

God's Economy

Scripture Reading:

Hymn: 1334

- 1 Tim. 1:4 ...God's economy, which is in faith.
 Eph. 1:10 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times....
 Eph. 3:9-11 And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things, In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

I. Definition of the word *economy*:

- A. In Greek the word *economy* is composed of two words, *oikos* (*household, abode, dwelling place*) and *nomos* (*law*); *Oikonomia* denotes household regulations or household management.
- B. This word refers to a household administration and management, it implies a plan.

II. The economy of God:

- A. God's household management, God's household administrative arrangement, the divine dispensation—Eph. 1:10.
- B. A plan made by God according to His good pleasure—Eph. 1:9.
- C. An eternal plan God made in Christ—Eph. 3:11.
- D. To dispense God Himself into His chosen people in His Trinity. This dispensing has three steps:
 1. It is of God the Father, who is the source, the origin—Eph. 1:3-6.
 2. This dispensing is through God the Son, who is the course—Eph. 1:7-12.
 3. God's dispensing is in God the Spirit, who is the instrument and sphere—Eph. 1:13-14.
- E. For the producing of the church as the kingdom of God, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:10; 1 Cor. 4:17, 20; Rev. 21:2; John 3:29.

III. The main emphasis of the Bible is concerning the economy of God; "God became man, that man may become God" is the essence of the entire Bible—1 John 3:2.

- A. God became man—incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension.
- B. Man becoming God—going through regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation and glorification.
- C. The New Jerusalem is the ultimate consummation of God's economy—Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 21:2, 9, 10; 22:17.

IV. The economy of God is likened to a great wheel with Christ as the center—Ezek. 1:15-21.

- A. The hub of the wheel signifies Christ as the center of God's economy.
- B. The rim signifies Christ's counterpart, the church, the Body of Christ.
- C. The many believers as the members of Christ are the spokes spreading from the hub to the rim, spreading to the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem.
- D. The great wheel is not just the economy of God but also the moving of the

economy of God.

1. From Genesis chapter one until now, the move of God's economy has never stopped, and today this great wheel has reached us.
2. In every age and in every generation, this great wheel has been moving and today we all are a part of the move of this great wheel on earth.

Reference Books: *The Conclusion of the New Testament, Message 2; Living a Life according to the High Peak of God's Revelation, Chapter 5; The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ, Chapter 2; The Life-study of Joshua, Chapter 2.*

Excerpts from the ministry:**God's New Testament Economy****God's Household Management, God's Household Administrative Arrangement,
the Divine Dispensation**

What is God's New Testament economy? God's New Testament economy is God's household management, God's household administrative arrangement, the divine dispensation (plan). By dispensation we mean here an arrangement, that is, a plan.

This economy, this dispensation, is revealed in Ephesians 1:10 and 3:9. Ephesians 1:10 says, "Unto a dispensation of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him." The Greek word rendered "dispensation" here is *oikonomia*, from which we get the English word "economy." God has purposed to have an economy. All the kingdoms in the universe, the angelic kingdom, the human kingdom, the animal kingdom, and the plant kingdom, are for this economy, this dispensation, and are moving toward its completion.

The Greek word rendered "dispensation" in Ephesians 1:10 can also be translated "stewardship" or "household arrangement." The word "administration" may also be used because eventually this dispensation, this stewardship and household arrangement, will become an eternal administration. The entire universe will eventually be under one administration. Although the word administration may be used here, I prefer the words dispensation, stewardship, and household arrangement.

In relation to God's purpose, the word "economy" is unfamiliar to many Christians. The Greek word for economy, *oikonomia*, is used two other times in Ephesians. We have seen that in Ephesians 1:10 Paul speaks of a dispensation, or economy, of the fullness of the times, in which all things will be headed up in Christ. Then in 3:2 he speaks of the stewardship of the grace of God, and in 3:9, of the dispensation of the mystery. In 3:9 Paul says, "To bring to light what is the dispensation of the mystery, which from the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things." God's mystery is His hidden purpose. His purpose is to dispense Himself into His chosen people. Hence, there is the dispensation of the mystery of God. This mystery was hidden in God from the ages, that is, from eternity and through all past ages, but now it has been brought to light to the New Testament believers.

In 1 Timothy 1:4 Paul speaks of "God's dispensation which is in faith." Once again, the Greek word rendered "dispensation" is *oikonomia*. In Greek the words "God's dispensation" here also mean God's household economy. This is God's household administration to dispense Himself in Christ into His chosen people so that He may have a house, a household, to express Himself, which household is the church, the Body of Christ. Paul's ministry was centered on this economy of God (Col. 1:25; 1 Cor. 9:17). (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, Message 1, pp.14-15.)

The Definition of the Word "Economy"

We have seen that dispensation is the translation of the Greek word *oikonomia*, which is composed of two words: *oikos*, which means house, and *nomos*, which means law. *Oikonomia* denotes household regulations or household management. Because this word refers to a household administration and management, it implies a plan. In Ephesians 3 the word dispensation means a plan, an arrangement. Therefore, when we use the word dispensation, we mean God's household management, God's arrangement, God's plan. When we use the word dispensation, we do not mean dispensing, which is the act of God's dispensing Himself into us. Nevertheless, in God's dispensation the crucial matter is the dispensing of the Triune God into us. (*Conclusion of the New Testament*, message 2, p. 20.) (A replacement)

To Dispense God Himself into His Chosen People in His Trinity

God's New Testament economy is His plan to dispense Himself into His chosen people in His trinity. In what way does God dispense Himself into His people in His trinity? This dispensing has three steps. First, it is of God the Father. The Father is the source, the origin. Second, this dispensing is through God the Son, who is the course. Third, God's dispensing is in God the Spirit, who is the instrument and sphere. Through these steps of God the Father, through God the Son, and in God the Spirit God dispenses Himself into His chosen people.

For the Producing of the Church as the Kingdom of God Consummating in the New Jerusalem

God's New Testament economy to dispense Himself into His chosen people is for the producing of the church (Eph. 3:10). This dispensing brings forth the church for the manifestation of the multifarious wisdom of God according to His eternal purpose made in Christ (Eph. 3:9-11). This means that through the dispensing of God in His trinity the church is produced to exhibit God's manifold wisdom.

We have pointed out that the church today is the kingdom of God. Therefore, the dispensing of God into us produces the church as the kingdom of God. 1 Corinthians 4:17 and 20 show that the kingdom is the church life today. In verse 17 Paul refers to his ways "which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church." Then in verse 20 he says, "The kingdom of God is not in speech, but in power." These verses show that the kingdom of God is the church everywhere, and the church everywhere is the kingdom. The kingdom is here because the church is here.

The church as the kingdom of God will have a consummation, and this consummation will be the New Jerusalem for the eternal expression of the Triune God. Revelation 21:2 says, "I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." The New Jerusalem is a living composition of all the saints redeemed by God throughout all generations. It is the bride of Christ as His counterpart (John 3:29) and the holy city of God as His habitation. As the bride of Christ, New Jerusalem comes out of Christ, "her Husband", and becomes His counterpart, just as Eve came out of Adam, her husband, and became his counterpart (Gen. 2:21-24). The New Jerusalem is prepared as a bride for her husband by participating in the riches of the life and nature of Christ. As the holy city of God, she is wholly sanctified unto God and fully saturated with God's

holy nature to be His habitation. (*The Conclusion of the New Testament*, Message 1, pp. 17-18.)

“God Became Man, That Man May Become God” Being the Essence of the Entire Bible

In the past ten years the Lord has shown us His economy. According to my study of church history and the biographies of many saints, I would say that before 1984, God’s eternal economy as the very reality and the center of the Bible was never seen by God’s people so fully as today among us. To my knowledge, no other book has pointed out that God’s eternal economy has Christ as its center and reality, with His Body, the organic Body of Christ, as the organism of the Triune God.

Today we have come to this high peak of God’s divine revelation. I would even say that we have probably reached the highest peak of the divine revelation in the entire Bible. (*Living a Life According to the High Peak of God’s Revelation*, pp. 37-38.) “God became man that man may become God” is the essence of the entire Bible. The entire Bible is the speaking of God’s eternal economy. (Translated)

Man Becoming God—Going Through Regeneration, Sanctification, Renewing, Transformation, Conformation, and Glorification

Christ’s resurrection was to bring the God-created humanity into divinity to be resurrected with Him....In this resurrection He brought the humanity which He had put on into divinity and thus became God’s firstborn Son. His becoming the Firstborn was His birth in His resurrection....Thus He was begotten to be God’s firstborn Son, and at the same time He regenerated all the God-chosen people (1 Pet. 1:3). To use our ordinary language, we may say that we and the Lord as God’s firstborn Son were born in the same delivery. We all were born together in Christ’s resurrection. This birth of His was the first step as a foundation for man to become God. Now in His resurrection, we as God’s chosen ones have been brought into divinity. Thus, through regeneration we have received another life.

Not only so, He as the last Adam, who in His resurrection brought humanity into divinity, became the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45)....This Spirit is the consummation of the Triune God. This Spirit is also the pneumatic Christ, who is the embodiment of the Triune God. Hence, this Spirit is the very Christ, the very Triune God. Eventually, our God has become such a One. From the day of His resurrection to eternity He will be like this eternally. When we believe in the Lord, the One whom we receive is such a One, not a shallow Christ as people commonly preach. The Christ whom we know is so profound and so high. This One is our Redeemer and our Savior. He is not only Jesus Christ but also the one who became the life-giving Spirit, the consummation of God. It is this One who went through all these processes to accomplish the step for Him to become man that He might make man God. (*The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ*, pp. 29-30.)

After God regenerates us with Himself as life, He continues to carry out the work of sanctification, renewing, and transformation in us by His Spirit of life. God became man through incarnation; man becomes God through transformation. When the Lord Jesus lived as a man on this earth, once He went up on the mountain and was transfigured. That transfiguration was a sudden occurrence. Our transformation into

God, however, is not something that happens unexpectedly. Rather, it is a lifetime transformation until we are conformed to His image. Eventually, we will enter with Him into glory; that is, we will be redeemed in our body. That will be the final step of the redemption of our whole being that brings us into glory. Therefore, it is through regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification that we may become God. When we reach this point, 1 John 3:2 says that when “He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.” (*The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ*, p. 31.) (A replacement)

The Economy of God being Likened to a Great Wheel

In Ezekiel 1 God’s economy is likened to a great wheel (vv. 15-21). The hub of this great wheel signifies Christ as the center of God’s economy, and the rim signifies Christ’s counterpart, the church, which consummates in the New Jerusalem. The many believers as the members of Christ are the spokes of the hub spreading to the rim, to the Body of Christ consummating in the New Jerusalem. This great wheel is not just the economy of God but also the moving of the economy of God. From Genesis 1 until the present, this wheel has been continually moving. The move of God’s economy has never stopped, and today this great wheel has reached us. When I moved from mainland China to the island of Taiwan with about three hundred fifty to five hundred others more than forty years ago, there were few Christians on that island who knew what God’s economy was. But because of the moving of the great wheel of the divine economy, within five years the number in the churches increased to fifty thousand. Eventually, the Lord, the Motivator, burdened me to come to this country. This also was part of the moving of this great wheel. In every age and in every generation, this great wheel has been moving, and today we all are a part of the move of this great wheel on earth. Sometimes the move of this wheel is quite slow, but at other times it is so fast that we can hardly keep up with it. (*Life-study of Joshua*, pp. 7-8.)

Questions:

1. Please explain the meaning of the word “economy.”
2. Please explain according to the Bible, what is the economy of God?
3. Please explain briefly what is the essence of the entire Bible.
4. Please describe briefly the economy of God being likened to a great wheel having Christ as the center.