

## THE MINISTRY OF THE AGE

Second Morning Session—Message One

### **The Ministry of the Age, the Vision of the Age, the Flow of the Age, and the Commission of the Age**

Scripture Reading: Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:19; 1 Cor. 3:9; 15:10, 58; 16:10

**I. In every age the Lord has special things that He wants to accomplish; He has His own recoveries and His own works to do; the particular recovery and work that He does in one age is the ministry of that age—cf. Gen. 6:13-14; 2 Kings 2:2-15:**

- A. These ministries of the ages are different from the local ministers; Luther was a minister of his age; Darby was also a minister of his age.
- B. It is God's mercy that a person can see and come into contact with the ministry of that age, yet it is altogether a different thing for man to take up the courage to forsake the past ministry—cf. 1 Sam. 14:1-46; 2 Sam. 6:16, 20-23.

**II. In every age there is the vision of that age, and we have to serve God according to the vision of the age—Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:19; Eph. 1:17; 3:9:**

- A. In the building of God there is only "one window"—one revelation and one vision through one ministry—cf. Gen. 6:16; Acts 26:19; Rev. 21:10:
  - 1. God's word reveals to us that in every age God gives only one vision to man; a vision is a scene that God unfolds to man.
  - 2. Our vision extends all the way from Adam's vision of the tree of life in the Garden of Eden to the New Jerusalem with the tree of life; the New Jerusalem is the last scene of the vision—Gen. 2:9; Rev. 22:1-2.
  - 3. We are not serving God according to the first few scenes alone; we are serving God according to the last scene, which includes all the previous scenes.
- B. "After my study of the Bible for the past sixty-nine years, what have I seen? I would say that I have seen the New Jerusalem. This is my vision, this is my revelation, and this is my ministry" (*Practical Points Concerning Blending*, pp. 25-26):
  - 1. God's eternal intention for us to become the New Jerusalem is seen in Genesis 1—2 as the organic blueprint, the architectural plan of the Triune God, and in Revelation 21—22 as the finished product, the organic masterpiece of the Triune God, for the full manifestation of His multifarious wisdom—Heb. 11:10; Eph. 2:10; 3:10; cf. 1 Cor. 1:30; 3:10-12:
    - a. Man is a vessel created according to God's kind that man might contain and express Him—Gen. 1:26; Rev. 21:11; 4:3.
    - b. The tree of life is the center of God's economy—Gen. 2:7-9; Rev. 22:2.
    - c. A river of water of life is flowing to reach the four directions of the earth—Gen. 2:10-14; Rev. 22:1; cf. 21:13.
    - d. At the flow of the river are three kinds of precious materials for God's building—Gen. 2:11-12; Rev. 21:18-21.
    - e. The goal is the producing of a couple, a corporate, great God-man—Gen. 2:22; Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17.

2. What is revealed in these two parts of the divine revelation in the holy Scriptures is the central line of the divine revelation throughout the entire holy Scriptures; this central line should be a controlling principle to our interpreting and understanding of the holy Scriptures.
- C. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, an up-to-date, all-inheriting vision—Acts 1:14.

### **III. We have to keep up-to-date with the flow of the age:**

- A. “The flowing of the divine life, which started on the day of Pentecost and has been flowing throughout all generations to this very day, is just one stream.”
- B. “Please be clear that there have never been two streams. There is only one stream; and you have to keep yourself in this one stream” (*The Divine Stream*, p. 13.)
- C. “If you study carefully the history of the church, you will find that throughout the generations there has been one stream of the Holy Spirit flowing all the time” (p. 14).

### **IV. “The recovery bears the vision that the Lord has entrusted to this age...We are bearing on our shoulders the commission of this age” (*The Ministry*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 23, 25):**

- A. We need to fulfill our divine commission according to the heavenly vision by working and abounding in the work of the Lord as God’s fellow workers by the all-sufficient grace of God—1 Cor. 16:10; 15:58; 3:9; 15:10; 2 Cor. 12:9:
  1. The work of God, His intent and pleasure, is to work Himself into man to make man the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19.
  2. In order to build up the church with the Triune God as the precious materials of gold, silver, and precious stones, we must be constituted and rebuilt with Him—1 Cor. 3:9, 12; cf. S. S. 1:11-12.
  3. Love is the most excellent way and prophesying is the excelling gift for the building up of the church—1 Cor. 8:1; 13:13; 14:4b; 15:45b.
- B. “I would encourage all of us to pick up this high commission: to go out with the high peaks of the divine revelation and with God’s up-to-date vision to move with God for His high peaks of the divine revelation that will consummate His eternal economy” (*The Triune God’s Revelation and His Move*, p. 98).
- C. “Some co-workers and elders often would say to me, ‘I don’t dare to speak about these high truths because the believers whom I am serving cannot understand them according to their present spiritual condition.’ My reply is: ‘It is not that they cannot understand, but it is that you cannot speak clearly.’ It is only after we have known, experienced, and gained Christ that we can speak to others, according to the new language in the Lord’s recovery, concerning this Christ whom we have gained. We must learn to use the new language to speak the new culture in the divine and mystical realm. Then people will listen to us with great pleasure and will definitely understand the things we speak. It is only by this way that we are qualified to be co-workers and elders. Otherwise, we are outdated in the Lord’s move in the present age” (*How to Be a Co-worker and an Elder and How to Fulfill Their Obligations*, pp. 16-17).