus, the Son. When we say, "Lord Jesus, I love You," we enjoy the Spirit. Furthermore, when we tell the Lord that we love Him, the Lord would secretly impress us within to obey the Spirit and honor the Father. He would lead us to worship the Father. The Father is seeking those who will worship Him in the Son and through the Spirit. The Father always likes to exalt the Son, the Son always likes to honor the Father, and the Spirit always likes to testify for the Son with the Father.

Ephesians 2:18 tells us that if we come to approach God our Father, our access must be through the redeeming Son and in the guiding Spirit. Then we reach the loving Father. When we have the Father, we have the Son. When we have the Son with the Father, we have the Spirit. Therefore, we have the Three of the Divine Trinity. We can never separate Them. The divine revelation of the divine economy shows us the Divine Trinity in all His excellencies, beauties, and virtues. These excellencies, beauties, and virtues are seen in the divine coordination in the Godhead. (*Living in and with the Divine Trinity*, pp. 52-53)

THE SPIRIT BEING THE ACCESS FOR THE BELIEVERS TO CONTACT THE TRIUNE GOD

Ephesians 2:18 reveals that the Spirit is the access for the believers to contact the Triune God: "Through Him we both have access in one Spirit unto the Father." Here the Trinity of the Godhead is implied. Through God the Son who is the Accomplisher, the means, and in God the Spirit who is the Executor, the application, we have access to God the Father, who is the Originator. Through Christ the Son we have access in one Spirit unto the Father. Notice that this verse does not say that we have access unto the Spirit; it speaks of access unto the Father. The Spirit is unto us, whereas we are unto the Father. The Father came to us in the Son, and the Son came into us as the Spirit. Now through the Son the Spirit brings us unto the Father. This is for the dispensing of the Triune God into us so that the church may come into existence.

To have access unto the Father is to contact God for enjoyment. Whenever we come to God to contact Him, we enjoy Him. There is no enjoyment better than this. When we contact God, we come to Him through Christ in

the Spirit to the Father. This is the divine Trinity in our experience as our enjoyment. We all have been sealed with the Spirit as a pledge that God is our inheritance for us to enjoy. Now through the Son in the Spirit we come to the Father to enjoy Him.

According to the context, this verse also indicates that through Christ all the Jewish and Gentile believers, who were once at enmity, have access to the Father in one Spirit for their enjoyment. No matter whether we are Jewish or Gentile believers, we all are coming to the Father, through the Son, in the one Spirit, to enjoy the Father as our inheritance.

The access in one Spirit is unto the Father. Positionally we were reconciled to *God*; experientially we have access unto the *Father*. To be reconciled to God is to be saved; to have access unto the Father is to enjoy God, who, as the source of life, has regenerated us to be His sons. In the one Body we have been reconciled to God through the cross (Eph. 2:16). This is a fact. Now we have access unto the Father and contact Him directly. This is an experience. Having been reconciled to God once for all, we now have access to the Father for a continual enjoyment.

Chapter two of Ephesians tells us that God loved us (v. 4), enlivened us (v. 5), raised us up (v. 6), and seated us in the heavenlies (v. 6), to make us His poem, His masterpiece (v. 10). The God who did this is the Father as the source acting through a channel, Christ the Son. When the Son came, He came in the Father's name (John 5:43); He came with the Father (John 8:29; 16:32). The Father is the source who planned all things, and the Son is the means, the course, who accomplished the Father's purpose. Christ became the channel in which and by which God enlivened us, raised us up, and seated us in the heavenlies. After His death and resurrection, Christ came as the Spirit to preach the gospel (Eph. 2:17). When the Spirit came, He came with the Father (John 15:26) in the Son's name (John 14:26). This means that when the Spirit came, the Son came. Therefore, when the Son comes to preach the gospel to us, the Spirit also comes. When we receive the Son in His preaching, we receive the Spirit. The Spirit then brings us back to the Father through the Son. The Father came to us through the Son in the Spirit, and now the Spirit brings us back to the Father through the Son. Through this wonderful two-way traffic we enjoy the dispensing of the Triune God. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, pp. 1013-1015)