

**THE SERVICE NEEDED FOR THE PRACTICAL EXISTENCE
OF THE UNIVERSAL ONE NEW MAN**

Evening Session: Message Two

**Carrying Out the Stewardship of God
according to the God-ordained Way
in the Consciousness of the One New Man**

Scripture Reading: Col. 1:25; Eph. 3:2, 9; Matt. 28:19-20

I. The economy of God has become the stewardship of God given to all believers—Eph. 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25:

- A. In Ephesians 3 Paul used the Greek word *oikonomia* with two denotations:
 - 1. In relation to God, *oikonomia* denotes God's economy—v. 9.
 - 2. In relation to us *oikonomia* denotes the stewardship—v. 2.
- B. The stewardship of God is according to the economy of God; with God it is a matter of economy, and with us it is a matter of stewardship.
- C. The central point of the whole Bible is the desire of God's heart to dispense Himself into man for His corporate expression—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 1:5, 9; 3:17-21.
- D. Paul's stewardship was to complete the word of God in order to dispense Christ with all His riches into the churches—Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 4:1-2.
- E. Those who bear responsibility in the churches need to share in the stewardship of God—Titus 1:7, 9:
 - 3. The elders should take the lead to dispense the riches of Christ into others.
 - 4. All those who take the lead in the Lord's recovery and have the responsibility for the care of the churches need to realize that they have a part in such a divine stewardship.

II. If we would carry out the stewardship of God according to the God-ordained way, our concept of preaching the gospel needs to be uplifted—1 Cor. 9:16-17; Matt. 28:19-20:

- A. We should preach the gospel not merely to win souls but to carry out the stewardship of God for the economy of God by dispensing God into others.
- B. "We are not doing an ordinary work of gospel preaching. We are dispensing God into man. What a glorious ministry!" (*Life-study of Ephesians*, p. 246).
- C. We must go out to disciple the nations in order to make them members of the Body of Christ; this stewardship has been given to the entire Body of Christ—vv. 19-20.
- D. The first aspect of the God-ordained way to practice the New Testament economy is to save sinners by contacting them where they are—Luke 19:1-10:
 - 1. "We cannot change the truth of the gospel, but the way to preach the gospel must be changed and improved according to the Lord's way to meet His need" (*The God-ordained Way and the Eldership*, p. 25).
 - 2. "The practice of one man preaching and the rest listening is the practice of the old way. The new way is to contact sinners individually and directly....I beg all of you who are for the recovery to learn this way" (p. 25).

III. In His recovery the Lord desires to recover the perfecting of the members of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:11-16:

- A. We need to uproot the old way and to plant the new way, which gives the believers equal opportunity to function as the members of the organic Body of Christ—Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:14-20.
- B. Paul's thought concerning the perfecting of the saints is that God's intention is that every member would be able to do what the gifted persons do—Eph. 4:11.
- C. The Lord wants to recover the perfecting of the saints so that each one part of the Body of Christ may do the work of the ministry by operating in its measure for the building up of the organic Body of Christ—vv. 12, 16.

IV. The God-ordained way is carried out by labor—Col. 1:29; 1 Thes. 1:3:

- A. Our Christian work should eventually become a labor, something that is deeper and harder than work—Col. 1:29.
- B. "We in the Lord's recovery should be laborers and strugglers. Anything that needs labor or struggling will not go very fast or grow very fast"—(*Messages to the Trainees in Fall 1990*, p. 97).
- C. "To take the new way, you must labor definitely and regularly in a practical way. Then eventually you will see the fruitful result. This result is not a matter of fortune; it is a matter of laboring day and night" (pp. 105-106).

V. Because Paul, a faithful steward in God's economy (1 Cor. 4:1-2; 9:16-17), was conscious of the one new man, what was in his heart was not simply a particular local church or a certain saint but the universal one new man—Col. 3:10-11; 4:7-17:

- A. "Many saints secretly think more highly of the church in their locality than of the churches elsewhere. They do not have the realization that, although they are located in a specific church, they belong to the church everywhere" (*Life-study of Colossians*, p. 261).
- B. "If we are conscious of the one new man, we should no longer think that the churches in our country have nothing to do with the churches in other nations. Instead, we shall realize that all the churches are the one new man today. May we look to the Lord that we may not be sectarian in any way. We would not be sectarian either individually as believers or corporately as local churches. On the contrary, all of us, all the saints in all the churches, are just one new man" (p. 262).
- C. "We also should rejoice that on earth today there is another man, the new man, that includes all the believers. This new man, who is born through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is now spreading and growing throughout the earth. Praise the Lord that we are part of this new man!" (*The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John*, p. 447).