

GOD'S ECONOMY IN FAITH

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

Message Two

The Intrinsic Significance of Faith

Scripture Reading: Heb. 11:1, 5-6; 3:7-8a, 12-13, 15a; 4:7

I. Faith is the substantiation of God's facts:

- A. Hebrews 11:1 says, "Now faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"; the word *substantiation* means the capacity to make something real (colors are substantiated by our eyes, sounds by our ears, etc.); thus, it is one thing for objects to exist, and it is another thing for these things to be substantiated.
- B. All of God's facts recorded in the Bible are real; however, these facts can be substantiated only by faith, because faith is the substantiation of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- C. We need faith to substantiate a spiritual, divine fact, just as we need eyes, ears, and hands to substantiate physical objects; faith is not a mental understanding of a truth; it is the seeing of a divine fact and the substantiation of it; the accomplished facts of Christ's person, living, and work must be substantiated by us; that is, they must be made real to us.
- D. Believing is exercising our spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13) to substantiate the divine facts; once we believe by saying Amen to God's word, we substantiate the divine facts, and we have them; Amen does not mean a wish for something to be accomplished, but a declaration that it will surely be accomplished, and that there is no doubt about it; when we believe, we are accepting what the Lord has already promised to do.

II. Faith is the substantiation of the substance of the truth (Heb. 11:1), which is the reality of the contents of God's New Testament economy:

- A. Such a faith is allotted to all the believers in Christ as their portion, which is equally precious to all who have received it—2 Pet. 1:1; cf. Col. 1:12.
- B. As such a portion from God, this faith is objective to us in the divine truth, but it brings all the contents of its substantiation into us, thus making them all, with itself (faith), subjective to us in our experience.
- C. It is like the scenery (truth) and the seeing (faith) being objective to the camera (us); but when the light (the Spirit) brings the scenery to the film (our spirit) within the camera, both the seeing and the scenery become subjective to the camera.

III. Faith means that we believe that God is and we are not—Heb. 11:5-6, 1-2; 2 Cor. 4:13, 18:

- A. Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to God, to make God happy—Heb. 11:6a.
- B. To believe that God is, is to believe that He is everything to us and that we are nothing—John 8:58; Eccl. 1:2.
- C. To believe that God is implies that we are not; He must be the only One, the unique One, in everything, and we must be nothing in everything—Gen. 5:24; Heb. 11:5.
- D. To believe that God is, is to deny our self; in the whole universe He is, and all of us are nothing—Luke 9:23.
- E. I should not be anything; I should not exist; only He should exist—"it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ"—Gal. 2:20.

- F. Before Enoch's translation, he obtained the testimony that he had been well pleasing to God (Heb. 11:5-6); Enoch continually walked upward with God day and night for three centuries, exercising his faith to believe that God is, becoming closer to God and more one with God each day until "he was not, for God took him"—Gen. 5:22-24; cf. S. S. 8:5a.

IV. Faith means that we believe that God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him—Heb. 11:6; Gen. 15:1; Phil. 3:8, 14:

- A. Enoch's reward was the highest degree of life—escape from death—Heb. 11:5a; 2 Cor. 5:4; Rom. 8:6, 10-11; 5:17.
- B. The Lord is a rewarder, and we need to be His seekers—Psa. 27:4, 8; 42:1-2; 43:4; 73:25; 119:2, 10.
- C. We are those who live by faith, looking away to the reward of the uttermost enjoyment of Christ in the millennial kingdom and, like Moses, persevering as one seeing the unseen One—Phil. 3:14; Heb. 11:26-27.

V. Faith is rooted in God's great, eternal, and divine facts covenanted to us in His holy Word; the believers' subjective faith is in their spirit, which makes their mingled spirit a spirit of faith—2 Cor. 4:13 and footnote 2:

- A. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that God is love—1 John 4:8.
- B. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that God's grace is sufficient—2 Cor. 12:9.
- C. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that Christ is able to save us to the uttermost—Heb. 7:25.
- D. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are in Christ, that Christ is in us, and that we and Christ are one—1 Cor. 1:30; Col. 1:27; John 14:20; 15:5.
- E. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are God's children and heirs—Rom. 8:16-17.
- F. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we have been made full in Christ—Col. 2:10.
- G. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe in the fact that we are the temple of the living God and that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within us—1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16.
- H. We withstand the devil by being firm in our subjective faith in God's protecting power and loving concern—1 Pet. 5:8-9:
1. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord was manifested for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil—1 John 3:8.
 2. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's death has destroyed him who has the might of death, the devil—Heb. 2:14.
 3. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the Lord's resurrection has put Satan to shame; the resurrection life is a life that cannot be touched by death, that transcends death, that is beyond the boundary of death, that comes out of death, and that death cannot hold—Acts 2:23-24; Phil. 3:10; Col. 2:12-15, 20; 3:1; John 14:30.
 4. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the ascension of the Lord has put Him far above the power of Satan—Eph. 1:20-22; 2:6; 6:11, 13.
 5. We must exercise our spirit of faith to believe that the victory of the Lord is complete and that our whole life is included in this victory; we must see that we have already overcome and that we fight from a position of victory in order to maintain our victory; we can overcome because we are all included in the Lord as the leading Overcomer; He is the Head, center, reality, life, and nature of the man-

child, and the man-child as the following overcomers is the Lord's Body—Rev. 3:21; 12:5.

VI. All our spiritual possessions in Christ are realized and actualized by faith:

- A. Faith opens the door to every blessing that is ours in Christ—2 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 1:3.
- B. Faith cuts off the flesh with its natural energy and effort and gives us access into God's grace and a solid standing in grace, which is the Triune God processed so that we may enter into Him and enjoy Him—Rom. 5:2.
- C. We are all "sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus"—Gal. 3:26.
- D. The righteousness that is God Himself lived out of us is through faith in Christ; Christ Himself infused into us through our appreciation of Him becomes our faith, the faith of Christ that brings us into an organic union with Him—Phil. 3:9.
- E. We are sanctified dispositionally, which is to be saturated with God as our possession for our enjoyment today and to be transformed by and with the holy nature of God—Acts 26:18; Rom. 6:19, 22; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- F. The inward cleansing of man's heart can be accomplished only by the Holy Spirit with the divine life by faith.
- G. Christ makes His home deep down in our hearts through faith; Christ's indwelling is mysterious and abstract, and we apprehend it not by our physical senses but by the sense of faith—Eph. 3:17.
- H. At the time of our regeneration, we believed into Christ and received the Spirit by faith as the ultimate blessing of the gospel; after this, God is supplying the Spirit to us continually, and our receiving the Spirit is a lifelong, continuous matter by the hearing of faith—Gal. 3:2-5, 14.
- I. We are inheriting the promises of God through faith—Heb. 6:12.
- J. We have victory over the world through faith, by which we are enabled to overcome the Satan-organized-and-usurped world.
- K. We have victory over the evil one by taking up the shield of faith, which is able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one, which are Satan's temptations, proposals, doubts, questions, lies, and attacks—Eph. 6:16.
- L. Through faith we are able to overcome in the midst of all our circumstances of suffering and difficulties—Heb. 11:33-34.
- M. We are kept by the power of God through faith, and we have power through faith—1 Pet. 1:5; Matt. 17:19-20; 21:21-22.

VII. "Beware, brothers, lest perhaps there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God. But exhort one another each day, as long as it is called 'today,' lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin... 'Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts'"—Heb. 3:12-13, 15a:

- A. *Falling away* also means "turning away"; when we exercise our spirit of faith and keep our heart turned to the Lord, the veil is taken away, and we can behold Him as the God of glory with an unveiled face, so that we may be continually transfused with Him, with His believing element, so that we can live by Him as our faith and remain in the process of being transformed from one degree of glory to another degree of glory into the same image of the resurrected and glorified Christ—2 Cor. 4:13; 3:16-18; cf. Gen. 1:26; Isa. 43:7.
- B. We need to see that unbelief is the greatest sin; we are believers who walk by faith and not by sight (2 Cor. 5:7); a believer is one who does not trust in things that can be seen, but he takes certain unseen things, confesses them, and realizes them by faith.

- C. We overcome the devil, the accuser of the brothers, by our declaration of the divine facts, which is the word of our testimony (Rev. 12:10-11); we follow the Lord as the One who confronted the enemy not by His own word but by repeatedly saying, “It is written...”—Matt. 4:4, 7, 10.
- D. We should not believe in our feelings but believe in the divine facts in God’s holy Word; we must learn to declare the divine, mystical, and eternal facts of what the Lord has done, is doing, and will do in us, for us, and through us for the accomplishment of His eternal economy; when God says a certain thing, we should also speak that thing simply because the Bible tells us so.

VIII. As people of faith, we are people of “today”; the first point of the up-to-date way to practice the Lord’s present move is to be filled with the Spirit inwardly and outwardly, essentially and economically, for our life and our work “today”—Acts 2:4; 13:52; Heb. 3:7-8a, 13, 15; 4:7:

“Forget about yesterday’s enjoyment of Christ. You need a fresh enjoyment. You need something up to date. The Lord was there in Elden hall, but He is not there now. He is here presently moving in His recovery, and He is in you. Wherever you are, He is in you, and He is in you right now. Do you believe He is repeating all the things He did in the past? He is not repeating anything. He is always going on and on and on. The Lord is working. He is moving.

“Are you a person of yesterday? All of us should be people of today. Every day is a today. With some people every day is tomorrow, and with others every day is yesterday...Do not look ahead to the future, and do not look back to the past. We are people of today. Do not talk about your old experiences in the past. Talk about your experience today...Every day is a today. We do not have yesterday. We had yesterday, but we do not have it now. We will never have tomorrow. All the time we have is today. Every day is a today. When we enter into the New Jerusalem, we will have today since every day in eternity is today. The only day we have is today. Be filled inwardly [with the Spirit] today. Be filled outwardly [with the Spirit] today. Be filled today” (*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1985*, vol. 5, “The Way to Practice the Lord’s Present Move,” pp. 484-485).