

# SHEPHERDING THE FLOCK OF GOD

Message Five

(Friday—Second Morning Session)

## **Shepherding the Flock of God in an Organic Way according to His Initiation and with Our Cooperation**

Scripture Reading: Mark 9:7-8; Acts 22:8, 10, 14-15; 26:16-19; 1 Tim. 3:15; Eph. 3:14-21

### **I. In order to shepherd the flock of God in an organic way, we must see that all our work and service in the church must be initiated by God and must be done according to His desire—Jer. 2:13; Rom. 11:36:**

- A. Abel served God by faith according to God's revelation and, in type, offered Christ to God; Abel's offering was not of himself but of God; it was revealed, commanded, and ordained by God—Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17.
- B. Cain served God from himself according to his own will and thought, heretically rejecting the redemption by blood required and ordained by God; his way of doing things according to his opinion was not of God but of himself—Gen. 4:1-5, 16; Jude 11a.
- C. Noah served God according to God's revelation and command—Gen. 6:8-22.
- D. Abraham served God according to God's appearing; God's appearing motivated and controlled all his actions—12:1, 9—13:4.
- E. Moses served God according to God's instruction for the deliverance of the children of Israel, and he was divinely instructed by God to build the tabernacle according to the pattern that was shown to him in the mountain—Exo. 3:10; 25:9, 40; Heb. 8:5.
- F. David loved God, feared God, and cooperated with God; although he had the opportunity, saw the need, and had the ability to build the temple of God, he stopped when God's word came to him—2 Sam. 7:18, 25, 27; cf. Luke 1:38:
  - 1. David's stopping established a twofold testimony in the universe: first, all the work in this universe should come from God, not from man; second, all that matters is what God does for man, not what man does for God.
  - 2. David wanted to build a temple for God, but God said that He would build a house for David from which a kingdom would come forth—2 Sam. 7:5, 11-12.
  - 3. The builder of the temple and the site of the temple both came out of David's being forgiven of his sins, out of what God did for David—12:24-25; 24:1-10, 18-25; 1 Chron. 21:18; 2 Chron. 3:1; Psa. 51.
  - 4. We need to let God speak to us, command us, and then we need to cooperate with Him because we fear Him and love Him—Exo. 21:1-6; Psa. 86:11; 1 Cor. 2:9.
  - 5. We should love God by seeking His will, His revelation, and His command; we should do nothing on our own but act only according to the word of the Lord as our Master—Exo. 21:5-6; cf. John 5:30; Isa. 50:4-5.
  - 6. Sister M. E. Barber said, "Whoever cannot stop working for the sake of God cannot work for the sake of God."

- G. Peter learned to simply listen to the Lord's command to "hear Him" and to see "Jesus only" so that He could enjoy and minister Christ as the universal replacement, the centrality and universality of God's economy—Mark 9:7-8.
- H. Paul served God according to the heavenly vision that he saw concerning God's eternal economy—Acts 26:19; Eph. 3:8-11:
  1. Paul asked the Lord two questions at his conversion: "Who are You, Lord?" (Acts 22:8), and "What shall I do, Lord?" (v. 10).
  2. Paul became a minister and a witness to all men of the real Christ that he continually saw and heard—vv. 14-15; 26:16-19; cf. 1 John 1:3.
  3. We should all ask the Lord, "What shall I do?" rather than telling Him, "This is what I will do."

**II. All those who serve God must see a principle from the above examples: God's work needs man's cooperation, but it does not require man's initiation—Isa. 6:1-8; 2 Cor. 5:19-20; 6:1a:**

- A. The unique prerequisite to receiving God's revelation is to stop our speaking, our opinion, our view, and our self; when we have an opinion and want to initiate something, God stops and hides Himself—Job 38:2; 42:1-6.
- B. Job realized from God that he was a person who "darkens counsel / By words without knowledge" (38:2; cf. 42:3); when Job saw God, he said that he abhorred himself, referring to his opinions, views, and ideas.
- C. We must learn deep within that God wants only our cooperation; we must stop all our opinions, decisions, and ideas; we need to let Him speak to us.
- D. In order for us to serve God according to His will, we must stop ourselves to give God the absolute opportunity to speak to us—cf. Rev. 2:7.

**III. We must learn how to conduct ourselves in the church as the house of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15), taking the organic way to care for, to organically administrate, the church according to the following ten crucial points:**

- A. We must have Christ revealed in us—Gal. 1:15-16.
- B. We must see that Christ is our life—Col. 3:4.
- C. We must realize that we need to live in Christ—Gal. 2:20b; John 15:5.
- D. We must see that what we are and what we have in ourselves has been terminated on the cross—Gal. 2:20a; 6:14; Rom. 6:6.
- E. We must not serve or work according to what we are and what we have in ourselves; whatever we are, whatever we have, and whatever we do toward God must be in our mingled spirit, not in our soul by the power and ability of the soul—1:9; 7:6; 8:4-6, 16; Phil. 3:3; Gal. 5:16, 25; cf. Jude 19-20.
- F. We must not dispense anything other than Christ in our service and work in the church—Gal. 4:19; 2 Cor. 2:15-17; 3:3; 13:3.
- G. We must not expect those with whom we serve to change in any way; instead, we must desire only that they gain Christ, be filled with Christ, and be fully gained by Christ—1 Cor. 2:2; Phil. 3:8-14.
- H. We must clearly see that there must be only one result in our service, work, and administration of the church; this result is that Christ must be produced in the church so that everyone has Christ, so that Christ increases in every

member, and so that all will arrive at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ—2 Cor. 4:12; Phil. 3:8; Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:13.

- I. We must pray for the above eight points; we must be men of prayer—1:17-23; 3:14-19; Col. 1:9-12; 4:2.
- J. We must be like the apostle Paul who had a living faith, believing that God can accomplish these points—Eph. 3:20-21; 1 Thes. 5:24.