

## #8 Carrying Out the Stewardship of God for the One New Man

(The One New Man Fulfilling God's Purpose in Creating Man) 2019/12/30-2020/1/5

**Overview:** Because God's economy is executed by the services of the stewards, there is the desperate need for the stewardship, which is becoming a rapid step in the fulfillment of God's economy (I, II). The stewardship is the stewardship of grace, which indicates that stewards are to supply grace to man. Because grace is the Divine Trinity transmitted into us for our enjoyment, the stewards enjoy the grace, are filled with grace, and dispense grace to others (III). The responsible and the serving ones of the local churches should bear the responsibility for the care of the local churches by partaking the stewardship (IV). The goal of God's economy and stewardship is to realize the universal one new man, the faithful stewards are conscious of the new man, Christ's grace is dispensed into all people with different backgrounds, making them a family of God, the one new man (V).

**I. In order to carry out His economy, God must have stewards to serve, minister, manage, and execute His economy:**

**1 Cor. 4:1-2** A man should account us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Here, furthermore, it is sought in stewards that one be found faithful.

**A.** The Greek word for steward is of the same root as the word for economy in 1 Timothy 1:4 and Ephesians 1:10:

**1 Tim. 1:4** Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith. **Eph. 1:10** 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;

**1.** It means "a dispensing steward," "a household administrator, who dispenses the household supply to its members." **2.** A steward is a dispenser, one who dispenses the divine life supply to God's children: **a.** The apostles were appointed by the Lord to be such stewards. **b.** The dispensing service, the stewardship, is the ministry of the apostles.

**B.** In God's economy revealed in the New Testament, there are mainly two mysteries:

**1.** The first mystery, revealed in the book of Colossians, is Christ as the mystery of God. **2.** The second mystery, revealed in the book of Ephesians and explained in it, is the church as the mystery of Christ.

**C.** In the dispensing ministry it is most important that stewards be found faithful. **Mon**

**II. In the New Testament economy of God, there is the desperate need for the stewardship of God:**

**A.** The stewardship is God's divine arrangement to carry out His New Testament economy.

**B.** The economy of God has become the stewardship of God given to all believers: **1.** In Ephesians 3 Paul uses the Greek word *oikonomia* with two denotations: **a.** In relation to God, *oikonomia* denotes God's economy. **b.** In relation to us, *oikonomia* denotes the stewardship. **c.** The stewardship of God is according to the economy of God; with God it is a matter of economy, and with us it is a matter of stewardship. **2.** The stewardship of grace is the dispensing of the riches of Christ into our being so that we may grow and become the church. **Eph. 3:8** To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the Gospel.

**C.** The central point of the whole Bible is the desire of God's heart to dispense Himself into man:

**1.** God's economy is to carry out the dispensing of Himself into man.

**2.** The one new man, who can fulfill God's eternal purpose, receives God's continual and eternal dispensing: **Eph. 2:15** Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, so making peace,

**a.** Like a steady stream, God dispenses Himself little by little into those who are parts of the new man. **b.** God's continual, steady, and eternal dispensing constitutes us, coordinates us, and builds us up together. **Tue**

**D.** Paul's stewardship was to complete the word of God in order to dispense Christ with all His riches into the churches:

**Col. 1:25-27** Of which I became a minister according to the stewardship of God, which was given to me for you, to complete the word of God, The mystery which has been hidden from the ages and from the generations but now has been manifested to His saints; To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

**1.** Although Paul was used in the completion of the divine revelation centuries ago, there is still the need for its completion in a practical way today:

**a.** Satan, the enemy of God, is seeking to nullify the completion of the word of God. **b.** It is the subtlety of the enemy to veil the word, which was completed through Paul.

**c.** Without the completion of the word of God, God's purpose cannot be fulfilled, and Christ cannot obtain His bride or come with His kingdom.

**2.** What we are ministering today is the completion of the divine revelation given to Paul.

**3.** In the Lord's recovery we need more stewards who are able to complete the word of God. **Wed**

**III. The stewardship of God is the stewardship of Grace: Eph.**

**3:2** If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you, **8-9** To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the Gospel. 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, **(Thu)**

**A.** The stewardship of grace is the economy of grace to carry out God's New Testament economy.

**B.** Grace is God Himself in Christ as the Spirit given to us, gained by us, and enjoyed by us: **1.** The grace given to us in Christ was bestowed on us before the world began. **2 Tim.**

**1:9** Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages.

**2.** God, who was in the beginning, became flesh in time as grace for man to receive, possess, and enjoy, making God contactable, touchable, receivable, experienceable, enterable, and enjoyable. **3.** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the bountiful supply of the Triune God (who is embodied in the Son and realized as the life-giving Spirit) enjoyed by us through the exercise of our human spirit.

**4.** Grace is the Divine Trinity transmitted into us for our enjoyment, the manifestation of the Triune God in His embodiment in three aspects—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit: **a.** The grace of the Lord is the Lord Himself as life to us for our enjoyment, the love of God is God Himself as the source of the grace of the Lord, and the fellowship of the Spirit is the Spirit Himself as the transmission of the grace of the Lord with the love of God for our participation. **1 Cor. 15:10** But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary,

I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

**B.** In 2 Corinthians 13:14 the grace of the Lord is mentioned first because this book is on the grace of Christ. **2 Cor. 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**C.** The Holy Spirit as the circulation, the transmission, of the grace of Christ with the love of the Father is the supply in our Christian life and church life.

**D.** Day by day a marvelous divine transmission should be taking place: God is supplying the Spirit of grace bountifully, and we should be receiving and dispensing the Spirit of grace continually.

**E.** The gospel of the grace of God is the stewardship of grace to dispense God into people for their enjoyment; Paul, in his ministry, solemnly testified of the gospel of the grace of God to minister God into people.

**F.** The Christian living is the living of grace, the experience of grace, so that we may carry out our stewardship of grace, the dispensing of grace.

**G.** The practical life and building up of the Body of Christ comes forth out of the inward enjoyment of Christ as the grace of God.

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**IV. Those who bear responsibility in the churches need to share in the stewardship of God:**

**A.** The elders should take the lead to dispense the riches of Christ into others. **2 Cor. 13:14** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**B.** All those who take the lead in the Lord's recovery and bear the responsibility for the care of the churches need to realize that they have a part in such a divine stewardship.

**V. 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:**

**Eph. 1:10** 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;

**A.** "If we are conscious of the one new man, we should no longer think that the churches in our country have nothing to do with the churches in other nations. Instead, we shall realize that all the churches are the one new man today. May we look to the Lord that we may not be sectarian in any way. We would not be sectarian either individually as believers or corporately as local churches. On the contrary, all of us, all the saints in all the churches, are just one new man".

**B.** "We also should rejoice that on earth today there is another man, the new man, that includes all the believers. This new man, who is born through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is now spreading and growing throughout the earth. Praise the Lord that we are part of this new man!".

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**Crucial Point(1): Continue to be in the steady stream to become a faithful steward(OL I , II )**

**OL1:** In order to carry out His economy, God must have stewards to serve, minister, manage, and execute His economy. **OL2:** In the dispensing ministry it is most important that stewards be found faithful.

**OL3:** Like a steady stream, God dispenses Himself little by little into those who are parts of the new man.

**OL4:** God's continual, steady, and eternal dispensing constitutes us, coordinates us, and builds us up together.

Whenever the angels see a sinner saved, they sing. When they see the church, they will surely sing all the

more. Then Paul shows that in Christ's death and resurrection He used His divine element as the material to produce a universal new man. Finally, this masterpiece, this new man that can accomplish God's eternal economy, is brought to God in one Spirit, having drawn near to God, without any barrier whatsoever, and remains in the presence of God to receive God's continual and eternal dispensing. Like a steady stream, God dispenses Himself little by little into those who have a part in this new man. It is this continual, steady, eternal dispensing that coordinates them together, constitutes them together, and builds them up together. This built-up church is God's kingdom on earth for the executing of His administration. It is also the household for the dispensing of His love, and as such, it becomes His eternal habitation in our spirit.

Paul refers to himself as a steward in God's family. God is exceedingly rich; He has a vast storehouse of goods which He intends to dispense into His children. But this dispensation requires a steward. Thus, a steward is a dispenser, one who dispenses the divine life supply to God's children.

The desire of God's heart is to dispense Himself into man. This is the central point of the whole Bible. God's economy is to carry out the dispensing of Himself into man. We share in this economy through our stewardship, our ministry of dispensing the riches of Christ. After the riches of Christ have been dispensed into us, we need to take up the burden to dispense them into others. With God these riches are His economy; with us they are the stewardship.

**Application to young people and college students**

In order to stay in the presence of the Lord and the steady stream of the Spirit, all young saints should (1) stay in the church life with your spiritual partners, (2) pray for gospel preaching and shepherding and practice to preach gospel and to shepherd others every week.

(1) The presence of the Lord and the steady stream of the Spirit are in the church life with your spiritual partners and the leading brothers and sisters. You should not try to find a person in your church life whom you can get along well with in your natural character. Instead, join with the advancing and spiritually burning brothers and sisters who can lead you, supply you and perfect you. Open yourself to them, and respect and accept their leadings. Because your concept and values are different from God's concept and values, the brothers and sisters serving you as well do not serve according to your concept and values. Open your heart and pray for their leadings. For example, when you think that comparing with reading the Bible or attending the meetings, it is more fun for you to go out to shopping with your friends or to play the network games at home, the serving brothers and sisters will encourage you to redeem your time to read the Bible. They are fellowshiping you considering what is your good. **Eph. 5:16** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. From youth, redeem the time to love the Lord, enjoy the Lord, and learn to supply Christ to others.

At the same time, in order to step forward in your church

life, you need to have your partner of your same age. It is difficult to burn a charcoal while a charcoal is alone, but it can keep burning if it is overlapping each other.

**2 Tim. 2:21** If therefore anyone cleanses himself from these, he will be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, useful to the master, prepared unto every good work. **22** But flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

**(2)** Pray for gospel preaching and shepherding people. You may be weak, but gospel friends, recently saved new believers, and brothers/sisters who have not be able to come to our meeting are weaker than you. Pray for them and practice preaching gospel and shepherding people with your partners every week.

**Prayer:** "O Lord Jesus. I was given the stewardship of God. I praise you, Lord. To practice this stewardship to dispense the riches of Christ to people, I join to the brothers and sisters who lead me, and I live the church life with my partners of same age. If I do so, I can continue to be in the intimate presence of the Lord and the steady stream of the Spirit. May I be able to enjoy under the divine dispensing and flow it out to the other people."

**Crucial Point(2):** When reading the Bible, turn your heart to the Lord, exercise the spirit and train to have Bird's Eyes View and Crucial Points (OL II -D, III)

**OL1:** It is the subtlety of the enemy to veil the word, which was completed through Paul.

**OL2:** Without the completion of the word of God, God's purpose cannot be fulfilled, and Christ cannot obtain His bride or come with His kingdom.

**OL3:** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ is the bountiful supply of the Triune God (who is embodied in the Son and realized as the life-giving Spirit) enjoyed by us through the exercise of our human spirit.

In the New Testament the apostles, especially the apostle 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 Head and the Body. 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....The mystery concerning Christ and the church was hidden from eternity and from all the times until the New Testament age, when it is being manifested to the saints, including all of us, the believers in Christ.

In the Lord's recovery we need more stewards who are able to complete the word of God. We all must bear the burden for this. We need to spend more time in the Lord's presence so that He may become our portion for our enjoyment and so that we may have the riches of Christ to minister to others.

The Body is built up as all the members carry out the stewardship of ministering the riches of Christ. May there be such a mutual stewardship among us. You minister the riches of Christ to others, and they minister Christ to you.

...Through his subtlety, Satan, the enemy of God, is seeking to nullify the completion of the word of God. The enemy may allow Christians to preach what is revealed in

the Old Testament, in the Gospels, and in the Acts. But he cannot tolerate the teaching concerning Christ as the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit or concerning the church as the mystery of Christ. Anyone who ministers along this line will be attacked by the enemy.

This stewardship of the grace is for God's dispensation. We have seen that the desire of God's heart is to dispense His riches, which actually are Himself, into His chosen people.

**Application to young working saints and graduate students**

Paul's ministry was to complete the word of God, but because of Satan's strategy today, the Paul's completing ministry is covered. When you read the Bible, you should not read according to your religious concept or values. When you read the Bible, you should open your heart to the Lord and exercise your spirit to read it in the atmosphere filled with prayer. **2 Cor. 3:15** Indeed unto this day, whenever Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart; **16** But whenever their heart turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. **17** And the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Then Bible reveals God's economy and is a book about Christ and the church, the Body of Christ, produced as a result of dispensing of Christ. In the Bible there are many things written but its central point is Christ and the church, the Body of Christ. If you catch this central point and read the Bible, then the entire Bible will be open to you.

When you read the Bible, the important points are; **(1)** to have the Bird's Eye View, and **(2)** to find out the Crucial Points. This can be the same in the graduate research activity and business area. Therefore, removing your veil of concept and pursuing the truth of the Bible according to the lines of God's economy also can give you light and wisdom in your work in business life that make you an excellent business person.

In the world of global business, executives of western companies point out, "Japanese executives' making business decisions too slowly or making no decision are becoming their serious loss to their business." This is caused by Japanese cultural characteristics in which Japanese people tend to pay close attentions to details and so lose sight of essential points. Such characteristic works good for precise quality control of products, but does not work for timely business decision making. As a Christian in the Lord's recovery, please train yourself to learn the brother Lee's how to study the Bible, that is, to study taking Bird's Eye View and Crucial Points. This helps you greatly in your business or research.

**Prayer:** "O Lord Jesus, when I read the Bible, I open my heart to the Lord and exercise my spirit, so that I may catch the truth without being distracted from the central points, Christ and the church. Remove my religious concept and values. Thank you, Lord, for the learning of reading the Bible by removing preconceptions but having the bird's eye view and catching the crucial point, is surely useful to my business or research. Amen!"

**Crucial Point(3):** Grow into Christ, go out of the culture and carry out the stewardship for the one new man (OLIV, V)

**OL1:** All those who take the lead in the Lord's recovery and bear the responsibility for the care of the churches need

to realize that they have a part in such a divine stewardship.

**OL2:** "If we are conscious of the one new man, we should no longer think that the churches in our country have nothing to do with the churches in other nations. Instead, we shall realize that all the churches are the one new man today. May we look to the Lord that we may not be sectarian in any way. We would not be sectarian either individually as believers or corporately as local churches. On the contrary, all of us, all the saints in all the churches, are just one new man"

All those who take the lead in the Lord's recovery and have responsibility for the care of the churches need to realize that they have a part in such a divine stewardship. We are not here to carry on an ordinary Christian work. For instance, we are not concerned merely with teaching the Bible in an outward way. Rather, we desire to serve the riches of Christ to all the members of God's family. In our conversation with one another, we need to minister the riches of Christ. Even when we are invited to the homes of the saints for dinner, we need to dispense the riches of Christ. This is the stewardship of God.

We have many opportunities to minister the riches of Christ to the saints. Suppose we are helping a family to move. We should not simply move the furniture, but we should supply the riches of Christ to the members of the family. All our activity with respect to such a service should be with Christ.

Another opportunity to minister the riches of Christ to others is in giving or receiving hospitality. Both the hosts and the guests should minister the riches of Christ.

#### Application to the serving ones

You, as a serving one of the New Testament, have a part in the service of God's stewardship. The idea of a fallen man is that he is a minister, so he wants to be a little bossy. However, the stewards are the ones who execute the authority over people to serve them, not the ones being bossy. The steward, employed by the owner of the big family, is the person who dispenses the household supply to its members to serve, minister and manage them. Please read the following excerpt from "Lessons for the Elders and Responsible Ones, Volume 1 pp.258-259".

"Seeing the difference between management and domination can help. To rule a person is to decide on their behalf and tell them what to do or not to do. It is to put a person under your command. In the Lord's recovery, we must hate this kind of domination... However, management is necessary... There must be some management in the meeting. For example, suppose someone worships an idol and insists on the freedom to do so. This must be excluded."

The stewardship dispenses the riches of Christ to God's chosen ones. It is to bring forth the one new man. Since the local churches are part of the one new man, they should be conscious of the new man.

**A Brother's testimony:** In the afternoon of December 22<sup>nd</sup>, not only Japanese and Chinese friends, but also friends from Africa, Botswana and India join the meeting

of "Gospel Concert, Testimony of new ones, Message of the One New Man". When I was speaking the message, I felt especially oiled when speaking the following words in English. "Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all. (Col. 3:11)" "For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord is Lord of all and rich to all who call upon Him; For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. 10:12-13)

We were divided and scattered by Satan, but the Lord gathers us together into one new man. We overcome the language and cultural barriers, enjoy the Lord together and be built together. The church in Kobe is not only for Japanese people. The church does not distinguish between Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Indians, Africans and Americans, and executes the one new man. As I was talking about these things, I found the brothers from Botswana, brothers and friends from India very happy. We need to go out of Japanese culture so that they can come to the meeting, enjoy together, and be drawn to Christ. When we carry out the Japanese church life, we end up rejecting them.

**Prayer:** "Oh Lord Jesus, we have a part in the stewardship of grace and we need to supply the riches of Christ to all members of God's family whatever we do. There is no distinction of nationality or race in the church. Let me get out of the Japanese culture, be conscious of the one new man, and have a church life of the one new man."

#### **The Mystery of Human Life(2)** **Our attitude ⑦: "Behold"**

- A.** "Looking away unto Jesus, the Author and Perfector of our faith," by turning away from every other object. (Heb. 12:2 FN1)
- B.** "They looked to Him and were radiant; And their faces will never be abashed." (Psa. 34:5)
- C.** "Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I will yet praise Him, The salvation of my countenance and my God." (Psa. 42:11)
- D.** "You are my hiding place and my shield; In Your word do I hope." (Psa. 119:114)
- E.** "Cause me to hear Your lovingkindness in the morning, For in You I trust. Make known to me the way on which I should walk, For to You I lift up my soul." (Psa. 143:8)
- F.** "Blessed is the man whose help is the God of Jacob, Whose hope is in Jehovah his God," (Psa. 146:5)
- G.** "and if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived." —Bronze signifies judgement. The bronze serpent is a type of the Lord Jesus, who was crucified in the likeness of the flesh of sin as our Substitute and Replacement that we might "look at" (believe into) Him and have eternal life. (Num. 21:9b FN1)