

LIVING AND SERVING IN THE DIVINE DISPENSING OF THE DIVINE TRINITY

Message Nine

The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity in the Believers' Living for the Building Up of the Church as the Body of Christ

Scripture Reading: Eph. 4:17-32

Eph. 4:17-32 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind, **18** Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness. **20** But you did not so learn Christ, **21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, **22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality. **25** Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26** Be angry, yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your indignation, **27** Neither give place to the devil. **28** He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need. **29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

- I. In Ephesians 4:17-32 there are three verses that reveal the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity in the believers' corporate God-man living as the reality of the Body of Christ for the building up of the church; these verses speak of the Father's life (v. 18), the Son's living (v. 21), and the Spirit's sealing (v. 30):**

Eph. 4:17-32 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind, **18** Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness. **20** But you did not so learn Christ, **21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, **22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality. **25** Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26** Be angry, yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your indignation, **27** Neither give place to the devil. **28** He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need. **29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

Eph. 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

Eph. 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

- A. Verse 18 speaks of the life of God for supplying His children with His divine riches in His divine dispensing.

Eph. 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

- B. Verse 21 speaks of learning Christ as "the reality is in Jesus" for infusing His believers with His God-man living in His divine dispensing:

Eph. 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

1. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God—this is what is meant by "the reality is in Jesus" in verse 21.

Eph. 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

2. The reality that is in Jesus is the practicality of the life of God, that is, the practicing of the life of God, which took place in Jesus while He lived on earth.
 3. In the daily life of Jesus there was something very real, and that reality was God's divine life realized and practiced as the truth in Jesus' humanity.
- C. Verse 30 speaks of the sealing of the Holy Spirit for saturating the members of Christ with the divine element in His divine dispensing:

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

1. The sealing Spirit is also the sealing ink which seals us—1:13; 2 Cor. 3:3.

Eph. 1:13 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise,

2 Cor. 3:3 Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2. The contents, the element, and the essence of the sealing ink are the divine life plus Jesus' practical humanity.
 3. This sealing can never become dry but remains wet forever; because it is wet, it saturates, permeates, and soaks us with the Triune God.
- D. The life of God, the reality that is in Jesus, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit are the three sources of the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity for the building up of the Body of Christ:
1. The Father's life must become the reality in our daily living, the reality that is in Jesus; this reality, as the practicality of the life of the Father, becomes the sealing ink, which is the Holy Spirit.
 2. While the sealing ink seals us, it saturates, permeates, and soaks us with the divine life in the practicality of Jesus' daily life, making us a "Xerox" copy of Jesus' life, which is the practicality of the Father's life; this results in the glorious expression of the Triune God in and through the church.

II. Ephesians 4:17-24 reveals the basic principles of the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity in the believers' corporate God-man living as the reality of the Body of Christ:

Eph. 4:17-24 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind, **18** Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; **19** Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness. **20** But you did not so learn Christ, **21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, **22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

- A. We must not walk as the Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind—v. 17.

Eph. 4:17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind,

- B. We must not be alienated from the life of God—v. 18.

Eph. 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;

- C. We must not cease from caring for the feeling of our conscience—v. 19; Acts 24:16.

Eph. 4:19 Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness.

Acts 24:16 Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

- D. We must learn Christ in the divine dispensing as the truth (reality versus vanity) that is in Jesus; the reality of the Body of

Christ is the reality that is in Jesus, the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, duplicated in His many members as the corporate living of the perfected God-men—Eph. 4:20-21; cf. vv. 15, 24-25; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:19-21a:

Eph. 4:20-21 But you did not so learn Christ, **21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

Eph. 4:15 But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ,

Eph. 4:24-25 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality. **25** Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Phil. 1:19-21 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

1. As those who toil and are burdened, we need to come to our dear Lord so that He can give us rest, and we can take His yoke upon us and learn from Him; this is to learn Christ as the reality that is in Jesus—Matt. 11:28-30.

Matt. 11:28-30 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. **29** Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

2. In the church life we are being disciplined by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by denying our natural life and disposition according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—v. 29a; Gal. 2:20.

Matt. 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

3. In His human living, Jesus expressed the divine virtues in His humanity by the mysterious attributes of the Triune God; we need to learn from Him by eating Him and staying intimately connected with Him so that we can live because of Him with the divine attributes expressed in our human virtues—Luke 7:13-14; John 6:57; Col. 2:2-3, 19.

Luke 7:13-14 And when the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion for her and said to her, Do not weep. **14** And He came near and touched the bier, and those carrying *it* stood still. And He said, Young man, to you I say, Arise.

John 6:57 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.

Col. 2:2-3 That their hearts may be comforted, they being knit together in love and unto all the riches of the full assurance of understanding, unto the full knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, **3** In whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden.

Col. 2:19 And not holding the Head, out from whom all the Body, being richly supplied and knit together by means of the joints and sinews, grows with the growth of God.

4. He took the Father as His source, "looking up to heaven"; we need to expect the Lord's blessing, just as He expected the Father's blessing and looked to the Father as the source of blessing—Matt. 14:19-23.

Matt. 14:19-23 And after commanding the crowds to recline on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves and gave *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds. **20** And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve handbaskets full. **21** And those who ate were about five thousand men, apart from women and children. **22** And immediately He compelled the disciples to step into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. **23** And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

5. Just as the Son came to do the will of God by sacrificing Himself on the altar of the cross, and just as He was the tent of God, the tabernacle and temple of God, living as a sojourner on earth, having no place to lay His head, we need to live a life

of the altar (the crucified Christ as our life) and the tent (the church—the corporate Christ as our living)—Psa. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:5-10; Ezek. 40:47; John 1:14; 2:19-22; 18:33-38; Matt. 3:16-17; 8:20; Gen. 12:7-8; 13:3-4, 18; Psa. 43:4a; 1 Cor. 2:2; Lev. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 3:16; 14:23-31.

Psa. 40:6-8 You do not delight in sacrifice and offering; / You have prepared ears for Me; / You do not require burnt offering and sin offering. **7** Then I said, / Behold, I have come; / In the scroll of the book / It is written concerning Me. **8** I delight in doing Your will, O My God; / Indeed Your law is within My inward parts.

Heb. 10:5-10 Therefore, coming into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. **6** In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not delight. **7** Then I said, Behold, I have come (in the roll of the book it is written concerning Me) to do Your will, O God." **8** Saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law), **9** He then has said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first that He may establish the second, **10** By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Ezek. 40:47 And He measured the court, a square, one hundred cubits long and one hundred cubits wide; and the altar was in front of the house.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 2:19-22 Jesus answered and said to them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. **20** Then the Jews said, This temple was built in forty-six years, and You will raise it up in three days? **21** But He spoke of the temple of His body. **22** When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.

John 18:33-38 Pilate therefore entered again into the praetorium and called for Jesus. And he said to Him, You are the King of the Jews? **34** Jesus answered, Are you saying this of yourself, or did others tell you about Me? **35** Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Your nation and its chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done? **36** Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here. **37** Pilate said therefore to Him, So then You are a king? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I would testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice. **38** Pilate said to Him, What is truth?

And having said this, he again went out to the Jews and said to them, I find no fault in Him.

Matt. 3:16-17 And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming upon Him. **17** And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.

Matt. 8:20 And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of heaven *have* roosts, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.

Gen. 12:7-8 And Jehovah appeared to Abram and said, To your seed I will give this land. And there he built an altar to Jehovah who had appeared to him. **8** And he proceeded from there to the mountain on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east; and there he built an altar to Jehovah and called upon the name of Jehovah.

Gen. 13:3-4 And he continued on his journey from the Negev as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai, **4** To the place of the altar, which he had made there formerly; and there Abram called on the name of Jehovah.

Gen. 13:18 And Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to Jehovah.

Psa. 43:4 And I will go to the altar of God, / To God my exceeding joy; / And I will praise You with the harp, / O God, my God.

1 Cor. 2:2 For I did not determine to know anything among you except Jesus Christ, and this One crucified.

Lev. 1:1 Then Jehovah called to Moses and spoke to him out of the Tent of Meeting, saying,

1 Tim. 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.

1 Cor. 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Cor. 14:23-31 If therefore the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak in tongues, and some unlearned *in*

tongues or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are insane? **24** But if all prophesy and some unbeliever or unlearned person enters, he is convicted by all, he is examined by all; **25** The secrets of his heart become manifest; and so falling on *his* face, he will worship God, declaring that indeed God is among you. **26** What then, brothers? Whenever you come together, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up. **27** If anyone speaks in a tongue, *it should be* by two, or at the most three, and in turn, and one should interpret; **28** But if there is no interpreter, he should be silent in the church, and speak to himself and to God. **29** And as to prophets, two or three should speak, and the others discern. **30** But if *something* is revealed to another sitting by, the first should be silent. **31** For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

6. The living of the Body of Christ as the new man must be exactly the same as the living of Jesus; the way Jesus lived on earth is the way the Body of Christ as the new man must live today—Eph. 4:20-24.

Eph. 4:20-24 But you did not so learn Christ, **21** If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, **22** That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

- E. We must put off, as regards the former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit (the personification of Satan), and, being renewed in the spirit of the mind, put on, in the divine dispensing, the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality—vv. 22-24:

Eph. 4:22-24 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

1. To put off the old man is to put off four old habits; to put on the new man is to live according to the present, up-to-date divine dispensing.
2. We put off the old man and put on the new man by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; this means that our mind is filled with, saturated by, and under the control and direction of our mingled spirit—cf. Rom. 8:6.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

III. Ephesians 4:25-32 reveals the organic details of the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity in the believers' corporate God-man living as the reality of the Body of Christ:

Eph. 4:25-32 Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26** Be angry, yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your indignation, **27** Neither give place to the devil. **28** He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need. **29** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

- A. As members of the Body, members one of another, we must speak truth one with another—v. 25.

Eph. 4:25 Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

- B. We must not give place to the devil by letting the sun go down on our indignation; we must not continue in anger but relinquish it before the sun sets, being angry but not sinning—vv. 26-27.

Eph. 4:26-27 Be angry, yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your indignation, **27** Neither give place to the devil.

- C. We must not steal, but labor, working with our own hands in that which is respectable, that we may have something to share with ones who have need—v. 28.

Eph. 4:28 He who steals should steal no more, but rather should labor, working with his own hands in that which is respectable, that he may have *something* to share with him who has need.

- D. We must not let any corrupt word proceed out of our mouth but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace, in the dispensing of the divine life, to the hearers—v. 29.

Eph. 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.

- E. We must not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom we were sealed, for the dispensing of the Divine Trinity unto (or, for) the day of the redemption of our body—v. 30.

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

- F. We must abstain, in the divine dispensing, from all bitterness, anger, wrath, clamor, and evil speaking, with all malice—v. 31.

Eph. 4:31 Let all bitterness and anger and wrath and clamor and evil speaking be removed from you, with all malice.

- G. We must be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave us—v. 32:

Eph. 4:32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ also forgave you.

1. We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing, so we must always bless one another, being of the same mind, sympathetic, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, humble-minded—1:3; 1 Pet. 3:8-9.

Eph. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ,

1 Pet. 3:8-9 And finally be all of the same mind, sympathetic, loving the brothers, tenderhearted, humble-minded; **9** Not rendering evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing *one another*, because you were called to this, that you might inherit blessing.

2. We have been called to bless others, so we, as a blessed people, must always bless others so that we may inherit blessing; what we bless others with, we will inherit ourselves—Matt. 10:13.

Matt. 10:13 And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.