

<p>I . Paul was a pattern of cooperating with Christ's heavenly ministry to shepherd people for the building up of the Body of Christ.  <u>Philippians3:17</u> Be imitators together of me, brothers, and observe those who thus walk even as you have us as a pattern. <u>2 Thessalonians3:9</u> Not because we do not have the right, but in order that we might give ourselves to you as a pattern that you might imitate us. <u>Ephesians4:16</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 one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.</p>	
<p>II. The apostles were a pattern of the glad tidings that they spread—"you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake":</p>	<p>A. In the church the most important thing is the person; the person is the way, and the person is the Lord's work; what you are is what you do.  <u>John6:57</u> 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.  <u>Matthew12:33</u> Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for by the fruit the tree is known.</p>
	<p>B. We need to follow the pattern of the apostles to pay more attention to life than to work.  <u>John12:24</u> Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.  <u>2 Corinthians4:12</u> So then death operates in us, but life in you.</p>
<p>III. Paul was a pattern to the believers of living and ministering Christ as the Spirit in his spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ:  <u>1 Timothy1:16</u> But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.</p>	<p>A. The Lord appeared to Paul to make him a minister and a witness of the things in which Paul had seen Him and of the things in which He would appear to Paul. <u>Act1:8</u> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth. <u>23:11</u> But in the night following, the Lord stood by him and said, Take courage, for as you have solemnly testified to the things concerning Me in Jerusalem, so also you must testify in Rome.</p>
	<p>B. Paul took Christ as everything—as his living, pattern, goal, and secret. <u>Philippians1:20</u> According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.<u>3:13</u> Brothers, I do not account of myself to have laid hold; but one thing I do: Forgetting the things which are behind and stretching forward to the things which are before, <u>3:14</u> I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called me upward. <u>4:11</u> • • •for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content. <u>4:12</u> I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack.</p>
	<p>C. Paul lived by the Spirit, walked by the Spirit, sowed unto the Spirit, and ministered the Spirit as a spiritual man who lived and served in his spirit.  <u>Galatians5:16</u> But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall by no means fulfill the lust of the flesh. <u>2 Corinthians3:6</u> Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, ministers not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.</p>
	<p>D. Paul was infused with God to shine forth God in the ministry of the new covenant, which is the ministry of the Spirit, the ministry of righteousness, and the ministry of reconciliation.  <u>2 Corinthians3:18</u> But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit. <u>5:20</u> On behalf of Christ then we are ambassadors, as God treats you through us; we beseech you on behalf of Christ, Be reconciled to God.</p>
	<p>E. Paul lived and did everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body. <u>2 Corinthians12:14</u> Behold, this third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not be a burden; for I do not seek what is yours but you. For the children ought not to store up for the parents, but the parents for the children. <u>15</u> But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. <u>Ephesians4:12</u> For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,</p>
<p>IV. The best way to shepherd people, to cherish and nourish them, is to give them a proper</p>	<p>A. The apostles not only preached the gospel but also lived it; their ministering of the gospel was not only by word but also by a life that displayed the power of God, a life in the Holy Spirit and in the assurance of faith. <u>1 Thessalonians1:5</u> For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.</p>
	<p>B. The saints in Thessalonica became imitators of the apostles; this led them to follow the Lord, to take Him as their pattern, thus making them a pattern to all other believers.  <u>1 Thessalonians1:6</u> And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Spirit, <u>7</u> So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia.</p>
	<p>C. The apostle Paul stressed</p> <p>1. The apostles were struggling and speaking the gospel to the Thessalonians in the boldness of God. <u>1 Thessalonians2:2</u> But having suffered previously and having been outrageously treated, even as you know, in Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.</p>

<p>pattern; Paul fed his spiritual children with his own living of Christ:</p> <p>repeatedly the apostles' entrance toward the believers; this shows that their manner of life played a great role in infusing the gospel into the new converts: <u>1 Thessalonians1:9</u> For they themselves report concerning us what kind of entrance we had toward you and how you turned to God from the idols to serve a living and true God</p>	<p>2. The apostles were free from deception, uncleanness, and guile. <u>1 Thessalonians2:3</u> For our exhortation is not out of deception nor out of uncleanness nor in guile;</p>	
	<p>3. The apostles were first tested and approved by God and then were entrusted by Him with the gospel; hence, their speaking, the preaching of the gospel, was not of themselves to please men but of God to please Him; God proved, examined, and tested their hearts continually. <u>1 Thessalonians2:4</u> But even as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who proves our hearts.</p>	
	<p>4. The apostles were never found with flattering speech or with a pretext for covetousness: <u>1 Thessalonians2:5</u> For neither were we found at any time with flattering speech, even as you know, nor with a pretext for covetousness; God is witness.</p>	<p>a. To have any pretext for covetousness is to peddle or adulterate the word of God. <u>2 Corinthians2:17</u> For we are not like the many, adulterating the word of God for profit; but as out of sincerity, but as out of God, before God we speak in Christ.</p> <p>b. It is also to pretend to be godly for the sake of gain. <u>1 Timothy6:5</u> Perpetual wranglings of men corrupted in mind and deprived of the truth, supposing godliness to be a means of gain.</p>
	<p>5. The apostles did not seek glory from men: <u>1 Thessalonians2:6</u> Nor did we seek glory from men, neither from you nor from others, though we could have stood on our authority as apostles of Christ.</p>	<p>a. To seek glory from men is a real temptation to every Christian worker; many have been devoured and spoiled by this matter.</p> <p>b. Lucifer became God's adversary, Satan, because of glory-seeking; anyone who seeks glory from men is a follower of Satan. <u>Ezekiel28:17</u> Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness. I cast you to the ground; I presented you before kings that they may look at you.</p> <p>c. How much we will be used by the Lord and how long our usefulness will last depend on whether we seek glory from men. <u>John7:17</u> If anyone resolves to do His will, he will know concerning the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. <u>2 Corinthians4:5</u> For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake.</p>
	<p>6. The apostles did not stand on their authority or dignity as apostles of Christ:</p>	<p>a. To assert authority, dignity, or right in Christian work damages that work; the Lord Jesus, while on earth, gave up His dignity, and the apostle preferred not to use his right. <u>1 Corinthians9:12</u> If others partake of this right over you, should not rather we? Yet we did not use this right, but we bear all things that we may not cause any hindrance to the gospel of Christ.</p> <p>b. If we follow this pattern, we shall kill a deadly disease germ in the Body of Christ, the germ of assuming a position. <u>Matthew20:28</u> Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.</p>
	<p>7. The apostles cherished the believers and yearned over them as a nursing mother would cherish and yearn over her own children : <u>1 Thessalonians2:7</u> But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. <u>8</u> Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us. <u>9</u> For you remember, brothers, our labor and travail: While working night and day so as not to be burdensome to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.</p>	
	<p>a. To cherish people is to make them happy, to comfort them, to make them feel that you are pleasant to them, easy to be contacted in everything and in every way.</p> <p>b. To cherish people in our natural humanity is not genuine; we must cherish people with the Lord's presence as the charming factor, as the reality of resurrection.</p> <p>c. Cherishing includes nourishing; to nourish people is to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ in His full ministry of three stages.</p>	
	<p>8. The apostles not only imparted the gospel of God to the Thessalonians; they also imparted their own souls:</p>	<p>a. To live a clean and upright life and to love the new converts, even by giving our own souls to them, are the prerequisites for infusing them with the gospel.</p> <p>b. Paul was willing to spend not only what he had but also himself, his very being, on behalf of the saints. <u>2 Corinthians12:15</u> But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?</p>
	<p>9. The apostles considered themselves as fathers in exhorting the believers to walk worthily of God, to have a walk that will enable them to enter into the kingdom of God and usher them into the glory of God:</p>	<p>a. As worshippers of idols, the believers were in the kingdom of Satan.</p> <p>b. Now, through the salvation in Christ they were called, and they have believed into the kingdom of God, which is the sphere in which they can worship and enjoy God under the divine ruling with the view of entering into God's glory.</p>

**Experience: ① become an upright man and learn to be a role model to shepherd the newcomers**

We have to learn to be the proper person more than to learn to do the proper things. It is meaningless for things to be done properly without the person being a proper one. ... You cannot serve God beyond what you are as a person. Hudson Taylor said in his book Union and Communion that what we are is more important than what we do. This word left a deep impression on me. We should know how to help the brothers and sisters properly.

What God cares for is whether or not you have been touched by Him. The measure we yield ourselves to the Lord determines the measure we are able to serve Him. If you have been dealt with in your temper, you can help others with their temper. If you have been dealt with in the way you dress, you will be able to help others in the way they dress. The church is not a worldly society. The church is a body (Eph. 1:23). A body is a matter of life.

Our attitude may be that everyone is weak but we are not weak. We may have the feeling that we are strong ones. In 1 Corinthians 9:22 Paul said, "To the weak I became weak that I might gain the weak." This means that we should come down to the weak one's level. To a sick person we come down to the level of a sick person. This is the way to shepherd people by visiting them. Paul also said, "Who is stumbled, and I myself do not burn?" [2 Cor. 11:29]. This is to burn in sorrow and indignation over the cause of the stumbling of all the fallen ones. This shows the pattern of Paul as a good shepherd, taking care of God's flock.

First Thessalonians 2:1-12 shows us how we should conduct ourselves as a pattern for new believers. In order to be a proper pattern, we need to be pure in our motives, especially concerning money. Much of what is written in these verses is related to money, greed, and covetousness. If we are not pure concerning money, if we are not sincere, honest, and faithful regarding it, we may be among those who adulterate the word of God and peddle it. Furthermore, this motive may cause us to use flattery and to have a pretext for covetousness. All these are serious matters. Therefore, if we would be a proper pattern for young saints, our greed must be dealt with, and money matters must be under our feet. We should never speak words of flattery, we should never have any pretext, and we should never seek glory for ourselves. Moreover, instead of trying to please man, we should do our best to please God. Then other believers will have a good pattern to follow.

**The working young saints' model:**

As a working young saint, you should not only learn the skills of work, but also learn to be an upright person. You will not succeed if you only learn skills. Some people are outstanding in skills and abilities, but their personalities are unstable and are difficult for them to build relationships of trust with others. Usually it does not seem to be a big problem in particular, but as soon as difficulties or problems turn up, they become unstable instantly and tend to be isolated. This is due to the arrogance, individualism, love of money, greediness and the covetousness deep in the person, since they have not been dealt with, the person is devoured by them. As a working young saint in the Lord, you need to be an upright person both in the company and in the church services. When you are lost, you need to ask yourself if the righteousness is carried out or not. Even when it is difficult to carry out the righteousness, but if you carry out the injustice rather than the righteousness, people around you will know and they will never respect you full-heartedly. You should say the right things, carry out the right things, fear God, and have the will to please God in the Lord, with the Lord, and for the Lord. Therefore, you need to deal with the negative passive things in you through confessions. Amen!

**Experience: ② Nurture with love affection like a mother, nourish the newcomers tenderly**  
1 Thessalonians 2:7 But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children. 8 Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.

Even though Paul was a brother, he considered himself a nursing mother. Surely, he had no thought of position, dignity, or authority. The thought of being a nursing mother is very different from the thought of dignity or position. What position does a nursing mother have? What rank, dignity, or authority belongs to her? Her dignity consists in nourishing and cherishing her children, in taking care of them in a tender way.

The word cherish is lovely, a word of utmost tenderness. Paul regarded himself as a cherishing one, not merely as one who serves. He certainly did not control the believers. Neither did he merely serve them. Rather, he cherished them. His care for them was full of tenderness.

The word in 1 Thessalonians 2:8 "yearning" indicates being affectionately fond of, affectionately desirous of, like a nursing mother affectionately interested in her child whom she nourishes and cherishes. This was what the apostles did with the new believers.

**Junior high/Senior high students' model:**

Even if you are a young teenager, please bear the burden of shepherding the newcomers (newly saved person, weakened person, gospel friends, person pursuing Christianity, and person that recently moved). Never think that you cannot afford to do such a thing because you are weak. You may be weak, but there is still person who are weaker than you. You may feel troubled because the grades do not go up, but there can be a person who is at a stalemate with the study even more than you. First, prayers must carry out for the five types of newcomers mentioned above. Form praying groups by using LINE and do one-minute prayer for the newcomers every day. Then carry out a one-on-one shepherding under the support of prayers. Please also use LINE for this shepherding and send short Bible verses every day for nurturing and nourishing. If the message is short, the newcomers will read it every day and will start looking forward to receive it. The point here is that the message is short and it is sent every day. If it is not short the newcomer will not read it and will be difficult for us to carry out the shepherding. Also, because there is no way to tell when the attempts will come and weaken the newcomers, if it is not every day, it will not be supply and support practical to the newcomers.

The following is important in carrying out the shepherding:

A) Love the Lord enthusiastically by touching the love of the Lord through personal, loving, and intimate fellowship with the Lord

Hymn 208	1. O Jesus, Jesus, dearest Lord ! Forgive me if I say, For very love, Thy sacred name A thousand times a day.	2. I love Thee so I know not how My transports to control; Thy love is like a burning fire Within my very soul.
(Chorus)	O Jesus, Lord, with me abide; I rest in Thee, whate'er betide; Thy gracious smile is my reward; I love, I love Thee, Lord!	6. What limit is there to this love? Thy flight, where wilt Thou stay? On, on! our Lord is sweeter far Today than yesterday.

B) Love the Lord, receive entrustment to feed newcomers from the Lord

C) Use the Lord's love to love the newcomers, tenderly nurture and nourish the newcomers like a loving mother

D) never exert authority, behave like a nurturing mother

E) Recognize that the need to be an example rather than teaching a lot, deal with the passive things inside to become a good role model

## The milestone of John 9: Necessity for the blind in religion - Sght of life and shepherding of life

By Kobe U. BSG OB/OG

John9:1 And as He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth. 2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind? 3 Jesus answered, Neither has this man sinned nor his parents, but he was born so, that the works of God might be manifested in him. 5 While I am in the world, I am the light of the world. 6 When He had said this, He spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed his eyes with the clay, 7 And He said to him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is interpreted, Sent). He went therefore and washed and came away seeing. 8 The neighbors then and those who previously saw him as a beggar said, Is not this the one who used to sit and beg? 9 Some said, This is he. Others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am the one. 10 They said then to him, How then were your eyes opened? 11 He answered, The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me, Go to the pool of Siloam and wash. I went therefore and washed, and I received my sight. 12 And they said to him, Where is He? He said, I do not know. 13 They brought him who was once blind to the Pharisees.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and He found him and said, Do you believe into the Son of God? 36 He answered and said, And who is He, Lord, that I may believe into Him? 37 Jesus said to him, You have both seen Him, and He is the One speaking with you. 38 And he said, Lord, I believe; and he worshipped Him.

Blindness is a matter of sin and death. A dead person is blind for certain. "In whom the god of this age (Satan) ... has blinded the thoughts of the unbelievers." Therefore, let "the illumination of the gospel of glory of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:4), it is necessary "To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God" (Acts 26: 18).

The disciples asked Jesus and said, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?" This question was of Yes or No, belongs to the tree of knowledge, and the result is death (Genesis 2:17). But the Lord's answer in verse 3 is showing them the Lord himself, who is the tree of life, and the result is life (Genesis 2: 9).

After man was created in Genesis 2, there was a tree of knowledge and a tree of life in front of him. The disciples believed that the born blind man was blind because he had sinned or his parents had sinned. They asked the Lord to answer either A or B. But the Lord answered neither A nor B but brought them back to God instead.

Let's apply your student life to situations where you are facing people, things, and matters and are forced to respond. Sometimes, you have two choices. For example, suppose that you got a job offer from two companies in your job hunting activity. If you choose simply according to the information of each company (salary, company size, welfare benefits, etc.), it will be a knowledge-based decision. No doubt you need this information, but to make the choice, you need to go to the Lord who is your life, fellowship with the Lord in prayer, and decide according to the feeling of the life and peace inside. The same for choosing your marriage partner after finding employment. God is omniscient and know what will happen in the future, what will help you walk the path of righteousness and blessings, and what will distract you from God and God's blessings. So the feeling of inner life obtained from God, who is life, should have the priority over the feeling from the outer knowledge only.

***Brother's testimony: When I was working in a medium and small size company, I got offers from a major company in Osaka and a small company in Kobe. People who introduced Osaka's major company had recommended me to choose it, saying that if I missed this great opportunity that I would never have the opportunity again to go to another major company. But when I went to the Lord with my wife, and considered the small company in Kobe in our prayers, I had the feeling of brightness, momentum and joy inside me. In the end I decided to go to the small company in Kobe according to that feeling. I only stayed less than three years in that small company, but what I had***

***experienced of my failure and success there, had become a great help to me in the future. After that, I changed my job to a global company much bigger than any major Japanese company, and was able to get even greater opportunities.***

The point here is that you need to come to the Lord Jesus in various choices, decide and consider that choice in the fellowship with the Lord. If you learn this secret, your future will be blessed in life.

To be blind is to be in the dark. Your eyesight may be good, but the eyes of your heart may be blind. You do not know where you are coming from and where you are going to. Or the person who takes care of you truly could become annoyed and left or you could end up following the one that you should keep away from. This indicates that you are blind. The Lord was declared to be the light of the world. Then He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and anointed his eyes with the clay (anointed like an ointment). The soil here indicates the human nature, and the spittle symbolizes the Spirit and life of Lord's Word as coming out of the mouth of the Lord. Making clay with the spittle symbolizes the blending of humanity and the Lord's spiritual living word. After listening to the Word, use that Word to pray as follows, "Lord Jesus, you love the born blind man, and told him that You are the light of the world. Then You spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle and anointed his eyes with the clay. The mixing of the spittle and the soil symbolizes the blending of my humanity and the Word of the Lord. I shall open my heart to you, Lord, utilize my spirit to accept Your Word, please blend my humanity with Your Spirit, Amen."

After your eyes were anointed by the clay (original text was oiled), you must follow the Word of the Lord obediently and wash them in the pond of Siloam. Siloam means "sent". Once you believe in the Lord and accept the word of the Lord, the Lord will send you to the pond. You are required to go to the pond and wash the clay away. This symbolizes washing away our old humanity with baptism water. This is why the Lord says, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16)", truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:5)." Everyone who believes and accepts the Lord is baptized and should be washed with baptism water.

Summary would be as follows:

- ① In the first place, man who is soil accepts the spittle from the mouth of the Lord and is mixed with it
- ② Secondly, the eyes of your heart are anointed by the clay made from soil and spittle, or anointed by the oil
- ③ Finally the old self is buried and washed by the water of baptism
- ④ Christians should apply the water washing of the old self every day (As our body needs to take a shower every day, our inner existence needs to be washed spiritually every day)
- ⑤ As a result, you gain vision and will be in the light
- ⑥ In order to gain the sight of life that is the salvation of the Lord, it is necessary to follow in the sense that life is coming from the fellowship of the Lord's Word but not following the knowledge
- ⑦ Religion (Judaism, Pharisee) is to worship God according to knowledge or in a formal way. Religion can never heal man's blindness. Religion may require worshiping God formally, but requires no fellowship with God as life.

E993 (Japanese 675)

1 O how sweet the glorious message, Simple faith may claim;  
Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same.

Still He loves to save the sinful, Heal the sick and lame;  
Cheer the mourner, still the tempest; Glory to His name!

(C) Yesterday, today, forever, Jesus is the same,  
All may change, but Jesus never! Glory to His name,  
Glory to His name, Glory to His name;  
All may change, but Jesus never! Glory to His name.

2 He who was the friend of sinners,  
Seeks thee, lost one, now;  
Sinner, come, and at His footstool,  
Penitently bow.  
He who said, "I'll not condemn thee,  
Go and sin no more,"  
Speaks to thee that word of pardon,  
As in days of yore.