

ECONOMY REVELATION TEACHING

The entire Bible is concerned with God's economy. In particular, the New Testament is a full and complete revelation of the economy of God. Viewed from another angle, the New Testament is a written account of the apostles' teaching. Since the New Testament is a revelation of God's economy and since the New Testament consists of the apostles' teaching, there is an intrinsic relationship between the economy of God and the teaching of the apostles. If we would know the economy of God revealed in the New Testament, we must follow the apostles' teaching, which is the content of the New Testament.

"They continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles" (Acts 2:42). "By revelation the mystery was made known to me" (Eph. 3:3). "God's economy, which is in faith" (1 Tim. 1:4). In these verses there are three crucial words—*teaching*, *revelation*, and *economy*. The teaching is the teaching of the apostles; the revelation is the revelation of God's economy; and God's economy is His administrative arrangement to carry out His eternal purpose according to the desire of His heart. These three—the teaching, the revelation, and the economy—are actually one, for God's economy is the New Testament revelation, which is the teaching of the apostles. The divine revelation has become the teaching of the apostles, and the teaching of the apostles is focused on, and is the definition of, God's economy. Therefore, as a whole, the New Testament is a record of the divine revelation, which is the apostles' teaching and God's economy. To continue in the teaching of the apostles is to follow the revelation of God concerning His eternal economy. What is central for our consideration is the intrinsic relationship between the teaching of the apostles and the economy of God.

The apostles' teaching is both the teaching of Christ's person and redemptive work and the teaching of God's economy in faith. As such, the apostles' teaching is the unveiling of God's eternal economy concerning Christ and the church. God's economy may be described as His plan and arrangement to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity into His chosen and redeemed people as their life, their life supply, and their everything so that, having been regenerated, they might be transformed into the proper material for the building up of the Body of Christ expressed in local

churches in this age and in the New Jerusalem in eternity. This is the divine revelation, the divine economy, and the teaching of the apostles.

The apostles' teaching is the entire speaking of God in the New Testament concerning God's New Testament economy, from the incarnation of God to the consummation of the New Jerusalem. This speaking is God's speaking in the Son to His New Testament people. Unlike God's speaking in the Old Testament age, which was in many portions and in many ways in the prophets, God's speaking in the New Testament age is in one person, the Son. First, God spoke in the Son as a man in the four Gospels; then God spoke in the Son as the Spirit through the apostles in the Acts and the twenty-one Epistles; and finally, God spoke in the Son as the seven Spirits through the apostle John in Revelation. God's speaking in the Son, therefore, has become the apostles' teaching as the content of the New Testament revelation.

In God's New Testament economy there is only one category of teaching revealed and recognized by God—the teaching of the apostles. The apostles' teaching is actually the church's constitution, and the church must hold it and be under it absolutely. Furthermore, this constitution should be universally taught everywhere in every church in the same way. In other words, in the church there should be only the unique teaching—the teaching of the apostles. For this reason, any teaching that was different from the apostles' teaching was not allowed by the apostles. In fact, all teachings that were different from the unique revelation of God's New Testament economy were considered by the apostles to be winds of teaching (Eph. 4:14).

Sadly, these contrary winds have been blowing throughout the centuries, causing enormous difficulties. All the problems, divisions, and confusion among Christians, historically and presently, are all due to the single factor of neglecting, or not caring for, the apostles' teaching. It is vital and crucial, therefore, that we see the oneness of the divine revelation, the divine economy, and the apostles' teaching and that we learn to be recovered to and then continue steadfastly in the teaching of the apostles for the fulfillment of God's economy. **AC**