

<p>I . To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock: <u>John 21:16</u> 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. <u>Acts 20:28</u> Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.</p>	<p>A. Shepherding refers to caring for all the needs of the sheep <u>Psa 23:1</u> Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing. <u>2</u> He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside waters of rest. <u>3</u> He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. <u>4</u> Even though I walk Through the valley of the shadow of death, I do not fear evil, For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, They comfort me. <u>5</u> You spread a table before me In the presence of my adversaries; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. <u>6</u> Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me All the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah For the length of my days. B. All the sheep need to be well provided for and well tended to.</p>	
<p>II. In Ezekiel 34 the Lord Himself comes as the Shepherd to search for His sheep and seek them out: <u>Ezek. 34:11</u> For thus says the Lord Jehovah, I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and seek them out. <u>12</u> As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day when he is among his sheep which are scattered, so I will seek out My sheep; and I will deliver them from all the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness. <u>13</u> And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.</p>	<p>A. The Lord brings us out from among the unbelievers to Himself. B. He brings us to our own land, signifying Christ as the good land of Canaan. C. He brings us back to the high mountains, signifying the resurrected and ascended Christ. D. He brings us back to the streams, signifying the living water of the life-giving Spirit. E. He feeds His flock by the streams, signifying His feeding us with His riches. F. He brings us back to the good and rich pasture, signifying Christ as our life supply. <u>Ezek.34:14</u> I will feed them with good pasture, and their dwelling place will be upon the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in a good dwelling place, and on rich pasture they will feed upon the mountains of Israel. G. He causes us to lie down, giving us inward rest. <u>Ezek. 34:15</u> I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, declares the Lord Jehovah. H. He binds up the broken one and strengthens the sick one, signifying His binding up and healing the brokenhearted and sick ones. <u>Isa.61:1</u> The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me, Because Jehovah has anointed Me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent Me to bind up the wounds of the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives, And the opening of the eyes to those who are bound; I. The Lord exercises righteous judgments among us, clearing away all the unjust things. J. Christ is the real David, the real Shepherd, set up as the one Shepherd to feed us and cause us to be filled and satisfied:</p>	<p>1. He takes care of us, including all our problems and responsibilities and every aspect of our living. 2. The issue of the Lord's caring for us as our Shepherd is that we obey Him as our King and come under His kingship 3. As we experience the Lord's shepherding and remain under His kingship, we enjoy His covenant of peace and are no longer subject to spiritual troubles and disturbances. 4. Under His shepherding, all the evil beasts, evil persons, are kept away from the Lord's recovered people. 5. He breaks the bars of all our yokes, including the yokes of sin and the world, and delivers us from all kinds of slavery. 6. He promises that we will not be prey to the enemy and that we will dwell in peace and safety. K. He causes us to become a source of blessing to others so that they may be supplied with Him as the showers of blessing and as the planting place of renown. <u>Ezek. 34:26</u> And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing. L. Through the experience of His shepherding, we have God's presence; we are His and He is ours in our fellowship with Him in oneness for the mingling of God and man. <u>Ezek. 34:30</u> Thus they will know that I, Jehovah their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, declares the Lord Jehovah.</p>
<p>III. Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd of our souls:</p>	<p>A. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly:</p>	<p>1. He laid down His soul-life, His human life, to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His zoe life, His divine life. 2. He leads His sheep out of the fold into Himself as the pasture, the feeding place, where they may eat freely of Him and be nourished by Him. 3. The Lord has formed the Jewish and Gentile believers into one flock (the church, the Body of Christ) under His</p>

<p><u>John 10:10</u> The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly. <u>11</u> I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.</p> <p><u>1 Pet. 2:25</u> For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.</p>		shepherding.	<p>1. The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding.</p> <p>2. The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body of Christ and consummating in the New Jerusalem.</p> <p>3. As the great Shepherd, the Lord is making real to us the contents of the new covenant</p> <p>1. Without the elders' shepherding, the church cannot be built up.</p> <p>2. The elders' shepherding should be Christ's shepherding through them.</p> <p>1. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being.</p> <p>2. Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul in order to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and our problems, needs, and wounds.</p> <p>3. As the Shepherd of our souls, the Lord restores our soul and gives rest to our soul. <u>Matt. 11:28-29</u> Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.</p>
<p>IV. John 21, a chapter on shepherding, is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John; shepherding is the key to the Gospel of John:</p>			<p>A. The Gospel of John is a book on Christ coming to be our life by cherishing and nourishing us; to cherish people is to make them happy, pleasant, and comfortable, and to nourish people is to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ.</p> <p>B. After His resurrection, the Lord shepherded Peter and commissioned him to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to take care of God's flock, the church, which issues in the Body of Christ (John 21:15-17):</p> <p>1. The apostles were commissioned by the ascended Christ to cooperate with Him to carry out God's New Testament economy</p> <p>2. Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ's heavenly ministry, doing on earth what He is doing in the heavens.</p>
<p>V. First Peter 5:2 speaks of shepherding the flock of God according to God: <u>1 Pet. 5:2</u> 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.</p>			<p>A. According to God means that we live God.</p> <p>B. When we are one with God, we become God and we are God in our shepherding of others.</p> <p>C. 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.</p> <p>D. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes.</p> <p>E. In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become God in life, nature, expression, and function:</p> <p>1. We need to be filled to the brim with the divine life, enjoying the Triune God as the fountain, the spring, and the river to become a totality of the divine life, even to become the divine life itself.</p> <p>2. We need to become God in His attributes of love, light, righteousness, and holiness.</p> <p>3. We need to be the reproduction of Christ, the expression of God, so that in our shepherding we express God, not the self with its disposition and peculiarities.</p> <p>4. We need to become God in His function of shepherding the flock of God according to what He is and according to His goal in His economy. <u>Eph. 4:16</u> 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.</p>
<p>VI. For eternity we will have the experience and enjoyment of Christ as our eternal Shepherd:</p> <p><u>Rev. 7:16</u> They will not hunger any more, neither will they thirst any more, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat; <u>17</u> For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.</p>			<p>A. As our eternal Shepherd, Christ will lead us into Himself as the springs of waters of life so that we may enjoy the eternal dispensing of the Triune God.</p> <p>B. The waters of life will be supplied, and the water of tears will be wiped away.</p> <p>C. Under Christ's shepherding in eternity, there will be no tears, no hunger, and no thirst—only enjoyment.</p>

Experience: ① The Lord Jesus comes as a shepherd to look after our spiritual needs and human needs:

Ezekiel verse 23 goes on to say, “And I will set up over them one Shepherd, My Servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them, and He will be their Shepherd.” David typifies Christ. Christ is the real David, the real Shepherd, feeding us and causing us to be filled and satisfied....As our Shepherd Christ takes care of us, including all our problems and responsibilities. He takes care of us not only in spiritual things but in all things related to our human needs. This means that, according to Psalm 23, He takes care of us in every aspect of our living. ...When the Lord Jesus comes as the Shepherd, He comes also as the King. The issue of the Lord’s caring for us as our Shepherd is that we obey Him as our King and come under His kingship. The Lord is our Shepherd to be our King, and He is our King to be our Shepherd. On the one hand He shepherds us; on the other hand, He governs us.

Junior High / Senior High School student model:

English lessons begin officially, after you graduate from the elementary school and become a junior high student. Mathematics and other subjects become difficult as well. It is your responsibility to keep up with the studies in the junior high school. When you become a high school student, your responsibility becomes even bigger because of the university entrance exams. But you should not be afraid of the heavy responsibility. The Lord is a shepherd who looks after all the problems and responsibilities of junior high and senior high school students. You should not run away from the problems and responsibilities you face. Instead, capture the growing problems and responsibilities as an opportunity to experience the Lord Jesus as your shepherd. You can pray as follows, "Oh, Lord Jesus, I spend much time in the English classes ever since I became a junior high student. Even though I am not good at my English classes, but I cannot run away from them, Lord, you are my shepherd, please guide me and nourish me, help me to fulfill my responsibility regarding English, I will put my trust in Lord the shepherd. Amen."

Also, you need to have fellowship openly with the young working brothers and sisters and the brothers and sisters studying in the college who are looking after you. The Lord is the great shepherd of the sheep, and the brothers and sisters who guide you are also your shepherds.

The Lord is my Shepherd forever(Hymn 1170)

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| 1. The Lord is my Shepherd forever,
He maketh me down to lie,
He leads me beside the still waters
O how He does satisfy!
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life;
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life.
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever,
And I shall feast at the table spread for me;
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life. | 2. My Shepherd Himself is my pasture,
My Shepherd, the waters of rest;
I eat of His riches in spirit,
I drink, and O how I am blest!
3. My Shepherd my soul is restoring,
My will, and emotion, and mind;
And though through
the valley I'm walking,
O what a Companion I find! |
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② Elders and the responsible ones are indispensable for the building up of the church:

Christ is the Chief Shepherd, shepherding His flock through the elders of the churches . All the elders are subordinate shepherds. Christ as the Head is the Chief Shepherd....When we shepherd, it should be Christ shepherding through us....All the elders have to learn to shepherd the churches not by themselves in the old creation but by Christ as the shepherding Chief in resurrection.

Without the elders’ shepherding, the church cannot be built up. All the believers, regardless of their stage of spiritual growth, need shepherding. Even a brief word spoken to a saint after a meeting will comfort, encourage, and strengthen that one.

The elders should oversee “willingly, according to God” [1 Pet. 5:2]. To oversee according to God means according to God’s nature, desire, way, and glory, not according to man’s preference, interest, and purpose. The elders should not oversee according to their opinion, concept, or likes or dislikes. Instead, they should oversee according to God’s choice, desire, intention, and preference. The elders must oversee the church altogether according to God’s thought, feeling, will, and choice. They must oversee according to God’s likes and dislikes.

Working young saints model (particularly in regard to occupation and marriage):

For working young saints, the biggest concern is about occupation and marriage. Since these matters are also important to God, these problems cannot be avoided when the responsible brothers and the leaders are shepherding them according to God. In addition, the working young saints should not avoid or shy away from fellowshipping the problems with the leading brothers and sisters. In occupation and marriage, your future will be greatly blessed if you renew your consecration, open yourself to the guidance of Christ and the church, the great shepherd of the sheep and the shepherds who follow Christ. You need to leave these practical matters to the Lord and let the Lord guide you. You can pray the following,

"Lord Jesus, I need an occupation suitable for church life. I need particularly to sanctify the Lord’s Day to remember the Lord with the brothers and the sisters every week. In addition, an occupation with extreme overtime and/or low income is also not suitable. I put my trust in the Lord and the body of the Lord-the church instead of trusting myself with this. May my occupation be used for the building up of the church. Amen!

"Lord Jesus, May my future marriage be guided and blessed by you. The occupation may be changeable but the marriage is basically impossible to change. I come before you earnestly with my marriage. Please match me with the person determined by you. And may my marriage life be a testimony for the Christ and the church. Amen!

1 Peter 5:5 In like manner, younger men, be subject to elders; and all of you gird yourselves with humility toward one another, because God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. 6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time, 7 Casting all your anxiety on Him because it matters to Him concerning you.

③ The milestones in Chapter 1 of the Gospel of John (the BSG model)::

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

14 And the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and reality.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

32 And John testified, saying, I beheld the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He abode upon Him.

The milestones in the Gospel of John were of the verses 1 and 14, "The Word was God, and the Word became flesh", in verse 29, "The Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world", and in verse 32 "the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He abode upon Him".

The Word became flesh indicates that God became a person, who was Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was the Tabernacle of God. As it was the age of the Old Testament, the Tabernacle was a house of God, Jesus Christ was a man whom God dwelt in. He was a man who dwelt in God on earth for thirty-three years and had brought forth grace and reality. For in God's plan, it is even more important that God takes the form of flesh than the creation of all things.

The god who became flesh was crucified on the cross. He died in place of the sinners, in order to take away the sin from the sinners. We are the ones who committed the sin, but Jesus Christ who was without sin had died on the cross in place of us, He became "the Lamb of God that took away the sin of the world."

Finally, after Jesus Christ died on the cross as the scapegoat, He was raised from the dead, and became the life-giving spirit. We sinners, after the sin was taken away, there is the need to the have God's life dispensed into us.

Jesus Christ had passed over three important milestones. i) God became flesh, ii) Jesus Christ died on the cross to save us, iii) after Jesus Christ died on the cross, He was resurrected from the dead, became the life-giving spirit, and can dispense the life of God into man.

After recognizing these three milestones, read the Word of Bible below.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

The purpose for the thief to come is to steal, kill, and destroy. But the Lord came, and He came as a good shepherd, to let His sheep (us) have life and may have it abundantly. Today, the Lord Jesus as the life-giving spirit, is here now. That is for you, the sheep to have life,

and have it abundantly.

For this reason the Lord Jesus had to die on the cross first. Your problem of sin was solved and for you to gain peace. Then the Lord Jesus rose from the dead and became the life-giving spirit. That is for you to gain God's life and to gain contentment.

Please read the Word in chapter one of John.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Man's sin was forgiven, and was born of God with the life of God, not because of his good family lineage. Also, not of the will of the flesh (corrupted will), and not of the will (good will) of man. It is only by knowing that God has passed over the three milestones and by accepting them. As you have read Chapter 1 of John, may you also call the name of the Lord Jesus that you can simply receive the absolution of sins prepared for you and the dispensation of God's life. You may have good family lineage, but God's family is the most blessed, so you will accept God's visit and let God dwell in your heart. Praise God for His love.

Hymn 998

Christ has become one with sinners,
Sharing in all of our living;
Crucified even for sinners,
Glorious life to us giving.
(Chorus) Christ Jesus came for us,
Christ Jesus died for us;
O yes, for us, for us, for us.
Christ came and died for us.

The Triune God –His process (Tune:Hymns, 319)

Christ has put on human nature
And become a man like me.
He has died upon the cross that
I from Adam might be free.
He has risen and as Spirit
He has come to live in me,
That according to God's purpose
He my very life may be.

The Lord is my Shepherd forever(Hymn 1170)

1. The Lord is my Shepherd forever,
He maketh me down to lie,
He leads me beside the still waters
O how He does satisfy!
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life;
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life.
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever,
And I shall feast at the table spread for me;
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
All the days, all the days of my life.