

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE NEED FOR A NEW REVIVAL

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

MR *Hymns*: God's Eternal Economy, 910

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

- John 21:15 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.
- John 21:16 He 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.
- John 21:17 He 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.
- 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,
- Heb 13:21 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 5:2 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 Cor 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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:

- Heb 8:1 Now in the things which are being said the chief point is this: We have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,
- 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,
- Heb 13:21 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.
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- 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.
- 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,
- John 10:15 Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.
- John 10:16 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 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,

Heb 13:21 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.

B. Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ's heavenly ministry—1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2-4; John 21:15-17.

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 5:2 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 5:3 Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.

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

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

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. 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.

2 Cor 4:2 But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every conscience of men before God.

2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.

2 Cor 4:6 Because the God who said, Out of darkness light shall shine, is the One who shined in our hearts to illuminate the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

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.

1 John 1:5 And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

1 John 4:8 He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.

Luke 6:36 Be full of compassion, even as your Father also is full of compassion.

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:

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.

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

- 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 in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
3. In 1 Corinthians 7 we see the principle of being one with the Lord in all circumstances, situations, and conditions—vv. 17, 24.
- 1 Cor 7 be omitted.
- 1 Cor 7:17 However as the Lord has apportioned to each one, as God has called each one, so let him walk. And so I direct in all the churches.
- 1 Cor 7:24 Each one, brothers, in what status he was called, in this let him remain with God.
- B. Shepherding according to God requires that we be constituted with God—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- Col 3:10 And have put on the new man, which is being renewed unto full knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,
- Col 3:11 Where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.
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.
- Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
- Eph 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;
- Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism;
- Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.
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.
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
- C. Only those who live God can shepherd according to God—Phil. 1:21a:
- Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...
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.
- 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 6:48 I am the bread of life.
- 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.
2. We are participating in the divine life and the divine nature so that we can live God in our 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 in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
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.
- 1 Thes 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.
- 1 Cor 10:31 Therefore whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.
- 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:
- Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
- Eph 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

- Eph 3:18 May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- Eph 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.
- Eph 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,
- Eph 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.
- 1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.
- 1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
- 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.
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.

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
 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.

Eph 4:1 I beseech you therefore, I, the prisoner in the Lord, to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called,

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

Eph 4:3 Being diligent to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace:
 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.

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

Phil 1:21a For to me, to live is Christ ...

Eph 1:22 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

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.
- 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.

Exo 7:1 And Jehovah said to Moses, See, I have made you God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother will be your prophet.

Exo 3:16 Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, I have surely visited you and seen what is being done to you in Egypt.

Exo 3:17 And I say, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, to a land flowing with milk and honey.

- Exo 3:18 And they will listen to your voice. And you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt, and you shall say to him, Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; and now let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness that we may sacrifice to Jehovah our God.
- Exo 5:1 And afterward Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, Thus says Jehovah the God of Israel, Let My people go that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.
2. As the representative of God, Samuel was the acting God—1 Sam. 1:11; 2:35; 7:3; 8:22:
- 1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.
- 1 Sam 2:35 And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in My heart and in My mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he will go before My anointed continually.
- 1 Sam 7:3 Then Samuel spoke to all the house of Israel, saying, If you are returning with all your heart to Jehovah, remove the foreign gods and the Ashtaroth from your midst, and direct your heart to Jehovah and serve only Him; and He will deliver you from the hand of the Philistines.
- 1 Sam 8:22 Then Jehovah said to Samuel, Listen to their voice, and appoint a king to them. And Samuel said to the men of Israel, Go, each one to his city.
- a. Samuel could be the acting God because his being and God's heart were one—2:35.
- 1 Sam 2:35 And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in My heart and in My mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he will go before My anointed continually.
- 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.
- 2 Kings 4:9 And she said to her husband, Now I know that this man who continually passes through unto us is a holy man of God.
- 1 Tim 6:11 But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, meekness.
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.
- 2 Cor 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions and God of all comfort,
- 2 Cor 1:4 Who 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 And in this confidence I intended to come to you previously that you might have double grace,
- 2 Cor 1:16 And 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.
- F. To shepherd according to God is to minister God to others—13:14:
- 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

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.
 - Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...
 - 2 Cor 3:9 For if there is glory with the ministry of condemnation, much more the ministry of righteousness abounds with glory.
 - 2 Cor 4:1 Therefore having this ministry as we have been shown mercy, we do not lose heart;
 - 2 Cor 4:5 For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.
 - 2 Cor 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
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.
 - Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,
 - 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.
 - 2 Cor 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions and God of all comfort,
 - 2 Cor 1:4 Who 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 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
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.
 - 2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.
 - 2 Tim 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, an unashamed workman, cutting straight the word of the truth.
 - 2 Tim 4:2 Proclaim the word; be ready in season and out of season; convict, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching.
 - 2 Tim 4:3 For the time will come when they will not tolerate the healthy teaching; but according to their own lusts they will heap up to themselves teachers, having itching ears,
 - 2 Tim 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelist, fully accomplish your ministry.
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.
 - 2 Cor 4:10 Always bearing about in the body the putting to death of Jesus that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
 - 2 Cor 4:11 For 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.
 - 2 Cor 4:12 So 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.
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.
 - Eph 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,
 - Eph 3:17a That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...

- 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.
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.
- Matt 24:45 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time?
- Matt 24:46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.
- Heb 5:12 For when because of the time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you what the rudiments of the beginning of the oracles of God are and have become those who have need of milk and not of solid food.
- Heb 5:13 For everyone who partakes of milk is inexperienced in the word of righteousness, for he is an infant;
- Heb 5:14 But solid food is for the full-grown, who because of practice have their faculties exercised for discriminating between both good and evil.
- 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.