

The Enlargement of the Father's House

The crucial points of truth in John 14 relate to the Triune God and to the dispensing of the Triune God into redeemed and regenerated humanity to enlarge the Father's house, which is the Son as the incorporation of the Triune God. This was the focus of the Lord's speaking to His disciples on the evening prior to His crucifixion. This was realized through the Lord's breathing of the Holy Spirit into His disciples on the day of His resurrection. And this truth is manifested through the character and service of the believers in their work to build up the church as the Father's house.

It is common to miss this truth and fall into the error of assuming that the Father's house is heaven and that the many abodes are physical mansions. Consequently, we need the Lord's mercy to overcome the veils that lie upon our heart, to overcome the blinding work of the god of this age, to overcome a mind that is closed to the divine truth, and to overcome our lack of a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of the Triune God.

It is significant that at the very beginning of John 14, the Lord charged the disciples to believe *into* God and to believe also *into* Him. To believe into God the Father and also into the Son speaks of entering into a spiritual and organic union with God in Christ. When we believe into God by believing into the Son of God, we enter into a divine realm that is of God and actually is God and into a mystical realm that is invisible, mysterious, and universal. This realm is not merely the divine and mystical realm of the eternal Godhead; rather, it is the divine and mystical realm of the resurrected Christ as the consummated Spirit. The incarnated Christ passed through death and entered into resurrection so that He could become the pneumatic Christ, the Spirit of reality, to dwell not merely with the disciples but in them. This mutual dwelling of the Triune God in redeemed humanity and humanity in the redeeming God is a matter of incorporation.

The Lord's word in John 14 speaks of the divine incorporation and of the divine-human incorporation, which, in God's economy, is the enlargement of the divine

incorporation, because it includes humanity as well as divinity. The three of the Divine Trinity are an incorporation from eternity both in what they are and in what they do. The Father, the Son, and the Spirit are incorporated by coinhering mutually. Then the Son, through His incarnation, brought this incorporation into time in order that all the chosen and redeemed people of God might be incorporated, economically, into the divine incorporation to produce a universal, divine-human incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the regenerated believers.

In order to make this incorporation possible, the revelation of the Triune God in chapter 14 of the Gospel of John is focused on three crucial matters—the person and work of the Son, the Son in relation to the Father, and the Son in relation to the Spirit of reality. In its revelation concerning the person and work of the Son, John 14 shows that the Son is God, that the ruler of the world has nothing in the Son, that the Son went away through His death on the cross for our redemption and came again in His resurrection, that the

Son has prepared a place for

us in the Father's house and has received us to Himself so that where He is we also may be, and that the Son is the way, the reality, and the life, and that the believers come to the Father through Him. In its revelation concerning the Son and the Father, John 14 shows that the Father sent the Son and gave His word to the Son, that the Son and the Father coinhere, that the Son loves the Father, that to know the Son is to know the Father, that to see the Son is to see the Father, that the Father is glorified in the Son, and that the Son came from the Father and was going to the Father. In its revelation concerning the Son and the Spirit of reality, John 14 shows that the Father, in response to the Son's prayer, gives us another Comforter, the Spirit of reality, that the "He" in verse 17 is the "I" in verse 18, and that the Father sends the Holy Spirit in the Son's name.

The goal of the Divine Trinity's economic operation in John 14 is the building up of the Father's house, which is the church as the house of the living God and as the organic

THE FATHER'S HOUSE IN JOHN 14 IS THE ENLARGED REALITY OF THE BELIEVERS' INCORPORATED ONENESS WITH THE TRIUNE GOD.

Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem as the eternal dwelling place of the Triune God with His chosen, redeemed, regenerated, and glorified people. According to the divine revelation in the Bible regarding God's spiritual dwelling place, the Father's house is neither heaven nor abodes in heaven but His corporate, organic, personal dwelling place, the church. The desire of God's heart to live a life of coinherence with His redeemed people cannot be fulfilled by a physical house in heaven. Rather, God's deep longing can be fulfilled only by a spiritual house, the Father's house in John 14, built in Christ with the believers through the mingling of divinity and humanity.

This mingling of divinity and humanity in John 14 ultimately extends into the sphere of incorporation. The Son is eternally incorporated with the Father in His divinity, but He also passed through the process of incarnation, death, and resurrection to bring the element of His perfect humanity into the divine incorporation of the Triune God, thereby opening a way for redeemed humanity to be brought into the same divine incorporation of the Triune God. The Father's house is the enlarged reality of the believers' incorporated oneness with the Triune God.

John 14 is a chapter on incorporation because it is a chapter devoted to the Father's house, which is a matter of incorporation. Consequently, the Lord's words in this chapter reveal many levels of incorporation. Since the believers' incorporation fundamentally reflects the axiomatic incorporation of the essential Trinity, the Lord refers to incorporation in the essential Godhead. Since the believers' incorporation ultimately organically duplicates the pattern set forth in the Lord's life and work in His human living, the Lord refers to incorporation in the stage of His incarnation. Since the believers' incorporation manifests the operation of the Spirit of reality, the Lord refers to incorporation in the Body of Christ, which was produced through the resurrection of Christ as the Spirit and energized by His coming as another Comforter. And since the believers' economic incorporation into the Son as the Father's house is the very goal of this chapter, the Lord refers to the reality of this economic enlargement in His words concerning many abodes in verse 2 and to the experience of this economic enlargement in His promise to come with the Father to make an abode with those who love Him and keep His words in verse 23.

The abiding of the many abodes in the Son and the abiding of the Father and Son in the many abodes accomplish the goal of enlarging the Father's house by the mutual indwelling of God and humanity in the Body of Christ, a mutual abiding that is reflected and displayed in the character and service of those who rise and go forth in Christ, the believers and the apostles.

In considering instances of the incorporation of the

Triune God by the New Testament believers, there are many textual indications that in the believers' manifest life and service there is the operation of at least one of the persons of the Divine Trinity; that is the believers incorporate the operation of the Triune God in their life and service. While it is quite easy to read the New Testament and gather mere ethical standards of outward behavior, when we pay close attention to the subtext of incorporation as it relates to the believers, we begin to understand that the believers should have more than mere moral behavior based on a highly ethical existence. Rather, the believers, as the New Testament writers describe them, should incorporate the operation of the Triune God in their life and service, and it is this incorporated operation that gives the believers their real worth in God's economy and among humankind.

In their experience the apostles and the believers always manifest the operation of the one God, who is triune, and whenever God acts, He does so as an incorporation of the operations of all three. Thus, in the character and service of the apostles, the apostles *incorporate the incorporate operation* of the Triune God. This incorporation can be seen most clearly in the life of Paul. In his recounting of his personal experiences, usually written in the first person plural, he comments on the character and service of the apostles in a way that indicates that he is functioning as part of the one body of apostles and considers his experience as common to and representative of all the apostles.

Instances of incorporation can be seen in the general character of the apostles as captives being led by God in triumph in the Christ over His enemies; in the apostles' bearing about the putting to death and the life of Jesus; in the apostles' experience of the suffering and comforting of Christ, who incorporates the comforting operation of God the Father; in the apostles' virtues for the ministry, who incorporate God with His attributes into their life and service among the churches; in the apostles' feeling for the churches, who incorporate the inward parts of Christ; in the apostles' power for the ministry, who incorporate the all-powerful God in their actions; and in the apostles' sufficiency, confidence, boldness, and even boasting, which come out of an inward confirmation of their incorporation with Christ. Paul, as a man in Christ, exemplified the full spectrum of the experience of incorporating Christ in one's character and service. For Paul, the incorporation of Christ is a normal, daily, and almost casual experience, even in its breathtaking significance. Each of us should hope to incorporate Christ and make His attributes and operations the intrinsic content of what we are and do so that the divine economy of incorporation may be realized and manifested in the Body of Christ, the enlargement of the Father's house. **A&C**

by the Editors