

God's Recovery by Life through His Shepherding

In this message we come to the matter of God's recovery by life through His shepherding. God's recovery is needed because certain matters revealed and ordained by God have been damaged, lost, and misunderstood and because God's people have been divided, wounded, broken, and severely damaged in various ways. Thus, the Lord must have a recovery in order to bring us back to His original intention so that His eternal purpose, which is based on His heart's desire, may be fulfilled. Such a recovery is **by life**, and this life, which is the content of God and the flowing out of God, **reaches us by His direct shepherding**. This recovering life also reaches us through the shepherding of those who have been gained by the Shepherd Himself. This kind of shepherding is necessary, precious, and costly.

As we read this message, we must realize that although we cannot see the Lord, He is with us. He is Emmanuel, God with us, and He is our Shepherd. As we read about Christ as the Shepherd and His shepherding, we should find that **we are simultaneously under His direct shepherding**. This combination of the unveiling word and our immediate, instant experience of Christ will leave a lasting, indelible, and unforgettable impression on us. We will have a deep impression concerning the Lord, concerning our relationship with Him, concerning the church as God's flock, and concerning the high peak of the divine revelation and the God-man living, all of which are ultimately expressed through the shepherding in mutuality.

To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock. According to the divine concept, to care for the flock, the church, as a whole is to care for every single sheep. Furthermore, it is to take all-inclusive care of the flock. The Lord's sheep are.. tripartite human beings who are always in various situations. Thus, the care rendered to the flock must be all-inclusive; it must also be tender. Any care that we render to the flock that is not all-inclusive or tender is not true shepherding according to the divine concept.

In contrast, this chapter begins with the Lord rebuking the leaders of Israel, whom He calls shepherds. In His rebuke of the shepherds, He indicates that His flock, His sheep, needs to be recovered from the damage caused by the shepherds. The context of this chapter is not merely that the flock needed to be recovered from being scattered among the pagan nations, such as Assyria and Babylon, but that it also needed to be recovered from suffering **under the hand of their own leaders**. The words in these verses are not a mere theory. Even throughout our own history much damage has been inflicted on saints who have been broken, neglected, and driven away and are no longer in the recovery. To take the lead in the church or in the work is a very weighty responsibility, because the essential responsibility of a leading one is to shepherd the Lord's sheep, His flock. As we read the following verses [Ezekiel 34:1-11], we must pay attention to what the shepherds did and, even more, to what they neglected to do:

The situation described in this section was very desperate. Although the sheep were scattered and suffering, not one of the Lord's shepherds would seek them out. Not one of them had the heart or the skill to heal those who were broken; not one would bring back those who had been driven away. However, in His recovery the Lord Himself as the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the pneumatic Shepherd of our souls will directly seek out, find, bring back, heal, mend, and recover His sheep. **The only reason we are here is because of His shepherding.**

It will take **months, even years**, of **pursuing, learning**, and **experiencing Christ** in order for us to fully comprehend the matter of shepherding. This is because the principle of shepherding is that **only those who have been lost and found can seek the lost**; only those who have been broken and mended can mend the broken; and only those who have been wounded and healed have the heart and skill to heal others. Furthermore, since this mutual shepherding is one of the crucial aspects of the new revival, the Lord must recover this matter in us intrinsically, deeply, and thoroughly until He can look on His flock in the recovery and proclaim that not one of His sheep is being neglected and that there is an **all-inclusive, tender care for the flock**.

In Ezekiel 34 the Lord Himself comes as the Shepherd to search for His sheep and seek them out. In a sense, referring to certain people as “seeking ones” is not accurate, because it is not man who is seeking the Lord but the Lord who is seeking man. In many countries the Lord’s sheep have been driven away, scattered, and wounded, but the Shepherd is going there to seek them out and recover them. Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd of our souls. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly. Right now, our Shepherd would like you to have zoe, the divine life, abundantly. If you are willing to have this and want to know what it means to have life abundantly, you should pray, *“Lord, what is it like to have zoe abundantly?”*

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**. Our prayer for this year is that the Lord would bring more sheep out of the fold. We do not proselytize or go into Christian meetings to try to convert people. To do so would be shameful. We do not make the church an issue, but we can pray, *“Lord, all the sheep on the earth are Yours, and so many of them are in folds. We would like to ask You to lead many out of the folds this year. Would it not please You to bring a few thousand sheep out of the folds and into the flock?”*

As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being. This is very precious. First Peter 2:25 says that we all were like sheep being led astray... Right now, the pneumatic Christ is the Shepherd in your spirit, and from the vantage point of your spirit, **He is overseeing your mind, emotion, and will**. Then according to what He sees, He cares for you. He cares for your feeling, will, intention, motives, mind, imagination, and memory. Certain memories may still haunt you. He is not a psychologist, but He cares for your soul. He knows that the deepest suffering is in the soul.

First Peter is a book on the Christian life under the government of God, and all the saints throughout the earth are suffering in their souls. In light of this, how sweet it is to have a Shepherd in our spirit caring for our soul. Our spirit is the organ with which we experience Christ, and our soul is the primary organ for enjoying Christ. Whenever we have problems in our soul, the first casualty is our enjoyment. We may still have some experience, but we lose the enjoyment; therefore, the Shepherd **cares for our soul**. He is not spying on us; He is caring for us. Similarly, the overseers in the churches are not spying on the saints...

The book of Ezekiel refers to a watchman (3:17). The Lord’s recovery has **need of watchmen**. Some, in the loneliness of deputy authority, stand on the wall and watch. They watch over the whole recovery, and through that watching they get a word from the Lord to speak into the heart of the recovery. The overseers do the same thing, and based upon their loving watching, they shepherd. They realize that some sheep have not grown for twenty years and that there must be some inward barrier. Based on this kind of realization, they do not force themselves on the sheep. Instead, they go to the sheep **to cherish** them, **spend time** with them, and **pray** for them.

We need to become God in His attributes of love, light, righteousness, and holiness. We do not have the answers to our own problems, so how can we have the answers to others’ problems? We do not have any answers, but people still come to us for fellowship. When they come to us, we should not search for answers; instead, **we should give them God**. However, we cannot do this just by trying to give them God. There is **love, light, righteousness, and holiness** within us to a certain extent, and to that extent, these attributes of God can be imparted into them.

May the Lord—for the fulfillment of the desire of His heart to have the Body, the bride, and the kingdom—shepherd the souls of all the saints in the recovery and reproduce Himself in all of us so that there will be **the mutual shepherding**. We are all sheep, and we are all shepherds. Through this mutual shepherding, we will end this age, enter into the new revival, and bring the Lord back. Shepherding will do it. *(Excerpt from the Ministry of the Word: Crystallization-Study of Ezekiel (1), 283-309)*