

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
BEING OBEDIENT TO THE HEAVENLY VISION
OF THE ETERNAL ECONOMY OF GOD**

Message One

The Recovery of the Eternal Economy of God

Scripture Reading: Acts 26:16-19; 1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Rom. 16:17; 2 Tim. 4:22

I. We must walk in the truth of the heavenly vision of God's eternal economy, of the mark of God's eternal economy, and of the goal of God's eternal economy; this vision must be renewed in us day by day to be the controlling vision of all our life, work, and activity—Prov. 29:18a; Acts 26:16-19; 1 John 1:7; 3 John 3-4:

- A. God's eternal economy is His plan to dispense Himself into His chosen, predestinated, and redeemed people as their life, their life supply, and their everything to produce, constitute, and build up the organic Body of Christ—1 Tim. 1:3-6; 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 11:2-3; Titus 1:9; Col. 2:19.
- B. The mark of God's eternal economy, the strategic and central point of God's eternal economy, is the indwelling, subjective Christ as the Spirit in our spirit, our mingled spirit—2 Cor. 3:17; 2 Tim. 4:22; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. We must be narrowed down to and even zeroed in on the all-inclusive divine Spirit in our human spirit that we may be kept from missing the mark of the divine eternal economy—1 Tim. 1:6; Mal. 2:15-16; Rom. 1:9; 8:4, 6; Gal. 5:25; Phil. 3:3; 2 Cor. 2:13.
 - 2. In the "blueprint" of God's original intention, man is the center of the entire universe, and the center of man is his spirit—Gen. 2:7; Prov. 20:27:
 - a. The heavens are for the earth, the earth is for man, and man was created by God with a spirit that he may contact God, receive God, contain God, worship God, live God, fulfill God's purpose for God, express God, and be one with God—Zech. 12:1; John 4:24.
 - b. Without God being the Spirit and without our having a spirit to contact God, to be one with God, the whole universe is empty and we are nothing—Eccl. 1:2; 3:11; Job 32:8; cf. Rom. 9:21, 23; 2 Cor. 4:7.
 - 3. Christ as the life-giving Spirit can be everything to us when we live in and exercise our spirit; to live in our soul is to live in the principle of antichrist—Zech. 4:6; 12:1; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17; 1 John 2:18-19.
 - 4. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness in our spirit; to be in our spirit is to be in Jerusalem, the place of simplicity and oneness, whereas to be in our mind is to be in Babylon, the place of confusion and division—John 4:24; Eph. 2:22; Rom. 1:9; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.
 - 5. Our spirit is a "country" of grace to swallow up race for the one new man; our mind is a "country" of quarreling; to enjoy the Lord as the Spirit being in our spirit is to have grace with us; when this is lost, the degradation of the church is present—4:22; Gal. 6:18; 5:15; Col. 3:10-11.
- C. The goal of God's eternal economy is the reality of the organic Body of Christ, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 1:22-23; Rev. 21:2-3, 9-10:
 - 1. Without the local churches, there is no practical expression of the Body of Christ and there can be no reality of the Body of Christ—1:10-13; 2:7.
 - 2. God's eternal economy is to obtain the Body of Christ; any work outside of this is not on the central lane of God's eternal economy—Eph. 4:1-6, 11-16.
 - 3. We must follow the footsteps of the apostle Paul to bring all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ—1 Cor. 12:24; Rom. 16:1-20.

4. For the Lord's recovery in this age, we must cooperate with the Lord to be the overcomers as today's Zion in today's Jerusalem (the church life) for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem—Rev. 3:21-22; 14:1-5; Judg. 5:15-16, 31.
- D. Teachings that differ from the unique and healthy teaching of God's eternal economy, the teaching of the apostles, separate us from the genuine appreciation, love, and enjoyment of the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself as our life and our everything—1 Tim. 1:3-4; Acts 2:42; 2 Cor. 11:2-3.
- E. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, the vision of the eternal economy of God—Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 1:9-10; Jer. 32:39.

II. God's eternal economy was unveiled through the apostles, but because the believers lost the proper understanding of God's eternal economy, there is the need for it to be recovered by the Lord:

- A. The words *recovery* and *economy* refer to one thing as seen from two different viewpoints; with God it is a matter of economy; with us it is a matter of recovery—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9.
- B. *Recovery* means to go back to the beginning; we need to go back to the beginning, receiving the Lord's grace to go back to God's original intention, to what God ordained in the beginning—Matt. 19:8.
- C. There is a strong and solid principle that whenever the majority of the people of God fail to carry out God's purpose, God comes in to have a recovery; His recovery is always with the minority, with a remnant of overcomers, not with the majority—2 Kings 22:8; Ezra 1:3-11; Neh. 2:11, 17; Rev. 3:21; 18:4.
- D. Our vision should be governed not by the present situation nor by traditional practice but by God's original intention and standard as revealed in the Scriptures according to the present advance of His recovery:
 1. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of Christ as our center, reality, life, and everything—Col. 1:17b, 18b; Rev. 2:4, 7, 17; 3:20; Psa. 80:1, 15, 17-19.
 2. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the oneness of the Body of Christ—John 17:11, 21-23; Eph. 4:3-4a; Rev. 1:11.
 3. The Lord's recovery is the recovery of the function of all the members of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 14:4b, 26, 31.
- E. We in the Lord's recovery must have a clear vision of God's eternal economy and then be governed, controlled, and directed by this vision, for we are here to carry out God's eternal economy in His recovery—Acts 26:18-19; Prov. 29:18a.

III. In order to realize the recovery of the Lord for the carrying out of the eternal economy of God, we must stay away from death and division:

- A. We must stay away from death and be swallowed up by Christ as life; everything in the church must be in the nature of life, with the content of life, and in the flow and imparting of life—2 Cor. 5:4; John 7:38; 1 John 5:16a.
- B. We must reject any kind of division (1 Cor. 1:10), stand against any wind of teaching and any spreading of spiritual death (Eph. 4:14; 2 Tim. 2:16-17), and mark and turn away from those who make divisions and causes of stumbling contrary to the teaching of God's eternal economy (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10).
- C. Leviticus reveals that the first thing that we as God's priests need to deal with is our listening; our moving (feet) and working (hands) are always under the direction of our hearing—8:23-24; 14:14-16:
 1. If we do not take care of our hearing but give ear to negative speaking, our deeds and our work will be affected in a negative way.

2. If any church would stop hearing negative things, that church would be very healthy and living; the church that is the weakest and the most deadened is the one full of criticism, gossip, and reasoning.
 3. Because we often hear unclean things, things that are unhealthy and contagious, we need to wash our ears with the blood of Christ; after the washing of the blood, we will enjoy the anointing of the Spirit.
 4. Positive listening will rescue us from negative listening; if we listen to God's word from morning to evening, we will not have an ear to listen to any negative speaking—Rev. 2:7; John 10:3-5, 16, 27; S. S. 2:8, 14.
- D. In order to enjoy Christ as our meal offering to live a meal offering church life, we must be purified from any leaven (ambition for leadership) and honey (natural affection)—Lev. 2:11:
1. Ambition and natural affection go together; a person who is ambitious will love anyone who helps him to gain what he desires, but whoever hinders him from fulfilling his ambition will be regarded as his enemy—3 John 9.
 2. We should neither take the way of the Lord's recovery nor leave this way because of any person; we are following the vision of God's eternal economy in the realization of the Lord's recovery—Acts 26:19; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:1-15.
- E. For us to live a holy life for the church life, we must be careful about the kind of people we contact; in Leviticus 11 all the animals signify different kinds of people, and eating signifies our contacting of people—cf. Acts 10:9b-14, 27-29:
1. To eat is to contact things outside of us and to receive them into us with the result that they eventually become our inner constitution; whatever we contact, we will receive, and whatever we receive will reconstitute us, making us a different person from what we are now.
 2. "Do not be deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals"—1 Cor. 15:33.
 3. "He who walks with wise men will be wise, / But the companion of fools will be troubled"—Prov. 13:20.
 4. "Avoid profane, vain babblings, for they will advance to more ungodliness, and their word will spread like gangrene, of whom are Hymenaeus and Philetus, who concerning the truth have misaimed...But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart"—2 Tim. 2:16-18, 22.