

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE NEW COVENANT IN GOD'S ECONOMY

Message One

God's Economy and God's Covenant

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4; 2 Chron. 6:14; Psa. 25:14; Gal. 3:17

I. The central subject of the Bible is God's economy:

- A. God's 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--Eph. 1:9-10; 3:9-11; 1:22-23.
- B. In order to carry out His economy:
 - 1. God first created man in His image and after His likeness as a vessel to contain Him (Gen. 1:26-27; Rom. 9:23-24).
 - 2. God became a man to partake of the human nature (John 1:14; Heb. 2:14a);
 - 3. He lived a perfect sinless human life (John 6:57a; Heb. 4:15);
 - 4. He died an all-inclusive death (Heb. 2:15b);
 - 5. He resurrected (1 Cor. 15:4) to become the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b);
 - 6. He dispensed Himself into man (John 1:12-13) for the producing of many sons of God (Gal. 3:26);
 - 7. He formed and is building up the organic Body of Christ (Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:16);
 - 8. The Body of Christ consummates in the New Jerusalem as His eternal enlargement and expression (Rev. 21:9b-21:11).

II. The carrying out of God's economy is a story of God's covenant with man:

- A. God's covenant with man reveals God's intention for man, man's position and function in God's intention, what God wants to do in man, and all what God has done for man.
- B. The covenant is the highest expression of God's grace:
 - 1. Once God makes a covenant with man, He must be bound by the covenant and must perform according to the covenant (2 Chron. 6:14).
 - 2. The reason God makes a covenant with man is that man may become bold enough to demand what He has said in the covenant; God delights that man draw near to Him according to the covenant and demand Him to fulfill what He has promised in the covenant (Psa. 89:38-39, 49).
 - 3. We need to fear God and receive God's revelation that we may know God's covenant (Psa. 25:14; Eph. 1:17).
- C. After the fall of the created man Adam, God promised that the seed of woman would come to become man's salvation (Gen. 3:15). Afterward, according to this promise, He made a covenant with His called one, Abraham, saying that in Abraham's seed all the families of the earth would be blessed (12:3; 22:18); this covenant was the precursor of the new covenant, the covenant of grace.
- D. Because man knew neither the grace of God nor himself, God made the covenant of the law with the children of Israel (Exo. 24:4-8) to expose man and to reveal Himself to man; this covenant, referred to as the old covenant (Heb. 8:13), was not in God's plan but was added along the way (Rom. 5:20; Gal. 3:19).
- E. God's ultimate, highest, greatest, and best covenant with man is the new covenant enacted with the blood of the Lord Jesus (Luke 22:20); this covenant is the covenant of grace (Gal. 4:22-26) and the eternal covenant (Heb. 13:20), and its final result is the New Jerusalem as the ultimate issue of God's making covenants with man throughout the generations and as the consummation of God's economy.