

**9/7-13#6** Shepherding according to God: I. In the Lord's recovery today, there is the urgent need for shepherding. II. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock: **A** Shepherding refers to caring for all the needs of the sheep. **B** All the sheep need to be well provided for and well tended to. III. Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd of our souls: John 10:10 ...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. **A** As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we may have life and have it abundantly: 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 shepherding. 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. **B** God brought up from the dead "our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant (Heb. 13:20)": 1 The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding. 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. **C** As the Chief Shepherd, Christ shepherds His flock through the elders of the churches: 1 Without the elders' shepherding, the church cannot be built up. 2 The elders' shepherding should be Christ's shepherding through them. **D** As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being: 1 Peter 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being. 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, to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and of our problems, needs, and wounds. IV. 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: Eph.4:11 And He Himself gave some as apostles and some as prophets and some as evangelists and some as shepherds and teachers, 12 For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ, **A** Shepherding according to God requires us to be one with God and to be constituted with Him. **B** Only those who live God can shepherd according to God. **C** God's eternal purpose is to work Himself into us as our life so that we may express Him. **D** As those who shepherd according to God, we need to represent God and function as the acting God. **E** To shepherd according to God is to minister God to others: 1 How much we can minister God to others depends on our being broken by God for the outflow of life. 2 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.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. V. Peter charged the elders to shepherd the flock of God according to God: 1Pet.5:2 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; **A** According to God means that we must live God. **B** When we are one with God, we become God and we are God in our shepherding of others. **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. **D** To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes. **E** In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become God in life, nature, expression, and function: 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. 2 We need to become God in His attributes of love, light, righteousness, and holiness. 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. 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. VI. The shepherding that builds up the Body of Christ is a mutual shepherding: 1Cor.12:24 God has blended the

body together, giving more abundant honor to the *member* that lacked, **A** All of us need to be under the organic shepherding of Christ and be one with Him to shepherd others. John 21:15 Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs. 17 ...And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep. **B** All believers, regardless of their growth in life, need shepherding. **C** We all have defects and shortcomings and need others to shepherd us. **D** We are both sheep and shepherds, shepherding and being shepherded in mutuality. **E** Through this mutual shepherding, the Body builds itself up in love. 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.

**Testimony** When I was a student, I had a very difficult time getting up in the morning. This became especially serious when I was in my second year of high school. I began to miss school more often, and even when I was able to go to school, I often did not arrive until the afternoon. Poor health was one of the reasons, but the main reason was that my soul had become very complicated. I had many troubles, and my way of thinking had become very negative. When I entered my third year of high school, my condition improved somewhat, and I was able to improve my grades significantly. As a result, I was accepted by the university I had hoped to attend. Praise the Lord! However, after entering the university I had wanted to attend, I became relieved and relaxed, and gradually I fell back into my former condition. I could not get up in the morning and often failed my first-period classes because of my absences. Furthermore, in my fourth year at university, after I was assigned to a research laboratory, I still could not get up in the morning. Because I could not go to the laboratory in the morning, I began to miss more and more days. Eventually, the situation became so serious that my professor contacted my parents. This condition continued throughout the two years of my master's program. The Lord rescued me from this fallen condition through my engagement and marriage to a sister who loves the Lord. First, I became engaged at the end of March, at the end of the first year of my master's program. I was planning to take the teacher employment examination

in August, but I had not been able to make much progress in studying for it. After our engagement, I studied for the examination in a room at the Yoriki family's home. The sister helped me study by asking me questions while looking at the answers. With her help, I was able to make great progress in preparing for the examination, and eventually I passed the employment examination for high school teachers in Hyogo Prefecture. Praise the Lord! Then, in February of the following year, during the second year of my master's program, we got married. Soon after we were married, the Lord healed me of my long-standing habit of being unable to get up in the morning—a problem that I had thought would never change—and I became able to get up every morning. This was because my wife shepherded me according to God by having morning revival with me and eating breakfast with me every morning. Through our married life, I naturally developed a healthy rhythm of life and became able to go to bed early and get up early. Through the horizontal fellowship with my wife, my vertical fellowship with the Lord was also recovered. The Lord, as the Shepherd of my soul, cared for the problems in my complicated soul. 1 Peter 2:24 says: Who Himself bore up our sins in His body on the tree, in order that we, having died to sins, might live to righteousness; by whose bruise you were healed. **FN 8** on “were healed” says: “The healing of death. We were dead, but Christ's suffering of death healed our death that we might live in His resurrection.” **25** continues: “For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.” **FN 2** on “Shepherd and Overseer” says: “Christ was our Redeemer in His death on the tree. Now He is our soul's Shepherd and Overseer in the resurrection life within us. As such, He is able to guide us and supply us with life that we may follow in His steps according to His model of His suffering.” **FN 3** on “souls” says: “Our soul is our inner being, our real person. Our Lord, as the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls, shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person.” Now, together with my wife, I am learning to shepherd the young people. I want to be further trained to shepherd them not according to my own preference, interest, purpose, or disposition, but according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory.