

**Outline of the Messages
for the International Memorial Day Blending Conference
May 22-25, 2026**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:
THE GREAT NEED FOR A NEW REVIVAL**

Message One

Cooperating with the Lord to Bring In a New Revival That Will End This Age

Scripture Reading: Hab. 3:2; Acts 26:19, 22; Matt. 14:19, 22-23; Phil. 1:19-22, 25; John 21:15-17

Hab. 3:2—O Jehovah, I have heard the report concerning You *and* am afraid. O Jehovah, revive Your work In the midst of the years; In the midst of the years make *it* known; In wrath remember compassion.

Acts 26:19—Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Acts 26:22—Having therefore obtained the help which is from God, I have stood unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing apart from the things which both the prophets and Moses have said would take place,

Matt. 14:19—And after commanding the crowds to recline on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves and gave *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds.

Matt. 14:22-23—And immediately He compelled the disciples to step into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. ²³And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

Phil. 1:19-22—For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²But if *I am* to live in the flesh, if this to me is fruit for *my* work, then I do not know what I will choose.

Phil. 1:25—And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

I. Among God's elect there has always been an aspiration to be revived—Hab. 3:2; Hosea 6:2; Rom. 8:20-22; Psa. 119:25, 50, 107, 154; John 6:57, 63; 2 Cor. 3:3, 6.

Hab. 3:2—O Jehovah, I have heard the report concerning You *and* am afraid. O Jehovah, revive Your work In the midst of the years; In the midst of the years make *it* known; In wrath remember compassion.

Hosea 6:2—He will enliven us after two days; On the third day He will raise us up, And we will live in His presence.

Rom. 8:20-22—For the creation was made subject to vanity, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, ²¹In hope that the creation itself will also be freed from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans together and travails in pain together until now.

Psa. 119:25—My soul clings to the dust; Enliven me according to Your word.

Psa. 119:50—This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has enlivened me.

Psa. 119:107—I have been greatly afflicted; O Jehovah, enliven me according to Your word.

Psa. 119:154—Plead my case, and redeem me; Enliven me according to Your word.

John 6:57—As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

2 Cor. 3:3—Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

II. We can enter into a new revival by arriving at the highest peak of the divine revelation given to us by God—the revelation of the eternal economy of God (1 Tim. 1:3-4; 1 Cor. 9:17; Acts 26:19, 22); this is the great answer to the great question concerning God’s purpose in His creation of man and in His dealing with His chosen people (Gen. 1:26; Job 10:13; cf. Eph. 3:9):

1 Tim. 1:3-4—Even as I exhorted you, when I was going into Macedonia, to remain in Ephesus in order that you might charge certain ones not to teach different things ⁴Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God’s economy, which is in faith.

1 Cor. 9:17—If I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a stewardship.

Acts 26:19—Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Acts 26:22—Having therefore obtained the help which is from God, I have stood unto this day, testifying both to small and great, saying nothing apart from the things which both the prophets and Moses have said would take place,

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Job 10:13—But You have hidden these things in Your heart; I know that this is with You:

cf. Eph. 3:9—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,

A. The mystery hidden in God's heart is God's eternal economy (1:10; 3:9; 1 Tim. 1:4), which is God's eternal intention with His heart's desire to dispense Himself in His Divine Trinity as the Father in the Son by the Spirit into His chosen people to be their life and nature that they may be the same as He is as His duplication (Rom. 8:29; 1 John 3:2) to become an organism, the Body of Christ as the new man (Eph. 2:15-16), for God's fullness, God's expression (1:22-23; 3:19), which will consummate in the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2—22:5).

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;

Eph. 3:9—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,

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.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

1 John 3:2—Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

Eph. 2:15-16—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,* ¹⁶And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

Eph. 1:22-23—And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, ²³Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:19—And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Rev. 21:2—22:5—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them [and be] their God. ⁴And He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death will be no more, nor will there be sorrow or crying or pain anymore; for the former things have passed away. ⁵And He who sits on the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And He said, Write, for these words are faithful and true. ⁶And He said to me, They have come to pass. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely. ⁷He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be God to him, and he will be a son to Me. ⁸But the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and fornicators and sorcerers and idolaters and all the false, their part will be in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death. ⁹And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. ¹⁰And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain

and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal. ¹²It had a great and high wall and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names inscribed, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel: ¹³On the east three gates, and on the north three gates, and on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. ¹⁵And he who spoke with me had a golden reed as a measure that he might measure the city and its gates and its wall. ¹⁶And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to [a length of] twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. ¹⁷And he measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits, [according to] the measure of a man, that is, of an angel. ¹⁸And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass. ²²And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. ²³And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon that they should shine in it, for the glory of God illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴And the nations will walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory into it. ²⁵And its gates shall by no means be shut by day, for there will be no night there. ²⁶And they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it. ²⁷And anything common and he who makes an abomination and a lie shall by no means enter into it, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

¹And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street. ²And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³And there will no longer be a curse. And the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His slaves will serve Him; ⁴And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. ⁵And night will be no more; and they have no need of the light of a lamp and of the light of the sun, for the Lord God will shine upon them; and they will reign forever and ever.

- B. God becoming man that man might become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead for the producing and building up of the Body of Christ to consummate the New Jerusalem is the essence of the entire Bible, the “diamond” in the “box” of the Bible, the eternal economy of God—Gen. 1:26; John 12:24; Rom. 8:29:

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

John 12:24—Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

1. God became man through incarnation by participating in man's humanity; man becomes God in life and nature but not in the Godhead through transformation by participating in God's divinity—John 1:14; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:4; 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 2:5; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:10; Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:19; 1 John 3:2; John 1:12-13.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Col. 3:4—When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

2 Pet. 1:4—Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

Phil. 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Heb. 2:10—For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Eph. 1:5—Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Rom. 8:19—For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

1 John 3:2—Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

2. This divine-human romance is the subject of the entire Bible, the content of God's economy, and the secret of the entire universe—S. S. 1:1; 6:13; cf. Hab. 1:1; 2:4; Rom. 1:17:

S. S. 1:1—The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

S. S. 6:13—Return, return, O Shulammitte; Return, return, that we may gaze at you. Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, As upon the dance of two camps?

cf. Hab. 1:1—The burden which Habakkuk the prophet saw.

cf. Hab. 2:4—See, he who is puffed up, his soul is not upright within him, But the righteous one will live by his faith.

cf. Rom. 1:17—For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, “But the righteous shall have life and live by faith.”

- a. Christ is divine and human, and His transformed lover is human and divine; they are the same in life and nature, perfectly matching each other.
- b. The Triune God consummated to be the Husband and the tripartite man transformed to be the bride are to be one couple, a corporate, great God-man—Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17a.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:9—And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev. 22:17—And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

- C. The central revelation of God and of the Lord’s recovery is God becoming the flesh (John 1:1, 14), the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45b), and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit (Rev. 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; 5:6) to build up the church (Matt. 16:18) that becomes the Body of Christ (Eph. 4:15-16) and that consummates the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:2, 9; 22:17a; cf. Gen. 2:22; John 19:34).

John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Rev. 1:4—John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is coming, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,

Rev. 3:1—And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

Rev. 4:5—And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 5:6—And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Matt. 16:18—And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Eph. 4:15-16—But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, ¹⁶Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:9—And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

Rev. 22:17—And the Spirit and the bride say, Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely.

cf. Gen. 2:22—And Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man.

cf. John 19:34—But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately there came out blood and water.

- D. God and man will become one entity, and that one entity is the mingling of divinity with humanity, which will consummate in the New Jerusalem as the conclusion of the entire Bible—Rev. 21:3, 22, 2, 9; cf. Lev. 2:4-5; Psa. 92:10.

Rev. 21:3—And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

Rev. 21:22—And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:9—And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.

cf. Lev. 2:4-5—And when you present an offering of a meal offering baked in the oven, *it shall be* of fine flour, unleavened cakes mingled with oil or unleavened wafers anointed with oil. ⁵And if your offering is a meal offering *baked* on a flat plate, it shall be of fine flour mingled with oil, unleavened.

cf. Psa. 92:10—But You have exalted my horn like that of a wild ox; I am anointed with fresh oil.

- E. “I hope that the saints in all the churches throughout the earth, especially the co-workers and the elders, will see this revelation and then rise up to pray that God would give us a new revival—a revival which has never been recorded in history”—*Life-study of 1 and 2 Chronicles*, p. 15.

III. If we practice living the life of a God-man, which is the reality of the Body of Christ, spontaneously a corporate model will be built up, a model living in the economy of God; this model will be the greatest revival in the history of the church to bring the Lord back—Psa. 48:2 and footnote 1; Rev. 3:12, 21:

Psa. 48:2—Beautiful in elevation, The joy of the whole earth, Is Mount Zion, the sides of the north, The city of the great King.

Rev. 3:12—He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Rev. 3:21—He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

- A. God needs a corporate people to be raised up by His grace through the high peak of the divine revelation to live a life according to this revelation; a revival is the practice, the practicality, of the vision we have seen.
- B. The followers of Christ (Matt. 5:1; 28:19) were disciplined through Christ’s human living on the earth, as the model of a God-man—living God by denying Himself in humanity (John 5:19, 30), revolutionizing their concept concerning man (Phil. 3:10; 1:21a).

Matt. 5:1—And when He saw the crowds, He went up to the mountain. And after He sat down, His disciples came to Him.

Matt. 28:19—Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

John 5:19—Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:30—I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

Phil. 3:10—To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil. 1:21—For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- C. Our life should be a copy, a reproduction, of the model of the life of Christ, the first God-man—1 Pet. 2:21; Matt. 11:28-29; Eph. 4:20-21; John 17:4; 5:17; Phil. 1:19-22, 25.

1 Pet. 2:21—For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

Matt. 11:28-29—Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.
²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Eph. 4:20-21—But you did not so learn Christ, ²¹If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

John 17:4—I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.

John 5:17—But Jesus answered them, My Father is working until now, and I also am working.

Phil. 1:19-22—For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²But if *I am* to live in the flesh, if this to me is fruit for *my* work, then I do not know what I will choose.

Phil. 1:25—And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,

- D. The Spirit of life and reality who was breathed into the disciples would guide them into all the reality of what they had observed of the Lord when they were with Him for three and a half years—John 16:13; 20:22:

John 16:13—But when He, the Spirit of reality, comes, He will guide you into all the reality; for He will not speak from Himself, but what He hears He will speak; and He will declare to you the things that are coming.

John 20:22—And when He had said this, He breathed into *them* and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

1. At the commencement of the first God-man's ministry, He was baptized to fulfill all righteousness, recognizing that according to His flesh (His humanity—1:14; Rom. 1:3; 8:3), He was good for nothing but death and burial (Matt. 3:15-17).

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

Rom. 1:3—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,

Rom. 8:3—For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Matt. 3:15-17—But Jesus answered and said to him, Permit it for now, for it is fitting for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness. Then he permitted Him. ¹⁶And having been baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming

upon Him. ¹⁷And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.

2. He trained His disciples to learn from Him (11:29) in the miracle of feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two fish; His “looking up to heaven” to bless the five loaves and two fish (14:19) indicates His realizing that the source of blessing was not Him, the sent One, but the Father, the sending One (John 10:30; 5:19, 30; 7:6, 8, 18).

Matt. 11:29—Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt. 14:19—And after commanding the crowds to recline on the grass, He took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, He blessed and broke the loaves and gave *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to the crowds.

John 10:30—I and the Father are one.

John 5:19—Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:30—I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 7:6—Jesus therefore said to them, My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

John 7:8—You go up to the feast; I am not going up to this feast, because My time has not yet been fulfilled.

John 7:18—He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.

3. The Lord did not remain in the issue of the miracle with the crowds but went away from them to be with the Father privately on the mountain in prayer—
Matt. 14:22-23; Luke 6:12.

Matt. 14:22-23—And immediately He compelled the disciples to step into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. ²³And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

Luke 6:12—And in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

4. The Lord lived a life of contacting God (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28; Heb. 7:25), living in the presence of God without ceasing (Acts 10:38c; John 8:29; 16:32), and of contacting people, ministering God into them to bring them into the jubilee of God’s New Testament economy (Luke 4:18-19; Heb. 8:2; cf. Gen. 14:18; Acts 6:4).

Mark 1:35—And rising very early in the morning, *while it was still* night, He went out and went away to a deserted place, and there He prayed.

Luke 5:16—But He Himself *often* withdrew in the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 6:12—And in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Luke 9:28—And about eight days after these words, He took with *Him* Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray.

Heb. 7:25—Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Acts 10:38—Jesus, the One from Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all those who were being oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

John 8:29—And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

John 16:32—Behold, an hour is coming, and has come, that you will be scattered each to his own place and will leave Me alone; yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

Luke 4:18-19—“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,¹⁹To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, *the year of jubilee.*”

Heb. 8:2—A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

cf. Gen. 14:18—And Melchizedek the king of Salem brought out bread and wine. Now he was priest of God the Most High.

cf. Acts 6:4—But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.

5. He was a man in whom Satan, the ruler of the world, had nothing (no ground, no chance, no hope, no possibility in anything)—John 14:30b, cf. v. 20; 2 Cor. 12:2a; Col. 1:27; 2 Tim. 4:22; John 3:6b; 4:23-24; 1 John 5:4, 18.

John 14:30—I will no longer speak much with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and in Me he has nothing;

cf. John 14:20—In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

cf. 2 Cor. 12:2—I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know; God knows) such a one was caught away to the third heaven.

cf. Col. 1:27—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,

cf. 2 Tim. 4:22—The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

cf. John 3:6—That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

cf. John 4:23-24—But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

cf. 1 John 5:4—For everything that has been begotten of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory which has overcome the world—our faith.

cf. 1 John 5:18—We know that everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him.

- E. The only way to live the life of a God-man according to the Lord's model is to set our entire being on the mingled spirit, walking, living, and having our being according to the mingled spirit—Rom. 8:2, 4, 10, 6, 11, 16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 10:12; Gal. 5:25; Eph. 6:17-18; 1 Thes. 5:16-20; 1 Tim. 4:6-7; 2 Tim. 1:6-7.

Rom. 8:2—For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Rom. 8:4—That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit.

Rom. 8:10—But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:11—And if the Spirit of the One who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

Rom. 8:16—The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Rom. 10:12—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;

Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Eph. 6:17-18—And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, ¹⁸By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

1 Thes. 5:16-20—Always rejoice, ¹⁷Unceasingly pray, ¹⁸In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. ¹⁹Do not quench the Spirit; ²⁰Do not despise prophecies,

1 Tim. 4:6-7—If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed. ⁷But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness.

2 Tim. 1:6-7—For which cause I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For God has not given us a spirit of cowardice, but of power and of love and of sobermindedness.

- F. “We should all declare that we want to live the life of a God-man. Eventually, the God-men will be the victors, the overcomers, the Zion within Jerusalem. This will bring in a new revival that has never been seen in history, and this will end this age”—*Life-study of 1 and 2 Chronicles*, p. 28.

IV. We can enter into a new revival by participating in Christ’s heavenly ministry to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep in order to take care of God’s flock, which is the church that issues in the Body of Christ; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry—John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:1-4; Heb. 13:20-21; Rev. 1:12-13:

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Pet. 5:1-4—Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly; ³Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Heb. 13:20-21—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant, ²¹Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Rev. 1:12-13—And I turned to see the voice that spoke with me; and when I turned, I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

- A. We need to shepherd people according to the pattern of the Lord Jesus in His ministry for carrying out God’s eternal economy—Matt. 9:36; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4:

Matt. 9:36—And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

Heb. 13:20—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

1. The content of God's entire New Testament economy in His complete salvation is Christ as the Son of Man cherishing us by redeeming us from sin, accomplishing His judicial redemption through His death (1 Tim. 1:15; Eph. 1:7), and Christ as the Son of God nourishing us to impart the divine life into us abundantly, carrying out His organic salvation in His resurrection (John 10:10; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Eph. 5:29).

1 Tim. 1:15—Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost.

Eph. 1:7—In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace,

John 10:10—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Eph. 5:29—For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

2. Our not having the Father's loving and forgiving heart and the Savior's shepherding and seeking spirit are the reason for our barrenness—Luke 15:1-24.

Luke 15:1-24—Now all the tax collectors and sinners were drawing near to Him to hear Him. ²And both the Pharisees and the scribes murmured among *themselves*, saying, This man welcomes sinners and eats with them. ³And He told them this parable, saying, ⁴Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost. ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance. ⁸Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one silver coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek carefully until she finds *it*? ⁹And when she finds *it*, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost. ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner repenting. ¹¹And He said, A certain man had two sons. ¹²And the younger of them said to the father, Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to *me*. And he distributed to them his living. ¹³And not many days after, the younger son, having gathered everything together, went abroad to a distant country and there squandered his estate by living dissolutely. ¹⁴And when he had spent all, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him

into his fields to feed hogs. ¹⁶And he longed to be satisfied with the carob pods which the hogs were eating, and no one gave him *anything*. ¹⁷But when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants abound in bread, but I am perishing here in famine! ¹⁸I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. ¹⁹I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants. ²⁰And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately. ²¹And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son. ²²But the father said to his slaves, Bring out quickly the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³And bring the fattened calf; slaughter *it*, and let us eat and be merry, ²⁴Because this son of mine was dead and lives again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to be merry.

3. We need to cherish people (to make them happy and to make them feel pleasant and comfortable) in the humanity of Jesus (Matt. 9:10; Luke 7:34); we need to nourish people (to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ in His ministry of three stages) in the divinity of Christ (Matt. 24:45-47).

Matt. 9:10—And as He was reclining *at table* in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples.

Luke 7:34—The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Matt. 24:45-47—Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time? ⁴⁶Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. ⁴⁷Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.

4. Christ had to pass through Samaria, purposely detouring to Sychar to gain one immoral woman, cherishing her by asking her to give Him something to drink in order to nourish her with the flowing Triune God as the river of water of life—John 4:3-14; Rev. 22:1.

John 4:3-14—He left Judea and went away again into Galilee. ⁴And He had to pass through Samaria. ⁵So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the piece of land that Jacob gave to Joseph his son; ⁶And Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from the journey, sat thus by the well; it was about the sixth hour. ⁷There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, Give Me *something* to drink. ⁸For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹The Samaritan woman then said to Him, How *is it that* You, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, who am a Samaritan woman? (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰Jesus answered and said to her, If you knew the gift of God and who it is who says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water. ¹¹The woman said to Him, Sir, You have no bucket, and the well is deep; where then do You get this living water? ¹²Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank of it himself, as well as his sons and his cattle? ¹³Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, ¹⁴But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst

forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.

Rev. 22:1—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

5. As the One without sin, He did not condemn the adulterous woman but cherished her for the forgiveness of her sins judicially and for the setting free from her sins organically (John 8:1-11, 32, 36); it is also significant that the first one saved by Christ through His crucifixion was a robber sentenced to death (Luke 23:42-43).

John 8:1-11—But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ²And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him, and He sat down and taught them. ³And the scribes and Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, and having set her in the midst, ⁴They said to Him, Teacher, this woman has been caught committing adultery, in the very act. ⁵Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. What then do You say? ⁶But they said this to tempt Him, so that they might have *reason* to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote with His finger on the ground. ⁷But when they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, He who is without sin among you, let him *be the* first to throw a stone at her. ⁸And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹And when they heard *that*, they went out one by one, beginning with the older ones. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman *stood* where she was, in the midst. ¹⁰And Jesus stood up and said to her, Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? ¹¹And she said, No one, Lord. And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.

John 8:32—And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.

John 8:36—If therefore the Son sets you free, you shall be free indeed.

Luke 23:42-43—And he said, Jesus, remember me when You come into Your kingdom. ⁴³And He said to him, Truly I say to you, Today you shall be with Me in Paradise.

6. The Lord went to Jericho just to visit and gain one person, a chief tax collector, and His preaching was a shepherding (19:1-10); He also cherished the parents by laying His hands on their children (Matt. 19:13-15).

Luke 19:1-10—And He entered and was passing through Jericho. ²And behold, *there was* a man whose name was called Zaccheus; and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³And he was seeking to see Jesus, who He was, and could not because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. ⁴And he ran on ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. ⁵And as He came to the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay in your house. ⁶And he hurried and came down, and received Him, rejoicing. ⁷And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man. ⁸And Zaccheus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore four times as much. ⁹And Jesus said to him,

Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.

Matt. 19:13-15—Then little children were brought to Him that He might lay His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴But Jesus said, Allow the little children and do not prevent them from coming to Me, for of such is the kingdom of the heavens. ¹⁵And after He laid His hands on them, He went on from there.

- B. We need to shepherd people according to the pattern of the apostle Paul, who shepherded the saints as a nursing mother and an exhorting father in order to take care of God's flock—1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12; 1 Tim. 1:16; Acts 20:28:

1 Thes. 2:7-8—But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. ⁸Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.

1 Thes. 2:11-12—Just as you know how *we were* to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you and consoling *you* and testifying, ¹²So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

1 Tim. 1:16—But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.

Acts 20:28—Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

1. Paul shepherded the saints in Ephesus by teaching them “publicly and from house to house” (v. 20) and by admonishing each one of the saints with tears for three years (vv. 31, 19), declaring to them all the counsel of God (v. 27).

Acts 20:20—How I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring *them* to you and by *not* teaching you publicly and from house to house,

Acts 20:31—Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.

Acts 20:19—Serving the Lord as a slave with all humility and tears and trials which came upon me by the plots of the Jews;

Acts 20:27—For I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

2. Paul had an intimate concern for the believers (2 Cor. 7:2-7; Philem. 7, 12), and he came down to the weak ones' level so that he could gain them (2 Cor. 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; cf. Matt. 12:20).

2 Cor. 7:2-7—Make room for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. ³I do not say *this* to condemn *you*, for I have said before that you are in our hearts for *our* dying together and *our* living together. ⁴Great is my boldness toward you, great is my boasting on your behalf; I am filled with comfort, I overflow with joy in all our affliction. ⁵For even when we came into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but *we were* afflicted in everything; without were fightings, within were fears. ⁶But He who comforts those who are downcast, *that is*, God, comforted us by the coming of Titus; ⁷And not only by his coming, but also by

the comfort with which he was comforted because of you, declaring to us your longing, your lamentation, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced the more.

Philem. 7—For I had much joy and encouragement over your love, because the inward parts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

Philem. 12—Him I have sent back to you—him, that is, my very heart—

2 Cor. 11:28-29—Apart from the things which *have not been mentioned, there is this*: the crowd of *cares* pressing upon me daily, the anxious concern for all the churches.
²⁹Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I myself do not burn?

1 Cor. 9:22—To the weak I became weak that I might gain the weak. To all men I have become all things that I might by all means save some.

cf. Matt. 12:20—A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench until He brings forth justice unto victory.

3. He was willing to spend what he had, referring to his possessions, and to spend what he was, referring to his being, for the sake of the saints (2 Cor. 12:15); he was a drink offering, one with Christ as the wine producer, sacrificing himself for others' enjoyment of Christ (Phil. 2:17; Judg. 9:13; Eph. 3:2).

2 Cor. 12:15—But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?

Phil. 2:17—But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice, and I rejoice together with you all.

Judg. 9:13—But the vine said to them, Shall I leave my new wine, which cheers God and men, and go to wave over the trees?

Eph. 3:2—If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

4. Paul walked by the Spirit to honor God so that he could minister the Spirit to honor man—2 Cor. 3:3, 6, 8; Gal. 5:16, 25; Judg. 9:9.

2 Cor. 3:3—Since you are being manifested that you are a letter of Christ ministered by us, inscribed not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tablets of stone but in tablets of hearts of flesh.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor. 3:8—How shall the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?

Gal. 5:16—But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

Judg. 9:9—But the olive tree said to them, Shall I leave my fatness, because of which God and men are honored by me, and go to wave over the trees?

5. Paul indicated in his teaching that the church is a home to raise up people, a hospital to heal and recover them, and a school to teach and edify them— Eph. 2:19; 1 Thes. 5:14; 1 Cor. 14:31.

Eph. 2:19—So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

1 Thes. 5:14—And we exhort you, brothers, Admonish the disorderly, console the fainthearted, sustain the weak, be long-suffering toward all.

1 Cor. 14:31—For you can all prophesy one by one that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

6. He revealed that love is the most excellent way for us to be anything and to do anything for the building up of the Body of Christ—8:1; 12:31; 13:4-8a; Eph. 1:4; 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:24; Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b; 1 Thes. 1:3.

1 Cor. 8:1—Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Cor. 12:31—But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And moreover I show to you a most excellent way.

1 Cor. 13:4-8—Love suffers long. Love is kind; it is not jealous. Love does not brag *and* is not puffed up; ⁵It does not behave unbecomingly *and* does not seek its own things; it is not provoked *and* does not take account of evil; ⁶It does not rejoice because of unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; ⁷It covers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸Love never falls *away*. But whether prophecies, they will be rendered useless; or tongues, they will cease; or knowledge, it will be rendered useless.

Eph. 1:4—Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

Eph. 3:17—That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph. 4:2—With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, bearing one another in love,

Eph. 4:15-16—But holding to truth in love, we may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, Christ, ¹⁶Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

Eph. 5:2—And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

Eph. 6:24—Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.

Rev. 2:4-5—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love. ⁵Remember therefore where you have fallen from and repent and do the first works; but if not, I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place, unless you repent.

Col. 1:18—And He is the Head of the Body, the church; He is the beginning, the Firstborn from the dead, that He Himself might have the first place in all things;

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

- C. “I hope that there will be a genuine revival among us by our receiving this burden of shepherding. If all the churches receive this teaching to participate in Christ’s wonderful shepherding, there will be a big revival in the recovery”—*The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1994–1997*, vol. 5, “The Vital Groups,” p. 92.

Message Two

Arriving at the Highest Peak of the Divine Revelation

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10; 3:9; Rom. 1:3-4

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;

Eph. 3:9—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,

Rom. 1:3-4—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

I. The highest peak of the divine revelation given to us by God is the revelation of the eternal economy of God—God becoming man that man may become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead:

A. The entire Bible, which is the explanation of the eternal economy of God, is the autobiography of the Triune God, seen in the two sections of eternity and on the bridge of time:

1. The Triune God came from eternity into time and with His divinity to enter into humanity to become the incarnated God for His direct move in man, seen in the four Gospels, for the accomplishment of His judicial redemption—John 1:14, 29.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 1:29—The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

2. In resurrection He became the compounded God, the “processed” God, the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, seen in the Acts and the Epistles, for the carrying out of His organic salvation—John 1:32, 42; 1 Cor. 15:45b; Phil. 1:19.

John 1:32—And John testified, saying, I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He abode upon Him.

John 1:42—He led him to Jesus. Looking at him, Jesus said, You are Simon, the son of John; you shall be called Cephas (which is interpreted, Peter).

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Phil. 1:19—For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

3. In eternity future He will be the corporate God, the New Jerusalem, seen in Revelation 21 and 22.

4. The universal, divine-human incorporation of the processed and consummated Triune God with the regenerated, transformed, and glorified believers is the goal of God's eternal economy—John 1:51; Rev. 21:3, 22.

John 1:51—And He said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

Rev. 21:3—And I heard a loud voice out of the throne, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will tabernacle with them, and they will be His peoples, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.

Rev. 21:22—And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb are its temple.

5. The central revelation of God and the Lord's recovery is God becoming the flesh, the flesh becoming the life-giving Spirit, and the life-giving Spirit becoming the sevenfold intensified Spirit to build up the church that becomes the Body of Christ and that consummates the New Jerusalem.
- B. God becoming man that man might become God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead is the essence of the entire Bible, the “diamond” in the “box” of the Bible, the eternal economy of God—Gen. 1:26; John 12:24; Rom. 8:29:

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

John 12:24—Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

1. God became man through incarnation by participating in man's humanity; man becomes God through transformation by participating in God's divinity:
 - a. Participating in God's life—John 3:15; Col. 3:4.

John 3:15—That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

Col. 3:4—When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

- b. Participating in God's nature—Eph. 1:4; 2 Pet. 1:4.

Eph. 1:4—Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love,

2 Pet. 1:4—Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

- c. Participating in God's mind—Eph. 4:23; Phil. 2:5.

Eph. 4:23—And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Phil. 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

- d. Participating in God's being—2 Cor. 3:18b; Eph. 3:8.
2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
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
- e. Participating in God's image—2 Cor. 3:18a; Rom. 8:29.
2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.
Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;
- f. Participating in God's glory—v. 30; Heb. 2:10.
Rom. 8:30—And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.
Heb. 2:10—For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.
- g. Participating in God's sonship—Eph. 1:5; Rom. 8:23.
Eph. 1:5—Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,
Rom. 8:23—And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.
- h. Participating in God's manifestation—v. 19.
Rom. 8:19—For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.
- i. To bear God's likeness—1 John 3:2.
1 John 3:2—Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.
- j. To be Godkind—God's species—John 1:12; Rom. 8:14, 16.
John 1:12—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,
Rom. 8:14—For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.
Rom. 8:16—The Spirit Himself witnesses with our spirit that we are children of God.

2. This divine-human romance is the subject of the entire Bible, the content of God's economy, and the secret of the entire universe—S. S. 1:1; 6:13.
S. S. 1:1—The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's.

S. S. 6:13—Return, return, O Shulammitte; Return, return, that we may gaze at you.
Why should you gaze at the Shulammitte, As upon the dance of two camps?

II. The high peak of the divine revelation—the “diamond” in the “box” of the Bible—is the revelation that in Christ God has become man in order that man might become God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—2 Sam. 7:12-14a; Rom. 1:3-4; Eph. 3:17a:

2 Sam. 7:12-14—When your days are fulfilled and you sleep with your fathers, I will raise up your seed after you, which will come forth from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.
¹³It is he who will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ¹⁴I will be his Father, and he will be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the stripes of the sons of men;

Rom. 1:3-4—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh,
⁴Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

Eph. 3:17—That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

A. “God becoming man and man becoming God” is the economy of God—1 Tim. 1:4.
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.

B. God's eternal economy is to make man the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead and to make Himself one with man and man one with Him, thus to be enlarged and expanded in His expression, that all His divine attributes may be expressed in human virtues—Eph. 3:9; 1:10:

Eph. 3:9—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. 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. God's good pleasure is to be one with man and to make man the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead—vv. 5, 9.

Eph. 1:5—Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Eph. 1:9—Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

2. God became man in order to have a mass reproduction of Himself and thereby to produce a new kind—God-man kind—John 1:1, 14; 12:24.

John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 12:24—Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

- C. For the fulfillment of God's economy, we need God to build Himself in Christ into us as our life, our nature, and our constitution to make us God in life and nature but not in the Godhead—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:4, 10-11.

Eph. 3:17—That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Col. 3:4—When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Col. 3:10-11—And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

- D. God became man through incarnation; man becomes God through regeneration, sanctification, renewing, transformation, conformation, and glorification—John 3:5-6; 1:12-13; Rom. 6:19, 22; 12:2; 8:29-30.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Rom. 6:19—I speak in human *terms* because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves to uncleanness and lawlessness unto lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness unto sanctification.

Rom. 6:22—But now, having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end, eternal life.

Rom. 12:2—And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Rom. 8:29-30—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers; ³⁰And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

III. It is only by God's becoming man to make man God that the Body of Christ can be produced; this point is the high peak of the vision given to us by God—v. 3; 1:3-4; 8:14; 12:4-5:

Rom. 8:3—For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Rom. 1:3-4—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

Rom. 8:14—For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Rom. 12:4-5—For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

A. God became man to make man God that He might produce the Body of Christ—the organism of the Triune God, the ultimate manifestation of which is the New Jerusalem—Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4-6; Rev. 21:2, 9-10.

Eph. 1:22-23—And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, ²³Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 4:4-6—One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:9-10—And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, Come here; I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb. ¹⁰And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

B. The Bible shows us how man can become God to have a God-man living and thus become an organism of God—Rom. 1:3-4; 12:4-5:

Rom. 1:3-4—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

Rom. 12:4-5—For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1. This organism is God joining and mingling Himself with man to make man God.
2. The issue of God becoming man and man becoming God is an organism; this organism is the Body of Christ—the union and mingling of God with man—Eph. 4:4-6, 12.

Eph. 4:4-6—One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph. 4:12—For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,

- C. God sent His Son to be a man and to live a God-man life by the divine life; such a living issues in a universal man that is exactly the same as He is—a corporate man living a God-man life by the divine life—Rom. 8:3; 12:4-5.

Rom. 8:3—For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Rom. 12:4-5—For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function, ⁵So we who are many are one Body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

- D. The reality of the Body of Christ is the union and mingling of God with man to live out a corporate God-man—Eph. 4:4-6, 24.

Eph. 4:4-6—One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵One Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Eph. 4:24—And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Message Three

The God-man Living for a New Revival

Scripture Reading: Lev. 1:3, 9; 6:8-13; John 21:15-17;
1 John 3:14; 5:1; 2:6; 4:17; Gal. 6:2-3; Rom. 8:2

Lev. 1:3—If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Lev. 1:9—But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

Lev. 6:8-13—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ⁹Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. ¹⁰And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his flesh; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. ¹¹Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. ¹²And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall lay the burnt offering in order upon it and shall burn the fat of the peace offerings on it. ¹³Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1 John 3:14—We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death.

1 John 5:1—Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God, and everyone who loves Him who has begotten loves him also who has been begotten of Him.

1 John 2:6—He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

1 John 4:17—In this has love been perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, *so* also are we in this world.

Gal. 6:2-3—Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely. ³For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

Rom. 8:2—For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

- I. The desire of God's heart is that "the reality...in Jesus" (Eph. 4:21), the actual condition of the God-man living of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels, would be duplicated in the many members of Christ's Body by the Spirit of reality to become the reality of the Body of Christ, the highest peak in God's economy, for a new revival (vv. 20-24):**

Eph. 4:21—If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

Eph. 4:20-24—But you did not so learn Christ, ²¹If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, ²²That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, ²³And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind ²⁴And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

A. The four Gospels show the pattern of the life that God desires, the mold of the life that can satisfy God and fulfill His purpose; Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God; this is what is meant by *the reality is in Jesus*; to learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus is to be molded into the pattern of Christ, to be conformed to the image of Christ—Rom. 8:28-29; Eph. 4:20-21.

Rom. 8:28-29—And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose. ²⁹Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Eph. 4:20-21—But you did not so learn Christ, ²¹If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

B. We are being perfected by the Lord to be God-men, living the divine life by denying our natural life according to the model of Christ as the first God-man—Matt. 11:29a; 17:5b; 1 Pet. 2:21:

Matt. 11:29—Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt. 17:5—While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight. Hear Him!

1 Pet. 2:21—For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

1. In His life on earth He set up a pattern, as revealed in the four Gospels; then He was crucified and resurrected to become the life-giving Spirit so that He might enter into us to be our life; we learn from Him according to His example, not by our natural life but by Him as our life in resurrection—1 Cor. 15:45b; Col. 3:4.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

Col. 3:4—When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

2. Our Christian life is a life in Christ and also a life of Christ in us; we are in Christ as the mold, and He is in us as our life; in this way we learn Christ as the reality is in Jesus; this reality is the reality of the Body of Christ—1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; 12:2a; Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:10.

1 Cor. 1:30—But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

2 Cor. 5:17—So then if anyone is in Christ, *he is* a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold, they have become new.

2 Cor. 12:2—I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body I do not know, or outside the body I do not know; God knows) such a one was caught away to the third heaven.

Col. 1:27—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,

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Rom. 8:10—But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

- C. As we love the Lord, contact Him, and pray to Him, we automatically live Him according to the mold, the form, the pattern, described in the Gospels; in this way we are shaped, conformed, to the image of this mold—this is what it means to learn Christ—Matt. 11:29; Rom. 8:29.

Matt. 11:29—Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

- D. When we live in the mingled spirit, we are learning Christ according to the reality in Jesus by the Spirit of reality; we learn from Him as our model so that His biography becomes our history; the living of the Body of Christ as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus revealed in the Gospels—Gal. 6:17-18; Rom. 1:1, 9; Eph. 4:20-24; Phil. 2:5; Matt. 11:29; 1 Pet. 2:21.

Gal. 6:17-18—Henceforth let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the brands of Jesus. ¹⁸The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.

Rom. 1:1—Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus, a called apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,

Rom. 1:9—For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Eph. 4:20-24—But you did not so learn Christ, ²¹If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus, ²²That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, ²³And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind ²⁴And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Phil. 2:5—Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Matt. 11:29—Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

1 Pet. 2:21—For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps;

- E. The purpose of God in sending the Lord Jesus to be a man was for Him to live a God-man life by the divine life; when we eat Him, we live because of Him to become a universal great man who is exactly the same as He is—a man living a God-man life by the divine life—Lam. 3:22-24, 55-56; Rev. 2:4, 7; John 6:57, 63; Jer. 15:16; Eph. 6:17-18; Psa. 119:15.

Lam. 3:22-24—*It is Jehovah's lovingkindness that we are not consumed, For His compassions do not fail; ²³They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴Jehovah is my portion, says my soul; Therefore I hope in Him.*

Lam. 3:55-56—I called upon Your name, O Jehovah, From the lowest pit. ⁵⁶You have heard my voice; do not hide Your ear at my breathing, at my cry.

Rev. 2:4—But I have *one thing* against you, that you have left your first love.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

John 6:57—As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

Jer. 15:16—Your words were found and I ate them, And Your word became to me The gladness and joy of my heart, For I am called by Your name, O Jehovah, God of hosts.

Eph. 6:17-18—And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, ¹⁸By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Psa. 119:15—I will muse upon Your precepts And regard Your ways.

II. The only life that is pleasing to God is the life that is a repetition of the life Christ lived on the earth; this is a life that experiences Christ in His experiences as the burnt offering—Lev. 1:9; John 8:29; 2 Cor. 5:9:

Lev. 1:9—But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

John 8:29—And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

2 Cor. 5:9—Therefore also we are determined, whether at home or abroad, to gain the honor of being well pleasing to Him.

- A. The burnt offering typifies Christ in His living a life that is absolutely for God and for God's satisfaction; the burnt offering also typifies Christ in His being the

life that enables God's people to have such a living—Lev. 1:3; Num. 28:2-3; John 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; Heb. 10:5-10.

Lev. 1:3—If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Num. 28:2-3—Command the children of Israel and say to them, My offering, My food for My offerings by fire of a satisfying fragrance to Me, you shall be careful to present to Me at its appointed time. ³And you shall say to them, This is the offering by fire which you shall present to Jehovah: two male lambs a year old without blemish each day as a continual burnt offering.

John 5:30—I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:38—For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 8:29—And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

Heb. 10:5-10—Therefore, coming into the world, He says, “Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. ⁶In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not delight. ⁷Then I said, Behold, I have come (in the roll of the book it is written concerning Me) to do Your will, O God.” ⁸Saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not desire nor delight in” (which are offered according to the law), ⁹He then has said, “Behold, I have come to do Your will.” He takes away the first that He may establish the second, ¹⁰By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

- B. The word translated “burnt offering” denotes something that is ascending; this ascending refers to Christ (Lev. 1:3, 10, 14); the only thing that can ascend to God from earth is the life lived by Christ, for He is the unique person to live a life that is absolutely for God (John 6:38).

Lev. 1:3—If his offering is a burnt offering from the herd, he shall present it, a male without blemish; he shall present it at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, that he may be accepted before Jehovah.

Lev. 1:10—And if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall present it, a male without blemish.

Lev. 1:14—And if his offering to Jehovah is a burnt offering of birds, then he shall present his offering of turtledoves or of young pigeons.

John 6:38—For I have come down from heaven not to do My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

- C. The burnt offering was “a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah” (Lev. 1:9); the Hebrew words translated “satisfying fragrance” literally mean “savor of rest or satisfaction”; a satisfying fragrance is a savor that brings satisfaction, peace, and rest; such a satisfying fragrance is an enjoyment to God.

Lev. 1:9—But its inward parts and its legs he shall wash with water. Then the priest shall burn the whole on the altar, as a burnt offering, an offering by fire, a satisfying fragrance to Jehovah.

- D. The life of Christ within us is the reality of the burnt offering—this is a life of obedience, a life of submission, and a life of total dependence on God according to the principle of the tree of life—Phil. 2:8; John 5:19, 30; Heb. 5:8; 10:7:

Phil. 2:8—And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, and *that* the death of a cross.

John 5:19—Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 5:30—I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

Heb. 5:8—Even though He was a Son, learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

Heb. 10:7—Then I said, Behold, I have come (in the roll of the book it is written concerning Me) to do Your will, O God.”

1. Man’s acting alone and independently apart from and outside of God is sin; God wants us to act according to His instructions in everything—Psa. 40:7-8; 1 John 3:4.

Psa. 40:7-8—Then I said, Behold, I have come; In the scroll of the book It is written concerning Me. ⁸I delight in doing Your will, O My God; Indeed Your law is within My inward parts.

1 John 3:4—Everyone who practices sin practices lawlessness also, and sin is lawlessness.

2. “Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a little child shall by no means enter into it” (Luke 18:17); God wants us to be like a little child all the time because He wants us to depend on Him all the time; self-confidence is the enemy of God-dependence.

- E. By laying our hands on Christ as our burnt offering through the proper prayer, we are joined to Him, and He and we become one; as Christ lives in us, He repeats in us the life He lived on earth, the life of the burnt offering—Lev. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:17; Gal. 2:20.

Lev. 1:4—And he shall lay his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it shall be accepted for him, to make expiation for him.

1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- F. In such a union, such an identification, all our weaknesses, defects, and faults are taken on by Him—2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 2:20a.

2 Cor. 5:21—Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- G. We must allow the Lord to burn us so that we may be a continual burnt offering to burn others and be reduced to ashes to become the New Jerusalem for God's expression—Psa. 20:3; Lev. 1:16; 6:8-13; 1 Cor. 3:12a; Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11, 18-21:
Psa. 20:3—May He remember all your meal offerings And accept your burnt offering.
Selah

Lev. 1:16—And he shall take away its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar toward the east, in the place of the ashes.

Lev. 6:8-13—Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, ⁹Command Aaron and his sons, saying, This is the law of the burnt offering: The burnt offering shall be on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be kept burning on it. ¹⁰And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his flesh; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has consumed the burnt offering on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar. ¹¹Then he shall take off his garments and put on other garments and carry the ashes outside the camp to a clean place. ¹²And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it must not go out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and he shall lay the burnt offering in order upon it and shall burn the fat of the peace offerings on it. ¹³Fire shall be kept burning on the altar continually; it shall not go out.

1 Cor. 3:12—But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

Rev. 3:12—He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:10-11—And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

Rev. 21:18-21—And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

1. The ashes signify Christ reduced to nothing; since we are one with the Christ who has been reduced to ashes, we also are reduced to ashes, that is, reduced to nothing, to zero—Mark 9:12; Isa. 53:3; 1 Cor. 1:28; 2 Cor. 12:11.

Mark 9:12—And He said to them, Elijah does indeed come first and restore all things. And how *is it that* it is written of the Son of Man that He should suffer many things and be counted as nothing?

Isa. 53:3—He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom *men* hide their faces, He was despised; and we did not esteem Him.

1 Cor. 1:28—And the lowborn things of the world and the despised things God has chosen, things which are not, that He might bring to nought the things which are,

2 Cor. 12:11—I have become foolish; you yourselves have compelled me. For *it is I who* should have been commended by you; for in nothing am I inferior to the super-apostles, even though I am nothing.

2. The more we are identified with Christ in His death, the more we will realize that we have become a heap of ashes; when we become ashes, we are no longer a natural person; instead, we are a person who has been crucified, terminated, burned—Gal. 2:20a.

Gal. 2:20—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- H. Putting the ashes at the east side of the altar, the side of the sunrise, is an allusion to resurrection—Lev. 1:16; John 11:25; Phil. 3:10-11; 2 Cor. 1:9:

Lev. 1:16—And he shall take away its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar toward the east, in the place of the ashes.

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

Phil. 3:10-11—To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.

2 Cor. 1:9—Indeed we ourselves had the response of death in ourselves, that we should not base our confidence on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead;

1. With Christ as the burnt offering, the ashes are not the end—they are the beginning; the ashes mean that Christ has been put to death, but the east signifies resurrection—Mark 9:31.

Mark 9:31—For He was teaching His disciples. And He said to them, The Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, after three days He will rise.

2. The more we are reduced to ashes in Christ, the more we will be put to the east, and on the east we will have the assurance that the sun will rise and that we will experience the sunrise of resurrection—Phil. 3:10-11.

Phil. 3:10-11—To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, ¹¹If perhaps I may attain to the out-resurrection from the dead.

- I. Eventually, the ashes will become the New Jerusalem—Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 10-11:
Rev. 3:12—He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Rev. 21:2—And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

Rev. 21:10-11—And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

1. Christ's death brings us to an end, reduces us to ashes, and in resurrection the ashes become precious materials for God's building—1 Cor. 3:9b, 12a.
1 Cor. 3:9—For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's cultivated land, God's building.

1 Cor. 3:12—But if anyone builds upon the foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, grass, stubble,

2. When we are reduced to ashes, we are brought into the transformation of the Triune God to become the precious materials for the building of the New Jerusalem—Rom. 12:1-2; 2 Cor. 3:18; Rev. 21:18-21.

Rom. 12:1-2—I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, *which is* your reasonable service. ²And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rev. 21:18-21—And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every precious stone: the first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, chalcedony; the fourth, emerald; ²⁰The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth; the twelfth, amethyst. ²¹And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

III. In carrying out God's New Testament ministry, the Lord Jesus, as the reality of the burnt offering, did not do anything out of Himself (John 5:19), He did not do His own work (4:34; 17:4), He did not speak His own word (14:10, 24),

He did everything not by His own will (5:30), and He did not seek His own glory (7:18); He was never disappointed because He was satisfied only with God (Isa. 42:4; 50:4-5; 53:2a; cf. John 4:13-14; 6:15; Mark 9:7-8):

John 5:19—Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 4:34—Jesus said to them, My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.

John 17:4—I have glorified You on earth, finishing the work which You have given Me to do.

John 14:10—Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.

John 14:24—He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

John 5:30—I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 7:18—He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him, this One is true, and unrighteousness is not in Him.

Isa. 42:4—He will not faint, nor will He be discouraged, Until He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands will wait for His instruction.

Isa. 50:4-5—The Lord Jehovah has given me The tongue of the instructed, That I should know how to sustain the weary with a word. He awakens *me* morning by morning; He awakens my ear To hear as an instructed one. ⁵The Lord Jehovah has opened my ear; And I was not rebellious, Nor did I turn back.

Isa. 53:2—For He grew up like a tender plant before Him, And like a root out of dry ground. He has no *attracting* form nor majesty that we should look upon Him, Nor beautiful appearance that we should desire Him.

cf. John 4:13-14—Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, ¹⁴But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.

John 6:15—Then Jesus, knowing that they were about to come and take *Him* by force to make Him King, withdrew again to the mountain, Himself alone.

Mark 9:7-8—And a cloud appeared, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: This is My Son, the Beloved. Hear Him! ⁸And suddenly, when they looked around, they no longer saw anyone, but Jesus only with them.

A. The Lord's life was His work, His move, and His ministry; His work was His living, and His move was His being; with Him there was no difference between His life, His work, His move, and His ministry; the Lord Jesus lived His ministry—cf. Luke 22:26-27; John 10:10b; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 1 John 5:16a; 2 Cor. 3:6; Phil. 1:25.

cf. Luke 22:26-27—But you shall not be so; but let the greatest among you become like the youngest, and the one who leads like the one who serves. ²⁷For who is greater, the one who reclines *at table* or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines *at table*? But I am in your midst as the one who serves.

John 10:10—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

1 Cor. 15:45—So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

1 John 5:16—If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should make request concerning that.

2 Cor. 3:6—Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Phil. 1:25—And being confident of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of the faith,

- B. The Lord Jesus was a man of prayer; He often went to the mountain or withdrew to a private place to pray—Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28.

Matt. 14:23—And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

Mark 1:35—And rising very early in the morning, *while it was still* night, He went out and went away to a deserted place, and there He prayed.

Luke 5:16—But He Himself *often* withdrew in the wilderness and prayed.

Luke 6:12—And in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.

Luke 9:28—And about eight days after these words, He took with *Him* Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to pray.

- C. After the miracle of feeding five thousand, He compelled the disciples to leave Him in order that He might have more time to pray privately to the Father—Matt. 14:22-23:

Matt. 14:22-23—And immediately He compelled the disciples to step into the boat and to go before Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. ²³And after He sent the crowds away, He went up to the mountain privately to pray. And when night fell, He was there alone.

1. Standing in the position of man (4:4), the heavenly King, as the beloved Son of the Father (3:17), needed to pray privately to His Father who was in the heavens, that He might be one with the Father and have the Father with Him in whatever He did on earth for the establishing of the kingdom of the heavens.

Matt. 4:4—But He answered and said, It is written, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.”

Matt. 3:17—And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is My Son, the Beloved, in whom I have found My delight.

2. He did this not in the deserted place but on the mountain, leaving all the people, even His disciples, that He might be alone to contact the Father.

D. Because He was a man of prayer who was one with God, He was never alone, for the Father was with Him; every moment He saw His Father's face—John 5:19; 16:32; Psa. 16:7-8; cf. 27:8.

John 5:19—Then Jesus answered and said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, The Son can do nothing from Himself except what He sees the Father doing, for whatever that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner.

John 16:32—Behold, an hour is coming, and has come, that you will be scattered each to his own place and will leave Me alone; yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

Psa. 16:7-8—I will bless Jehovah, who counsels me; Indeed in the nights my inward parts instruct me. ⁸I have set Jehovah before me continually; Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.

Psa. 27:8—*When You say, Seek My face, To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.*

IV. When we abide in the love that is God Himself, love has been “perfected with us, that we may have boldness in the day of the judgment because even as He is, so also are we in this world” (1 John 4:17); Christ as the reality of the burnt offering lived in this world a life of God as love, and He is now our life that we may live the same life of love in this world and be the same as He is (3:14; 5:1; 2:6):

1 John 3:14—We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death.

1 John 5:1—Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten of God, and everyone who loves Him who has begotten loves him also who has been begotten of Him.

1 John 2:6—He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk even as He walked.

A. The law of the Spirit of life in our spirit is the law of Christ as the law of love (Rom. 8:2; Gal. 6:2); the law of love must be substantiated by the law of the Spirit of life so that we may be able to bear one another's burdens; but if we are filled with pride, we will be unable to bear others' burdens because we deceive ourselves by thinking that we are something when we are nothing (v. 3).

Rom. 8:2—For the law of the Spirit of life has freed me in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and of death.

Gal. 6:2—Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ completely.

Gal. 6:3—For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

- B. When the law of love is activated within us, we automatically and spontaneously will be shepherds who have the loving and forgiving heart of our Father God and the shepherding and seeking spirit of our Savior Christ—John 21:15-17; Luke 15:3-7.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Luke 15:3-7—And He told them this parable, saying, ⁴Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? ⁵And when he finds *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost. ⁷I tell you that in the same way there will be *more* joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance.

- C. When the law of love is activated within us, our labor in the Lord is a labor of love (1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thes. 1:3) in which we “support the weak” (Acts 20:35) and “sustain the weak” (1 Thes. 5:14); *the weak* refers to those who are weak either in their spirit or soul or body, or are weak in faith (Rom. 14:1; 15:1).

1 Cor. 15:58—Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

1 Thes. 1:3—Remembering unceasingly your work of faith and labor of love and endurance of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father;

Acts 20:35—In all things I have shown you by example that toiling in this way we ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

1 Thes. 5:14—And we exhort you, brothers, Admonish the disorderly, console the fainthearted, sustain the weak, be long-suffering toward all.

Rom. 14:1—Now him who is weak in faith receive, *but* not for the purpose of passing judgment on *his* considerations.

Rom. 15:1—But we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those who are weak and not to please ourselves.

- D. After His resurrection the Lord shepherded Peter and commissioned him to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry to take care of God’s flock, the church, which issues in the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate in the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God—John 21:15-17.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that

I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Message Four

**Living the Life of a God-man
by Living in the Kingdom of God
as the Realm of the Divine Species**

Scripture Reading: Mark 1:15; John 3:3, 5-6; 1:12-13;
2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 3:1

Mark 1:15—And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

2 Pet. 1:4—Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

1 John 3:1—Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

I. Because we have been born of God, we are God's species; that is, we are God in life and in nature but not in the Godhead—John 3:3, 5-8.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-8—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born anew. ⁸The wind blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from and where it goes; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

II. The God-men have the divine right to participate in God's species—vv. 3, 5-6; 18:36.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 18:36—Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

III. As believers in Christ, we are living the life of a God-man—Mark 1:15; John 14:17b, 20; Rom. 8:9a, 10; Gal. 5:25:

Mark 1:15—And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.

John 14:17—*Even* the Spirit of reality, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know *Him*; *but* you know Him, because He abides with you and shall be in you.

John 14:20—In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Rom. 8:9—But you are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Yet if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not of Him.

Rom. 8:10—But if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, the spirit is life because of righteousness.

Gal. 5:25—If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

A. In Christ God has been constituted into man, man has been constituted into God, and God and man have been mingled together to be one entity, which is called the God-man—Matt. 1:21, 23; Luke 1:35; Titus 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:5.

Matt. 1:21—And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name *Jesus*, for *it is* He *who* will save His people from their sins.

Matt. 1:23—“Behold, the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel” (which is translated, God with us).

Luke 1:35—And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.

Titus 2:13—Awaiting the blessed hope, even the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

1 Tim. 2:5—For there is one God and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

B. The God-men, the sons of God, are the duplication and continuation of Christ, the first God-man—John 12:24; Heb. 2:10; Rom. 8:29.

John 12:24—Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

Heb. 2:10—For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

C. A God-man is one who has been born of God and partakes of God’s life and nature, becoming one with God in His life and nature and thereby expressing Him—John 1:12-13; 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Cor. 6:17.

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:15—That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

2 Pet. 1:4—Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

- D. A God-man is constituted with God, having God as his life, nature, and everything; a God-man is man yet God and God yet man—Eph. 3:16-17a.

Eph. 3:16-17—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- E. Christ's human living was man living God to express the attributes of God in the human virtues, which were filled, mingled, and saturated with the divine attributes—Luke 1:26-35; 7:11-17; 10:25-37; 19:1-10.

Luke 1:26-35—And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷To a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, Rejoice, you who have been graced! The Lord is with you. ²⁹And she was greatly troubled at this saying and began reasoning what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found grace with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in *your* womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to Him the throne of David His father, ³³And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end. ³⁴But Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I have not known a man? ³⁵And the angel answered and said to her, The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore also the holy thing which is born will be called the Son of God.

Luke 7:11-17—And soon afterward He went into a city called Nain, and His disciples went with Him, as well as a large crowd. ¹²And as He came near the gate of the city, behold, one who had died was being carried out, an only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and a considerable crowd from the city was with her. ¹³And when the Lord saw her, He was moved with compassion for her and said to her, Do not weep. ¹⁴And He came near and touched the bier, and those carrying *it* stood still. And He said, Young man, to you I say, Arise. ¹⁵And the dead man sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother. ¹⁶And fear took hold of all, and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet has been raised up among us, and, God has visited His people! ¹⁷And this report concerning Him went out in the whole of Judea and in all the surrounding region.

Luke 10:25-37—And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and put Him to the test, saying, Teacher, what should I do to inherit eternal life? ²⁶And He said to him, What is written in the law? How do you read *it*? ²⁷And he answered and said, "You shall love the Lord your God from your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸And He said to him, You

have answered correctly; do this, and you shall have life. ²⁹But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, And who is my neighbor? ³⁰Jesus, taking up *the question*, said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who having both stripped him and beaten *him*, went away, leaving *him* half dead. ³¹And by coincidence a certain priest was going down on that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. ³²And likewise also a Levite, when he came to the place and saw *him*, passed by on the opposite side. ³³But a certain Samaritan, who was journeying, came upon him; and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion; ³⁴And he came to *him* and bound up his wounds and poured oil and wine on *them*. And placing him on his own beast, he brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵And on the next day he took out two denarii and gave *them* to the innkeeper and said, Take care of him; and whatever you spend in addition *to this*, when I return, I will repay you. ³⁶Which of these three, does it seem to you, has become a neighbor to him who fell into *the hands* of the robbers? ³⁷And he said, The one who showed mercy to him. And Jesus said to him, Go, and you do likewise.

Luke 19:1-10—And He entered and was passing through Jericho. ²And behold, *there was* a man whose name was called Zaccheus; and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. ³And he was seeking to see Jesus, who He was, and could not because of the crowd, for he was small in stature. ⁴And he ran on ahead and climbed up in a sycamore tree in order to see Him, for He was about to pass through that way. ⁵And as He came to the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, Zaccheus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay in your house. ⁶And he hurried and came down, and received Him, rejoicing. ⁷And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, He has gone in to lodge with a sinful man. ⁸And Zaccheus stood and said to the Lord, Behold, the half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore four times as much. ⁹And Jesus said to him, Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. ¹⁰For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.

- F. As the reproduction and duplication of the first God-man, we should live the same kind of life that He lived:
1. The Lord's God-man living set up a model for our God-man living—being crucified to live God so that God might be expressed in humanity—Gal. 2:20. **Gal. 2:20**—I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
 2. The Lord Jesus did not live a life of trying to be spiritual, holy, and victorious; He lived a life that was fully according to and for God's New Testament economy.
 3. In the four Gospels we see Jesus living the life of a God-man, and in Acts we see the disciples also living such a life.
 4. Christ lived a life of suffering, a suffering life; now we are His partners living the same kind of life; when we suffer for Christ, our sufferings are counted by God as the sufferings of Christ—Heb. 3:14. **Heb. 3:14**—For we have become partners of Christ, if indeed we hold fast the beginning of the assurance firm to the end—

5. We must deny ourselves, be conformed to Christ's death, and magnify Him by the bountiful supply of His Spirit—Matt. 16:24; Phil. 3:10; 1:19-21a.

Matt. 16:24—Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

Phil. 3:10—To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil. 1:19-21—For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ²⁰According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

6. The One who lived the life of a God-man is now the Spirit living in us and through us; we must reject self-cultivation and the building up of our natural man and allow nothing other than this One to fill us and occupy us so that we may live Him and express Him personally and corporately in the church, which is His Body—Eph. 3:16-19; 1:22-23.

Eph. 3:16-19—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are ¹⁹And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph. 1:22-23—And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, ²³Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

IV. As believers in Christ, we are living in the kingdom of God—Rom. 14:17:

Rom. 14:17—For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- A. The kingdom of God is God Himself—Mark 1:15; Matt. 6:33.

Mark 1:15—And saying, The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe in the gospel.

Matt. 6:33—But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

- B. The kingdom of God is God in Christ being the totality of the divine life with all its activities—John 11:25; 10:10b; 14:6.

John 11:25—Jesus said to her, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes into Me, even if he should die, shall live;

John 10:10—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, I am the way and the reality and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.

- C. The kingdom of God is the realm of the divine life for this life to move, to work, to rule, and to govern that life may accomplish its purpose.
- D. The kingdom of God is an organism constituted with God's life as the realm of life for His ruling, in which He reigns by His life and expresses Himself as the Divine Trinity in the divine life—15:1-8, 16, 26.

John 15:1-8—I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. ²Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes it away; and every *branch* that bears fruit, He prunes it that it may bear more fruit. ³You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. ⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. ⁶If one does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is dried up; and they gather them and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. ⁸In this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit and so you will become My disciples.

John 15:16—You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 15:26—But when the Comforter comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of reality, who proceeds from the Father, He will testify concerning Me;

- E. The kingdom of God is a realm, not only of the divine dominion but also of the divine species, in which are all the divine things—3:3, 5-6; 18:36:

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 18:36—Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My attendants would be struggling so that I would not be delivered to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not from here.

1. In John 3 the kingdom of God refers more to the species of God than to the reign of God.
2. God became man to enter into the human species, and man becomes God in life and nature but not in the Godhead to enter into the realm of the divine species—1:1, 12-14; Rom. 8:3; 1:3-4.

John 1:1—In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:12-14—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

Rom. 8:3—For that which the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of the flesh of sin and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh,

Rom. 1:3-4—Concerning His Son, who came out of the seed of David according to the flesh, ⁴Who was designated the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness out of the resurrection of the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord;

3. In order to enter into the realm of the divine species, we need to be born of God to have the divine life and the divine nature—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-6, 15; 2 Pet. 1:4:

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:15—That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.

2 Pet. 1:4—Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

- a. God created man not according to man's kind but in His image and according to His likeness to be God's kind, God's species—Gen. 1:26.

Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

- b. The believers, who are born of God by regeneration to be His children in His life and nature but not in His Godhead, are more God's kind than Adam was—John 1:12-13:

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

- (1) Adam had only the outward appearance without the inward reality of the divine life.
- (2) We, the believers in Christ and the children of God, have the reality of the divine life, and we are being transformed and conformed to the Lord's image in our entire being—2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2; 8:29.

2 Cor. 3:18—But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

Rom. 12:2—And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Rom. 8:29—Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

- (3) Our second birth, regeneration, caused us to enter into the kingdom of God to become the species of God—John 3:3, 5-6.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5-6—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

- (4) We have been regenerated to be Godkind; as God's sons, we are God's kind, God's species—Rom. 8:19; Heb. 2:10.

Rom. 8:19—For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

Heb. 2:10—For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

- (5) All the children of God are in the divine realm of the divine species—John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5.

John 1:12-13—But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name, ¹³Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:5—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- (6) The believers are God-men in the divine species, that is, in the kingdom of God—1 John 3:1a; John 3:5.

1 John 3:1—Behold what manner of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and we are. Because of this the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

John 3:5—Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- F. We live in the kingdom of God as the realm of the divine life by the sense of life—Rom. 8:6.

Rom. 8:6—For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

G. In the church, we are living in the kingdom of God today; Romans 14:17 is a strong proof that today's church life is the kingdom.

Rom. 14:17—For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

H. When we exercise that part of us which is the new creation—Christ Himself as the element of the kingdom of God—we are living in the kingdom of God.

I. The overcomers will inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God so that they can enter into the manifestation of the kingdom of the heavens—2 Tim. 4:18.

2 Tim. 4:18—The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will save me into His heavenly kingdom, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

V. In the Gospel of John we see many aspects of the believers' living in the realm of the divine species—1:16; 15:4a, 9, 11; 4:23-24; 14:2, 20, 23; 17:22-24:

John 1:16—For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

John 15:4—Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me.

John 15:9—As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

John 15:11—These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and *that* your joy may be made full.

John 4:23-24—But an hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truthfulness, for the Father also seeks such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truthfulness.

John 14:2—In My Father's house are many abodes; if *it were* not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:20—In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 14:23—Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

John 17:22-24—And the glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one; ²³I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me. ²⁴Father, *concerning* that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory, which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

A. "Of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace"—1:16.

B. "The water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life"—4:14b.

C. "He who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me"—6:57b.

D. "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there also My servant will be. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him"—12:26.

E. "In My Father's house are many abodes...I go to prepare a place for you"—14:2.

- F. “In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you”—v. 20.
- G. “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him”—v. 23.
- H. “Abide in Me and I in you”—15:4a.
 - I. “If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you”—v. 7.
 - J. “As the Father has loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love”—v. 9.
- K. “These things I have spoken to you that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be made full”—v. 11.
- L. “These things I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace”; “My peace I give to you”—16:33a; 14:27b.
- M. “Holy Father, keep them in Your name, which You have given to Me, that they may be one even as We are”—17:11b.
- N. “The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, even as We are one”—v. 22.
- O. “I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one”—v. 23a.
- P. “Father, concerning that which You have given Me, I desire that they also may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory”—v. 24a.

Message Five

The Apostolic Ministry in Cooperation with Christ's Heavenly Ministry to Shepherd the Church of God as His Flock for the Building Up of the Body of Christ and a New Revival

Scripture Reading: John 10:11, 16; 21:15-17;
1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Heb. 13:20; Rev. 1:13; 2:1, 7

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:16—And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Heb. 13:20—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

Rev. 1:13—And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

Rev. 2:1—To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

I. Psalms 22 through 24 are a group of psalms revealing Christ from His crucifixion through His shepherding to His kingship in the coming age:

- A. Psalm 23, which concerns Christ as the Shepherd in His resurrection and ascension, is the bridge between Christ's redeeming death and His church-producing resurrection in Psalm 22 and Christ's coming back as the King, who will regain the entire earth through the church as His Body in Psalm 24.
- B. In His heavenly ministry Christ is shepherding people, and we need to cooperate with Him by shepherding people; if this fellowship is received by us, there will be a big revival on the earth to bring the Lord back.

II. John 21 reveals the apostolic ministry in cooperation with Christ's heavenly ministry; it is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John:

- A. The Gospel of John has twenty-one chapters, but it actually ends with chapter 20.

- B. The entire book covers the earthly ministry of Christ, beginning with His incarnation as the Word of God to become a man in the flesh (1:14) and ending with His resurrection as the last Adam to become the life-giving Spirit (20:22); hence, chapter 21 should be an appendix.

John 1:14—And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

John 20:22—And when He had said this, He breathed into *them* and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit.

- C. Although it is correct to say this, it is more intrinsic to say that John 21 is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John; it consummates the entire Gospel of John by showing that Christ's heavenly ministry and the apostles' ministry on the earth cooperate together to carry out God's economy.

III. In John 10:10-11 and 16 the Lord unveiled to the disciples that He was the good Shepherd who came that the sheep might have life abundantly and that He had other sheep (the Gentiles) that He must lead to join with them (the Jewish believers) to be one flock (one church) under one Shepherd:

John 10:10-11—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly. ¹I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:16—And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

- A. The Lord's shepherding was first in His earthly ministry—Matt. 9:36; cf. 10:1-6. **Matt. 9:36**—And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

cf. Matt. 10:1-6—And He called His twelve disciples to *Him* and gave them authority over unclean spirits, so that they would cast them out and heal every disease and every sickness. ²And the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the *son* of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. ⁵These twelve Jesus sent forth, charging them, saying, Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter into any city of the Samaritans. ⁶But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

- B. The Lord's shepherding is second in His heavenly ministry (1 Pet. 5:4) to take care of the church of God, issuing in His Body.

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

IV. The Lord commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep:

- A. When the Lord stayed with His disciples after His resurrection and before His ascension, in one of His appearances, He commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep in His absence, while He is in the heavens—John 21:15-17.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

- B. This is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry to take care of God’s flock, which is the church that issues in the Body of Christ.
- C. Later, in the book of Acts, Peter said, “We will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word” (6:4); this is to cooperate with Christ’s heavenly ministry of intercession (Heb. 7:25) and of ministering God into His people (8:2). **Heb. 7:25**—Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Heb. 8:2—A Minister of the holy places, even of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.

- D. Peter was so impressed with this commission of the Lord that in his first book he tells the believers that they were like sheep being led astray, but they have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of their souls—1 Pet. 2:25:
1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
 - 1. Christ indwells us to be our life and everything, but He is also overseeing, observing, the condition and situation of our inner being.
 - 2. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our soul, our real person—cf. Heb. 13:17.
cf. Heb. 13:17—Obey the ones leading you and submit to *them*, for they watch over your souls as those who will render an account, that they may do this with joy and not groaning; for this would be unprofitable to you.
- E. Peter exhorts the elders to shepherd the flock of God among them so that when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, they, the faithful elders, will receive the unfading crown of glory—1 Pet. 5:1-4.
1 Pet. 5:1-4—Therefore the elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory to be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly; ³Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- F. Peter’s word indicates that the heavenly ministry of Christ is mainly to shepherd the church of God as His flock, which issues in His Body.

V. The following words of the apostle Paul also show the incorporation of the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry to take care of God’s flock:

- A. In Acts 20:28 Paul told the elders in Ephesus, “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained [or purchased] through His own blood.”
- B. Paul said, “I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock” (v. 29); the apostle did not care for his own life (v. 24), but he was very concerned for the future of the church, which was a treasure to him and to God.

Acts 20:24—But I consider my life of no account *as if* precious to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I have received from the Lord Jesus to solemnly testify of the gospel of the grace of God.

- C. Paul says in Hebrews 13:20, “God...brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant”:
 - 1. The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body and consummating the New Jerusalem; the eternal covenant of God is to consummate the New Jerusalem by the shepherding.
 - 2. God raised up our Lord from the dead to be the great Shepherd to consummate the New Jerusalem according to God’s eternal covenant.

VI. The main purpose and goal of the apostolic ministry incorporated with Christ’s heavenly ministry are to build up the Body of Christ, which will consummate the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God—cf. Eph. 3:2, 8-9; 1 Pet. 5:10.

cf. Eph. 3:2—If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

cf. Eph. 3:8-9—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 ⁹And 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,

cf. 1 Pet. 5:10—But the God of all grace, He who has called you into His eternal glory in Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, *and ground you.*

VII. The matter of shepherding God’s flock for the main purpose and ultimate consummation of the eternal economy of God is even referred to in Song of Songs:

- A. “Tell me, you whom my soul loves, Where do you pasture your flock [for satisfaction]? / Where do you make it lie down at noon [for rest]?”—1:7a.
- B. “Go forth on the footsteps of the flock, / And pasture your young goats / By the shepherds’ tents”—v. 8b.

- C. “My beloved is mine, and I am his; / He pastures his flock among the lilies [the seekers of Christ who live a life of trusting in God with a single heart]”—2:16.
- D. “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine; / He pastures his flock among the lilies”—6:3.

VIII. To shepherd the believers is very crucial for their growth in life; we must take the shepherding way to preach the gospel and revive the church:

- A. We should pray, “Lord, I want to be revived; from today I want to be a shepherd; I want to go to feed people, to shepherd people, and to flock people together.”
- B. In John 10 and 21 the Lord used three words concerning shepherding: *feed*, *shepherd*, and *flock* (10:16; 21:15-16); we can also use the word *flock* as a verb.
John 10:16—And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

John 21:15-16—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.

- C. All the churches have to learn how to flock together so that they can be blent together; the elders and co-workers should take the lead to practice this.

IX. The organic maintenance of the golden lampstand is Christ’s heavenly ministry to cherish the churches in His humanity and nourish the churches in His divinity to produce the overcomers through His organic shepherding—Rev. 1:13; 2:7; John 10:11, 14; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Heb. 13:20:

Rev. 1:13—And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:14—I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me,

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Heb. 13:20—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

- A. The Son of Man is in His humanity, the golden girdle signifies His divinity, and the breasts are a sign of love:
 1. Christ was girded at the loins, strengthened for the divine work (Exo. 28:4; Dan. 10:5) to produce the churches, but now He is girded about at the breasts, caring for the churches that He has produced by His love (Rev. 1:13).

Exo. 28:4—And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate and an ephod and a robe and a tunic of checkered work, a turban and a girding sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and for his sons that he may serve Me as a priest.

Dan. 10:5—I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a certain man, clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with the fine gold of Uphaz.

Rev. 1:13—And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

2. The golden girdle signifies Christ's divinity as His divine energy, and the breasts signify that this golden energy is exercised and motivated by and with His love to nourish the churches.
- B. Christ takes care of the churches in His humanity as the Son of Man to cherish them—v. 13a:

Rev. 1:13—And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

1. He dresses the lamps of the lampstands to make them proper, cherishing us that we may be happy, pleasant, and comfortable—Exo. 30:7; cf. Psa. 42:5, 11:
Exo. 30:7—And Aaron shall burn on it fragrant incense; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it.

cf. Psa. 42:5—Why are you cast down, O my soul? And *why* are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I will yet praise Him *For* the salvation of His countenance.

cf. Psa. 42:11—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.

- a. The Lord's presence provides an atmosphere of tenderness and warmth to cherish our being, giving us rest, comfort, healing, cleansing, and encouragement.
- b. We can enjoy the cherishing atmosphere of the Lord's presence in the church to receive the nourishing supply of life—Eph. 5:29; cf. 1 Tim. 4:6; Eph. 4:11.

Eph. 5:29—For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as Christ also the church,

cf. 1 Tim. 4:6—If you lay these things before the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, being nourished with the words of the faith and of the good teaching which you have closely followed.

cf. Eph. 4:11—And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers,

2. He trims the wicks of the lamps of the lampstand, cutting off all the negative things, which frustrate our shining—Exo. 25:38:
Exo. 25:38—And its tongs and its firepans shall be of pure gold.

a. The charred part of the wick, the snuff, signifies things that are not according to God's purpose, which need to be cut off, such as our flesh, our natural man, our self, and our old creation.

b. He trims away all the differences among the churches (the wrongdoings, shortages, failures, and defects) so that they may be the same in essence, appearance, and expression—cf. 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 12:18; Phil. 2:2.

cf. 1 Cor. 1:10—Now I beseech you, brothers, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and *that* there be no divisions among you, but *that* you be attuned in the same mind and in the same opinion.

cf. 2 Cor. 12:18—I entreated Titus and sent with *him* the brother. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not walk in the same spirit? In the same steps?

cf. Phil. 2:2—Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,

C. Christ takes care of the churches in His divinity with His divine love, signified by the golden girdle on His breasts, to nourish the churches—Rev. 1:13b:

Rev. 1:13—And in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle.

1. He nourishes us with Himself as the all-inclusive Christ in His full ministry of three stages so that we may grow and mature in the divine life to be His overcomers to accomplish His eternal economy.

2. As the walking Christ, He gets to know the condition of each church, and as the speaking Spirit, He trims and fills the lampstands with fresh oil, the supply of the Spirit—2:1, 7; cf. Exo. 27:20-21; Zech. 4:6, 11-14.

Rev. 2:1—To the messenger of the church in Ephesus write: These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, He who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:

Rev. 2:7—He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

cf. Exo. 27:20-21—And you shall command the children of Israel to bring to you pure oil of beaten olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. ²¹In the Tent of Meeting, outside the veil which is before the Testimony, Aaron and his sons shall maintain it in order from evening to morning before Jehovah; it shall be a perpetual statute *to be observed* throughout their generations by the children of Israel.

cf. Zech. 4:6—And he answered and spoke to me, saying, This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says Jehovah of hosts.

cf. Zech. 4:11-14—Then I answered and said to him, What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left? ¹²And I answered a second time and said to him, What are the two olive branches that are by the side of the two golden spouts, which empty the gold from themselves? ¹³And he spoke to me, saying, Do you

not know what these are? And I said, No, sir. ¹⁴And he said, These are the two sons of oil, who stand by the Lord of the whole earth.

3. To participate in His move and enjoy His care, we must be in the churches.

X. Through Christ's wonderful shepherding, we will enjoy Him as our blessings both today and for eternity—Isa. 49:10; Rev. 7:9-17; John 6:35; 4:13-14; Psa. 36:7-9; 91:1; Isa. 12:1-6; Rev. 22:1.

Isa. 49:10—They will not hunger or thirst; Neither the scorching heat nor the sun will strike them; For He who has compassion on them will lead them And will guide them beside the springs of water;

Rev. 7:9-17—After these things I saw, and behold, *there was* a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation and *all* tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes and palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰And they cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sits upon the throne and to the Lamb. ¹¹And all the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, ¹²Saying, Amen. The blessing and the glory and the wisdom and the thanks and the honor and the power and the strength be to our God forever and ever. Amen. ¹³And one of the elders answered, saying to me, These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and where did they come from? ¹⁴And I said to him, My lord, you know. And he said to me, These are those who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵Because of this they are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits upon the throne will tabernacle over them. ¹⁶They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat; ¹⁷For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

John 6:35—Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

John 4:13-14—Jesus answered and said to her, Everyone who drinks of this water shall thirst again, ¹⁴But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.

Psa. 36:7-9—How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Thus the sons of men take refuge in the shadow of Your wings. ⁸They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures. ⁹For with You is the fountain of life; In Your light we see light.

Psa. 91:1—He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

Isa. 12:1-6—And you will say in that day, I will praise You, O Jehovah. You were angry with me, *But* Your anger has turned and You have consoled me. ²God is now my salvation; I will trust and not dread; For Jah Jehovah is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation. ³Therefore you will draw water with rejoicing From the springs of salvation, ⁴And you will say in that day, Give thanks to Jehovah; call upon His name! Make His deeds known among the peoples; Remind *them* that His name is exalted. ⁵Sing psalms to Jehovah, for He

has done something majestic! Let it be made known in all the earth! ⁶Cry out and give a ringing shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel.

Rev. 22:1—And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

Message Six

Shepherding according to God

Scripture Reading: John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2, 4; Eph. 4:16

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Acts 20:28—Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

1 Pet. 5:2—Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Eph. 4:16—Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

I. In the Lord's recovery today, there is the urgent need for shepherding.

II. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock—John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28:

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Acts 20:28—Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

A. Shepherding refers to caring for all the needs of the sheep.

B. All the sheep need to be well provided for and well tended to.

III. Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd of our souls—John 10:9-17; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25:

John 10:9-17—I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture. ¹⁰The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly. ¹¹I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. ¹²He who is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters *them*. ¹³*He flees* because he is a hireling and

it does not matter to him concerning the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me, ¹⁵Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. ¹⁶And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd. ¹⁷For this *reason* the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

Heb. 13:20-21—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant, ²¹Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

A. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly—John 10:10-11:

John 10:10-11—The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly. ¹¹I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

1. He laid down His soul-life, His human life, to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His zoe life, His divine life—vv. 11, 15, 17.

John 10:11—I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:15—Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:17—For this *reason* the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

2. He leads His sheep out of the fold into Himself as the pasture, the feeding place, where they may eat freely of Him and be nourished by Him—v. 9.

John 10:9—I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture.

3. The Lord has formed the Jewish and Gentile believers into one flock (the church, the Body of Christ) under His shepherding—v. 16.

John 10:16—And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

B. God brought up from the dead “our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant”—Heb. 13:20:

Heb. 13:20—Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

1. The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding.

2. The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body of Christ and consummating in the New Jerusalem.
- C. As the Chief Shepherd, Christ shepherds His flock through the elders of the churches—1 Pet. 5:4:
1 Pet. 5:4—And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
1. Without the elders' shepherding, the church cannot be built up.
 2. The elders' shepherding should be Christ's shepherding through them.
- D. As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being—2:25:
1 Pet. 2:25—For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
1. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being.
 2. Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul, to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and of our problems, needs, and wounds.

IV. In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become one with God, be constituted with God, live God, express God, represent God, and minister God:

- A. Shepherding according to God requires us to be one with God and to be constituted with Him—John 14:20; 1 Cor. 6:17; Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11.
John 14:20—In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
1 Cor. 6:17—But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
Eph. 3:17—That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,
Col. 3:10-11—And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, ¹¹Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
- B. Only those who live God can shepherd according to God—Phil. 1:21a.
Phil. 1:21—For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
- C. God's eternal purpose is to work Himself into us as our life so that we may express Him—Gen. 1:26; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.
Gen. 1:26—And God said, Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heaven and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

Eph. 1:11—In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 3:11—According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

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

D. As those who shepherd according to God, we need to represent God and function as the acting God—2 Cor. 1:3-4, 12, 15-16; 2:10; 10:11; 11:2.

2 Cor. 1:3-4—Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions and God of all comfort, ⁴Who comforts us in all our affliction that we may be able to comfort those who are in every affliction through the comforting with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

2 Cor. 1:12—For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.

2 Cor. 1:15-16—And in this confidence I intended to come to you previously that you might have double grace, ¹⁶And through you to pass through into Macedonia, and again from Macedonia to come to you and be sent forward by you into Judea.

2 Cor. 2:10—But whom you forgive anything, I also *forgive*; for also what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, *it is* for your sake in the person of Christ;

2 Cor. 10:11—Let such a one take account of this, that such as we are in word by letters when absent, such also *we are* in deed when present.

2 Cor. 11:2—For I am jealous over you with a jealousy of God; for I betrothed you to one husband to present *you as* a pure virgin to Christ.

E. To shepherd according to God is to minister God to others:

1. How much we can minister God to others depends on our being broken by God for the outflow of life—4:10-12, 16; Heb. 4:12.

2 Cor. 4:10-12—Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹For we who are alive are always being delivered unto death for Jesus' sake that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹²So then death operates in us, but life in you.

2 Cor. 4:16—Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner *man* is being renewed day by day.

Heb. 4:12—For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

2. If we would minister God to one another, we need to speak words of grace, truth, spirit, and life, ministering the processed God who has been wrought into our being—Eph. 3:16-17a; 4:25, 29; John 6:63.

Eph. 3:16-17—That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, ¹⁷That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph. 4:25—Therefore having put off the lie, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Eph. 4:29—Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, according to the need, that it may give grace to those who hear.

John 6:63—It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

**V. Peter charged the elders to shepherd the flock of God according to God—
1 Pet. 5:2:**

1 Pet. 5:2—Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;

- A. *According to God* means that we must live God.
- B. When we are one with God, we become God and we are God in our shepherding of others.
- C. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory, not according to our preference, interest, purpose, and disposition.
- D. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes.
- E. In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become God in life, nature, expression, and function:

- 1. We need to be filled to the brim with the divine life, enjoying the Triune God as the fountain, the spring, and the river to become a totality of the divine life, even to become the divine life itself—John 4:14; Col. 3:4.

John 4:14—But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.

Col. 3:4—When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

- 2. We need to become God in His attributes of love, light, righteousness, and holiness.
- 3. We need to be the reproduction of Christ, the expression of God, so that in our shepherding we express God, not the self with its disposition and peculiarities.
- 4. We need to become God in His function of shepherding the flock of God according to what He is and according to His goal in His economy.

VI. The shepherding that builds up the Body of Christ is a mutual shepherding—1 Cor. 12:23-26:

1 Cor. 12:23-26—And those *members* of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely *members come to* have more

abundant comeliness, ²⁴But our comely *members* have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the *member* that lacked, ²⁵That there would be no division in the body, but *that* the members would have the same care for one another. ²⁶And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with *it*.

A. All of us need to be under the organic shepherding of Christ and be one with Him to shepherd others—John 21:15-17.

John 21:15-17—Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. ¹⁶He said to him again a second time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep. ¹⁷He said to him the third time, Simon, *son* of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

B. All believers, regardless of their growth in life, need shepherding.

C. We all have defects and shortcomings and need others to shepherd us.

D. We are both sheep and shepherds, shepherding and being shepherded in mutuality.

E. Through this mutual shepherding, the Body builds itself up in love—Eph. 4:16.

Eph. 4:16—Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.