
Church in Campbell Weekly News

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GOD'S ECONOMY— TO WORK CHRIST INTO US

We have seen that God's economy is Christ with the church and that the word economy denotes a dispensation. God's intention is to dispense Himself into His chosen people. To be saved is not merely to have our sins forgiven, to be justified, and to be made ready for heaven. To be saved is for God to begin dispensing Himself into us.

WHAT GOD IS SEEKING TODAY

God's dispensation is altogether related to Christ. According to the natural concept, we think that after salvation we need to improve our behavior, seek power, or carry on a fruitful work for the Lord. Some Christians believe that they need to pursue such gifts as speaking in tongues, prophecy, and healing. Others feel that the most important thing for a saved one is to gain the proper knowledge of the Bible. However, if we view salvation from the perspective of God's economy, we shall see the Christian life in a different way.

The New Testament does speak of proper conduct, power, gifts, and knowledge. Nevertheless, the crucial point is how much of Christ has been wrought into us. God is seeking to work Christ into us. We all need to be enlightened to see what God is doing today. God's intention is not to improve us. Whatever we are in ourselves means nothing to God. What matters to Him is that Christ is wrought into us.

In 1:19 and 20 Paul speaks of the "surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe." This power was wrought in Christ when God raised Him from among the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenlies. Today God's main activity is to work this Christ into us.

GOD'S CONCERN

Throughout the centuries, Christians have argued about doctrines and practices. For example, there has been much disputation about baptism, head covering, foot-washing, and about loudness or quietness in Christian meetings. In Galatians 6:15 Paul says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation" (Gk.). Forms and regulations do not avail anything, because they are not Christ. Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is the new creation that is in Christ

Jesus. The new creation that Paul refers to is Christ wrought into our being. When Christ is wrought into us, a new creation takes place within us. Furthermore, this new creation is not merely an individual matter; it is a corporate matter involving the corporate entity of the new man, the Body of Christ.

God's concern is not foot-washing, the length of our hair, or how many times we have been baptized. God cares about how much of Christ has been wrought into us. God is not concerned whether or not we are humble or proud, crude or gentle. He cares only that Christ is wrought into our being. Again and again I wish to proclaim that God cares only for Christ. Morality, ethics, forms, and regulations cannot produce a church that matches Christ. Only Christ Himself wrought into us can produce a church to match Himself.

The church is the Body of Christ. Only what comes out of Christ can be part of the Body of Christ. This means that mere gifts, teachings, and power cannot produce the Body. Nothing other than Christ wrought into the saints can produce the Body of Christ. Our eyes need to be enlightened to see this vision. In Ephesians 1 Paul prayed in a specific way, asking that our inner eyes be enlightened so that we may see that God's intention is to work Christ into us. God does not desire to adjust us or to improve us. His intention is to work Christ into us.

In a very real sense, we need to repent more of our goodness than of our evil. When you are good to your wife in a natural way, you need to repent and say, "Lord, forgive me. This is not Christ. In myself I may be good, but I am not living by Christ. Lord, I am good in a natural way, but I do not give You the opportunity to live out of me." We all are full of regret when we do things that are bad, but we may not realize that we need to be even more repentant when we do good things apart from Christ.

GOD'S WORKMANSHIP

In 2:10 Paul says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God before prepared that we should walk in them." We should not think that we are able to work for God or to do God's work. We are God's workmanship. This indicates that God does not expect us to work for Him. On the contrary, He is seeking the opportunity to work upon us. If we consider our situation, we shall realize how much work remains to be done on us. God does not need us to work for Him. Rather,

He will work on us until we become His masterpiece. We, the church, are the masterpiece of God's work, expressing God's infinite wisdom and divine design. The reason we are God's masterpiece is that Christ is being wrought into us. We can boast to God's creation that we have Christ in us. The more Christ is wrought into us, the more we become part of God's workmanship, God's masterpiece.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURAL GOODNESS AND CHRIST

In 1934 I met a certain brother in Shanghai. Before I met him, I heard many good things about him. At that time, I was not able to discern between Christ and good behavior. Eventually, through the help of Brother Nee, I realized that although this particular brother was good, not much of Christ was lived out of him. We all need to learn the difference between natural goodness and Christ. A person may be good in certain aspects, but these good things may have nothing to do with Christ. Our desire should not be to become a good brother or sister; we should desire to become a "Christ" brother or a "Christ" sister. If we would be God's masterpiece, Christ must be wrought into us. This should be not only a revelation, but also a revolution that takes place within our being. Oh, may we all see clearly that God does not desire us to be good Christians, but to be "Christ" Christians, those who have Christ wrought into them and lived out of them.

THE UNSEARCHABLE RICHES OF CHRIST

In 3:8 Paul says that he preached the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel. What Paul preached was not doctrine, gifts, knowledge, or power. He preached the riches of Christ. This means that Paul ministered these riches to others. The unsearchable riches of Christ include all the aspects of what Christ is to us. In a gradual way, Christ's riches need to be wrought into us. For example, we are not the ones who should be patient, kind, gentle, or loving. Rather, Christ must be wrought into us to be our patience, kindness, gentleness, and love. This means that we need to participate in the riches of Christ and to have these riches daily, even hourly, wrought into us in a specific way. In our daily experience we should be able to itemize Christ's riches. Christ must become our patience, our love, our everything.

CHRIST MAKING HIS HOME IN OUR HEARTS

Christ must be wrought into our being to such an extent that He makes His home in our hearts (3:17). I am concerned that for many of us the matter of Christ making His home in our hearts is simply a doctrine. Is Christ actually making His home in your heart? Who is presently at home in your heart—you or Christ? If you are honest, you will have to say that, for the most part, your heart is

your home, not Christ's home. You are the one living there, not Christ. We may hear a message about Christ making His home in us and shout that our heart is Christ's home. But there may be no reality to support what we proclaim. In order for Christ to make His home in our heart, we need to take Him both as our person and as our life. In such a case, we shall be able to testify that the person living in our heart is no longer the self, but Christ.

The crucial issue is not whether we are humble or proud, weak or powerful, gifted or not gifted. The question concerns who is living in our heart. Who is the person taking up residence in your heart? You may be unusually gifted, but your heart may not yet be Christ's home. Rather, it may be the home of the self, as long as you are still the person living in your heart.

Today's Christianity is a religion of behavior, doctrine, work, power, gifts, and knowledge. However, it is virtually devoid of the reality of Christ. Most Christians are veiled by natural and religious concepts. This is the reason that we need a heavenly vision to know what is in God's heart and to see what He planned in eternity.

God desires to have a people who care only for Christ. He wants a people who are not occupied with knowledge, work, behavior, or power, but who simply care for Christ in a very practical way. The experience of the riches of Christ and the reality of Christ making His home in our hearts should not be mere doctrines. They must be the reality of our daily Christian experience.

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Burdens for Church Prayers

- Pray for the young people to sanctify their time in the summer to pursue the Lord with their companions.
- Pray for Spanish speaking work
- Pray for spreading to nearby cities
- For daily exercise in GOW training: prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth and attend Lord's day meeting on time.
- For gospel preaching on West Valley College campus, as well as for English-speaking testimony in Campbell.

Announcement

- Morning Revival: The Central Line of the Bible week 4
- YP in summer pursue program: Luke chapter. 9-10.
- Prayer meeting 7:30PM on Tuesday (7/26) at brother Liu's house
- Chinese-Speaking Student Perfecting training:
July 29 ~ Aug 5 (Fri-Fri) in Franklin Park, NJ
Aug 4 ~ 7 (Thu-Sun) in Santa Clara, CA
Registration <http://www.mswe1.com>
- The celebration meeting of SST will be held Friday night (7/29) at Church in SF meeting hall (1201 19th Ave San Francisco, CA 94122) at 6 pm with dinner. Parents and young people are welcome to attend.