

# LIVING AND SERVING IN THE DIVINE DISPENSING OF THE DIVINE TRINITY

(Thursday, Second Morning Session)

Message Two

## **The Stewardship of God for the Carrying Out of the Divine Economy through the Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity**

Scripture Reading: 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 9:17; Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25

- I. The central point of the whole Bible is the desire of God's heart to dispense Himself into His chosen and redeemed people for His corporate expression—Phil. 2:13; Eph. 1:5, 9; 3:17-21.**
- II. God's intention in His economy is to dispense Christ with all His riches into His believers for the constitution of the Body of Christ, the church, to express the processed and consummated Triune God; this is the central line of the divine revelation—1:3-23.**
- III. The economy of God has become the stewardship of God given to the apostles and to all the believers—3:2, 9; Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17:**
  - A. In Ephesians 3 Paul uses 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. When the economy of God came to the apostles, it became the stewardship of God—1 Cor. 9:17; Eph. 3:2, 9; Col. 1:25:
    1. The stewardship of God is according to the economy of God; with God there is the economy, and with the apostles there is the stewardship—Eph. 3:2.
    2. The stewardship is a particular service arranged by God to carry out His eternal economy—1 Cor. 9:17.
    3. In Ephesians 3:2 and Colossians 1:25 the word *stewardship* conveys the sense of dispensing.
    4. The stewardship of God is the dispensing of the processed and consummated Triune God in Christ into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people so that He may be their life, their life supply, and their everything for the building up of the church as the unique Body of Christ to be His corporate expression—Eph. 3:14-21; Col. 1:25; 3:4, 10-11.
  - C. The Greek word for *steward* (*oikonomos*) means “a dispensing steward,” “a household administrator, who dispenses the household supply to its members”—1 Cor. 4:1-2:
    1. God's desire is to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into the members of His family through a sweet and intimate stewardship—2 Cor. 13:14.
    2. In the New Testament a steward is one who takes care of the dispensing of God to His family; thus, a steward is a dispenser, one who dispenses the divine life supply to God's children—Luke 12:42; 16:1; 1 Pet. 4:10.

3. The apostles were appointed by the Lord to be such stewards, dispensing God's mysteries, which are Christ as the mystery of God and the church as the mystery of Christ—Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:4.
  4. The faithful steward is one who gives food to the believers in the church by ministering the word of God and Christ as the life supply—Matt. 24:45.
- D. The economy of God and the stewardship of God are actually one; this means that we should be doing what God is doing—carrying out the economy of God through the stewardship of God with the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity—Eph. 1:10; 3:2, 9.

**IV. The stewardship of God is the stewardship of the grace of God—the dispensing of the grace of God into God's chosen people for the building up of the church—vv. 2, 14-21:**

- A. According to the context of Ephesians 3, the stewardship of the grace of God is the dispensing of the unsearchable riches of Christ to others as grace—vv. 2, 8.
- B. Grace is God Himself as our enjoyment; in Christ and through Christ we receive God, and God becomes our enjoyment—John 1:14, 16-17:
  1. The stewardship of grace is the dispensing of God into others to be their enjoyment—2 Cor. 13:14.
  2. Because we partake of God as our enjoyment, we can dispense Him as grace into others; this is the stewardship of the grace of God—Eph. 3:2.

**V. The stewardship of God is the ministry in God's New Testament economy—2 Cor. 4:1:**

- A. Out of the stewardship comes the New Testament ministry, and this ministry corresponds with God's economy; that is, it corresponds with God's dispensing of Himself into His chosen people for the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:16.
- B. The New Testament ministry is the dispensing of the unsearchable riches of Christ into the members of God's family—3:8.
- C. The one, unique ministry in the New Testament is to dispense Christ as God's grace into His chosen people for the building up of the church as the Body of Christ to be the organism of the processed Triune God for His full and eternal expression—4:12, 16.
- D. The real, genuine, adequate ministry in the New Testament is the divine stewardship, which ministers the Triune God in Christ to others as their life and life supply—2 Cor. 4:1; 13:14.

**VI. For the church to exist and stand properly in a living way, there is the need for the stewardship of God—Eph. 3:1-12:**

- A. All those who take the lead in the Lord's recovery and have responsibility for the care of the churches should share in this stewardship by dispensing the riches of Christ into others—Titus 1:7, 9.
- B. Every member of the Body has the privilege of dispensing the unsearchable riches of Christ into both believers and unbelievers—Eph. 4:12:
  1. In every aspect of the practical church life, we need to fulfill our stewardship, being filled with Christ and ministering the riches of Christ—3:2, 8-9.

2. We all should be good stewards of the varied grace of God, distributing the riches of Christ to nourish all the saints in the church—1 Pet. 4:10.
3. With God the riches of Christ are His economy, with us they are the stewardship, and when they are dispensed by us into others, they become God's dispensing; hence, we have the divine economy, the divine stewardship, and the divine dispensing of the Divine Trinity—Eph. 3:2, 9; 2 Cor. 13:14.