

Message Six

Shepherding according to God

(2)

**Becoming One with God, Being Constituted with God,
Living God, Expressing God, Representing God,
and Ministering God to Shepherd according to God**

Scripture Reading: John 21:15-17; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 5:2; 1 Cor. 6:17; 2 Cor. 13:14

I. The Lord Jesus incorporated the apostolic ministry with His heavenly ministry in shepherding God's flock, which is the church—Heb. 8:1; 13:20-21; John 21:15-17:

- A. In His heavenly ministry the Lord Jesus continues the shepherding that He began in His earthly ministry—10:11, 14-16; Heb. 13:20-21.
- B. Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ's heavenly ministry—1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2-4; John 21:15-17.

II. In 1 Peter 5:2 the apostle Peter speaks about shepherding according to God:

- A. 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—2 Cor. 4:2, 5-6.
- B. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes—1 John 1:5; 4:8; Luke 6:36.

III. 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. If we would shepherd according to God, we need to become one with God—John 14:20; 1 Cor. 6:17:
 - 1. The basic principle of the Bible is that in His economy God is making Himself one with man and man one with Him—John 15:4; 1 Cor. 6:17.
 - 2. God desires that the divine life and the human life be joined together to become one life that has one living—John 6:57; Gal. 2:20.
 - 3. In 1 Corinthians 7 we see the principle of being one with the Lord in all circumstances, situations, and conditions—vv. 17, 24.
- B. Shepherding according to God requires that we be constituted with God—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
 - 1. God desires to dispense Himself into our being so that our being may be constituted with His being to be one constitution with His being—Eph. 3:17a; 4:4-6.
 - 2. As the Divine Being, God infuses us with His element, causing us to be the same as He is in life and nature but not in the Godhead—2 Cor. 13:14.
- C. Only those who live God can shepherd according to God—Phil. 1:21a:
 - 1. God's economy is to work Himself into us so that we may receive Him as our life and life supply in order to live Him—John 11:25; 6:48, 57.
 - 2. We are participating in the divine life and the divine nature so that we can live God in our humanity—Gal. 2:20.

3. Our daily life should actually be God Himself and thus be a life of living God; to walk in a manner worthy of God is to live God, that is, to express God in our daily living—1 Thes. 2:12; 1 Cor. 10:31.
- D. God's intention in His economy is to dispense Himself into us as our life and nature, making us the same as He is in life and nature to express Him—Eph. 3:16-21; 1 John 5:11-12; Col. 3:4; 2 Pet. 1:4:
1. 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.
 2. The human virtues that are produced in us through our eating, digesting, and assimilating God with His attributes become the expression of God—Eph. 4:1-3.
 3. God's desire is that we would be one with Him and live Him for His corporate expression—1 Cor. 6:17; Phil. 1:21a; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:16.
- E. As those who would shepherd according to God, we need to represent God and function as the acting God:
1. Jehovah made Moses "God to Pharaoh"; in Moses, God had one to represent Him and to execute His will—Exo. 7:1; 3:16-18; 5:1.
 2. As the representative of God, Samuel was the acting God—1 Sam. 1:11; 2:35; 7:3; 8:22:
 - a. Samuel could be the acting God because his being and God's heart were one—2:35.
 - b. Samuel's living and working were for carrying out whatever was in God's heart.
 3. In his ministry Elisha the prophet, as the man of God, behaved himself as God's representative, as the acting God; today we, the believers in Christ, can be the same—2 Kings 4:9; 1 Tim. 6:11.
 4. As an ambassador of Christ, one who represented God, Paul was the acting God—2 Cor. 1:3-4, 12, 15-16; 2:10; 10:11; 11:2.
- F. To shepherd according to God is to minister God to others—13:14:
1. Our work in the Lord's recovery today is to minister the processed God to people—Eph. 3:16-17a; 2 Cor. 3:9; 4:1, 5; 13:14.
 2. The Triune God is embodied in Christ and realized as the consummated Spirit; this is the God whom we worship, proclaim, and minister to others—Col. 2:9; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; 13:14.
 3. Those who minister the word should supply the saints with God and reality, not mere doctrine—2 Tim. 2:2, 15; 4:2-3, 5.
 4. How much we can minister God to others depends on our being broken by God for the outflow of life—2 Cor. 4:10-12, 16; Heb. 4:12.
 5. 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.
 6. We need to feed the saints with God so that they may receive the supply of life with full enjoyment and satisfaction for the building up of the Body of Christ—Matt. 24:45-46; Heb. 5:12-14; Eph. 4:16.