

Message Four

Being Inoculated against the Decline of the Church by Life and Truth through the God-breathed Scripture and the Healthy Teaching of God's Economy

Scripture Reading: 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1:13-15; 2:15; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 6:3; Titus 1:9

I. Life is the Triune God imparted into us, and truth is the Triune God shining into us; by life and truth Paul encouraged Timothy and inoculated him against the decline of the church—2 Tim. 1:1, 10; 2:15, 25.

II. Life and truth are dispensed into us through the God-breathed Scripture:

- A. The antidote of the divine inoculation against the decline of the church is the God-breathed Scripture, the Word of life and truth—3:14-17; Phil. 2:16a; Acts 5:20; Col. 1:5; John 6:63; 17:17.
- B. We need to see the vital position and function of God's word in His economy:
 - 1. God's word is the exhaling of God—2 Tim. 3:16; John 6:63.
 - 2. God's word is milk and honey—1 Pet. 2:2; Psa. 119:103; cf. S. S. 4:11a.
 - 3. God's word is bread and solid food—Matt. 4:4; John 6:48-51, 57, 63, 68; Heb. 5:12-14; Job 23:12.
 - 4. God's word is rain and snow—Isa. 55:10-11.
 - 5. God's word is seed—Luke 8:11.
 - 6. God's word is a laver with sanctifying, cleansing, washing, and living water—Eph. 5:26.
 - 7. God's word is a mirror—v. 26; cf. Exo. 38:8.
 - 8. God's word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path—Psa. 119:105, 130; Phil. 2:14-16.
 - 9. God's word is a sword—Eph. 6:17-18.
 - 10. God's word is a discernor—Heb. 4:12.
 - 11. God's word is fire and a hammer—Jer. 23:29.
 - 12. God's word is our abode—John 8:31; 15:7.
 - 13. God's word is our wealth—Psa. 119:72, 14, 127, 162; 19:10.
 - 14. God's word is our joy—Jer. 15:16.
 - 15. God's word is our medicine—Prov. 4:20-22.

III. Life and truth are dispensed into us through the healthy teaching of God's economy:

- A. God's economy is God's working Himself through His Divine Trinity into man in order that man would enjoy the riches of Christ to become His members and be constituted into the Body of Christ for the manifestation of the Triune God—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Eph. 3:8-11, 14-19.
- B. The healthy teaching of God's economy according to the unique New Testament ministry keeps the church healthy in life and established in truth to bring forth godliness—a life that lives Christ and expresses God in Christ—1 Tim. 6:3; 3:15-16; 2 Tim. 1:13; Matt. 4:4; John 6:57, 63; Rev. 2:7.
- C. The basic factor of the decline and apostasy of the church is the turning away from Paul's completing ministry centered on the economy of God—2 Tim. 1:15; 4:3-4; 1 Tim. 1:3-4:
 - 1. Because they turned away from Paul's ministry, the churches in Asia declined into degradation—2 Tim. 2:16-17; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; Rev. 2:1-7; cf. 3:16.

2. The striking point of the churches' degradation was different teachings—the teaching of Balaam, (2:14), the teaching of the Nicolaitans (v. 15), and the teaching of Jezebel (v. 20); different teachings crept in because the churches turned away from Paul's teaching, the unique teaching of God's eternal economy.
3. One church in Asia was unique and highly appraised by the Lord—the church in Philadelphia; the Lord appreciated them because they kept the word, which means they did not turn away from the healthy teaching of God's economy, the teaching according to godliness—3:8; 1 Tim. 1:10; 6:3; 2 Tim. 4:3.

IV. In order to be reconstituted with God to be the testimony of God, the expression of God, we must be reconstituted with the word of God by daily reading the Bible and the ministry that opens up the Bible:

- A. In order to be reconstituted and inoculated, we need to come back to God by coming back to His word, both the written Word and the interpreted word—Neh. 8:1-18.
- B. In order to be reconstituted and inoculated, we need to read the sixty-six books of the Bible again and again—cf. Deut. 17:18-19; 1 Tim. 4:13:
 1. To reconstitute the people of God is to educate them by putting them into the Word of God that they may be saturated with the word—2 Tim. 2:15.
 2. Through our daily reading of the divine Word, the word of God works within us, and the Spirit, through the word, spontaneously dispenses God's nature with God's element into our being, causing us to be constituted with God—Eph. 5:26-27.
 3. God's word gradually changes our mind and our way of thinking, transfusing us with the thought of God, with the considerations of God, and with all that God is, making us God's testimony—4:23; Psa. 119:2, 14, 88; Exo. 25:16, 21-22; 38:21; Rev. 1:2.
- C. In order to be reconstituted and inoculated, we need to labor to get into the healthy teaching of God's economy through the unique ministry—1 Tim. 5:17:
 1. The healthy teaching not only ministers the life supply to the believers and heals the spiritual diseases, but in so doing, it also brings the church into a sound condition with a good order—6:3; Titus 1:1, 9.
 2. The notes of the Recovery Version and the Life-study messages do not replace the Bible but open up the Bible to bring us into its intrinsic significance according to the unique teaching of God's economy—Psa. 119:130; Acts 8:30-31; Neh. 8:8, 13.
 3. "I have the assurance to say that whoever has read through five hundred Life-study messages properly has been an excellent believer...Medicine, nourishment, and all kinds of vitamins are included in these messages" (*Elders' Training, Book 3: The Way to Carry Out the Vision*, p. 106).
 4. We must deposit the Lord's healthy words and the healthy teaching of God's economy into our being, like we deposit money in a bank—2 Tim. 1:13-14; 1 Tim. 6:3, 20; Col. 3:16; Psa. 119:72.
 5. In a darkened and confused situation we must cleave to the enlightening and ordering word in the New Testament, the healthy teaching of God's economy—Titus 1:9; Acts 2:42; 1 Tim. 1:3-4; 2 Tim. 1:15-16.