

## **Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Six: The Apostolic Ministry in Cooperation with Christ's Heavenly Ministry**

### **I. Overview:**

John 21 should be an appendix and also is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John, showing that Christ's heavenly ministry and the apostles' ministry on the earth cooperate together to carry out God's New Testament economy. Peter was so impressed with this commission of the Lord that he exhorts the elders to shepherd the flock of God among them and to shepherd God's flock according to God to build up the Body of Christ. We must take the shepherding way to preach the gospel and revive the church. We need to shepherd people according to the pattern of the Lord Jesus in His ministry and follow the pattern of the apostles to pay more attention to life than to work. If all the churches receive this teaching to participate in Christ's wonderful shepherding, there will be a big revival in the recovery.

### **II. Truth and Enlightenment:**

Day 1 —

#### **A. What are the important things unveiled in John 21?**

John 21 should be an appendix, but it is more intrinsic to say that John 21 is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John, showing that Christ's heavenly ministry and the apostles' ministry on the earth cooperate together to carry out God's New Testament economy. 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.

#### **B. Explain the meaning of the eternal covenant Paul says in Hebrews 13:20.**

The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body and consummating the New Jerusalem. The eternal covenant of God is to consummate the New Jerusalem by the shepherding. God raised up our Lord from the dead to be the great Shepherd to consummate the New Jerusalem according to God's eternal economy.

Day 2 —

#### **A. Explain how Christ to be Shepherd and Overseer of our souls.**

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.

#### **B. Expound "to shepherd according to God" in 1 Peter 5:2.**

According to God means that we must live God. 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. According to God means according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory, not according to man's preference, interest, and purpose.

Day 3 —

#### **A. How does John 21 mention about shepherding and how important is it?**

John 21 is a chapter on shepherding and the Gospel of John is a book on Christ saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." Here we see the Savior's saving strength and His saving love. (Life-study of Luke, p. 291) being God coming to be our life. Eventually, such a book has a conclusion on shepherding. If we do not know what shepherding is, the entire Gospel of John will be in vain to us. It is only when we shepherd others that we can know John in an intrinsic way. Shepherding is the key to the Gospel of John.

#### **B. How should we do since shepherding and teaching are our obligation as a charge given to us by the Lord.**

This is the basic way ordained by God in the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate His eternal goal. The Gospels reveal Christ's shepherding and teaching in His ministry for carrying out God's eternal. We all need to rise up and the number

one thing we should do in these days is to visit people in their homes. This is to follow the pattern of the Lord Jesus. We must go to visit people.

Day 4 —

A. How do we see the Savior's saving strength and love in Luke 15?

Luke 15:4 says that the Lord Shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it. Luke 15:5-6 continues, "And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost." Here we see the Savior's saving strength and His saving love.

B. By what is the revival of the church brought in?

Shepherding is something divine. In order to be a shepherd, we must be a witness of Christ, a member of Christ, and a brother of Christ. We need to shepherd people. This is the way to be fruitful, to have the multiplication and the increase. There is a revival brought in on the earth by the many members of Christ's Body being shepherds who follow the steps of the processed Triune God in seeking and gaining fallen people.

Day 5 —

A. How did the Lord cherish and nourish a thirsty sinner in John 4?

When Christ as the God-Savior wanted to save an immoral woman of Samaria, He traveled from Judea to Galilee through Samaria, He detoured from the main way of Samaria to the city of Sychar, and He waited at the well of Jacob, near Sychar, for His object to come that He might cherish her by asking her to give Him something to drink so that He might nourish her with the water of life.

B. How do we see Christ as the model of cherishing and nourishing in Rev.1?

In Rev. 1:12-13 John said, "when I turned to see the voice that spoke with me, I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment reaching to the feet, and girded about at the breasts with a golden girdle." This shows that Christ is taking care of the lampstands by being the Son of Man with a long garment. This garment is the priestly robe, which shows that Christ is our great High Priest.

Day 6 —

A. Explain the fact of fostering seen in 1 Thessalonians 2.

Here Paul likens the apostles both to a nursing mother and to an exhorting father. They regarded the believers as children under their fostering care. Just as parents care for their children, fostering their growth, so the apostles cared for the new believers. Because the apostles rendered such a care to the new believers, the apostles will eventually receive a reward from the Lord.

B. What's the significance that Paul spent for the believers in 2 Cor.12:15?

"spend" means to spend what he has, referring to his possessions. To "be utterly spent" means to spend what he is, referring to his being. Paul was willing to sacrifice himself—his soul, his life, his entire being—for the believers. All the saints in the Lord's recovery need to learn this crucial lesson: to receive grace to spend what we have and to be utterly spent for the saints and for the churches.

### III. Conclusion:

In 1942-43 the revival of the church in Yan-Tai and in 1949 the initial work in the island of Taiwan having the hundred fold multiplication brought in were due to the proper shepherding by the many members of the Body of Christ. The pulse and the life lines of a church's multiplication are on "home meetings"; brother Lee once mentioned, "If the new way reaches a crucial stage, it will arrive at a mountain, which is the home-meeting. In order to climb this mountain and even to climb over it, we, no matter how old or how young we are, all need to receive this burden to bear the task in one accord. The new way succeeds at two things; one is to save people and the other is the home meetings to hold the new believers, becoming the remaining fruit and to perfect them unto the useful vessels."