

WEEK 6 — OUTLINE

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

<< DAY 1 >>

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).

<< DAY 2 >>

- 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).

<< DAY 3 >>

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).

« DAY 4 »

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).

« DAY 5 »

- 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).

« DAY 6 »

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).

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 1 >>

Morning Nourishment

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.

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.

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) which He must lead to join with them (the Jewish believers) to be one flock (one church) under one Shepherd....The Lord's shepherding was firstly in His earthly ministry (Matt. 9:36). The Lord saw the Israelites as sheep harassed by their leaders; they were cast away like sheep not having a shepherd. The Lord as the Shepherd of God's elect prayed, and God told His sent One to appoint twelve apostles that they might take care of the sheep of God (Matt. 10:1-6)....The Lord's shepherding is secondly in His heavenly ministry (1 Pet. 5:4) to take care of the church of God, issuing in His Body. When He was on the earth, He was shepherding. After His resurrection and ascension to the heavens, He is still shepherding. (Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John, pp. 130-131)

Today's Reading

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). Shepherding implies feeding, but it includes much more than feeding. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock....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.

Christ's shepherding of His flock includes His caring for their outward things and also their inner being, their souls. He takes care of the things concerning their souls by overseeing their souls. Christ indwells us to be our life and everything, but He is also overseeing, observing, the condition and situation of our inner being. 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....Peter exhorted 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)....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....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. (Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John, pp. 131-133)

Through their experience of the dispensing of the Divine Trinity, the believers should shepherd the saints as the flock of God according to God, that is, according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory. In Acts 20:28 Paul reminded the elders in Ephesus to shepherd the church of God. The main responsibility of the elders as overseers is not to rule over the flock but to shepherd the flock, to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock, the church of God. Shepherding the flock of God requires suffering for the Body of Christ as Christ suffered (Col. 1:24). This kind of shepherding enables the elders to be rewarded with the unfading crown of glory (1 Pet. 5:4).

To shepherd according to God [v. 2] means to shepherd according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory, not according to man's preference, interest, and purpose. The elders should not shepherd the flock according to their own opinion, concepts, or likes and dislikes. Instead, they should shepherd the saints as the flock of God according to God's choice, desire, intention, and preference. (Truth Lessons—Level Four, vol. 3, pp. 20-21)

Further Reading: Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John, msg. 13; The Vital Groups, msg. 6

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 2 >>

Morning Nourishment

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.

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.

In his first Epistle, Peter spoke in 2:25 of Christ being the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, our inner being and real person. Then in 5:1-2 he told the elders that their obligation is to shepherd God's flock according to God. According to God means that we must live God. We must have God on hand. We have God in our understanding, in our theology, and in our teaching, but we may not live God when we are shepherding people. When we are one with God, we become God. Then we have God and are God in our shepherding of others. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes. God is love, light, holiness, and righteousness. According to God is at least according to these four attributes of God. We must shepherd the young ones, the weak ones, and the backsliding ones according to these four attributes. Then we will be good shepherds. Without shepherding, there is no way for us to minister life to others. (The Vital Groups, pp. 60-61)

Today's Reading

In order to understand the Bible, we must exercise one principle. This principle is that God planned in His economy to make Himself one with man. The basic principle, the main principle, of Christ's birth is that God came to join Himself to man, to be a man, and to be one with man. This is the basic principle of the Bible.

When we read the Bible, we need to keep the principle of God's being one with man. We should keep the principle that the Word of God as the divine revelation shows us that God's main purpose is to make Himself one with man and to make man one with Him. In John 15 the Lord said, "I am the vine; you are the branches....Abide in Me and I in you" (vv. 5, 4). This shows us that God and the believers in Christ are one. We and God were once separate, but one day we, the wild branches, were grafted into Him in Christ (Rom. 11:24). We have been grafted into Christ as the tree, and this grafting has made us one with Him. What is needed now is for us to abide in Him that He may abide in us. Then He and we will be one, having one life, one nature, and one living.

If we see this, we will be fully adjusted in our understanding of the Bible. We need to hold the divine concept in John 15 where the Lord said that He is the vine, that we are His branches, and that we should abide in Him that He may abide in us.

In our understanding of the Bible, we have to pick up the proper principles. The main principle is that God desires to be one with His chosen people. Eventually, the oneness between God and man will be completed, consummated. All of God's chosen people will be consummated to be fully one with God to become the constituents of the holy city, the New Jerusalem. Whenever we come to the Psalms, we need to hold this concept; otherwise, we can be misled. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 200-201)

We all know that in botany, grafting means to unite two trees. A farmer grafts a branch of a sweet tree into that of a sour tree so that the life of the sweet tree can enter into the sour tree and the life of the sour tree can enter into the sweet tree. Eventually these two lives are joined together to become one life. The fruit produced thereafter is the expression of the sweet tree through the sour tree. To the sour tree, the sweet tree is its life, so it is no longer the sour tree that lives, but it is the sweet tree that lives in it. If the sour tree could speak, it would declare, "As always, even now the sweet tree will be magnified in my body, whether through wind and frost or through rain and snow." This is the life of a Christian. (The Mystery of the Universe and the Meaning of Human Life, pp. 27-28)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, "Living in the Spirit," chs. 1-3

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 3 >>

Morning Nourishment

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, where there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcision and uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all.

Paul's spirit was absolutely one with God. Paul was not willing to change anything or to initiate anything. This was the reason he could tell the Corinthians not to change their status as far as marriage was concerned. Those who were married when called by the Lord should remain married. This principle applies even to marriage with an unbeliever. The married believer should not initiate any change. On the contrary, the entire matter should be left with God. Whether the unbelieving party remains or leaves, the believing one should take the situation from the Lord. Everything depends on God and on the situations, circumstances, and conditions arranged by Him. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, p. 372)

Today's Reading

It is important to see this principle of being absolutely one with the Lord in all circumstances, situations, and conditions. If we are mindful of this principle as we read 1 Corinthians 7, we shall see that Paul is utterly one with the Lord and that in his instructions and answers he spontaneously and unconsciously expresses such an absolute spirit. Because Paul had this kind of spirit, he could answer the Corinthians' questions in a clear and absolute way, in a way that would help them also to become one with God in their situation. (Life-study of 1 Corinthians, p. 373)

The law of life within us is for God's economy. Without giving us His life as the inner law, God has no way to accomplish His economy. God's economy is to dispense Himself into our being that our being may be constituted with His being to be one constitution with His being. This can be accomplished only by God putting Himself into us as the divine life. Today hardly any Christians pay attention to the divine life as the inner law. (Life-study of Jeremiah, p. 179)

We may use other terms to describe God's desire to dispense Himself into us. God wants to water us, feed us, refresh us, and nourish us. These terms indicate that God wants to be our life, life supply, food, drink, and air. He is our food to nourish us; our drink to quench our thirst; our air to refresh us; and our life supply to enrich us. As the Divine Being, He infuses us with His elements, causing us to be the same as He in life and nature.

In His economy God does not improve us outwardly. Instead, He transmits all that He is into us. The difference between outward correction and inward transfusion can be illustrated by the difference between applying makeup and having a healthy complexion because of eating properly. Man's way is to apply makeup. God's way is to transform us metabolically; it is to nourish, refresh, water, enrich, and strengthen us. This is God's economy...God does not merely teach us; He nourishes us, waters us, and infuses all His riches into our inner being. This is God's way.

There is a great difference between God's economy and the natural human concept. Our concept is that after we are saved we should make up our minds to improve our behavior. Probably every genuine Christian has made such a decision. According to our concept, we need to improve ourselves. Conscious of our weakness, we beg God to help us. However, God does not answer this kind of prayer. The more we pray that He will help us to improve, the less He will do. On the contrary, our behavior may even worsen. The reason for this is that the concept of receiving help from God to improve our behavior is contrary to God's economy. God's economy is to dispense Himself into us and to work Himself into us that we may take Him as our life and life supply in order to live Him. This is not to have an improved human character; it is to live God. According to His economy, God's intention is to impart His element, His substance, and the ingredients of His nature into our being that we may live Him. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 324, 323)

Further Reading: Life-study of Jeremiah, msg. 32; The God-man Living, msg. 8-9

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 4 >>

Morning Nourishment

1 Thes. 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

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

Eventually, we Christians should live a life of God and man, the life of a God-man. Today we live as a man, yet we also live as God in His life and in His nature but not in His Godhead. His Godhead is unique. We have His life and His nature, just as the children of a father have their father's life and nature. But none of the children have the fatherhood. Only the father of a family has the fatherhood. In the same way, God is unique and His Godhead is unique. We cannot share in His Godhead, but we do have the divine life and the divine nature. We are participating in this divine life and divine nature so that we can live God, live Christ.

We need to be released from being misled and be brought into the central line of God's economy, which is to live Christ as the embodiment of God by the realization of the Spirit. Today we are here as a man, but we are living the Triune God in our manhood. (Life-study of the Psalms, pp. 210-211)

Today's Reading

We have placed a strong emphasis on the fact that, according to 1 Thessalonians 1:1, the church is an entity in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Now let us go on to consider 2:12: "That you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." What does it mean to walk worthily of God? To walk worthily of God is to have a life in the Lord Jesus Christ. First Thessalonians 2:12 is an explanation of 1:1. What does it mean for the church to be in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ? For the church to be in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ in a practical way is for there to be a company of human beings who walk worthily of God.

What can compare with God? What can match Him? The answer to these questions is that only God Himself can compare with God or match Him. This indicates that to walk worthily of God actually means to live God. Our daily life must actually be God Himself, since only God can be worthy of God, match God, or compare with God. Therefore, in our living we must express God. (Life-study of 1 Thessalonians, p. 84)

The Bible is a complete revelation. The content of this revelation is God's eternal purpose. As we have pointed out many times, God's eternal purpose is to work Himself into a corporate man so that He may have a corporate expression in the universe. If we would understand any portion of the Bible in a proper way, we must keep this matter in mind. (Life-study of Genesis, p. 813)

The God of whom we have been constituted will express Himself from within us. In what way is the God whom we eat and digest and of whom we are constituted expressed from within us? God is expressed in us by means of His attributes. God is love and light, and He is holy and righteous. When we eat and drink of God, we shall live Him as love, light, holiness, and righteousness. These divine attributes will become our virtues as the expression of God. How can we tell that someone has been eating and digesting God? We can tell this by the expression of God from within him. This expression of God is God's speaking. The human virtues that are produced through assimilating God with His divine attributes become the expression of God, and this expression is actually God's speaking. (Life-study of 1 John, p. 29)

God has an economy, and this economy involves a plan with many arrangements. God's aim in His economy is to have a group of human beings who have His life and nature inwardly and His image and likeness outwardly. This group of people is a corporate entity, the Body of Christ, to be one with Him and live Him for His corporate expression. As God is expressed not only by the Body but also through the Body, He is glorified. When He is glorified, His people are also glorified in His glorification. In this way God and man are one in glory. (Life-study of Jeremiah, p. 82)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1975-1976, vol. 1, "Living in the Spirit," chs. 4-5; Life Lessons, Isn. 34

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 5 >>

Morning Nourishment

Exo. 3:18 ...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.

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.

In Exodus we see both the stubborn Pharaoh and Moses, God's representative. By Pharaoh God made Himself manifest as the sovereign God, but in Moses God had one to represent Him and to execute His will. Praise the Lord that none of us are Pharaoh but we all are Moses, those who are one with the Lord! In His sovereignty and mercy, wherever we go, we go with the Lord, we represent Him, and we execute His will. (Life-study of Exodus, p. 246)

Today's Reading

At the end of his ministry,...Samuel had reached the highest position. We may say that in the whole universe, there was only one who was above him, and that one was God. We may even say that, as God's representative, Samuel was the acting God. God intended to move, to act, yet He needed a representative. Samuel thus became a prophet, a priest, and a judge. He was God's oracle and God's administration. As such, he was the acting God on earth.

Samuel was faithful to God to do according to what was in God's heart and mind. His whole being and person, not just his doing, living, and work, were according to God. Samuel's being and God's heart were one. For this reason it is not too much to say that Samuel, a man according to God, was the acting God on earth. God's mind was Samuel's consideration. He had no other thought, consideration, or thinking. His living and working were for the carrying out of whatever was in God's heart. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 43, 28-29)

In his ministry Elisha the prophet, as the man of God, behaved himself as God's representative, as the acting God, on the earth. As believers in Christ, we can be the same. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Kings, pp. 93-94)

The apostle Paul was an ambassador of Christ. An ambassador is one who represents the highest authority...The highest authority in this universe is God, and God has given all authority in heaven and on earth to Christ (Matt. 28:18). God has appointed Christ to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 17:14). Today Jesus is the Christ, the Lord of all, the highest authority. For this highest authority there is the need of some ambassadors on this earth who are qualified to represent Him. The Lord's ministry is not a matter of merely being a preacher or a teacher but of being one who is authorized with the heavenly authority, representing the highest authority in the whole universe. First, we need to be captured by Christ, and eventually, we need to become a representative of Christ on this earth to deal with the earthly nations as an ambassador.

Many years ago I had a card that said "Bondslave of Christ—Witness Lee." At that time I did not dare to entitle myself an ambassador of Christ, but now I have a fuller realization that we all have to be ambassadors of Christ on this earth. We are not only the captives of Christ. Eventually, we have to be the ambassadors of Christ representing Him on this earth for His interests. We may think that this is something too great, too big. Maybe some of the sisters would think that they are just the weak vessels. They may wonder how they could be the ambassadors of Christ, representing the highest authority on this earth. Regardless of whether we are a brother or a sister, all of us are members of the Body of Christ. The highest authority is Christ as the Head, and we as members of the Body have to be representatives of the Head. As representatives of the Head, we are ambassadors. (CWWL, 1967, vol. 2, "An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," pp. 171-172)

Further Reading: Life-study of Exodus, msg. 22; CWWL, 1967, vol. 2, "An Autobiography of a Person in the Spirit," ch. 6

<< WEEK 6 — DAY 6 >>

Morning Nourishment

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.

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.

Our work in the recovery today is to minister God to people. Yes, we need to save sinners and to feed the saints and perfect them. The crucial matter, however, is that we minister God to others. The God whom we minister is not just the building God—He is also the builded God. If we fail to minister God in this way, our work will be wood, grass, and stubble (1 Cor. 3:12). (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, pp. 200-201)

Today's Reading

I would ask you to reconsider the work you are doing for the Lord. Perhaps you have opened up a region or have brought many people to God. But I ask you this question: How much of Christ as the embodiment of the Triune God has been wrought into those whom you have brought to God? If we are sincere and genuine, we will humble ourselves and confess that not very much of the Triune God has been wrought into the ones we have brought to God. Therefore, we need to practice one thing—to minister the processed Triune God into others so that He may build Himself into their inner man. In every aspect of our work—preaching the gospel, feeding the believers, perfecting the saints—the intrinsic element must be that we minister the building and builded God to others.

The processed Triune God is embodied in Christ and realized as the consummated Spirit. This is the God whom we worship, preach, and minister to others. Today He is building Himself into His redeemed people in order to produce a house with Himself as the element and also with something from their redeemed and uplifted humanity. This house is the church, the Body of Christ. (Life-study of 1 & 2 Samuel, p. 201)

We often say that God is life and that He enters into us to be our life. However, because we do not see this vision, we do not speak concerning this in our messages, nor do we help the saints to see this. Those who minister the word must see that the church needs the supply of life, words of life, not the interpretation of doctrines. The ministry of the word is to supply the saints with God as the Spirit of life. The word that is spoken must be spirit and life. This causes the saints to touch God. This is the urgent need in the churches today. (The Perfecting of the Saints and the Building Up of the House of God, p. 82)

We must remember that the outer man constitutes the greatest hindrance to the ministry of the word....No matter how clever a person is, the outer man can never replace the inner man. The inner man will come up with the right thoughts and proper words to flow out only as the outer man is broken and smashed. The outer shell must be broken by God. The more this shell is broken, the more the life in the spirit will be released. (CWWN, vol. 54, "The Breaking of the Outer Man and the Release of the Spirit," p. 205)

In the Old Testament, in addition to the ministries of the priests, kings, and prophets, there was another ministry related to God's people, the ministry of the shepherds (Jer. 23:3-4; Ezek. 34:11-31)....In the Bible God likens His people to a flock, and those who pasture God's people are called shepherds. Shepherds are commissioned by God to feed God's flock so that they may receive the supply of life with full enjoyment and satisfaction....Besides feeding God's people, shepherds take care of God's people so that they may lie down and have rest. Sometimes shepherds seek out, heal, and rescue....As a shepherd, one also should teach God's people and open their understanding with the holy Word of God so that they may know God and obey God....The most crucial responsibility of a shepherd is to lead God's people so that they are not scattered and led astray but obey and keep God's word and are one flock under God's name. (Truth Lessons—Level Three, vol. 2, pp. 123-124)

Further Reading: The Vital Groups, msgs. 7-8

<< WEEK 6 — HYMN

Hymns, #863

1

In daily walk and in our meetings too,
Christ is the center, Christ is everything;
'Tis not for form nor doctrine good and true,
But 'tis for Christ alone we're gathering.

2

Christ is the way and Christ the light of life,
In Him we walk and by Him we are led;
Christ is the living water and the food;
Of Him we drink and we with Him are fed.

3

Christ is the truth, 'tis Him we testify,
Christ is the life, 'tis Him we minister;
Christ is the Lord, 'tis Him we magnify,
Christ is the Head, and we exalt Him here.

4

Christ is the All in all to God and man—
With Him both we and God are satisfied;
Christ, the reality within the Church—
By Him are life and numbers multiplied.

5

By all the hymns and prayers we offer here,
Christ the reality we would express;
All the activities in fellowship—
Christ thus in operation manifest.

6

'Tis in His Name we meet, in Spirit act,
With nothing in our mind to formalize;
'Tis by His pow'r we pray, in unction praise,
And with Himself in spirit exercise.

7

All things forgetting, cleaving unto Christ,
Applying Him until maturity;
Let us count everything but loss for Him,
For Him, our All in all, eternally.