

Week 5—Outline

God's Economy and Consecration to Love the Lord

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:9-10, 3:9:11, 2:4, John 13:1, Rom. 5:8, Matt. 22:37- 38, Rom. 8:28, 1 Cor. 2:9, 8:3, 2 Cor. 5:14

I. A Christian who loves the Lord must see God's economy:

A. God's economy is God's household administration, God's plan and arrangement—Eph. 1:9-10.

B. The content of God's economy – God dispenses Himself into His chosen people in His divine Trinity in order to produce the church to be God's kingdom, consummating in the New Jerusalem—Eph. 3:8, 2:20-21, Rev 21:2.

C. God accomplishes His eternal economy by His dispensing, dispensing Himself to people – the 1st step is becoming flesh, the 2nd step is becoming the Life-giving Spirit— John 1:1, 14, 1 Cor. 15:45b.

D. The bible only speaks about God's economy. "God becoming man, man becoming God" is the outline of the entire bible—1 John 3:2.

II. As we know God's economy, we will spontaneously consecrate ourselves to love the Lord and to cooperate with God's economy :

A. God loved us and paid the price, purchasing us back unto Himself with His precious blood—1 Pet. 1:19, 1 Cor. 6:20.

B. Consecration is the shifting of the ownership. Christ has the ownership; He owns us and accomplishes His economy on us—2 Cor. 5:14-15.

C. We believe the Lord, receive the Lord by spirit; we love the Lord and enjoy the Lord with our heart—John 4:24, Matt. 22:37.

D. May we all become passionate lovers of the Lord Jesus—1 Pet. 1:8.

Week5 Day1

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Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

Eph. 1:9-10

Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, Unto the economy 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;

Eph. 2:19

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

A Christian Who Loves the Lord Must See God's Economy

In eternity God planned a will. This will was hidden in Him; hence, it was a mystery. God's will as a mystery hidden in God issues in God's economy, dispensation (3:9). From God's will issues God's economy through His purpose, good pleasure, and counsel.

God's economy being God's household administration, God's plan and arrangement

After God's will, purpose, good pleasure, and counsel, there is God's economy. God's economy is God's household administration, God's plan and arrangement. With an administration, there is the need of a plan, and with a plan, there is the need of an arrangement. Based upon God's will, He made a purpose. In His will and purpose, there is His good pleasure. Then the Divine Trinity had a council to make a decision, which is the divine counsel. Based upon that counsel, God made a plan with an arrangement, and this plan with this arrangement is His household administration, His economy. (The Central Line of the Divine Revelation, pp 31-34)

Definition of the word economy

Economy is a translation of the Greek word, oikonomia. This Greek word has been anglicized into the English word economy and is equal to the word dispensation. The basic meaning of this word is a kind of arrangement, a kind of an arranged order. So it may be considered as a plan, as a

management, or as an administration. God has a divine arrangement of His administration.... The Greek word, oikonomia, is composed of two words: oikos, meaning house and nomos, meaning law. Hence, it refers to the house arrangement, household management or administration. The word denotes the management and distribution of the wealth of a rich household. (The Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity, Volume 1, pp 1, 4)

This house is the house of God, including all the saved ones in the whole human race, all those who were chosen by God and have received God as their life (Eph. 2:19). They are a group of people who became the new creation by receiving God's life through God's selection. They are a big family of God. Furthermore, in this big family we are the masters and all the angels are the servants who wait upon us, ministering to us as those who inherit so great a salvation (Heb. 1:14).

In this universal house, there is the need for a household administration to arrive at a specific purpose. Whenever there is a household administration, it is necessary to have a dispensation and a plan. This is not a small matter. With the household administration, there is a dispensation; with the dispensation, there is the need for a plan. Hence, when God makes His dispensation, He designs a number of administrative procedures for the carrying out of His economy. For this reason, oikonomia may also be rendered dispensation, which means "arrangement" or "plan," referring to God's plan for His administration. In God's administration, God's plan, there are many dispensations and many ways. (Revelation and Vision of God, p.103)

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Week5 Day2

Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

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,

Throughout the Ages, God's Central Goal Being to Accomplish God's Eternal Economy

Throughout the ages, God has only one work, and that is to work Himself into man.... Why did God create the universe? Why did He create man? Why did He create you? What is God trying to accomplish? This is an important question. If God wants to do something, and you do not know about it, your Christian life is meaningless. You may think that God's intention is for you to have joy and peace. It is true that God wants you to have joy and peace, but these things are not God's center. God is not merely giving you peace, blessings, forgiveness, eternal life, and so forth; His central thought is to work Himself into man. What is the ultimate goal of God in the old creation as well as in the new? It is to work Himself into man. This is God's goal. God's redemption is for this goal. He created the universe in order to put man in it, and the purpose for Him to have man is to work Himself into him. (Messages Given During the Resumption of Watchman Nee's Ministry, volume 1, pp 101-102)

The content of God's economy – 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.

The church today is 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 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. (The Conclusion of the New Testament, Volume 1, pp 20-21)

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Week5 Day3

Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Cor. 15:45the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

God's dispensing being for His eternal economy

God's economy.... is God's goal (Eph. 1:10; 3:9). God's dispensing.... is His means. In order to accomplish the economy of working Himself into man, God has to pass through the means of dispensing. Hence, God's dispensing is for God's economy.

The first step - becoming flesh

In order to dispense Himself to man, the first step God took was to become flesh and be a man (John 1:14). When He was in the flesh, on the one hand, He was the Lamb of God who took away man's sin (John 1:29). On the other hand, He was the brass serpent, which shows that He became flesh, that is, He was sent in the likeness of the flesh of sin (Rom. 8:3). As the brass serpent, He had only the form of a serpent; He did not have a serpent's poison. While the Lord was in the flesh, He was lifted up on the cross and destroyed Satan, the old serpent (John 3:14; 12:31). Furthermore, He was also a grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died. Through His death He released God's life (John 12:24).

The second step - becoming the life-giving Spirit

The second step God took in order to dispense Himself to man was to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b).... As the life-giving Spirit, Christ first regenerated our spirit (John 3:5-6) so that, in

addition to our natural life, we might receive the eternal life of God as the new source and the new element of the new man. After this, Christ as the life-giving Spirit spreads out from our spirit to transform our soul. If we set our mind, the main part of our soul, on the spirit and cooperate with the operation and work of the Lord Spirit within us, our mind will be renewed (Rom. 12:2). When our mind is renewed, our will and our emotion as the other parts of our soul will spontaneously be renewed also.... Finally, He will transfigure our bodies so that our bodies may be redeemed to enter into His glory, and our entire being may be like Him in every way

(Rom. 8:17, 23; Phil. 3:21; 1 John 3:2). This is the ultimate consummation of God's salvation. (The Economy and Dispensing of God, pp19-21)

The bible dealing exclusively with the economy of God

The entire Bible is a book that deals exclusively with the economy of God, and that in particular the New Testament is focused on the consummation of the economy of God. Hence, Paul wrote to Timothy, asking him to charge and exhort certain dissenting ones not to teach different things any longer. What are the "different things"? They are things that have nothing to do with the economy of God (1 Tim. 1:3-4). (A General Outline of God's Economy and the Proper Living of a God-Man, p2) "God became man that man may become God" being the essence of the entire bible "God became man that man may become God".... are the essence of the entire Bible. The entire Bible is an explanation of the eternal economy of God.... God is God, and He Himself has begotten us as His children.... Since God has begotten us, we are the children of God. Furthermore.... God will work on us to such an extent that we will be like Him completely (1 John 3:2).... Adam was created with God's image and likeness. Then God set man before the tree of life, meaning that He wanted man, who had God's image, to receive God as his life.... But the Lord also shows us clearly that we are God in life and nature (but not in Godhead).... Suppose the father is an emperor. We cannot say that all his children are emperors.... God did this that He might produce a Body for Christ, that is, that He might produce an organism for the Triune God, the ultimate manifestation of which is the New Jerusalem. (The High Peak of the Vision and the Reality of the Body of Christ, pp 14-15, 11-12)

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Week5 Day 4

Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

1 Cor. 6:20 For you have been bought with a price. So then glorify God in your body.

2 Cor. 5:14 For the love of Christ constrains us because we have judged this, that One died for all, therefore all died;

Rom. 12:1 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable service.

We Need to Consecrate to Love the Lord to Cooperate with God's Economy

God's goal is to work Himself into His redeemed people. God wants to work Himself into His chosen people that He may have a full expression in eternity. This is the goal of God's full salvation. God's dispensation is toward this goal. We must see, not only God's dispensation, but also the goal of God's dispensation, that is, God is working Himself into His chosen people. (Divine Dispensing of the Divine Trinity)

God loved us and paid the price, purchasing us unto Himself with His precious blood

First Corinthians 6:20 says: "Ye were bought with a price." Our consecration is based on this purchase of God. For instance, you may go to the Gospel Book room and see a great number of

books on display, but you cannot help yourself to any of them, because you have no basis for doing so. But if you pay three dollars for one of the volumes, then you can demand that the book be turned over to you and claim that it belongs to you. This demanding is based upon your purchase. The basis of consecration is exactly the same.... In Exodus 13:2 we see that after the Passover, God commanded the Israelites, saying, "Sanctify unto me all the first-born." The reason for this command is that all these first-born were redeemed by God through the death of the lamb.... The basis of consecration, therefore, is God's purchase.

Consecration is the shift of ownership

If we were to investigate the consecration experiences of Christians, we would discover that most were constrained by the love of the Lord.... But if we were to consecrate ourselves to the Lord only because of the constraint of the Lord's love, would this consecration be sufficiently stable?

Experience tells us that it is not. The reason is that love is the story of our heart's mood and desire.... Therefore, if consecration is purely a matter of love, it will not be sufficiently stable. It will be subject to as much change as our unstable mood. When we understand the basis of consecration and realize that consecration is based on the matter of purchase, our consecration will then be stable and secure.... God has already bought us and has the right to own us. Therefore, whether we are happy or not, we must consecrate ourselves.

The motive of consecration is the love of God.... This kind of consecration, motivated by the love of God, is mentioned very clearly in two places in the Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 and Romans 12:1.

Second Corinthians 5:14-15 says: "For the love of Christ constraineth us (constraineth in the original has the meaning of the rushing of waters)...and He died for all, that they that live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again.".... The dying love of Christ is like the rushing of great waters toward us, impelling us to consecrate ourselves to God and to live for Him beyond our own control.

In Romans 12:1 the mercies referred to here are the love of God. Therefore, in this place also, Paul is seeking to move our hearts with the love of God. He would cause us to have the motive of love, so that we might consecrate ourselves willingly to God as a living sacrifice.

In a normal consecration this motive of love is very necessary. If our consecration rests solely on the basis of consecration, the realization of God's right to us, this consecration will only be based on reason; it will lack sweetness and intensity. But if our consecration has love as its motive, if our feelings have been touched by the love of God, the constraint of this love will cause us to consecrate ourselves willingly to God. This consecration will then be sweet and intense. (The Experience of Life, pp 25-26, 28, 31- 32)

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Week5 Day 5

Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

Matt. 22:37-38

And He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the great and first commandment.

Mark 14.9

And truly I say to you, Wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what this woman has done shall also be told as a memorial of her.

It is Reasonable to Love the Lord Fervently and to Consecrate Our Entire Being

Since we are all believers, we ought to love God. No other religion speaks of loving God like ours. Loving God is unique to Christianity.

The Bible says that he who believes in the Son has life. Believing is adequate because it does not say to believe with all your heart.... However, loving God requires all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. This is the first commandment (Mathh. 22:37-38). No matter where it is placed, this commandment is always the first. This is also the greatest commandment. Wherever it may be, it is the greatest. Today we must praise God for commanding us to love Him.... God not only wants us to believe in Him, but also to love Him. (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set 1, Volume 18, pp 133-134)

Loving the Lord as Mary

"A woman came [Mary—John 12:3], having an alabaster flask of ointment, of very costly pure nard." Pure nard is precious enough, whereas a very costly, pure nard is unmatched in excellence. This very costly, pure nard was inside an alabaster flask. The alabaster flask was also very precious. Not only was Mary offering to the Lord a costly ointment, but the flask that contained the ointment was also very precious. We can offer to the Lord only what is most precious.

Pouring the ointment over His head

"And poured it over His head." When she did this, the house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment (John 12:3). Not only was the house filled with the fragrance then; even now as we read this passage, we can sense the fragrance!This love to the Lord and this consecration to Him indeed is a fragrance that has lasted until now and will last until eternity.

She has done a noble deed on the Lord

"She has done a noble deed on Me" (v. 6). The Lord was opposed to the disciples' concept, who thought that such an anointing and consecration to Him was a waste. The Lord said that it was a noble deed and not a waste. It is a noble deed to love Him too much, to obey Him too much, and to be spent on Him too much; it is not a waste. It is a noble deed to love Him to the extent that we forget about the criticism of those who are older in the Lord. It is a noble deed to love Him to the extent that we forget about the need of the poor outside. It is not a waste. It is a noble deed to love Him to the extent that we waste everything on Him. This is not a waste.... The result of the preaching of the gospel is not only to send sinners to heaven but to make every saved person a lover of Christ. (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set 1, Volume 19, pp 211-212, 215- 216)

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Week 5 Day 6

Bible Verses for Pray-Reading

Rom. 8:28 all things work together for good to those who love God,

1 Cor. 2:9-10Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit,

1 Pet. 1:8 Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory,

All Things Work Together for Good to Those Who Love God

Romans 8:28 says, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God." Many know this verse well. Only one kind of people enjoy the good: those who love God. If you do not love God, perhaps not even one thing is working for you. God does not alter things; He changes your

heart. If you love God, then all things, though unaltered, will work for your good. Sometimes you complain about everything that comes your way. You complain concerning this and concerning that. Yet if love is there, all these will mean nothing to you. Loving God will make an unsatisfactory environment a profitable one.

Things Which Eye Has Not Seen and Ear Has Not Heard and Which Have Not Come Up in Man's Heart; Things Which God Has Prepared for Those Who Love Him

First Corinthians 2:9-10 says, "But as it is written, 'Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and which have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' But to us God has revealed them through the Spirit." What God has prepared for those who believe is eternal life, yet the thing which God has prepared for those who love Him is in the future. Only those who love God can know of this coming blessing. If someone tells you about a marvelous thing he saw, it surely will not be comparable because the coming blessing has not yet been seen by eyes. If someone tells you about a wonderful thing he heard, it also must be a lesser thing than the coming blessing because no ears have heard it. If someone can indeed imagine the unsurpassable best, it still cannot compare to the coming blessing because it has not yet entered into the heart of man. Nevertheless, God has revealed to us by His Spirit this thing which no eyes have seen, no ears have heard, and what has not entered into man's heart. In other words, a lover of the Lord may enjoy what men have not seen, heard, nor dreamed of in this life. When God discloses His glory to you, you will exclaim, "Oh, what joy!" This heavenly glory is so much that you will find it hardly bearable. Grace Be With All Those Who Love Our Lord Jesus Christ in Incorruptibility

Ephesians 6:24 says, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility." To whom is grace given here? God gives it to those who love the Lord in incorruptibility. If others would ask you, "Do you believe in the Lord?", the whole world would marvel if you answer, "I am one who loves the Lord."

May We Be Passionate Lovers of the Lord Jesus

First Peter 1:8 says, "Whom having not seen, you love; into whom though not seeing Him at present, yet believing, you exult with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory." This verse says that we love Him because we believe in Him. What is born out of this love through believing? It is joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

Finally, brothers and sisters, "May you be a passionate lover of the Lord Jesus!" (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, Set 1, Volume 18, pp 138-139, 142)

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