

**BLENDING CONFERENCE**

**GENERAL SUBJECT:  
SHEPHERDING IN  
MUTUALITY  
FOR THE BUILDING UP  
OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

**NEW ZEALAND TRAINING CENTRE  
DECEMBER 2020**

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Message One

**The Urgent Need of Shepherding**

Scripture Reading: John 10:11, 16; 21:15-17; Eph. 4:11-16; Matt. 24:45; 1 Pet. 2:25; 1 Cor. 12:23-26

**I. In the Lord's recovery today, there is an urgent need of shepherding for the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:16; 2:21-22:**

- A. The greatest lack among us is in the matter of shepherding;
- B. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock—Acts 20:28.
- C. In His organic salvation God the Father first regenerates us by God the Spirit and then shepherds us in the Son as our Shepherd that we may grow and exist in the divine life—Rev. 7:17.
- D. Shepherding the believers is crucial for their growth in the divine life unto maturity for the building up of the Body of Christ—Eph. 4:13-16.

**II. The two basic elements of shepherding are cherishing and nourishing—5:29:**

- A. To cherish is to comfort, to soothe, to nurture with tender love, and to foster with tender care.
- B. In shepherding others we should first cherish them to make them happy, and then we should nourish them.

**III. Shepherding should be accompanied by teaching—4:11:**

- A. Shepherding depends on teaching; if we cannot teach, we cannot shepherd—Matt. 28:19-20; 9:35-36.
- B. Shepherding and teaching go together—Eph. 4:11.
- C. Our shepherding should always be with teaching, and our teaching should always be with shepherding.
- D. Shepherding and teaching are our obligation as a charge given to us by the Lord; this is the basic way ordained by God for the building up of the Body of Christ to consummate His eternal goal—the New Jerusalem—Eph. 4:16; Rev. 21:2.

**IV. Shepherding is to take care of the children of God by feeding them—John 21:15-17:**

- A. The work of shepherding is the work of feeding—Matt. 24:45; 1 Cor. 3:2.
- B. Shepherding by feeding is a part of the God-man living.
- C. The shepherds' feeding is not only for the believers' daily salvation but also for their maturity in the divine life, which is needed for the God-men to be built up.

**V. The shepherding that builds up the Body of Christ is a mutual shepherding—1 Cor. 12:23-26:**

- A. All believers, regardless of their stage of spiritual growth, need shepherding; we all have defects and shortcomings and need others to shepherd us.
- B. We need to be under the organic shepherding of Christ and to be one with Him to shepherd others—John 10:11, 16; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25.

C. We are both sheep and shepherds, shepherding and being shepherd in mutuality; through this shepherding the church is built up into the Body of Christ—Heb. 5:14; Eph. 4:12-13.

**VI. We need to shepherd the flock of God according to the loving and tender heart of our Father God and according to the seeking and shepherding spirit of our Savior Christ—Luke 15:1-32:**

A. We need to shepherd one another in love—1 Cor. 13:1-13:

B. Love is the most excellent way to be anything and to do anything—12:31b:

1. God has given us a spirit of love—2 Tim. 1:7.

2. Since God is love and since we have been regenerated by God to be His species, we should be love—1 John 4:8; John 3:6.

C. The Body of Christ builds itself up in love—Eph. 4:16.

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Message Two

**The Shepherding Life**

Scripture Reading: 2 Cor. 6:1-13; 7:2-3

- I. The goal of the Lord's recovery is to recover the ministering of Christ by all the believers so that the church as the Body of Christ may be built up—Eph. 4:11-16.**
- II. The more we are constituted with Christ, the more we will spontaneously live a shepherding life and have the burden to take care of others—Col. 1:27; 3:4, 10-11:**
  - A. The constitution of Christ in our spiritual life has a shepherding aspect—John 21:15-17.
  - B. Shepherding is not a matter of responding to being encouraged by others to shepherd.
  - C. Shepherding is the issue of being constituted with Christ—Col. 3:4, 10-11.
  - D. The part of our being that has been constituted with Christ is the part that shepherds others.
  - E. We cannot shepherd anyone; the Christ constituted into us is the Shepherd—John 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:25; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:2, 4.
- III. We need to work together with God by an all-fitting life—a life that is all-sufficient and mature, able to fit all situations, to endure any kind of treatment, to accept any kind of environment, to work under any kind of condition, and to take any kind of opportunity for the carrying out of the work of the ministry for the building up of the Body of Christ—2 Cor. 6:1-13; 7:2-3:**
  - A. To work together with God means that we are in God; only a person who is in God can bring others into God—5:20.
  - B. If we have an all-fitting life, any situation or circumstance is right for us to minister life to others.
  - C. If we would have an all-fitting life, we need an enlarged heart, a heart to embrace all of God's people—2 Cor. 6:11-13; 2 Chron. 1:10; 1 Kings 4:29:
    1. To be enlarged by growing and maturing in life is equivalent to being fully reconciled to God—2 Cor. 5:20.
    2. With an enlarged heart we are able to embrace all believers regardless of their condition, and with an opened mouth we are free to speak to all believers frankly concerning the real situation into which they have been misled—Matt. 5:7; 6:14-15; 7:1-2.
- IV. If we would engage in shepherding for the building up of the Body of Christ, we need to live a ministering life—2 Cor. 4:10-12:**
  - A. A ministering life is a life of ministering Christ for the building up of the Body of Christ—1 John 5:13-16.
  - B. The Body needs those who have been constituted with the processed and consummated Triune God so that they may have the riches of Christ in their spirit and in their entire inner being to impart to others—Eph. 3:16-17a.
  - C. A ministering life is a life that warms up others by cherishing them in the humanity of Jesus to nourish them in the divinity of Christ with the riches of Christ—Eph. 5:29.

- D. To live a ministering life means that our outer man is being consumed and our inner man is being renewed day by day—2 Cor. 4:16.
- E. To live a ministering life is to have a deep, genuine, tender, loving, and affectionate concern for others—7:2-16.
- F. We need to be enlarged in heart to have the intimate concern of the ministering life—vv. 7:2-3; 1 Thes. 2:8; Phil. 2:19-20; 1 Cor. 12:31b; 9:22.

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Message Three

**Shepherding according to God  
(1)**

Scripture Reading: 1 Pet. 5:2; John 14:20; 1 Cor. 6:17; Col. 3:4; 2 Cor. 13:14

**I. Peter charged the elders to shepherd the flock of God according to God—1 Pet. 5:2:**

- A. *According to God* means that we live God.
- B. When we are one with God, we become God in life and nature 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—John 4:14; Col. 3:4.
  - 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.

**II. If we would shepherd according to God, we need to become one with God—John 14:20; 1 Cor. 6:17:**

- A. 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.
- B. 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.

**III. Shepherding according to God requires that we be constituted with God—Eph. 3:17a; Col. 3:10-11:**

- A. 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.
- B. 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.

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Message Four

**Shepherding according to God  
(2)**

Scripture Reading: 1 Pet. 5:2; 2 Pet. 1:4; Phil. 1:21a; Col. 3:4; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; 13:14

- I. Only those who live God can shepherd according to God—Phil. 1:21a:**
  - A. 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.
  - B. We are participating in the divine life and the divine nature so that we can live God in our humanity—Gal. 2:20.
- II. 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:**
  - A. 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.
  - B. 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.
- III. As those who would shepherd according to God, we need to represent God and function as the acting God:**
  - A. 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.
  - B. 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.
  - C. 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.
  - D. 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.
- IV. To shepherd according to God is to minister God to others—13:14:**
  - A. 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.
  - B. 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.