

Message Three

Continuing in the Grace of God and

Continuing to Be Faithful to the Vision of God's New Testament Economy

Scripture Reading: Acts 4:33; 11:23; 13:43; 14:3; 20:32; 26:19b

Acts 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

11:23 Who, when he arrived and saw the grace of God, rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain with the Lord with purpose of heart.

13:43 And when the synagogue gathering had been dismissed, many of the Jews and the devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who spoke to them and urged them to continue in the grace of God.

14:3 Therefore they spent a considerable amount of time speaking with boldness in the Lord, who testified to the word of His grace by granting signs and wonders to be done through their hands.

20:32 And now I commit you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified.

26:19b I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.

I. If we would be in the continuation of the book of Acts, we need to continue in the grace of God—4:33; 11:23; 13:43:

- A. Grace is the resurrected Christ becoming the life-giving Spirit to bring the processed God in resurrection into us to be our life and life supply so that we may live in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:10, 45b.
- B. The grace that was seen by Barnabas must have been the Triune God received and enjoyed by the believers and expressed in their salvation, change in life, holy living, and the gifts they exercised in their meetings, all of which could be seen by others—Acts 11:23.
- C. God has given us the resurrected Christ as the holy and faithful things, but in our experience these holy and faithful things become the compound, all-inclusive grace, which is the processed Triune God—13:34, 43.
- D. By God's grace Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners, became the foremost apostle laboring more abundantly than all the apostles—1 Tim. 1:15-16; 1 Cor. 15:10:
 1. His ministry and living by this grace were an undeniable testimony to Christ's resurrection—Acts 13:33-34, 43; 14:3, 26.
 2. The grace that motivated Paul and operated in him was a living person, the resurrected Christ, the embodiment of God the Father becoming the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who dwelt in him as his everything—John 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:10, 45b; Acts 15:40; 18:27.
- E. Paul committed the believers to God and to the word of His grace—14:3; 20:32:
 1. The word of God's grace is able to build up the saints; this building up requires the growth in the divine life, and the growth in the divine life needs the nourishment of the divine element and the edification and equipment with the divine knowledge, all of which are supplied by the word of God's abundant grace.

2. The word of God's grace functions to give us the inheritance among all those who have been sanctified; the divine inheritance is the Triune God Himself with all that He has, all that He has done, and all that He will do for His redeemed people—26:18; Eph. 1:14.

II. If we would be in the continuation of the book of Acts, we need to continue to be faithful to the vision of God's New Testament economy—Acts 26:19b; Prov. 29:18a:

- A. In our reading of the book of Acts, we need to devote our full attention and concentrate our entire being on the vision of God's New Testament economy—Eph. 1:10, 17-23; 3:9-11.
- B. God's economy is focused on the all-inclusive Christ as our life, our person, and our everything; this One is the embodiment of the processed Triune God, and He is realized as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, who is within us and upon us; this Spirit is working in us so that we may be brought back directly to Christ to enjoy Him as everything—Col. 2:9; 3:4, 10-11; 1 Cor. 15:45b; John 14:16-17; Acts 1:8.
- C. We need to see the vision of God's New Testament economy—Eph. 1:10; 3:9:
 1. In this economy the Triune God became a man in the Son; this means that the accomplishment of God's New Testament economy began with the incarnation of Christ—John 1:14; Col. 2:9.
 2. Through Christ's human living, death, resurrection, and ascension, everything necessary for the accomplishment of God's eternal economy was done—John 6:57a; 1:29; 3:14; 12:24; Luke 24:26, 49-51; Acts 1:1-2.
 3. After breathing the Spirit into the disciples essentially, the Lord, in His ascension, poured out the Spirit upon His Body economically—John 20:22; Acts 1:8; 2:17.
 4. Now the Triune God as the processed all-inclusive Spirit is both within His chosen people and upon them, and with them He is carrying out the New Testament economy—John 14:16-17; Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8; 5:32.
 5. The Lord is propagating Himself by imparting Himself to His believers to make them living members of His universal Body to be His corporate vessel for His expression—v. 14; John 20:17; Rom. 8:29; 12:4-5; Eph. 4:16; 5:30.
 6. This is the vision that Paul saw, and this is what we need to see today—1:17-23.
- D. "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision"—Acts 26:19b:
 1. This was a vision, in which the apostle saw the divine things concerning the dispensing of the Triune God into His chosen, redeemed, and transformed people—2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:3-14.
 2. All his preaching in the book of Acts and his writing in his fourteen Epistles, from Romans to Hebrews, are a detailed description of this heavenly vision seen by Paul—Acts 9:4-5, 15; 22:14-15; 26:16.
 3. May we all continue to be faithful to the heavenly vision—the vision of God's New Testament economy—v. 19b; 1 Cor. 4:2.