

Message Two

The Organic Shepherding of Christ

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

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

v. 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.

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, perfect 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.

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

Rev. 7:17 For 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.

I. Christ is the good Shepherd—John 10:9-18:

- A. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly—vv. 10-11:
 - 1. He led 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.
 - 2. The good Shepherd laid down His human life to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His divine life—vv. 11, 15, 17.
- B. Under the shepherding of Christ as the good Shepherd, “there shall be one flock, one Shepherd”—v. 16:
 - 1. The Lord has formed the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers into one flock under His shepherding.
 - 2. The one flock signifies the one church, the one Body of Christ (Eph. 2:14-16; 3:6), brought forth by the Lord’s eternal, divine life, which He imparted into His members through His death—John 10:9-18.

II. Christ is the great Shepherd—Heb. 13:20-21:

- A. God raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead to be the great Shepherd to consummate the New Jerusalem according to God’s eternal covenant.
- B. The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding.
- C. 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 the New Jerusalem—Rev. 21:2.

III. Christ is the Chief Shepherd—1 Pet. 5:4:

- A. As the Chief Shepherd, Christ shepherds His flock through the elders of the churches—vv. 1-2.
- B. The first responsibility of the elders is to shepherd God’s flock, the church; without the elders’ shepherding, the church cannot be built up.
- C. The elders’ shepherding should be Christ’s shepherding through them.
- D. The elders must learn to shepherd the churches not by themselves or by the old creation but by Christ the Chief Shepherd in resurrection—vv. 3-4.

IV. Christ is the Shepherd of our souls—2:25:

- A. As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being:
 - 1. Christ’s organic shepherding primarily takes care of our soul—Psa. 23:3.

2. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being—cf. Heb. 13:11.
 3. This kind of shepherding is an inward, intrinsic, organic comforting.
- B. 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 to take care of our problems, needs, and wounds—John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17:
1. As our pneumatic Shepherd, Christ takes care of us from within our spirit:
 - a. His shepherding begins from our spirit and spreads to every part of our soul.
 - b. From our spirit Christ reaches all the parts of our soul and takes care of us in a tender, organic, all-inclusive way.
 2. This is the inward shepherding of the processed and consummated Triune God, who is united, mingled, and incorporated with His regenerated believers.

V. In eternity future Christ will be our eternal Shepherd guiding us to springs of waters of life for our eternal satisfaction—Rev. 7:17.

VI. The Lord Jesus incorporated the apostolic ministry with His heavenly ministry to take care of God’s flock, which is the church, issuing in the Body of Christ—John 21:15-17:

- A. John 21 consummates the Gospel of John by showing that Christ’s heavenly ministry and the apostles’ ministry on earth cooperated to carry out God’s New Testament economy:
1. In one of His appearances after His resurrection, the Lord Jesus commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and to shepherd His sheep in His absence, while He is in the heavens—vv. 15-17.
 2. This is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ’s heavenly ministry to take care of God’s flock.
- B. Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ’s heavenly ministry:
1. The heavenly ministry of Christ is mainly to shepherd the church of God as His flock—Heb. 13:20-21; Acts 20:28.
 2. What He was doing in the heavens, the apostles did on earth to carry out His heavenly ministry.
- C. 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 in the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God—Eph. 4:16; Rev. 21:2.