

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Eight : Carrying Out the Stewardship of God for the One New Man

I. Overview:

In order to carry out His economy, God must have stewards to serve, minister, manage, and execute His economy. A steward is a dispenser, one who dispenses the divine life supply to God's children; in the dispensing ministry it is most important that stewards be found faithful. In the New Testament economy of God, there is the desperate need for the stewardship of God to dispense Himself into man. Paul's stewardship was to complete the word of God in order to dispense Christ with all His riches into the churches. The stewardship of God is the stewardship of grace, the dispensing of grace. Those who bear responsibility in the churches need to share in the stewardship of God. Because Paul, a faithful steward in God's economy, was conscious of the one new man, what was in his heart was not simply a particular local church or a certain saint but the universal one new man.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain how to carry out this dispensing in His economy.

God's dispensing is fully something that is in His economy. For the execution of this dispensing, the Triune God selected some with whom He could use and made them His dispensers, richly bestowing upon them His grace. Through God's rich grace there was an operation of God's power within these people. These apostles and prophets then fulfilled their ministry according to the operation of God.

B. How did Paul receive a commission of the stewardship of God?

Paul received a special commission, a special grace, and a special operation to transmit the unsearchable riches of Christ to the Gentiles chosen by God. This was his stewardship. Hence, the stewardship is God's economy. The execution of God's economy depends on the stewardship.

Day 2 —

A. Why do we say that Paul's ministry was a dispensing ministry?

Paul dispensed Christ into all the believers. Receiving such a dispensation through Paul, the believers could then grow with the supply they had received. By this we see that Paul's ministry was a dispensing ministry, a ministry of dispensing the unsearchable riches of Christ into our being so that we may grow and become the church.

B. Why can every saint share this stewardship?

The stewardship of God is according to the economy of God. With God it is a matter of economy; with us it is a matter of stewardship. All the saints, no matter how insignificant they may seem to be, have a ministry according to God's economy. This means that every saint can dispense the riches of Christ into others.

Day 3 —

A. How did Paul become a minister of the church to complete the word of God?

Paul, completed the word of God in the mystery of God, which is Christ, and in the mystery of Christ, which is the church, to give us a full revelation of God's economy. According to Colossians 1:26, the word of God is the mystery. This hidden mystery is related to Christ and the church. The unveiling of this mystery through the apostle Paul is a major part of the completion of the word of God as the divine revelation.

B. Why does the divine revelation also need to be completed through us today?

Although the divine revelation was completed through the apostles, especially through Paul, in a practical sense it also needs to be completed through us today. As we contact people, we must progressively, continually, and gradually preach the word in full, which is to complete the word. In the Lord's recovery we need more stewards who are able to complete the word of God.

Day 4 —

A. Explain the stewardship of the rich families in Paul's time.

At the time of Paul, many rich families had stewards whose responsibility was to distribute food and other necessities to members of the household. Because our Father has a divine household, there is the need for many stewards to dispense these riches to His children. This dispensing is the stewardship.

B. Fellowship the stewardship of the grace is the dispensing of the riches of Christ.

Grace is the riches of Christ. When the riches of Christ are enjoyed by you, they become grace. Paul's ministry was to dispense the riches of Christ as grace to the believers. This is what we are doing in the ministry today. This stewardship is according to God's economy. With God it is a matter of economy; with us it is a matter of stewardship.

Day 5 —

A. Expound our stewardship being the stewardship of the grace.

We should preach the gospel to carry out God's economy by dispensing God into others. Go to school or to work for the purpose of carrying out your stewardship according to God's economy for His dispensation. We are not doing an ordinary work of gospel preaching. We are dispensing God into man. What a wonderful stewardship!

B. Explain the true significance of grace.

Many Christians think that grace refers mainly to material blessings. But the Bible indicates that grace did not come before Christ. Grace is nothing less than God Himself given to us, gained by us, and enjoyed by us. Therefore, stewardship of grace is the dispensing of God into people to be their enjoyment.

Day 6 —

A. Explain what the relationship between the stewardship and the economy have.

The Greek word for stewardship in Ephesians 3:2 and for economy in 1:10 is *oikonomia*, which was first God's plan, God's economy. Then this economy of God became the stewardship that God gave to the apostle Paul. The economy and the stewardship are actually one. The carrying out of God's economy is the stewardship of God's grace.

B. Explain in Ephesians 3:8 Paul refers to himself as "less than the least of all saints."

If Paul could be a steward, then we also can be stewards and dispense the riches of Christ into others. May the Lord open our eyes to see that we all have part in the stewardship of God. In every aspect of the practical church life, even in such things as ushering and cleaning the meeting hall, we need to dispense Christ into others.

III. Conclusion:

How do we cooperate with the Lord to enter into and participate in the stewardship? Firstly, we must stay under the dispensing of grace every day. Secondly, according to Ephesians 3:4 we can perceive Paul's understanding in the mystery of Christ by reading and entering into the riches of the books of the ministry. Thirdly, we should receive a commission of the shepherding, dispensing what we have gained to others. Fourthly, be perfected to have a part of this stewardship, valuing the words of the seven feasts in the ministry yearly. Fifthly, take care of the growth in life, for the stewardship comes from the growth in life. Sixthly, with the growth of life causes us to be able to function through the operation in the measure of each one part. Seventhly, see through that I am just a member and need to coordinate with others in the Body. Eighthly, follow 1 Peter 4:10 "Each one, as he has received a gift, ministering it among yourselves as good stewards of the varied grace of God."