

The Economy of God: THE TRIUNE GOD in His Operation

by Ron Kangas

In the writings of the apostle John, there are two crucial verses on knowing God. “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Him whom You have sent, Jesus Christ” (John 17:3). Here knowing the true God and the Son of God sent by Him is intrinsically related to eternal life—the divine life, the uncreated, indestructible life of God. To know God, the divine Being, we must have the divine life, for this life has the special function of knowing God and Christ. We receive and possess the divine life by means of the divine birth (1:12-13; 3:3, 5; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18) through which those who believe into the Son of God (John 3:15) become children of God with the life and nature of God. Only by the divine life obtained through regeneration as the divine birth can we know God.

Then in 1 John 5:20 the apostle John utters these tremendous words: “We know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we might know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” Here we see that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, which is the faculty of our mind enlightened by the Spirit of reality to know the divine reality in our regenerated spirit (Eph. 4:23; John 16:12-15). With such an understanding, such a faculty, we can know the true One, the genuine and real God. *Know* in this verse, as in John 17:3 and *knowledge* in Ephesians 1:17, is the ability of the divine life to know the true God in our regenerated spirit through our renewed mind, enlightened by the Spirit of reality through the inner anointing (1 John 2:20, 27). Although it might be objectionable to those who emphasize the objective, doctrinal knowledge about God (as opposed to the experiential knowing of God in Hebrews 8:11), in 1 John 5:20 *Him who is true*—or *the true One* (literally, *the true*)—refers to God becoming subjective to us, to the self-existing and ever-existing God becoming the true One in our spiritual life and experience as children of God begotten of Him. This true One is the divine reality, and to know the true One is to know the

divine reality by experiencing, enjoying, possessing, and being constituted with this reality. As this process takes place, the divine reality—God Himself, who was once merely objective to us—becomes a subjective reality in our experience. Furthermore, John points out that “we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ.” To be in the true One is to be in His Son Jesus Christ, for only by being in the Son can we be in the Father as the only true God. This indicates that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the true God and that the true One and Jesus Christ are one in the way of coinherence (John 10:38; 14:10-11). Thus, to be in the Son is to be in the true One. John goes on to conclude, “This is the true God and eternal life.” The word *this* refers to the God who has come through incarnation and has given us the ability to know Him as the true One, the genuine God, and to be one with Him in His Son Jesus Christ. This genuine and real God is eternal life to us so that we may partake of Him as everything to our regenerated being, such as the bread of life and the water of life (6:48; 7:37-38; Rev. 22:1, 17). Yet we must go on to see something even more marvelous: *This* in 1 John 5:20 refers to the true God and Jesus Christ in whom we are (John 14:20). *This* includes the fact that we are in this One, the true One, and it implies that, in a practical sense according to spiritual experience, eternal life is the true God in whom we are experientially. Therefore, the true God and eternal life include our being in the true One and in His Son Jesus Christ. Now in our experience as believers, the true One becomes the true God, and Jesus Christ becomes eternal life. By the function of eternal life, which is in the Son and which the Son Himself is (1 John 5:11-12; John 11:25; 14:6), we can know the true God according to His revelation of His being and nature and according to the apostles’ testimony of His operation in His economy.

This article, a sketch of certain truths, mainly from the Gospel of John, concerning the economy of God—the Triune God in His operation to carry out His eternal purpose according to the desire of His heart—is written from

the divine perspective unveiled in John 17:3 and 1 John 5:20, that is, the perspective of the eternal life possessed by us through our believing into Christ and the divine reality experienced and enjoyed by us through our being in Christ. From this perspective we will consider God in Himself, His essence; God in His process, His economy; God in His dispensing, His life-imparting; God in His union with the believers; and God in His corporate expression.

God in Himself—His Essence

In Himself, that is, in His essence, God is uniquely one, self-existing, ever-existing, immutable, triune, and characterized by life, light, love, righteousness, and holiness. The fact that God is uniquely one and that He alone is God is the clear and definite revelation of the Scriptures. As we have pointed out, the Lord Jesus speaks of Him as “the only true God,” indicating that the Father is the true God and that any so-called gods are false. “There is no God but one” (1 Cor. 8:4), for to the believers “there is one God,

The God who is uniquely one, self-existing, ever-existing, and immutable is essentially triune; He is three-one. From eternity to eternity the unique God, the Triune God, is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.



the Father, out from whom are all things” (v. 6). Thus, God is one (Rom. 3:30; Gal. 3:20). Regarding this, the Old Testament is equally emphatic. “You alone are God” (Psa. 86:10). “I am Jehovah and there is no one else; / Besides Me there is no God” (Isa. 45:5; see vv. 6, 21, 22). “I am the First and I am the Last, / And apart from Me there is no God” (44:6). “Is there a God besides Me? / Or is there any other Rock? I do not know of any” (v. 8). “Remember... / That I am God and there is no one else; / I am God and there is no one like Me” (46:9). This truth regarding the uniqueness of God must always be our point of departure in our journey toward knowing Him who is true.

The true God is self-existing. As the self-existing One, God is I Am. “God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you” (Exo. 3:14). “The divine title I AM denotes that God is the One who is self-existing and ever-existing and who depends on nothing apart from Himself” (Recovery Version, Exo. 3:14, note 1). “God has no origin,” Tozer quotes Novatian as saying, and then

remarks, “It is precisely this concept of no-origin which distinguishes That-which-is-God from whatever is not God” (31). Quoting the words of God to Moses in Exodus 3:14, Tozer goes on to say, “Everything God is, everything that is God, is set forth in that unqualified declaration of independent being” (35). The technical theological term for God’s independent being is *aseity*, from Latin *aseite*, meaning “of oneself.” “Used of God, it denotes that He exists in and of Himself, independent of anything else. He is self-existent” (Geisler 58).

The self-existing God is, of necessity, ever-existing, immortal, eternal. It is impossible for Him not to exist or to cease from being. First Timothy 6:16 declares that God “alone has immortality”; He is deathless, absolutely free from death. God alone possesses immortality in Himself, for immortality is an essential element of His being. According to Paul, God’s eternal power and divine characteristics “have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being perceived by the things made” (Rom. 1:20). Because God is ever-existing, eternal, and outside

of time, the concept and limitations of time do not apply to Him. “Time marks the beginning of created existence, and because God never began to exist it can have no application to Him....God dwells in eternity but time dwells in God” (Tozer 45). He is “the high and exalted One, / Who inhabits eternity” (Isa. 57:15).

Intrinsically related to God as the ever-existing one is God’s immutability. The word *mutable* means “liable or subject to change or alteration; capable of change or given to changing constantly.” In contrast, *immutable* means “not capable or susceptible of change, unchanging, invariable, unalterable.” To testify that the true God is immutable is to assert that He is not subject to change, that in Himself He is unchanging, invariable (James 1:17; Heb. 6:17).

God is immutable in His essence, attributes, promises, and purpose. God’s immutable essence is unalterable; it remains eternally the same. The God who revealed Himself as I Am later speaks of Himself as the One who is, who was, and who is coming (Rev. 1:4). God is unchanging also in His attributes. He is perfect and immutable in His life, light, love, holiness, righteousness, glory, wisdom, knowledge, power, grace, compassion, mercy, and all other attributes. “The attributes of God can no more change than Deity can cease to be” (Pink 37). Furthermore, because God is immutable in His promises, He is not capricious; in Him is no fickleness, inconstancy,

or arbitrariness. With Him is no variation or shadow cast by turning (James 1:17). From the foregoing it follows that God is immutable in His purpose. “The counsel of Jehovah stands forever; / The intentions of His heart stand from generation to generation” (Psa. 33:11). Concerning this, God Himself makes a declaration through the prophet Isaiah: “Jehovah of hosts has sworn, saying, / Surely just as I have conceived it, so has it happened; / And just as I have purposed it, so shall this stand” (14:24). Elsewhere in Isaiah the Lord says,

I am God and there is no other, / I am God, and there is no one like Me, / Who declares the end from the beginning / And things which have not been done from ancient times, / Saying, My counsel will stand, / And all My desire I will accomplish. (46:9-10)

The eternal purpose which God made in Christ will be fulfilled (Eph. 3:11).

The God who is uniquely one, self-existing, ever-existing, and immutable is essentially triune; He is three—one—three yet one, one yet three. From eternity to eternity the unique God, the Triune God, is the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. The Father is God (1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 1:17), the Son is God (Heb. 1:8; John 1:1; Rom. 9:5), and the Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4). The Father is eternal (Isa. 9:6), the Son is eternal (Heb. 1:12; 7:3), and the Spirit is eternal (9:14). All three co-exist; they exist simultaneously and immutably. Among the Father, the Son, and the Spirit in the eternal Godhead, there is distinction but no separation. The Father is distinct from the Son, the Son is distinct from the Spirit, and the Spirit is distinct from the Son and the Father. However, they are not separate, and cannot be separate, because they coinhere, dwelling in one another mutually:

The relationship among the Father, the Son, and the Spirit is not only that They simultaneously coexist but also that They mutually indwell one another. The Father exists in the Son and the Spirit; the Son exists in the Father and the Spirit; and the Spirit exists in the Father and the Son. This mutual indwelling among the three of the Godhead is called coinherence...We cannot say that They are separate, because They coinhere, that is, They live within one another. In Their coexistence the three of the Godhead are distinct, but Their coinherence makes them one. They coexist in Their coinherence, so They are distinct but not separate. (Lee, *Crucial* 9-10)

This is neither tritheism nor modalism. Tritheism, an error on the side of the threeness of the Triune God, is the bizarre notion that the three persons in the Godhead are three separate Gods. This is heresy. Modalism, an error on the side of the oneness of the Triune God, is the strange concept that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are merely

three modes, three temporary and successive manifestations, of the one God, who is not regarded as essentially triune. This also is heresy. The revealed, biblical truth, being twofold according to the principle of the twofoldness of divine truth, embraces both the oneness and the threeness of the Triune God: God is uniquely one, yet He is three-one—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

This exceedingly brief sketch of crucial points of the truth concerning God in Himself, in His essence, is foundational for everything that will be presented regarding God in His process, dispensing, union, and expression. When I turn to God in His economy and His dispensing according to His administration, I do so with the firm conviction that the truth concerning God in Himself will not be jeopardized or compromised in any way.

At this juncture, it is necessary to point out the difference between the essential Trinity and the economical Trinity. The essential Trinity is a matter of the essence of the Triune God for His eternal existence; the economical Trinity is a matter of God’s arrangement for His operation in His move to accomplish His eternal purpose. An excellent presentation of this distinction is offered by Witness Lee:

The essential Trinity refers to the essence of the Triune God for His existence. In His essence, God is one, the one unique God (Isa. 45:18b; 1 Cor. 8:6a). In the essential Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit coexist and coinhere at the same time and in the same way with no succession. There is no first, second, or third.

Essentially, God is one, but economically He is three—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). In God’s plan, God’s administrative arrangement, God’s economy, the Father takes the first step, the Son takes the second step, and the Spirit takes the third step. The Father purposed (Eph. 1:4-6), the Son accomplished (vv. 7-12), and the Spirit applies what the Son accomplished according to the Father’s purpose (vv. 13-14). This is a successive procedure or a succession in God’s economy to carry out His eternal purpose. Whereas the essential Trinity refers to the essence of the Triune God for His existence, the economical Trinity refers to His plan for His move. There is the need of the existence of the Divine Trinity, and there is also the need of the plan of the Divine Trinity.

The Father accomplished the first step of His plan, His economy, by working to choose and predestinate us, but He did this in Christ the Son (Eph. 1:4-5) and with the Spirit. After this plan was made, the Son came to accomplish this plan, but He did this with the Father (John 8:29; 16:32) and by the Spirit (Luke 1:35; Matt. 1:18, 20; 12:28). Now that the Son has accomplished all that the Father has planned, the Spirit comes in the third step to

apply all that He accomplished, but He does this as the Son and with the Father (John 14:26; 15:26; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:17). In this way, while the divine economy of the Divine Trinity is being carried out, the divine existence of the Divine Trinity, His eternal coexistence and coinherence, remains intact and is not jeopardized. (*Crucial* 9-10)

God in His Process—His Economy

In order for God to carry out His economical plan, it was necessary for Him to become what we may, with precision, call *the processed God*—the Triune God who has passed through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection to become the Spirit of reality, the holy breath (John 14:16-17; 20:22) able to indwell the believers. These processes are focused on the two “becomings” of Christ: the Word becoming flesh (1:14) and Christ, the last Adam in the flesh, becoming the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). To know God as the processed God is to know the economy of God, the Triune God in His operation.

In order to carry out His economical plan, God became *the processed God*, passing through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection to become the Spirit of reality to indwell the believers.

Incarnation

In His incarnation Christ, the Son of God, brought the infinite God into the finite man and thus became, in His unique divine-human person, both the infinite God and a finite man. As the infinite God, Christ is self-existing and ever-existing—the great I Am (John 8:24, 28, 58; 18:6). As the infinite God, Christ is eternal and immortal (Micah 5:2; 1 Tim. 6:16), He is immutable and unchangeable (Heb. 1:8-12; 6:17), He is omnipresent and omnipotent, He is unlimited in His attributes, and He is the effulgence of God’s glory (1:3). As a finite man Christ in the flesh was limited in space and time (John 7:6). As a finite man, Christ in the flesh was neither omnipresent nor omnipotent, He was limited in knowledge (Matt. 24:36; Luke 2:40, 52), He had a natural human life (John 10:11, 15, 17), He lived a dependent existence (Matt. 14:19; John 6:57), and He did not manifest the glory of His divinity but concealed it within the shell of His humanity (12:23-24). If we see this, we will realize that Christ in His incarnation was both the infinite God and a finite man.

God is infinite, and man is finite, yet in Christ the two became one. As the infinite God and a finite man, Christ is wonderful, mystical, and mysterious. In the words of a popular hymn, the great Creator became our Savior, with flesh and blood as His substance, and now we know that He is the great I Am.

Human Living

This wonderful One, the God-man, the infinite God and a finite man, lived a human life on earth. It was an unprecedented life, for it was God living in a human being and a human being living God, expressing the divine attributes in His human virtues.

Concerning this God-man living, the testimony of the Gospel of John is truly remarkable in its details. To His bewildered disciples He said, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work” (4:34). His working was the Father’s working: “My Father is working until now, and I also am working” (5:17). To the religionists who were shocked at this word, the Lord Jesus went on to say, “The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner” (v. 19). As the Son of God in the flesh standing in the position of a sent one, He did nothing from Himself and sought not His own will but the will of the Father. “I can do nothing from



Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me” (v. 30). The fact of the Son’s doing the will of the Father is reiterated in 6:38: “I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.” The living Father had sent Him, and He lived “because of the Father” (v. 57), living a life of complete dependence as He set aside His natural human life and lived the Father’s life in His humanity. The Lord Jesus did not speak from Himself or seek His own glory (7:17-18). With all candor He declared, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me” (v. 16). He was a man who spoke the truth which He heard from God (8:40), speaking the things which He had seen with His Father (v. 38). In 8:50 He said, “I do not seek My own glory.” In His ministry He did the works which the Father had given Him to finish (5:36), and He did these works in the Father’s name, because He had come in the name, the person, of the Father. He did nothing from Himself, and He did not speak from Himself. “I have not spoken from Myself; but the Father who sent Me, He Himself has given Me commandment, what to say

and what to speak...The things therefore that I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak" (12:49-50). This speaking, working Father was in the Son, and the Son was in Him. "Believe Me," He told Philip, "that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me" (14:11). If we are impressed with this utterance, we will attend to what the Lord said in 10:38: "Believe the works so that you may come to know and continue to know that the Father is in Me and I am in the Father." The Lord Jesus came in the name of the Father, sought the glory of the Father, did the will of the Father, spoke the word of the Father, completed the works of the Father, and lived because of the Father by always denying Himself so that, as a God-man in His human living, He could abide in the Father and enjoy the Father's abiding in Him. Therefore, He, and He alone, could declare, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (14:9). Thus, according to the prophecy in Isaiah 9:6, His name was called "Eternal Father." To see Jesus, the Son of God in incarnation, was to see the Father!

Crucifixion

According to the record in the Gospel of John, the Lord Jesus died as the Lamb of God (1:29), as the fulfillment of the type of the bronze serpent (3:14), and as the grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died for the release of the divine life and the producing of many grains (12:24).

"Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29). As the redeeming Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus was the fulfillment of all the offerings described in Leviticus: the sin offering, the trespass offering, the burnt offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the wave offering, the heave offering, and the drink offering. He was, therefore, the totality of all these offerings, and as such, He died to take away the totality of sin.

Because God had sent His Son "in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin" (Rom. 8:3), Christ, in His vicarious death on our behalf, could be the fulfillment of the type of the bronze serpent. The Lord spoke of this to Nicodemus in John 3:14: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up." God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son to be the reality of the sin offering in order to judge and destroy the devil and to deliver His chosen people from their serpentine nature and to dispense eternal life into them for the kingdom of God and the bride of Christ. The following note is enlightening:

In Gen. 3 Satan, the serpent, injected his nature into man's flesh. When the children of Israel sinned against God, they were bitten by serpents (Num. 21:4-9). God told Moses to lift up a bronze serpent on their behalf for God's judgment, that by looking upon that bronze serpent all might live. That was a type. Here, in this verse,

the Lord Jesus applied that type to Himself, indicating that when He was in the flesh, He was in "the likeness of the flesh of sin" (Rom. 8:3), which likeness is equal to the form of the bronze serpent. The bronze serpent had the form of the serpent but was without the serpent's poison. Christ was made in "the likeness of the flesh of sin," but He did not participate in any way in the sin of the flesh (2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15). When He was lifted up in the flesh on the cross, by His death Satan, the old serpent, was dealt with (12:31-33; Heb. 2:14). This means that the serpentine nature within fallen man has been dealt with. (Recovery Version, John 3:14, note 1)

All genuine believers know that Christ, the Lamb of God, died for their sins, and some realize that Christ died also to deal with Satan and the satanic, serpentine nature within fallen humanity. However, not many have a proper appreciation of the life-releasing aspect of Christ's death spoken of in John 12:24: "Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." Through incarnation, the divine life, the uncreated eternal life, came into and was confined by the shell of Jesus' humanity. The only way that this life could be released from within the Lord's human shell and imparted to God's chosen and redeemed people was through the non-redemptive, life-releasing aspect of Christ's death. In the words of John 10, this required that the Lord Jesus lay down His human life, His soul-life, so that His sheep could have the divine life. In 10:10 the Lord said, "I have come that they may have life [Gk. *zoe*] and may have it abundantly." In the following verse He went on to say, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life [Gk. *psuche*] for the sheep." In verses 15 and 17 the Lord continued to speak about laying down His soul-life, His human life, so that we, the believers, could have the divine life that was concealed and confined within Him. The Lord's laying down of His human life in John 10 was His dying as a grain of wheat in John 12. He fell into the ground and died in His human life in order to release, and in resurrection to impart, His divine life. On the basis of His dying as the Lamb of God and the fulfillment of the type of the bronze serpent, the Lord could die also as a grain of wheat.

The redemptive and life-releasing aspects of Christ's death are signified by the blood and the water in John 19:34: "One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water." Although the blood and water were actual physical substances, in the Gospel of John, a book of signs, they function as signs. The blood is a sign of the Lord's redemptive death, which dealt with our sins and made it possible for God righteously to forgive and justify us in His grace. The water is a sign of the Lord's life-releasing death. On the negative side, the death of Christ took away our sins; on the positive side, the death of Christ

released the divine life so that it could be dispensed into us by Christ in resurrection as the life-giving Spirit. The negative aspect—the redemptive aspect—was not an end in itself but was for the positive aspect—the life-releasing aspect—for the fulfillment of God’s purpose.

First John 1:7 unveils the significance of the Lord’s redeeming blood, assuring us that the blood of Jesus, God’s Son, cleanses us from every sin. This cleansing blood is, according to Paul’s word in Acts 20:28, God’s blood, “His own blood” with which God obtained the church. Through incarnation our God, the Creator, the eternal One, became mingled with man, a God-man who had human blood to shed for redemption and who was able to die for us. When the God-man died on the cross, He died not only as man but also as God, and thus the blood that redeemed us is the blood of Jesus, the Son of God. As a man, the Lord shed human blood to redeem us. Because He is the Son of God, even God Himself, with His blood there is the element of divinity, and this divine element ensures the eternal efficacy of His

Gospel of Christ as the God-Savior is also the Gospel of eternal life. This life, the divine life, may be considered the first and basic attribute of God (Eph. 4:18; John 5:26). According to the divine and eternal nature of the life of God, God’s life is the life (1 John 5:11-12), the unique life; hence, only the life of God can be counted as life (John 1:4; 10:10; 11:25; 14:6), “that which is really life” (1 Tim. 6:19). This life is both the content of God and the flowing out of God (Rev. 22:1), and God’s desire is to be the fountain of life to us for our satisfaction and delight (Jer. 2:13; Psa. 36:9). It is only by the life of God that the eternal purpose of God can be fulfilled. Therefore, it was indeed a great matter for the Lord Jesus to die as a grain of wheat to release the divine life. Now the life that is in Him (1 John 5:11-12), the life which He Himself is (John 11:25; Col. 3:4), is now the eternal life in all those who believe into Him as the Son of God.

Resurrection

Christ’s resurrection involved His person and work in relation to God’s economy. The basic truth concerning Christ’s person in resurrection is that in, by, and through resurrection He became the firstfruits of resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20, 23), the Firstborn from the dead (Col. 1:18), the Son of God designated in power (Rom. 1:3-4), the firstborn Son of God (Acts 13:33; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10-12), a resurrected man with a spiritual body of flesh and



The objective truth of the resurrection of Christ is that the risen Lord Jesus has a body of flesh and bones; the subjective reality of the resurrection of Christ is that the resurrected Christ is the Spirit who gives life.

redeeming blood. As a man, the Lord Jesus had genuine human blood, and as God, He has the element that gives His blood eternal efficacy. The name *Jesus* denotes the Lord’s humanity, which was needed for the shedding of the redeeming blood; the title *His Son* denotes the Lord’s divinity, which is needed for the eternal efficacy of His redeeming blood. Thus, the blood of Jesus shed on the cross is eternal blood, and for this reason the redemption accomplished by the God-man is eternal (Heb. 9:12).

With the shedding of the redemptive and eternally efficacious blood of the God-man as the basis, the divine life, the eternal, uncreated, indestructible life of God, was released from within the shell of the Lord’s humanity. This is a matter of indescribable importance. As indicated by the tree of life in Genesis, God’s original intention according to His economy was that His people would eat of the tree of life, which signifies God in Christ as our life and life supply (2:9, 16; Rev. 2:7; 22:14). The symbolism of the tree of life in Genesis has its explanation and fulfillment in the Gospel of John, which as the

bones (John 20:19; Luke 24:36-43; 1 Cor. 15:44; Phil. 3:21), the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45; John 14:16-20; 20:22), the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17), and the Christ in the believers (Rom. 8:10; Col. 1:27; 2 Cor. 13:5). The basic truth concerning Christ’s work in resurrection includes: rising from the dead to be the firstfruits of resurrection offered to God for His satisfaction (John 20:17; 1 Cor. 15:20, 23; Lev. 23:10-11); causing His believers to be regenerated by God (1 Pet. 1:3); rising on the first day of the week to germinate the new creation (John 20:1; 2 Cor. 5:17); producing many grains for His multiplication and glorification (John 12:23-24; 13:31-32; 17:1, 5); bringing forth the corporate child, the corporate new man consisting of Himself as the firstborn Son and His brothers as God’s many sons (16:19-22; Rom. 8:29); rebuilding God’s temple, making it a corporate, spiritual temple (John 2:19-22); becoming the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45); breathing Himself as the Holy Spirit into the disciples (John 20:22; 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-8, 13); staying with the disciples and teaching them the things concerning the kingdom of God (Acts 1:3); and preparing and

charging the disciples to preach the gospel and disciple the nations for His propagation that the church may be produced (Mark 16:15-16; Matt. 28:18-20). For the purpose of this sketch of the Triune God in the operation of His economy, we will concentrate on certain aspects of the person and work of Christ in His resurrection.

We begin with the fact that Christ was resurrected bodily, with a spiritual body of flesh and bones. Anything else one might say concerning the Lord's resurrection must begin here, because if Christ has not been raised, our proclamation is in vain, our faith is in vain, and we are still in our sins (1 Cor. 15:14, 17). As the apostles bore testimony throughout the book of Acts, and as Paul uncompromisingly asserted, "Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father" (Rom. 6:4). And He was raised with a body! Manifesting Himself to His disciples after His resurrection, He said to them, "See My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Touch Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you behold Me having" (Luke 24:39). In John 20:20, after He said, "Peace be to you" (v. 19), "He showed them His hands and His side" (v. 20). To Thomas, who had refused to believe without seeing in the Lord's hands the mark of the nails, putting his finger into the mark of the nails, and putting his hand into His side, the risen Lord Jesus said, "Bring your finger here and see My hands, and bring your hand and put it into My side" (vv. 26-27). This we believe.

In keeping with the principle of the twofoldness of the divine truth in the Word of God, we believe also that in and through resurrection Christ has become the pneumatic Christ, the life-giving Spirit, ready and able to enter into us, live in us, and make His home in us. On the one hand, the resurrected Christ has a glorified body of flesh and bones, and with such a body He has ascended to the throne of God and will return. On the other hand, the resurrected Christ is now the Spirit of reality, another Comforter, living in those who have received Him by believing into Him (4:16-17). It is a fact in the New Testament revelation that the resurrected Christ dwells in us (Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5; Col. 1:27), and it is also a fact that the resurrected Christ has a body of flesh and bones. How can He be with our spirit and make His home in our heart (2 Tim. 4:22; Eph. 3:17)? Christ can be one spirit with us (1 Cor. 6:17), He can live in us (Gal. 2:20), and He can make His home in us (Eph. 3:17) because He is now the pneumatic Christ, the Lord Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18), the life-giving Spirit. The objective truth of the resurrection of Christ is that the risen Lord Jesus has a body of flesh and bones; the subjective reality of the resurrection of Christ is that the resurrected Christ is the Spirit who gives life. The Gospel of John reveals both the fact and the reality, and we must believe and receive both without bias or preference.

Another great truth regarding the resurrection of Christ, unveiled particularly in the Gospel of John, is that Christ's resurrection was His glorification. In a very real sense, with respect to Christ, resurrection is synonymous with glorification, and there is a line of thought in John concerning this. In 12:23 the Lord Jesus said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified," and then He went on to speak of a grain of wheat falling into the ground and dying in order to bear much fruit (v. 24).

Christ had the glory with God (17:5). His incarnation caused His divine glory to be concealed in His flesh. Through His death and resurrection His glory was released, producing many grains, which become His increase as the expression of His glory. (Recovery Version, v. 24, note 2)

In 13:31 and 32 the Lord again spoke of His being glorified. "Now has the Son of Man been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and He will glorify Him immediately." Shortly before He died, He prayed for His glorification, saying, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You...Now, glorify Me along with Yourself, Father, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (17:1, 5). First the Lord predicted His glorification, and then He prayed for it.

He was about to pass through death so that the concealing shell of His humanity might be broken and His divine element, His divine life, might be released. Also, He would resurrect that He might uplift His humanity into the divine element and that His divine element might be expressed, with the result that His entire being, His divinity and His humanity, would be glorified. (Recovery Version, v. 1, note 1)

According to the book of Acts, which has the resurrected Christ as its focus, "the God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His Servant Jesus...the Author of life...whom God has raised from the dead" (3:13, 15). For God to glorify Jesus was to raise Him from the dead. The Lord referred to this in Luke 24:26 when He asked, "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?" Since the Lord had been glorified through resurrection, the disciples were released from the limitation imposed on them by the Lord immediately after His transfiguration: "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of Man is raised from the dead" (Matt. 17:9, cf. v. 2). Now they could tell the vision of the Son of Man, who was transfigured on the mountain and glorified in resurrection.

The Gospel of John reveals that the glorification of Christ through His resurrection had a marvelous issue: The Spirit of God became *the Spirit*. Although in His essence, His

eternal Godhead, the Triune God is immutable, when Christ was glorified by the Father through death and resurrection, the Spirit of God economically became the Spirit. This is the significance of John 7:39: “This He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive; for the Spirit was not yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.” The Spirit of God is the eternal Spirit and thus has always been in existence, but the Spirit as the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9) and the Spirit of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19) was “not yet,” because the Lord Jesus had “not yet been glorified” in and through His resurrection. The words *not yet* imply a process in time with a consequent fulfillment. At present, a certain thing or matter is “not yet,” but in the future this thing or matter will be. John 7:39 speaks of two “not yet’s.” The Spirit was not yet, and Jesus was not yet glorified. The first not yet, which concerns the Spirit, is dependent on the second not yet, which concerns Jesus being glorified. The revelation here is that, in the processes of God’s economy, the Spirit who was “not yet” would have being after the glorification of the Son of Man. The Lord Jesus was glorified

humanity which He had perfected and sanctified for Himself...When poured out at Pentecost, He came as the Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Spirit of the Incarnate, crucified, and exalted Christ, the bearer and communicator to us, not of the life of God as such, but of that life as it had been interwoven into human nature in the person of Christ Jesus...And of this Spirit, as He dwelt in Jesus in the flesh, and can dwell in us in the flesh too, it is distinctly and literally true; the Holy Spirit was not yet. The Spirit of the glorified Jesus, the Son of man become the Son of God—He could not be until Jesus was glorified...

From His nature, as it was glorified in the resurrection and ascension, His Spirit came forth as the Spirit of His human life, glorified into the union with the Divine, to make us partakers of all that He had personally wrought out and acquired, of Himself and His glorified life...And in virtue of His having perfected in Himself a new holy human nature on our behalf, He could now communicate what previously had no existence—a life at once human and Divine. (37-39)

Since God, in His economy, has become the Spirit, He can now fulfill His desire to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen and redeemed people in order to be one with them and to be expressed through them.



At this point it would be profitable, and perhaps necessary, to restate the two-fold nature of the truth regarding God in His Godhead and God in His economy, that is, the truth of the immutability of God and the process of God, both of which we must believe. God’s immutability is related to His being in His essence, and God’s process is related to His

when He was resurrected, and through this glorification the Spirit of God became the Spirit of the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:19). This means that after the Lord Jesus was glorified in resurrection, the Spirit of God became *the Spirit* (Gal. 3:2, 5, 14; Rev. 22:17)—the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit of the incarnated, crucified, and resurrected Christ. Andrew Murray understood this:

becoming in His economy. In particular, God’s process is related to the two becomings of Christ: His becoming flesh through incarnation (John 1:14) and His becoming the life-giving Spirit (the Spirit) through resurrection (7:39; 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:45). These two becomings, as stages of God’s process in Christ, are an economical, not essential, matter; they are changes that involve God’s economy, not God’s essence.

The Holy Spirit *was not yet*; because Jesus *was not yet* glorified...The expression, if accepted as it stands, may guide us into the true understanding of the real significance of the Spirit’s not coming until Jesus was glorified....

Change with God can only be economical; it can never be essential. Essentially, our God cannot change. From eternity to eternity He remains the same in His essence. But in His economy the Triune God has changed in the sense of being processed. (Lee, *Conclusion* 914)

We know how the Son, who had from eternity been with the Father, entered upon a new stage of existence when He became flesh. When He returned to Heaven, He was still the same only-begotten Son of God, and yet not altogether the same. For He was now also, as Son of Man, the first-begotten from the dead, clothed with that glorified

God in His Dispensing—His Imparting

Since God, in His economy, has become the Spirit, He can now fulfill His desire to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen and redeemed people in order to be one with them and to be expressed through them. The

Triune God carries out His economy by the divine dispensing. The economy of God is the plan and arrangement according to God's desire and purpose; the dispensing of God is the imparting of His processed being into the believers according to His plan and arrangement. As indicated by the flow of thought from 1:14 to 20:22, the Gospel of John is a book concerning the divine dispensing. The incarnation, the crucifixion, and the resurrection of Christ are all for God's dispensing experienced by spiritual breathing, drinking, and eating.

The Spirit—the Spirit of the glorified Jesus—was breathed as the holy breath into the disciples by Christ the Son in resurrection. “He breathed into them and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit” (20:22). The Gospel of John reveals that Christ became flesh to be the Lamb of God, that in resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit as the holy breath, and that in His resurrection He breathed Himself as the Spirit into the disciples. The Holy Spirit in 20:22 is actually the resurrected Christ Himself, because the Spirit is His breath. The Spirit, therefore, is the breath of the Son. The Christ who breathed Himself into the disciples is the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). It is as the Spirit that He was breathed into His disciples, and it is as the Spirit that He can live in us and abide in us and that we can live by Him and abide in Him (John 14:19-20; 15:4-5). By breathing the Spirit into the disciples the Lord imparted, dispensed, Himself into them as their life and everything to be their regenerated being. Now we, as His believers, have the resurrected, pneumatic Christ as the holy breath for our spiritual breathing, and we can breathe in the Lord simply by calling on His name.

We can also come to Him and drink of Him as the living water, responding to His invitation: “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water” (7:37-38). The water that He gives us becomes in us a fountain of water springing up into eternal life (4:14). In this divine dispensing the Father is the fountain, the Son is the spring, and the Spirit is the flow. As the source, the origin, the Father is the fountain of living waters (Jer. 2:13). As the embodiment and expression of the Father, the Son is the fountain of water that springs up in the believers into eternal life. As the flow, the Spirit is the river of water of life (John 7:37-39; Rev. 22:1). This is the Triune God in His dispensing—God the Father as the source, God the Son as the course, and God the Spirit as the flow dispensing Himself into us.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity revealed in the Gospel of John is the matter of eating the Lord, emphasized in chapter 6, where we see that Jesus is edible. He is the bread of life (vv. 35, 48), the living bread (v. 51), the true bread (v. 32), the bread of God (v. 33), and the bread which came down out

of heaven (vv. 32, 50). As such bread, Christ wants us to eat Him. “This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever” (vv. 50-51). Because of our need of redemption, the bread which the Lord gives is His flesh, given for the life of the world (v. 51). In response to the contentions of the religionists, the Lord continued,

Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you do not have life within yourselves. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up in the last day. For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of me (vv. 53-57)

Christ is the true food, and as we eat Him, He as the Spirit (v. 63) dispenses Himself into us.

God's economy is that we eat Christ and be constituted with Him in order to express Him and represent Him (Gen. 1:26). To eat is to contact something that is objective to us and to receive it into us, with the result that it becomes our constituent. As we eat our food, we take it into us that it may be assimilated organically into our body. The principle is the same with eating Jesus. To eat the Lord Jesus is to receive Him into us that He may be digested and assimilated by the regenerated new man in the way of life. Eventually, the Christ whom we have eaten, digested, and assimilated will be constituted into and actually become us. Since we are what we eat, if we eat Christ we will become Christ, the corporate Christ, for His expression (1 Cor. 12:12). If we see this, we will have the blessed realization that, as presented in the Gospel of John, God's economy is a matter of Christ coming into us to be digested and assimilated by us and constituted into us. For this, we need to take Him by eating and thereby live by the divine dispensing.

God in His Union with the Believers

Throughout the Bible there is a particular divine thought—God desires to make Himself one with His chosen people and to make them one with Himself so that they have one life, one living, and one expression. For this purpose God created humankind in His image and according to His likeness (Gen. 1:26). Through incarnation God made Himself one with man in Christ Jesus as the inception of a process that, in its consummation, will bring Himself into untold millions of His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people. By the all-inclusive death of Christ on the cross, all barriers separating man from God were removed, and in His resurrection Christ brought

man into God. Now God and man are one in Christ organically in spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). It is the love in God that gives Him the longing to be one with us, and it is God as love in us that gives us the yearning to become one with Him.

The oneness that God desires involves union, mingling, and coinherence. The oneness of union is the organic union in the divine life brought about by our being grafted into Christ; the oneness of mingling is a matter of two natures—divinity and humanity—being mingled together without the producing of a third nature; and the oneness of coinherence involves persons indwelling one another. We read of coinherence in John 14:20 and 15:4. “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (14:20). “Abide in Me and I in you” (15:4). As we will now see, this is a union in the divine-human incorporation—an incorporation in which we, the believers, enjoy a mutual indwelling between us and Christ similar to that which the Son enjoys with the Father. We are in Christ, and Christ is in us; Christ is in the Father, and we are in the Father in virtue of being in Christ, who dwells in the Father.

The true vine as the organism of the Triune God is the Triune God united, mingled, and incorporated with His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit coinhere with the believers mutually.

Regarding the oneness of coinherence, we make particular use of the term *incorporation*. The words *corporation* and *incorporation* are closely related, but there is nonetheless a significant difference between them. A *corporation* is a group of people combined or associated into one body, usually for the purposes of business or government. An *incorporation* is a matter of union and intimate mingling. To *incorporate* is to unite intimately, to blend, combine, or mingle thoroughly into a whole. *Incorporation* denotes both an act of incorporating and the state of being incorporated. In speaking of the oneness of coinherence, *incorporation* is a much better term than *corporation*. Whereas *union* concerns our oneness in life with the Lord and *mingling* is related to the divine and human natures, *incorporation* is a matter of persons in a relationship of coinherence.

Union and *mingling* refer to our relationship with the Lord in our life and nature but not in our person. Humanly speaking, no person can be in another person. But in the divine and mystical realm, the consummated

God and the regenerated believers, the persons, indwell one another. This is an incorporation. In this universal, divine-human incorporation, persons indwell one another, that is, they coinhere. (Lee, *Issue* 41)

The coinherence that makes possible the universal divine-human incorporation is revealed in John 14:20 and 17. If we see this crucial matter of coinherence, we will realize why we must avoid the word *corporation*, which cannot convey the thought of coinherence but only of combination or association, and must instead use the word *incorporation*, which implies an intimate union and which, in our usage, can convey the idea of coinherence and the incorporation produced by it.

The three of the Divine Trinity not only coexist but coinhere (vv. 10-11) and act together as one; thus, the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are a divine incorporation. To fulfill His desire to make Himself one with us and us one with Him, God, through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ, has brought us into Himself. Now we abide in Him, and He abides in us. “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him and he in God” (1 John 4:15). The divine incorporation has thus been enlarged in God’s economy to become the universal divine-human incorporation.

A picture of this divine-human incorporation is the true vine in John 15. The true vine with its branches—



Christ the Son with the believers in the Son—is the organism of the Triune God in the divine economy to grow with His riches and express His life. The function of this vine is for the Triune God to have an organism in the Son for His multiplication, spreading, and glorification in the divine life. The Father as the husbandman is the source and the founder; God the Son is the center, the embodiment, and the manifestation; God the Spirit is the reality and realization; and the branches are the Body, the corporate expression (vv. 1, 4-5, 26). All that the Father is and has is embodied in Christ the Son and then realized in the Spirit as the reality (16:13-15). All that the Spirit has is wrought into us, the branches, to be expressed and testified through us. In this way, the processed and consummated Triune God is expressed, manifested, and glorified in the church (Eph. 3:16-21).

The true vine as the organism of the Triune God is the Triune God united, mingled, and incorporated with His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people (John 14:20). The Father, the Son, and the Spirit coinhere with the

believers mutually, for the Triune God and the believers in Christ are united, mingled, and incorporated into one (15:4-5). Here we see the goal of God's economy—to have this enlarged, universal divine-human incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the redeemed, regenerated believers.

As the branches of this vine, the believers are the multiplication of Christ, the duplication of Christ, the spreading of Christ, and the enlargement of Christ in the divine economy. Christ, the infinite God incarnated as a man, is the vine, and we are His branches, organically one with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). Because we are branches of the true vine, parts of the organism of the Triune God, we are the same as God in life and nature but not in the Godhead (1 John 5:11-12). When we believed into the Lord Jesus and were joined to Him, He branched Himself into us, and we became branches in Him (John 3:15). Now Christ is our life (11:25; 14:6; Col. 3:4); in fact, Christ, the vine, is everything to us, the branches. From Him as the vine we receive everything that we need to live a life of coinherence with Him. He does everything through the branches; without us He does nothing, and without Him we can do nothing.

As branches of the vine, we need to abide in the vine by living in the mingled spirit—the regenerated human spirit indwelt by and mingled with the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 6:17; 15:45; Rom. 8:4, 16). Whereas to be in Christ is a matter of union, to abide in Christ is a matter of fellowship. If we would enjoy this fellowship by abiding in Christ, we need to see a clear vision of the fact that we are already branches in Him as the vine, for of God we are in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:30). Once we see that we are already in Christ, we need to maintain the fellowship between us and the Lord by abiding in Him. This is the Christian life—a life of abiding in the Lord (1 John 2:24, 27-28; 4:13) by exercising to be one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). Experientially, our abiding in Christ is the condition of His abiding in us (John 15:5).

When we abide in Christ, enjoying a life of fellowship with Him in spirit, we have the church life (1 Cor. 1:2, 9, 30; 6:17; 12:27). As the branches abide in the vine, they realize that they are one not only with the vine but also with one another, and they delight in this blessed oneness (Psa. 133). The more we abide in Christ, the more we participate in the wonderful fellowship among the co-branches. We gradually discover that the inner life of all the branches is one and that this life is continually circulating through all the branches (John 15:4-5; 1 John 1:7). In the divine life we experience and enjoy the divine love as a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The church life, the corporate life in the vine, the Body life, is a life of loving one another (John 13:34; 15:12, 17). The Body life is a life of love and in love (Eph. 4:16; 5:2); in the Body life we love one

another in the life of Christ and in the love of Christ. This is to live not in the psychological sensation of love; rather, it is to live in the spirit. We can have the church life portrayed in John 15 only by living in the mingled spirit, in Christ as the life-giving Spirit mingled with our regenerated spirit. As we live here, we live together in the Triune God, and we know God in His incorporation, in His union with His redeemed, regenerated people.

God in His Corporate Expression

By living in the oneness of the universal divine-human incorporation, in which we know the Triune God in His union with the believers in Christ, we eventually come to know God in His glorious corporate expression. Actually, it is for the glorification of the Father in the Son with the many sons that we aspire to live in the oneness of the divine-human incorporation.

John 17 shows us that oneness and glory are intrinsically related. The prayer of Christ recorded in this chapter was a prayer first for glorification and then a prayer for oneness. The Lord began His prayer by saying, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son that the Son may glorify You" (v. 1). This was actually a prayer for the corporate glorification, manifestation, and expression of the Triune God. As we have noted, Christ was the unique grain of wheat containing the divine life with the element of the divine glory. When the shell of His humanity was broken through His death on the cross, the divine life and the divine glory were released (12:24). In 17:1 Christ prayed that the Father would glorify Him, and the Father answered His prayer by resurrecting Him, for Christ's resurrection was His glorification (Luke 24:26). The issue of Christ's being glorified with the divine glory by the Father in resurrection was the producing of the universal divine-human incorporation, in which we and the Triune God live in the oneness of coinherence (John 14:10-11, 20; 17:21). In this marvelous incorporation the Triune God is expressed, glorified, in a corporate way through the unique Son of God and the many sons of God, all of whom have a share in the glory of God.

Because the corporate expression of the Triune God is maintained in the oneness of the believers with the Triune God and with one another in the Triune God, the Lord Jesus prayed for oneness in three levels. The first level of oneness is the oneness in the Father's name and by the Father's eternal, divine life (vv. 6-13). The person of the Father, denoted by the name *Father*, is the Father Himself as the source of life. The Father's life with His nature is the element of our oneness. The second level of oneness is the oneness in the reality of the sanctifying word (vv. 14-21). Since the word is the truth, and the truth is the Triune God (v. 17; 14:6), to be sanctified by the reality of the word is to be sanctified—separated unto God and saturated with

God—by the Triune God Himself. The third, and highest, level of oneness is the oneness in the divine glory for the corporate expression of the processed and consummated Triune God (17:22-24), who, in Christ and according to His economy and by His dispensing, is united, mingled, and incorporated with His redeemed, regenerated believers. In this stage of oneness, we all are delivered from the self and the expression of the self and are one in the glorious, corporate expression of the Triune God. The ultimate consummation of this stage of oneness will be the New Jerusalem in eternity. The apostle who recorded the Lord's prayer for glorification and oneness is the one who saw the fulfillment of this prayer: "He carried me away in spirit onto a great high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, having the glory of God" (Rev. 21:10-11).

Our God, the only true God—the self-existing, ever-existing, co-existing, coinhering Triune God—is immutable in His eternal Godhead, and for this we render to Him our praise, worship, and adoration. This very God,

In the glorified Christ
the processed Triune God has
made Himself one with us and
increasingly is making us one
with Him, living with us a blessed
life of the oneness of union,
mingling, and incorporation.



essentially triune, has a tremendous operation in His economy. In Christ He has been processed through incarnation, human living, crucifixion, and resurrection to become the Spirit. In the resurrected, pneumatic Christ the Triune God is dispensing Himself in His Divine Trinity

into us as our life, our life supply, and our everything. In the glorified Christ the processed and consummated Triune God has made Himself one with us and increasingly is making us one with Him, living with us a blessed life of the oneness of union, mingling, and incorporation. In Christ the Triune God—immutable in His Godhead and processed in His economy—is manifested in His glorious, corporate expression. Like the apostle John, the apostle Paul lived in this reality, and with him (Eph. 3:21) we say, "To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen." [AFC](#)

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Footnote from the Recovery Version of the Bible

"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" (Eph. 1:10).

economy: Or, plan. The Greek word, *oikonomia*, means *house law, household management or administration, and derivatively, administrative dispensation, plan, economy*. The economy that God, according to His desire, planned and purposed in Himself is to head up all things in Christ at the fullness of the times. This is accomplished through the dispensing of the abundant life supply of the Triune God as the life factor into all the members of the church that they may rise up from the death situation and be attached to the Body.