

# The HEARING OF Faith

LIVING STREAM MINISTRY RADIO NEWSLETTER

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"He therefore who bountifully supplies to you the Spirit . . . does He do it out of the works of the law or out of the hearing of faith?" Galatians 3:5

*Dear Listeners,*

Isn't Christ's salvation wonderful? Christ has accomplished redemption and is now living in us to carry out God's plan of full salvation. We hope you are enjoying the programs on God's full salvation in the *Life-study of Acts*. The recent programs from Acts 2:21 about calling on the name of the Lord as the fulfillment of Joel's prophesy in the Old Testament have brought many of our listeners into a more practical relationship with Christ in their daily experience. Our prayer is that you are one of those listeners.

Because calling upon the name of the Lord is so crucial to our personal experience of Christ, we are covering it again this month in our "Path of Life" article. Have you taken the time to try this simple life practice? If you have, we trust that calling on His name has strengthened your faith and deepened your love for Him. If not, will you take a moment to open your mouth to vocally call upon the name of the Lord? Many of us only prayed silently to the Lord before (which is also important since we are charged to pray unceasingly), but when we discovered calling upon the name of the Lord from the Bible, our experience entered into another realm; we found a practical handle to enjoy Christ.

In *Life-study of Acts* we have seen the resurrected Christ propagating Himself in His ascension through His disciples to produce the churches, the kingdom of God. In contrast to Christ, the great French conqueror Napoleon defeated many nations to form his empire. But at the end of his life, he acknowledged that while he had founded his empire by force, Jesus had founded His empire upon love. Napoleon was able to persuade his soldiers to die for his cause when he was alive, but when he died, his cause died with him. However, two thousand years after Christ's death, men and women all over the world are still willing to live and die for Him. May we all be His disciples today through whom He is still conquering and spreading His kingdom upon the earth.

*Living Stream Ministry Radio*

## WHAT IS GOD'S ECONOMY?

*"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." Eph. 3:9*

Because God has a purpose, He needs an economy. The Greek word for economy is *oikonomia*. This Greek word is composed of two words—*oikos* meaning house or household and *nomos* meaning law. Economy is a "house law," a household administration. This household administration is for the carrying out of God's purpose, God's plan. God's economy is God's planned administration to carry out His eternal purpose. . . .

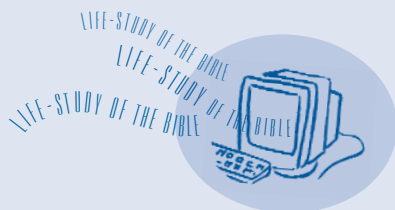
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## GOD'S ECONOMY

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If you trace the root of the word economy, it goes back to a word that refers to the parceling out of food, the distributing of food as in parcels. Joseph is a good illustration of this. His job was to distribute all the food supply of Pharaoh to feed all the hungry people. This root word also means to distribute food to the cattle for grazing. To distribute is to dispense. In God's economy, He dispenses Himself into His people as life, as life supply, and as everything to them. God wants to dispense Himself as food to us.

The Holy Bible tells us that God is rich as food to us. The Lord Jesus declared that He was the bread of life (John 6:48), and Paul said that he was charged to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph. 3:8). Christ is life, and His riches are unsearchable. All these riches of life are to be dispensed into His believers. Paul was commissioned to be a dispenser of these riches, a steward. He was to be a steward in the same way that Joseph was a great steward to distribute the rich life supply of Pharaoh's household. . . . By this we can see what the proper denotation of the word *oikonomia* is—God's household administration to dispense the divine riches of the Triune God as life and life supply into His chosen and redeemed people. . . .

*The Divine Economy*, pp. 7-10, by Witness Lee

The Divine Trinity is for God's dispensing. The matter of dispensing is revealed in Ephesians 3:2 and Colossians 1:25-27. In these verses the word stewardship has the sense of dispensing. God's stewardship is the dispensing of the processed Triune God in Christ into His chosen, redeemed, and regenerated people that He may be their life and everything, to produce the unique Body of Christ in the universe to be His corporate expression. This Body is the church in this age and the New Jerusalem in eternity.

This is what God is after. God saves us for this. He regenerates us, transforms us, makes us spiritual, and causes us to be seeking, all for this. We are not saved, regenerated, transformed, spiritual, or seeking, for ourselves. Rather, we become such in order that we may be delivered from the natural life and the self so that we can be built up with all the saints into God's habitation. This is God's economy and dispensing.

*The Economy and Dispensing of God*, pp. 8, 20

For further reading on this subject please see *The Economy of God*, *God's New Testament Economy*, *The Divine Economy*, and *The Economy and Dispensing of God* published by *Living Stream Ministry*.

## THE STONE-SAVIOR

*As we have studied the book of Acts, a particular matter concerning Christ has emerged which, though not widely known, is a central point not only in the New Testament, but in the entire Bible. Below is an excerpt concerning Christ as our Stone-Savior from Life-study of Acts.*

In chapter three of Acts Peter presents Christ, the Healer, as God's Servant, the Holy One, the Righteous One, the Author of life, the Prophet, and the seed in whom all families of the earth will be blessed. . . . But in chapter four Peter was given the opportunity to present this Healer in a further way, presenting Him as a stone for God's building. Concerning this, 4:11 and 12 say, "This is the stone which was despised by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is no salvation in any other; for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved." . . .

God came in incarnation to be a stone for the building up of His universal habitation, but the Jewish leaders, who should have been the builders, despised this stone. . . . The Jewish leaders rejected Him by killing Him. But God honored Him by raising Him up from among the dead and making Him a particular stone, the cornerstone, the very prominent stone that joins the walls of a building. Christ is the cornerstone of God's habitation.

I do not believe that throughout the centuries many have taught from the Word that Jesus Christ is a stone for God's building. He is not only the Servant, the Holy One, the Righteous One, the Author of life, the Prophet, and the seed; He is a stone for God's building. According to 4:12, this stone is the One in whom we can be saved. Hence, He is the Stone-Savior. As the Stone-Savior, He is solid, strong, and reliable. We can rely on Him and stand on Him. This stone is the rock, the foundation stone, and the cornerstone. In Zechariah 4:7 we see that He is even the topstone. Christ is the material for God's building. God's building is entirely of Christ.

Christ is not only the stone for God's building; He is also the stumbling stone and the smiting stone. . . . To the believers, Christ is the foundation stone in whom we trust (Isa. 28:16). But to the unbelieving Jews, He is the stumbling stone (Isa. 8:14-15; Rom. 9:32-33), and to the nations He will be the smiting stone. According to Daniel 2:34 and 35, Christ as the stone will smite the nations at His coming back.

For us as believers Christ. . . has become the building stone. First, we became His propagation, and now He is building us up together into God's dwelling place. He is both the Builder and the material for God's building. He is the Stone-Savior. In God's economy He is building His eternal habitation. . . .

In the Bible there is a line concerning stone from Genesis 2 through Revelation 22. In Genesis 2 we have the onyx stone at the beginning, and then in Revelation 21 and 22 we have the jasper city as the consummation. . . . How much truth, therefore, is indicated and implied by Peter's referring to Christ as the stone rejected by the builders but made by God the cornerstone in resurrection!

*Life-study of Acts*, Message 16, pp. 127-31, 134

See insert for information on *Life-study of Acts*