

**HWMR: THE ALL-INCLUSIVE CHRIST AS REVEALED IN MATTHEW (Week 4)**

**Christ as the Center of the Processed Triune God**

Scripture Reading: *Matt. 28:19; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17; 13:14*

- 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**,
- 1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam became a **lifegiving Spirit**.
- 2 Cor. 3:17 And the Lord is the **Spirit**; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.
- 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.

**Day 1**

*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**.*

*Gal. 3:27 - For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

**Day 2**

*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.*

*1 Cor. 12:13 - ...In one Spirit we were all baptized **into one Body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.*

**I. The clearest revelation of the **Divine Trinity** is in Matthew 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**”:**

**A. Into the name** denotes the **person**:

1. To be baptized is to be baptized **into the name, the person**, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, **into the organic union** with the processed Triune God.
2. The word *into* in 28:19 indicates **union**, as in Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27, and 1 Corinthians 12:13.
3. To baptize people into the name of the Triune God is to baptize them **into the spiritual and mystical union with Him**.
4. In Matthew 28:19 there is **one name** for the Divine Trinity:
  - a. The name is the **sum total** of the Divine Being, equivalent to His person.
  - b. To baptize believers into the name of the Triune God is to immerse them **into all** that the Triune God is.

**B. God is **three-in-one****—2 Cor. 13:14:

1. In Matthew 28:19 the Lord spoke of **three persons**—the **Father**, the **Son**, and the **Holy Spirit**.
2. When He spoke here of the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

*name is singular* in the original text.

3. This means that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are three, yet the **name is one**.
4. One name for three persons is really mysterious and reveals that **God is three-in-one**.
5. This **name includes the three**—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
6. Although God is **uniquely one, yet there are three persons**—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

To be baptized is to be baptized into the name, the person, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, into the organic union with the processed Triune God. His name is not merely His designation. **His name denotes His person**. Christianity practices baptism, and we also baptize people. When we baptize people, do we have the thought that we are merely initiating them into the Christian faith and the church, or do we have the conviction and assurance that we are putting them into a wonderful person—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—in order to bring them into an organic union with Triune God? May the Lord **recover the proper view and appreciation of baptism** among us. I sometimes feel that we may baptize people too lightly, as if we are carrying out a formal practice. The ones being baptized should have the **full assurance**, as they are being immersed in the water, that they are being **put into the wonderful person of the Triune God and are entering into an organic union with Him**.

This **organic union** is best illustrated by the process of the **grafting of two trees**. When a branch from one tree is cut off and then joined to a tree with **better—yet similar—characteristics**, the life of the second tree begins to flow into the branch. Eventually, the fruit that is produced is not from either tree alone but **from both trees together**. Some fruits today are hybrids, the product of joining two trees by grafting. Hence, this phenomenon in nature can be used to illustrate what happens in the spiritual realm when a person is baptized in water. The one who is baptized is **put into the Triune God and forms an organic union with the Triune God**. When we are baptized, we are put into the Triune God, and the **Triune God flows into us**. As a result, something organic, something of life, joins the two together organically. This is truly mysterious, but it is a fact. We must be full of faith to realize that when we baptize people in the water, we are putting them into an organic union with the Triune God. When they arise from the water, they are no longer the same but have been joined to the Triune God organically. We can have many wonderful experiences after we are baptized because now we have been brought into another realm by being organically joined to the Triune God. (*The Ministry of the Word, vol. 30, No. 1, chapter 4*)

## II. As believers in Christ, we have been **baptized into the processed Triune God**:

- A. The charge given in Matthew 28:19 was given by the Lord Jesus **after He had entered into resurrection**, which was the consummation of the process of the Triune God.
- B. The Triune God has **passed through a process** that began with incarnation, included human living and crucifixion, and consummated with resurrection.
- C. In **resurrection** Christ, the embodiment of the Triune God, became the **life-giving Spirit**—1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 3:17.
- D. This **Spirit** is the **consummation** of the Triune God for the believers to be baptized into the Divine Trinity.
- E. To be baptized **into the person of the Triune God** is to be baptized **into the all-inclusive, consummated Spirit** who is the ultimate consummation of the **processed Triune God**:
  1. This is to be baptized into the **riches of the Father**, into the **riches of the Son**, and into the **riches of the Spirit**.
  2. As the baptized ones, we are now in an **organic union** with the Triune God; therefore, whatever the Father has, whatever the Son has, and whatever the Spirit has have become ours.
- F. To be baptized into the name of the Triune God is to be put into a **mystical union** with Him and to **appropriate whatever God is into our being**.

We are baptized not only into the Triune God but into the **processed Triune God**. Our Triune God has been processed. Probably the word processed to describe the Triune God is uniquely used by us in the Lord's recovery. We do not use this word lightly in describing the Triune God. Christians may ask, "Why does God need to be processed? God is eternal and unchanging. He is the same. How dare you say that He has been processed!" We fully agree that **in His essence, God is unchanging, that essentially He is the same yesterday, today, and forever**. However, **in His economy and in time, God became a man**. Was that not a process? God lived on the earth for thirty-three and a half years. Imagine that the very One who was walking in the land of Palestine, doing menial chores in His parents' home, and eating with the disciples was actually God Himself. One day the very God who created the universe stepped out of eternity into time and became a man. In those thirty-three and a half years He passed through a process. He picked up the human life and nature, **lived a human living**, and at the end of His human journey, He went to the cross to be **crucified**. God was crucified. Some claim that it is absurd that God could be crucified. To be sure, God in His divinity cannot die, but God as a man was indeed crucified and passed through **death**. Then after three days He **resurrected**, and later He **ascended**. All these are processes that He passed through. Our God was processed.

Although we can never say that God has changed essentially, in His essence He is forever the same. However, economically God has passed through different stages. In His becoming a man, He picked up humanity. He picked up all the aspects of human living. He knows what suffering is. He knows what hunger is. He knows what thirst is. He even knows what death is because He went to the cross to be crucified. **He passed through everything in the human life. These are all steps of His process**. At the end of that process, He resurrected from the dead. Praise the Lord for His resurrection! In His resurrection He changed His form. He was transfigured to become the **life-giving Spirit**.

We can now be baptized into Him as the processed and consummated Triune God **because He is the life-giving Spirit**. We could never baptize people into God if He had remained the One who dwells in unapproachable light. We thank the Lord that one day He, the One who dwelt in unapproachable light, entered into time, put on flesh and blood, and became a man like us. He passed through all aspects of human life and was crucified on the cross. In resurrection He changed His form to become the life-giving Spirit, the Spirit who is available, accessible, enterable, and receivable. It is into the Triune God as the Spirit that we can be baptized and can baptize others. Through baptism we put believers into the processed Triune God, who has been consummated as the Spirit. (*The Ministry of the Word, vol. 30, No. 1, chapter 4*)

### Day 3

*John 7:39* - But 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.

*Rom. 8:9* - ... You are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the **Spirit of God dwells in you**. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

### III. Christ is the **center** of the **processed Triune God**—2 Cor. 13:14:

- A. *Processed* refers to the **crucial steps** through which the Triune God has passed:
1. Before His incarnation God was unprocessed, having the divine nature but not the human nature, but through **incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension**, the Triune God was processed and consummated.
  2. In Revelation the Triune God is the processed and consummated Triune God with **divinity, humanity, human living, the all-inclusive death, the powerful resurrection, and the transcendent ascension**—1:4-5.

## Day 4

*John 7:39* - But 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.

*Rev. 1:4* - ...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*.

- B. The processed and consummated Triune God is the **Spirit**—22:17a; John 7:39:
1. The Spirit is the **totality**, the **aggregate**, of all the elements of the titles of the Spirit of God—Matt. 3:16; 10:20; Luke 1:35; 4:18; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6.
  2. As the consummation of the processed and consummated Triune God, the **Spirit is the blessing of God's New Testament economy**—3:14.

## Day 5

*Rev. 21:10* - And he carried me away *in spirit* onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

*Matt. 16:18* - ...I will build My *church*, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

*Eph. 3:17* - That Christ may make His *home in your hearts* through faith...

- C. The Triune God in **Revelation** is the **building and builded God**—21:18-19a, 21:
1. The Bible consummates in the **New Jerusalem, which is the very God** who was in the beginning—Gen. 1:1; Rev. 21:10:
    - a. The unique God is eventually **enlarged** and **expanded** into a city for His eternal expression.
    - b. In His economy God has become the **New Jerusalem**—v. 10.
    - c. In the New Jerusalem the Triune God is **wrought into His chosen and redeemed people**—vv. 18-19a, 21a.
  2. The God who has become the New Jerusalem is the **building and builded God**—2 Sam. 7:12, 14a; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:17:
    - a. The processed and consummated Triune God as the source, the element, and the essence is building the church by **building Himself into our being**—v. 17.
    - b. God is fulfilling His desire to **build Himself in Christ into our being** and to **build us into His being**; eventually, the outcome of this building will be the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:2, 10.

## Day 6

*Rev. 22:17* - And the *Spirit and the bride* say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

*Rev. 7:17* - For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to *springs of waters of life*...

- D. In the book of **Revelation**, we have the **consummate revelation** of the Divine Trinity for the divine dispensing—22:1-2; 7:17a; 21:6b; John 4:14b:
1. The divine dispensing is God's **imparting of Himself into His chosen and redeemed people** as their life, life supply, and everything—2 Cor. 13:14.
  2. In the divine dispensing, the **Father** is the **fountain**, the **Son** is the **spring**, and the **Spirit** is the **flow**.

Now let us look at the New Testament. The first matter in the beginning of the New Testament is the **incarnation**, which is God's coming into man. This is a marvelous matter! Today's Christianity constantly pays attention to the story of Bethlehem, saying that a Savior was born there for us. Surely this is right, but it is not enough. The story of Bethlehem is not only about a Savior but also about the **mingling of God and man, about God coming into man**. The significance of what happened in Bethlehem is that God became flesh and entered into man to be mingled with man and to become one with man. It is a mystery that God comes into man to be God to man. Whereas formerly God was outside of man, **now God has entered into man**. This is not a matter of God's descending from the heavens to the earth. God's descending from the heavens to the earth is a human thought, not a divine concept. The significance of what happened in Bethlehem is not merely that God came from the heavens to the earth but that God entered into man. Incarnation is God's coming into man, entering into a union with man, and tabernacling among men.

Dear brothers and sisters, we need to see clearly this matter of God's building in the New Testament age. First, the Lord as the Word became flesh to be a tabernacle, a temple. **God mingled Himself with Him and dwelt within Him**. At that time, however, the scale of that temple was very small. It was limited to one man, whose name is Jesus, the Nazarene. In the entire human race, the building of God was within Him alone. He alone was the tabernacle of God, the temple of God. God dwelt in Him, and He dwelt in God. **Then God caused Him to go through death and resurrection so that He could impart His life into His people**. In this way, what happened in Bethlehem in the incarnation could also happen in them. Thus, God entered into these people and was constituted into them. They were also brought into God, and they became the temple of God. As a result, the temple has been enlarged. It is no longer limited to one person but has been **enlarged to include thousands and thousands of people**.

Since that day that He entered into His people, **God has been building this temple**. The Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build My church" (Matt. 16:18). What is this rock? This rock refers to the resurrected Christ. Immediately after Peter received the revelation and knew that the Lord was the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Lord said, "Upon this rock I will build My church." **The church is being built upon Christ**, the Son of the living God. Since that day God's work has been to build the Body—the church as the temple of God—upon this rock as the foundation.

For two thousand years God has been doing this building work in the church. The apostle Paul told us that after the Lord's resurrection and ascension, He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as shepherds and teachers. **All these gifts are for the building up of His Body, which is the church**. Furthermore, he said that in Christ all of us who are saved are being **built together into a dwelling place of God in spirit**. He also said that we are the temple of God, and that "he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (6:17). Therefore, **this building is the union of God and man in spirit**. It is man and God becoming one spirit. This one spirit is a building, a spiritual house, which is the church. Both God and man are in this spirit and dwell in this spirit. This is God's work of building in the New Testament age. (*The Building Work of God, Chapter 2*)