



Research article

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BIBLICAL TEACHING ON SELF-GIVING LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST AND ITS MUTUAL GIVING IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Alangbam Simanta Singh

PhD Candidate, Department of Advanced Theological Studies, SHUATS, Prayagraj.

Email: simantasingh@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT



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God is one yet manifested in three persons (the Trinity), and there is no contradiction in this relationship. It demonstrates the self-giving of one another unconditionally. The concept of self-giving serves as an example to all believers. However, believers are unable to comprehend the effects of complete self-giving love. Their own selfishness impacts their minds and conduct. This self-giving love has developed over time as an offshoot of cultural education and an individual's prior moral decision. In this paper, the author divides thoughts into three sections, namely, the eternally self-giving nature of the true God, the church's acceptance of Jesus Christ's self-giving, and the local church's implications for Jesus' self-giving and mutual understanding.

Keywords: *Trinity, Love, Self-giving, God, Local Church.*



A. The Eternally Self-Giving Character of the Triune God

The Christian faith is unique in the world because God is one but exists in three persons. However, there is no self-contradiction between them; rather, it demonstrates that they are related to one another. This is distinctiveness, and it reveals who God is, what He is like, how He operates, and how He has to be approached.¹ Many Christians are unable to understand the importance of Trinitarian theology in daily life. Moreover, this Triune God exemplifies unconditional self-giving toward one another. It serves as a paradigm of self-giving that is followed by all Christians that is ingrained in their character. This study demonstrates the Triune God's selfless nature, and addresses the self-giving character of the Trinity and what that means for man, who is made in God's image.

1. *God the Father's self-giving to Jesus and the Holy Spirit.*

The Bible unequivocally teaches that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in a relationship with one another. This bond confirms their oneness and equality. The Father greets the Son, and the Son greets the Father. One can claim that the Son and the Father are entirely self-giving in their nature. The Apostle John declares, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:149 KJV). It demonstrates that the Father is in Jesus and that Jesus reveals Him.² They enjoy a deep relationship and give of themselves to each other. Both are united. They never leave each other alone. Thus, Jesus is never alone or opposed to His parent because the Father sent the Son into the world (Jn.3:16). As a result, He is very close to the Father and works on the world in accordance with the Father's instructions. His mission is to carry out the Father's will (John.8:29).

Jesus Christ declares, "You're going to leave me alone. But I am not alone, since my Father is with me" (Jn.16:32; 17:5). The author believes that Jesus was glorified on the cross by the Father because there is no separation between them. It is undeniable that the Son has given just himself to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and they have oneness and friendship with each other. According to Miroslav, "The father is the first and He is the wellspring of divinity at the level of divine person constitution. On a relational level, the Son not only

¹ Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Michigan: Baker Academic, 2006), p.347.

² Blum, Edwin A. "John." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), p.323.



comes from and returns to the Father, but the Father has given all things into his hands and glorified the Son.”³

God is the source of divine essence, according to the author. They understand each other and possess similar abilities. In relation, all are equal in divine nature and give the same essence to one another while also possessing the same grandeur. This kind of self-giving to others is not sacrifice for others. There is no hierarchy system in their unity. They are acquainted. Daniel L. Migliore says, "If God is self-giving love, He establishes a community in liberty." As a result, He will not reign with power, but with fellowship to the entire human race”.⁴

These three persons reveal that there is self-communication in the mission and work of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Christ and the Father sent the Holy Spirit. Paul Enns writes that "The Holy Spirit came forth from the Father in the Old Testament economy."⁵ The writer can conclude that the Trinity members are self-giving to one another. They do not have the same misunderstandings that humans do. They are united and supportive of one another. When God the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit to complete their mission, He completed all of the works. There is no question of superiority or inferiority; rather, they are fully self-giving to one another.

2. Jesus' self-giving to God the Father and the Holy Spirit

Christianity is founded on Jesus Christ's self-giving to the Father and the Holy Spirit. He is God, the second person of the Trinity. Jesus differs from both the Father and the Holy Spirit. Scott Horrel added, "The Son enjoys in giving the Father glory, and the Father delights in glorifying the Son."⁶ The writer adds that they understand each other in the self-giving love and glory. They have enjoyed revealing the truth to one another. This act was designed by God the Father from the eternal decree.⁷ They expressed their love for each other. The relationship between God, Son, and Holy Spirit is eternal and cannot be broken. They are

³ Miroslav volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, otherness, and Reconciliation*.p.136.

⁴ Daniel L. Migliore, "The Trinity and Human Liberty", *Theology Today* (No date): 499, in *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials* [database online], Ebsco; accessed July 10, 2017.

⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. p.168.

⁶ J. Scott Horrel, *The self-giving Truine God, The image Dei and the nature of the Local Church: An Ontology of Mission*, 2004; Available from <http://www.bible.org.> ; accessed August 7, 2017.

⁷ The decree of God is His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His will, whereby for His own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever come to pass. Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. p.633.



independent and have an inner divine relationship in their lives. When they surrender to each other, they do not lose their essence and power, but oneness is birthed and they communicate in divinity.

John the apostle says, “Jesus and God have a special relationship and fellowship with each other” (John 1:1). Furthermore, Father is the source of divine nature, but Jesus has both human and divine nature. As a result, Jesus Christ submits to, and obeys the Father. He glorifies the Father and receives the Holy Spirit. In creation, Jesus Christ established the Father's monarchy.⁸ The Bible clearly shows that Jesus makes Himself equal to God (Jn.5:18). Jesus is God because God is His Father. He committed Himself to the Father, and the Father gave Him everything.

There is no hierarchical culture, but a culture of self-sacrifice and mutual understanding. They gave space for others. It is the unique and pure identity of their individuality, the giving of self without coercion from others. The Father never leaves Jesus Christ alone (John 8: 29). They communicate all the time and know each other. They give to each other. It is spontaneous and permanent, for we have never seen God, the only-begotten Son of God in the bosom of the Father (John 1: 18).

When Jesus Christ was baptized by John, He came up out of the water. At that moment the heavens opened and he saw the Spirit of God swoop down and descend on him like lightning. Then a voice from heaven said, “I am very pleased with him” (Matthew 3: 16-17). It can be argued that all three members of Trinity existed and were actively involved in this world. In addition, there is the work of the authentication of Jesus by God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Another event revealed by Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration is that God the Father recognizes the work of Jesus (Mt.17:5).⁹

They are connected to Jesus via His death, burial, and resurrection. His baptism demonstrates that Jesus is the Son of God (John.1:34) and is an example of obedience in carrying out God's will. In this world, he is the epitome of self-giving. This obedience is not as a slave, but rather as a mutual agreement and expression of willingness. One could argue

⁸ Ibid.,p.389.

⁹ Louis A. Barbieri Jr., “Matthew.” In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.25.



that His baptism differs from that of believers because He gave himself to the will of the Father, and God approved of His submission, as well as the Holy Spirit's devotion to the Father and the Holy Spirit as a promise to accomplish their will.

Here, His humility was not caused by God or the Holy Spirit, but He intentionally humbled Himself to give God glory. According to Wiersbe, Jesus Christ freely laid down His life for the sins of the world. He lives for the glory of God and the benefit of others.¹⁰ Therefore His self-humility and obedience to the Father are very important because this is His mission and task on earth.

Consequently, God the Father, was exceedingly pleased with His Son since He obeyed His word. In order to obey God, Jesus was humble and ready to retain His divine essence and rights, and the Father is content with His son. He exalts and reveres God. As a result, God had wonderfully exalted His son. He mentions Jesus' name¹¹ above every nation (John.17:5). Everyone who is under the earth and Heaven will bow before Him. Their tongues will acknowledge that He is the Lord. The writer can see the mutual understanding between the Father and the Son.

The glory of God is the goal of Christ's humiliation and exaltation (Phil.2:11). "Father, the moment has arrived to honor your Son, and your Son may glorify you because you gave Him dominion over all people", says John (Jn.17:1-2). It is shown here that the Father and the Son bestowed glory and honor on one another. The Father lavished the greatest honor on His Son in this unique triune relationship. He was a witness to his son (Jn.8:18). His son was sealed by the Father (John.6:27).

3. The Holy Spirit's self-giving to God the Father and the Son Jesus Christ

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity and a member of the Triune God. He is the manifestation of God's strength (Lk.1:35). God sent the Holy Spirit to earth to carry out His will (Ps.139:7). He possesses the same essence as the Father and the Son. According to

¹⁰ Warren W Wiersbe, *Be Joyful: Philippians* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1986),p.62-64.

¹¹ Here "Name" refers to His person and position of dignity and honor. Robert P.Lightner, "Philippians." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), p.654.



Erickson, "The Holy Spirit possesses the attributes or qualities of God."¹² From the beginning, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have had an intimate relationship with one another. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the seas," (Genesis.1:2). In the natural world, they are inseparable. "Go ye then, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (Matthew.28:19). According to Linn Tonstad, the Son and Holy Spirit established the Father's kingship throughout the earth. His monarchy is dependent on the Son and the Holy Spirit.¹³

The Holy Spirit identifies himself as omnipotent in the Bible. He surrenders himself to the Father and the Son. Paul wrote in his first letter to the Corinthians, "God has revealed to us by his Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God" (1 Corinthians 2:10). It can be said that the Holy Spirit and God are closely related. They shared and understood each other. As a result, they love each other; He can reveal the heart of God. The Holy Spirit gives the Father and the Son for others forever. In the Trinity, they love and sacrifice one another. Lynne Tonstad says that the Spirit glorifies the Son, and in him the Father raised Jesus from the dead, revealing himself as the Son to reveal the Father, and glorifying the Son in obedience to the Father.¹⁴

When Jesus lived on the earth, He had a close relationship with the Holy Spirit as Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Lk.1:35). He was empowered by Him. Here, Paul Enns writes that "The Spirit would rest upon Messiah, giving wisdom, strength, and knowledge in His ministry."¹⁵ He anointed Christ and filled with Christ (Lk.1:15). In addition, the Holy Spirit plays a part in the death of Christ (Heb.9:14).¹⁶

Here, the writer says that the Holy Spirit was involved in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Paul writes that "the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead according to the Spirit of holiness (Rom.1:4). John A. Witmer writes that, "The resurrection of Jesus Christ declared, he is the Son of God. This is the work of the Holy Spirit as self-

¹² Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*.p.874.

¹³ Linn Tonstad, "*The Ultimate Consequence of his self-distinction from the Father ...*"*Different and Hierarchy in Pannenberg's Trinity*, p.384.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.390.

¹⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. p.175.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.177.



giving to God.¹⁷ Again Daniel L. Migliore mentions that the provisional triumph of God's love is the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The radiation of this love is the coming of the Spirit who brings new life.¹⁸

God raised Jesus Christ from the grave and sent the Holy Spirit to believers for them to have spiritual resurrection life (Rom.8:11). The Holy Spirit brings the Father and the Son together. As Jesus responds to the Father's desire to send Him, the Spirit is with Him." As a result, the Holy Spirit's love is selfless. This type of love maintains a good relationship between the Father and the Son as a unit. As a result, the Holy Spirit is always present with Jesus.

B. The Embrace of Self-Giving of Jesus Christ to the Church

The New Testament focuses on the self-giving of Jesus Christ for the church. He gave his life to fulfill the will of God. He surrenders his life to the Father and for His church (Jn.4:34). Humpton writes that "Christ's commitment to the will of God was the self-surrender of His life and will to the Father's will".¹⁹ Jesus Christ surrendered and gave His life for Father and the church because the Father had chosen them before the foundation of this world (Eph.1:4).

1. Self-sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross

Jesus Christ's self-giving and Christianity cannot be separated because Jesus Christ gave Christians eternal life on the cross. Christ gives both His body and His spirit to these sinners. Jesus provided substitution²⁰ for sins²¹. One could argue that Christ's self-sacrificing life is for us. Christ bore our sins and took our place as a sinner (Is.53:6). Furthermore, Paul stated that God made someone who had no sin to be "sin" for us, so that man might become righteous before God (II Cor.5:21). He gives life once and for all (Heb.9:28). According to Leon Morris, Christ takes the place of the worshipper, just as the sacrificial victim took the

¹⁷ John A. Witmer, "Romans." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1983), p.440.

¹⁸ Daniel L. Migliore, "The Trinity and Human Liberty", p.499.

¹⁹ Humpton Keathley III, *Surrender and self sacrifice*, 2004;; Available from <https://bible.org/seriespage/mark-9-surrender-and-self-sacrifice>; Accessed August 10, 2017

²⁰ Christ's sacrifice Himself in the place of condemned sinner to satisfy God's holy and righteous judgment against sinners. Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. p.648.

²¹ Robert P Lightner, *Sin the Savior and Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1996), p.87.



place of the worshipper.²² This giving life makes complete and perfect righteousness to the sinner. Now all the believers are in the place of Jesus and He is in our place. He created a new life for the sinner by giving His life in the place of the church. Paul writes that "Do you know that your bodies are members of Christ Himself and your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor.6:15-19). It was designed by the Almighty Father before the earth was created. His self-giving love brings the divine and human worlds together. It is founded on God's love.

2. Self-giving of Jesus surrenders and sacrifices on the cross

Jesus' self-giving surrenders and sacrifices for the entire human being. His entire being surrenders to God. Christ's gift to the Father was a sacrifice for humans. One might argue that if Jesus did not surrender and sacrificed his life, Christian people would be the unluckiest people on the planet, but Jesus Christ made Christian people the most fortunate people on the planet. It is an incredible assignment for Jesus Christ.

Jesus desired to do God's will. He did not aim to please Himself, but rather to please God (Jn.5:30) and to prioritize the Father's mission. Furthermore, Jesus surrendered his will to the Father. As a result, He gives up His life for the Father's cause. According to Humpton, "Surrender meant surrendering Himself sacrificially for our redemption under the Father's plan (Jn.3:16)".²³ One can show from Philippians 2:5-8 that Jesus did not count Himself equal with God, but, He surrendered His will for the work of God. Jesus Christ is not less than God the Father and the Holy Spirit, but He has added another nature to Himself and that is the human nature.

God the Father and the Holy Spirit share a single nature, but Jesus Christ has two. He possesses both human and divine nature. He can overcome any form of sin and save others. In reality, by taking on the form of a servant for God's mission, He made Himself nothing. According to Erickson, Jesus did not cease to be in nature what the Father was. Rather, he became functionally subservient to the Father. It is done to reveal God and to provide life for humanity.²⁴ Again Paul Enns added that Christ took on the additional nature. The emptying

²² Leon Mories, *The Cross in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), p.175.

²³ Humpton Keathley III, *Surrender and self-sacrifice*.

²⁴ Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*, p.751.



was not a subtraction but an addition. Christ was taking on an additional nature, a human nature with all its limitations. Yet, He never surrendered His deity.²⁵

The author concludes that Jesus did not give up His divine nature since He acquired a human nature (Lk.2:52; Jn.5:19). Thiessen stated that Jesus did not give up His absolute qualities, but He is always present.²⁶ Jesus Christ's self-surrender is a living sacrifice. The writer demonstrates this living sacrifice of Jesus in the way that he humbled Himself by being obedient to death, even death on the cross (Philippians.2:8 NIV). Here, His living sacrifice is for the sake of others and the Father. It is His ultimate humiliation that He has become subject to death. He was crucified on the cross for obeying the Father's command.

3. Jesus' self-giving embrace of the enemy on the Cross

Through the crucifixion, Jesus Christ embraced his adversary. It is the world's best example. The best example of self-giving. Jesus' self-giving is founded in Trinity's self-giving love.²⁷ He gave His life for hostile humanity because there was a great chasm between God and man caused by accepting God's revelation concerning his sin. Robert writes that every human effort toward reconciliation with God is unacceptable to Him²⁸ because they commit deeds against God and hate the light (John.3:17-20). Jesus is the propitiation for our sins, as well as the sins of the entire world (I John.2:2). It signifies that people who embrace and trust in God can be saved.

God and man were antagonistic. Now one group must initiate the embrace of another. Some must make a sacrifice in order to bring the two groups together. As a result, God sacrificed his Son to bring about peace. Because God can see into man's heart, there was no emancipation to make peace. God honored their emancipation and freedom through Jesus Christ. He completed this task by sacrificing his life. Paul Enns says that "the death of Jesus provided this peace between man and God. Christ provided a satisfactory payment for sin through his death."²⁹ Christ's death has appeased God's wrath against sin. The self-giving life

²⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, Pp.228-229.

²⁶ Henry Clarence Thiesen, *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdman, 1975), Pp.296-9.7

²⁷ Miroslav volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, otherness, and Reconciliation*, p.12.

²⁸ Robert P Lightner, *Sin the Savior and Salvation*, p.4.

²⁹ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p.233.



of Jesus erases the wrath of God from the hostility of man. As result, they embraced one another.

3. The self-giving of Jesus Christ reconciled with the hostility of human on the cross

The death of Christ is very important to human history because His death brings an end to the enmity between God and human. His death removed hostility from God. Erickson says that “God plays the active role through Jesus Christ”.³⁰ Again Thiessen added that God reconciled³¹ to Himself not only to man but also all things in heaven and on the earth (Col.1:20).³²

Volf says that reconciliation makes peace between two groups but, it has to start with love from one sight. This peace is coming from the self-giving of Jesus on the cross for the Father and human.³³ Here, God did not try to expose human weaknesses, rather, He forgave them through the death of Jesus Christ who surrendered and sacrificed Himself for the sake of the entire human race.

Volf also added that the final reconciliation is not the work of human beings, but it is work of the Triune God. It is called the perfect love of God.³⁴ To renew the fellowship, man must reconcile with God. This reconciliation is not the result of human effort, but of Jesus Christ's self-giving and God's generosity. God did not make any mistakes, yet man must admit that what they did was against God. He does not need to remember, but through Jesus Christ, He demonstrates perfect love to His people. As a result, God made peace with mankind via the death of Jesus Christ. Those who accept Jesus Christ as their savior are no longer at odds with God.

4. Self-giving of Jesus forgives enmity on the cross.

The self-giving of Jesus Christ brings forgiveness to the sinner. When two parties reconcile with each other because of their repentance, it weakens the oppressor and at the same time promotes peace between the two parties. Here one can write that, this repentance

³⁰ Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*, p.832.

³¹ Reconciliation is presumably God's act as well His act of receiving the world into His favor and dealing specially with them. *ibid.*, p832.

³² Henry Clarence Thiessen, *Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, p.328.

³³ Miroslav volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, otherness, and Reconciliation*, p.76.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.77.



and peace are the gifts of God to a genuine believer. As result, God gives forgiveness to those who acknowledge their sins because man had sinned and needed to remove that sin. Paul Enns writes that "Forgiveness is the legal act of God whereby, He removes the charges that were held against the sinners."³⁵ When Christ died on the cross in our place, God was satisfied with his death. God forgave our sins because Jesus gave his life for our sins.

This forgiveness is not an easy thing for human beings because they need the right justice in order to forgive one another. So, the writer can conclude that forgiveness is a gift of God. Men can forgive one another through the power of God because they have to forget the powerful emotion and not recollect their mistakes. In addition, forgiveness is the boundary between exclusion and embrace. It heals wounds and breaks down the division of individuals and groups.³⁶ He brings communion between God and man by giving his love to us. God did not count out sin because Jesus Christ gave his life as a penalty for our sins.

A solution to a challenging circumstance will come from forgiveness. God erases our mistakes and shows right justice through the life of Jesus Christ. It breaks the power of remembering past incidents. Volf says that "Hanging on the cross where He was sent by unjust, Jesus became the ultimate example of His teaching. He prayed that Father forgives them (Lk.23:34).³⁷ When men revenge one another for guilt, there will be disharmony among the group and individual. But when God gives punishment, no one can raise any questions against Him. One can see from the Bible that "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay" (Romans.19 KJV).

Therefore, taking revenge is not our job, but it will be extremely difficult for men because they require justice to be served swiftly and without delay, and men should never forget this. This is a commandment of God. He has given different responsibilities to different people but forgiveness is the responsibility of every human being. It involves both attitudes and actions. This will heal our relationship with man and God. Instead of excluding one another, we should love and embrace. Jesus Christ is the supreme model for everyone. It is good for

³⁵ Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p.315.

³⁶ Miroslav volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, otherness, and Reconciliation*, p.94

³⁷ Ibid., p.90



emotional and spiritual life. Men's passion for revenge should turn into practice for forgiveness because God will judge them.

5. *The self-giving love of Jesus to the Church*

The relationship between the church and Christ cannot express itself in a word because the love of Christ for the church cannot compare with anything in this world. Church is the body of Christ and He is the head of the church. Paul writes that He puts all things under His feet and gave him to be Head over all things to the church (Ephesians.1:22-23). The body of Christ refers to all the believers from Pentecost till Christ's return. This church was bought by His precious blood (Acts.20:28). Stanley D. Toussaint writes that the Church is important to the Father because Jesus shed His blood for it.³⁸

The Church is called the people of God (II Corinthians.6:16). The church belongs to God because He gives life to the church and brings them into the presence of God. Sambhu writes that the Lord has chosen us and made us a chosen generation. So, the church should separate itself from the world.³⁹ Jesus Christ bought the church with His own blood because He loves the church. Again, He made the church without blemish (spotless) by his own precious blood (I Peter.1:19). Now the church can escape from sin because Jesus Christ gave His life for it.

Paul used husbands and wives as an analogy for the church and Christ. Christ loves his church. She is to respect Christ. Paul writes that wives are to submit to their husbands as to the Lord. Harold W Hoehner writes that a wife's submission to her husband is a service rendered to the Lord. The reason for this submission is that husband is the head of the wife and is compared to Christ's headship over the church. He is the Savior of the body.⁴⁰ One can see that Christ is the Head of the Church so she should submit to Christ because the church belongs to Christ. It does not mean that the church does not have any freedom but it recognizes and acknowledges the Headship of Christ. Erickson observes that all things were created in Him and through Him (Colosians.1:16). He is the beginning, the firstborn.

³⁸ Stanley D. Toussaint, "Acts." *In The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.414.

³⁹ Sambhu Nath De, *The Doctrine of the church* (Kerala: Bethany house,2015),p.74

⁴⁰ Harold W Hoehner, "Ephesians." *In The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.522.



Believers are united with Him and He nourishes them because He is the Head of the body and connects every part of the body to the head.⁴¹

Husbands have to love their wives as Christ loves the church and gave his life for her. Harold W Hoehner writes that the purpose of Christ's death was to make the set apart for Himself as His own forever.⁴² Jesus Christ's death sanctified and cleansed the church. He cleansed the church from its old ways of sins and made her acceptable for special service. Jesus intends that the church should be perfect. Christ prepared the church for Himself with love and it was the personal and sacrificial work of Christ. Our families should reflect this role of Christ and the church.

An Implication Of Self-Giving of Jesus and Mutual Understanding to the Local Church

The love of Jesus Christ cannot compare with the love of this world. The self-giving love of Jesus equips us to a deeper love for one another. The Father has disclosed the deepest love in the Son for this world. It is unconditional love for them. As result, He saved men and women irrespective of whether they deserved to be saved or not. This is His sacrificial love for us. In this way, God has given grace to everyone to be like Christ who made Himself a living sacrifice for all mankind.

A. Self-giving of the Trinity and mutual understanding for the believers

There is self-revelation of each other in the Trinity. They share a relationship and mutual understanding, which reveals the significance of their relationship to one another. Trinity's distinguishing feature is that they entirely give themselves to one another. The Son commits His entire self to the Father, and the Father accepts it. Each has different personalities and responsibilities, yet they get along well. Tyler Smith writes that "The Father, Son, and Spirit live in harmony and love that is a model for human life. Therefore, we ought to open our

⁴¹ Millard J Erickson, *Christian Theology*, p.1047.

⁴² Harold W Hoehner, "Ephesians." In *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.641.



lives hospitably to them. We indwell the lives of others. We ought to see others not as obstacles to our plans and projects but as potential homes in which we can dwell together.”⁴³

There is communication and understanding among the three people of the Trinity. They are equal in power and divine nature. Therefore the believers should communicate and understand the problems of each other in the local church and society. This should be an identity for every believer. Our true identity is seen in the identity of the Trinity. There is no difference among the believers. Martin Davis writes, "God created human beings to share in the divine life by participating in the mutual love, communion, and fellowship of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit".⁴⁴ They should have mutual understanding and be ready to give freely of themselves to others. There are many cultures, nations, and races but, what we need is peaceful co-existence that is free from self-interests and selfishness.

Self-giving is a duty of Christian life. It should not be obligatory rather it should be willing for God and others. Again Scott added that the God of Christians is self-giving and He created man in his self-giving image.⁴⁵ One can share that the self-giving of God has been imparted to us through His Son. Now, this love has to reflect in our lives and care for others live. Again, Boff explains that ethical, tribal, and cultural difference in worship styles and practices should be encouraged and celebrated throughout the church.⁴⁶ Therefore the Trinity provides a way as to how a believer should establish connections with others in the church. Human beings are not perfect but they are finite. For this reason, they should depend upon one another as persons within the nature of the Trinity. The right relationship with God is the foundation of a Christian life.

Jesus' self-giving for believers in equality in the local church

⁴³ Tyler Smith, "5 ways the Doctrine of the Trinity is surprisingly practical", 2016; Available from <https://blog.logos.com/2016/03/5-ways-the-doctrine-of-the-trinity-is-surprisingly-practical/>, accessed on September 1, 2017.

⁴⁴ Martin Davis, *The Holy Trinity, and Human Relationship*, 2013; Available from <http://martindavis.blogspot.in/2013/07/the-holy-trinity-and-human-relationships.html>; accessed on September 1, 2017.

⁴⁵ Ibid.,

⁴⁶ L. Boff, *Trinity and society* (New York: Orbis Books, 1988), Pp. 118-20.



The Trinity consists of three persons who are equal in power and essence. They are accountable and self-giving to one another. The Holy Trinity's three members yield to one another. Now, the author wants to encourage local churches that every believer is a member of the local church because they are God's children. The Spirit himself bears witness to our spirit that believers are God's children (Romans.8:16). It is through Jesus Christ's self-giving that they are saved (Galatians.3:26).

All believers are equal in the sight of God. Scoot writes that "Believers are to be given real value and dignity by the local church, not left as anonymous spectators amidst professional performance".⁴⁷ There is no hierarchy system among the church members because all are one in Christ (Gal.3:28). There is no distinction between the rich and the poor in the sight of God. Donald K. Campbell writes that the believers are one in Christ and human distinctions lose their significance.⁴⁸

2. Jesus Christ's self-giving as a church model

The Model of Jesus Christ's self-giving for the church is the greatest example. Jesus gave his right to Father and humankind. Paul encouraged the church to have godly attitude and the humble mind of Jesus Christ because He willingly and graciously offered Himself to death for us. The implication of Christians should model the life of Jesus Christ. He was humble and obedient to death for the Father and the church (Phi.2:8).

All believers must surrender and sacrifice themselves for God. Humpton added, "Christian[s] must surrender and sacrifice one's own desires and will in the total submission to God and do whatever he calls He called to do".⁴⁹ The believer must take the right decision and submit to God as a servant to God and others. They must obey the word of God and surrender their whole heart to Jesus because they are bought by His precious blood. He makes us spotless and blameless from others. Therefore, everyone has to exalt Jesus' name as God exalts the name of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁷ Ibid.,

⁴⁸ Donald K. Campbell, "Galatians." *In The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.600.

⁴⁹ Humpton Keathley III, Surrender and self-sacrifice.



God desires us to glorify Jesus Christ. Paul says that whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God (I cor.16:31). One can identify that self-interest cannot glorify God but a self-giving and sacrificing life can glorify God. It can satisfy Him. As a result, the believer should keep faith in Christ Jesus because it is impossible to please Him without faith (Heb.11:6). Such faith can glorify God.

4. Self-giving of Jesus' practice of embracement for the church

Jesus is the model of embracement to others. He gave life to embrace others. This model has no place for the practice of deception, injustice, and violence because there are many practices of exclusion in the church without any reason. One can find out that exclusion is a kind of sickness in the different churches and societies of this modern age. All these can prevent the model of Jesus' embracement to others. The exclusion comes a self-centered mindset. Miroslav says, "Exclusion has to turn into the center on Jesus. This self-giving is a pattern of the Messiah. This has the motif of being believers."⁵⁰ Therefore, exclusion has to stay away from the pattern of self-giving exemplified by Christ Jesus.

Jesus Christ has renamed every believer. He changed enemies into sons and daughters of God. Christian people must rename others' names for their oppressors in positive ways that they can be a friend and give hope to them. They must get a new identity in Christ. When they understand one another, there would be peace among them. They must forget and forgive their sin and should not recollect and remember sins because God did not appoint us to revenge enemies rather, He gave a command to love each other. We must embrace our enemies because it brings a feeling of peace and communion to the church. It is our duty to make the first space for others because God loved us first and then we have begun to love Him. This will make a good atmosphere in a relationship with one another.

Christians must have desires to help in pain and joy, and allow others to come into the family of God. This process has to initiate the movement toward others.⁵¹ When there is suffering and death in a family, everyone must aid and embrace one another. They must provide hope for them. One could argue that this embracement must apply to drug addicts,

⁵⁰ Miroslav volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, otherness, and Reconciliation*, p.48.

⁵¹ Ibid., p.50.



broken families, and all types of people in the local church since they require it. Embracement is concerned with the purpose of improving the lives of others. It has to do with educating individuals about the importance of embracement. Everyone must accept their people and not treat them as strangers. This concept will aid in accepting the opponent. In this scenario, some have to put themselves in danger for the sake of others so that the church can be peaceful.

One can see from the Scripture that an embracement is important in our lives. This embracement does not depend on the quality of behavior. In the story of the Prodigal Son, the father has changed the identity of his son by taking responsibility for his son. He embraced his younger son with love. The father made space in the self for others. In the self-giving and embrace, there is no higher and lower class rather, it makes equal one another. It opens our minds and hearts for others and prepares a space for all to come together and to stand in support of one another. In the same way, Christ died for all the people and not just for a few. All believers have to unite in the Church and not be a cause for any kind of dissension that will disband the members within the church. For this, oneness of mind is mandatory.

Self-giving love and serving one another

God's character is love in the Bible. The sacrificial love of Jesus has set a new standard for all believers. According to Edwin A. Blum, it is a specific love for other believers based on Jesus' sacrificial love. The love and support that Christians have for one another allow them to survive in a harsh environment.⁵² He urges believers to love one another as God loves us (John.10:18). As a result, He has given His followers the same mandate. He understands the believers' capacity since they may study and live together by loving one another. God's love demonstrates that it is a gift from God. When this love is there, it demonstrates that believers are God's children.

Every Christian must love and sacrifice for others. They have to serve one another by employing God's love because God requires it of us. The divisive spirit can be eradicated through loving one another and obeying God's commandments. Christians must serve God

⁵² Edwin A. Blum, "John." *In The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty: New Testament Edition*. Edited by F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. Wheaton: victor Books, 1983), p.322.



by loving Him because He has given everyone adequate grace, thus we should serve God with all our heart. In the midst of adversity, one must have patience and endurance for God and serve Him because He suffered for us on the cross. Through Christ, everyone can find hope and recompense. Whatever the case may be, believers must love and serve Him in a way that is pleasing to God.

Conclusion

This research report aimed to apply biblical teaching on Jesus' self-giving to the local church. It is extremely important in the life of a believer. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united in divine nature and reveal one another in the Trinity because they have an inherent relationship in life itself. Jesus purchased believers with His precious blood (Acts.20:28). It is God's plan for His people. The bond between God and man was restored by Jesus Christ. On the cross, He now made room for his oppressor. In the eyes of God, he made a new man.

As a result, all humans are equal in the eyes of the Trinity, yet God can utilize different people in different ways for his purposes. In the local church, members must have mutual understanding in self-giving to one another. There is no longer any superiority or inferiority. They should be equal in the church since Christ's death ends separation and strife. In Christ, all believers have one identity. These teachings and examples must be put into practice in order for every believer to love and serve God with all of their existence.

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