

Shepherds According to God's Heart

Monday 12/14

Related Verses

Jer. 3:15

15 And I will give you shepherds according to My own heart, who will feed you knowledge and understanding.

Isa. 40:11

11 He will feed His flock as a Shepherd; In His arm He will gather the lambs; In His bosom He will carry them. He will lead those who are nursing the young.

Ezek. 34:11

11 For thus says the Lord Jehovah, I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and seek them out.

Matt. 9:36

36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.

Psa. 23:4-6

4 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.

5 You spread a table before me In the presence of my adversaries; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

6 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.

John 10:2-4

2 But he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

Suggested Reading

Jehovah said that He would gather the remnant of His flock out of all the lands where He has driven them and that He will bring them back to their pasture. Also, He said that they would be fruitful and would multiply (Jer. 23:3).

Jehovah also promised to give Israel shepherds according to His own heart (v. 15). Such shepherds would

feed her knowledge and understanding. Israel was foolish and did not know anything, but these shepherds would give her the proper knowledge and understanding of God. (*Life-study of Jeremiah*, pp. 131, 47)

As the mighty One, the ruling and judging One, He comes to be a Shepherd (Isa. 40:11; Matt. 9:36; John 10:2-4, 11, 14). In a shepherd's care for his flock, he rules over the sheep to correct them. His ruling and correcting is his shepherding. In the past, we may have been wild persons who would not listen to the gospel or to the word of God. But in His ruling, Jesus did something to regulate us. His regulating is His shepherding. Many of us were saved because of Jesus' regulating. His regulating shepherds us to bring us into the flock, to get us on the right way, and to adjust us to the proper pace. He is adjusting us not to go too fast or too slow, but to take the pace of the flock. Today He is still shepherding us by adjusting us. He directs us, stops us, and urges us on. (*Life-study of Isaiah*, p. 314)

Ezekiel 34:11 says, "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out." As the Shepherd, the Lord not only seeks but also searches. Because of our fallen condition, we were all buried under many evil things, so we needed God to search for us. In Luke 15 we have both the shepherd (signifying Christ as the Shepherd) seeking the lost sheep and the woman (signifying the Spirit) lighting the lamp and searching within the house for the lost coin. The prodigal son then was drawn home by the searching of the Spirit.

The Lord has done the same thing with us. He searched for us in order to save us and recover us. Before we were saved, we were buried under many sins, but the Lord Jesus sought us. Then after we were saved, we backslid into degraded Christianity, and we were buried under many things, such as doctrines, forms, and gifts. However, once again the Lord Jesus searched for us; He sought us out and brought us out. Now we are the ones who have been sought out by the Lord Jesus as the Shepherd. How is it possible for us to be here in the church life? This is not of us but absolutely of Him. We are here because as the Shepherd He sought and searched for us.

Ezekiel prophesied that...the Lord would bring His people...out of the nations [Ezek. 34:12-13]. This also has been our experience. When we were fallen as sinners or when we became backsliders, we were among the nations

living like Gentiles. Although we were living like unbelievers among billions of others on earth, the Lord Jesus sought us out and brought us out of the nations, out of the unbelievers. You might have been a school teacher among many others, but you alone were sought out and brought back by the Lord Jesus, who then caused you to be different from the Gentiles. Formerly you were the same as the unbelievers, but one day the Lord Jesus as the Shepherd sought you and brought you out from among the unbelievers and brought you to Himself. (*Life-study of Ezekiel*, pp. 175-176)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations - Week 11, Day 1*

Corporate Reading of "The Mystery of Christ" Chapter 1– Sections: *The Mystery Of Christ; The Mystery Hidden In The Ages; One New Man; What Is The New Man?*

Tuesday 12/15

Related Verses

Ezek. 34:13-14, 12, 15, 23-24

13 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.

14 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.

12 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.

15 I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, declares the Lord Jehovah.

23 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.

24 And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and My Servant David will be a Prince among them. I, Jehovah, have spoken.

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Psa. 133:1-3

1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell in unity!

2 It is like the fine oil upon the head That ran down upon the beard, Upon Aaron's beard, That ran down upon the hem of his garments;

3 Like the dew of Hermon That came down upon the mountains of Zion. For there Jehovah commanded the blessing: Life forever.

Heb. 13:20-21

20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

21 Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Suggested Reading

In Ezekiel 34:13b the Lord [said] that He would bring His people back to their own land. They were in captivity in heathen countries, but the Lord promised to bring them back to their own country, to the good land of Canaan. Our good land is Christ. Before we were saved or after we backslid, we were separated from Christ. But the Lord sought us out and brought us back to Himself and even into Himself as our good land. Today we are in Christ as the good land. The good land today is also in the church life. Thus, when we were brought back to Christ, we were also brought to the church life, where we have the riches and the enjoyment of the good land. (*Life-study of Ezekiel*, pp. 175-176)

The Lord also said that He would bring His people back to the rivers (v. 13). These rivers signify the life-giving Spirit, the living water of the Spirit. From the mountains, the resurrected and ascended Christ, the living water of the Spirit flows. The Spirit of life flows forth from Christ in His resurrection and ascension. After the Lord sought us out and brought us back to Himself, we not only returned to Christ in the transcendent position of His ascension, but we also began to drink of the Spirit as the living water.

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.

Since the Lord Jesus is our Shepherd taking care of us, we should not worry about our problems or about our living. Instead, we need to learn to put our trust in Him. At the end of the day, it is very good to pray to the Lord as our Shepherd. There is no need to pray at length in a formal, religious way. Simply say, "Lord Jesus, I thank You that I am under Your care. Now I am going to sleep, and I ask You to come and take care of me." Such a simple prayer is good enough. When you wake up in the morning, you say, "Lord, I thank You that I am still under Your care." There is no need to be religious, asking the Lord to protect you and do many other things for you. If you pray in a religious way, the Lord might say, "Child, I know what you need. Do not waste your time and do not burden Me with this kind of prayer. Simply enjoy My care."

The Lord Jesus truly is our Shepherd....Wherever I have gone and wherever I have worked, I have been under His shepherding care....In His recovery we, as His flock, are under His constant shepherding. As He cares for us, He feeds us, and we have the real experience of Psalm 23: The Lord is our Shepherd, and we have no want. May we all learn to experience Christ as our Shepherd.

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. As we receive the Lord's shepherding, we understand the Lord's throne, kingdom, and authority. He is shepherding us with His care and supply so that we may be subject to His kingship and that He may set up His throne and His kingdom within us. (*Life-study of Ezekiel*, pp. 177, 180-181)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations - Week 11, Day 2*

Corporate Reading of "The Mystery of Christ"
Chapter 1 – Sections: *The Church Being Christ; The Church Being The Corporate Christ*

Wednesday 12/16

Related Verses

John 10:10-11, 14, 2-4, 15, 17

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.

14 I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me,

2 But he who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.

15 Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

Heb. 13:20-21

20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

21 Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

1 Pet. 5:4

4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Suggested Reading

In John 10:10-11 two verses two different Greek words are used for life. In verse 10 the Greek word is "zoe", which is the word used in the New Testament for the eternal divine life. In verse 11 the Greek word is "psuche", the same word for soul, which means the soulish life, that is, the human life. These two verses indicate that the Lord Jesus has two kinds of lives. As a man the Lord has the psuche life, the human life, and as God He has the zoe life, the divine life. He laid down His soul, His psuche life, His human life, to accomplish redemption for His sheep (10:15,

17-18) that they might share His zoe life, His divine life (10:10), the eternal life (10:28), by which they may be formed into one flock under Himself as the one shepherd. As the good shepherd, He feeds His sheep with the divine life in this way and for this purpose. (*Life-study of John*, p. 265)

The Lord's divine life could never be slain. What was slain in His crucifixion was His human life. In order to be our Savior, He, as a man, laid down His human life to accomplish redemption for us that we might receive His zoe life. He laid down His human life in order that we, after being redeemed, might receive His zoe life, the eternal life.

The shepherd, the divine life, and the human life are all for the flock. In verse 16 the Lord said, "And I have other sheep which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one shepherd." Who are the sheep that are not of this Jewish fold? They are the Gentiles. And what is this one flock? The one flock signifies the one church, the one Body of Christ (Eph. 2:14-16; 4:6), brought forth by life, which the Lord imparted into His members through His death (John 10:10-18). Before, the fold was Judaism; now, the flock is the church. The sheepfold was, and still is, Judaism, but the flock is the church. The flock is the church which includes two peoples—the believing Jews and Gentiles. The Lord brings both together into one flock and under one shepherd. Now, the one flock and the one shepherd are the one Body and the one Head.

Why are the shepherd, the divine life, and the human life all for the flock? Because the people in the flock are fallen persons in need of redemption. As a man, the shepherd had the human life. He sacrificed His human life in order to accomplish redemption for His flock. In this way His flock was redeemed. Then His flock received His divine life, and by this divine life the sheep live together as the flock. Thus, the flock is formed into one unit, into one entity. This is not accomplished by the human life, but by the divine life.

In the divine life we are all one entity, meaning that we are one flock under one shepherd in one life....A sheep is a regenerated person with the divine life. We all must live by the divine life and thus become genuine, real, and pure sheep....The flock is produced, kept, maintained, and

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formed by the divine life. How good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity (Psa. 133:1). However, dwelling in unity simply means to dwell in the divine life. Praise the Lord that in the divine life we are truly one and love one another. This is not possible in our human, psuche life, but only in the divine, zoe life. We receive this zoe life through the redemption accomplished by our shepherd who laid down His psuche life. He sacrificed His psuche life to accomplish redemption for us all that we might receive Him as our zoe life. Now we are in the zoe life under one shepherd to be one flock. (*Life-study of John*, pp. 265-267)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations - Week 11, Day 3*

Corporate Reading of "The Mystery of Christ"
Chapter 2 – Sections: *The Body Of Christ; The Church Being The Body Of Christ; The Body Of Christ Being A Matter Of Life*

Thursday 12/17

Related Verses

1 Peter 2:25

25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

Psa. 23:1-3

1 Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside waters of rest.

3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Matt. 11:28-30

28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

29 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.

30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

Rev. 7:16-17

16 They will not hunger any more, neither will they thirst any more, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;

17 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.

Suggested Reading

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. Therefore, He is able to guide us and supply us with life that we may follow His model in His steps of suffering (v. 21). According to verse 25, Christ is the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls. Our soul is our inner being, our real person. Our Lord, as the Shepherd and Overseer of our soul, shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our inner being and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our real person. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, p. 190)

Our problem was that we were like sheep being led astray. But now we have returned, turned back, to the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls....A shepherd takes care of the physical needs of his flock, and Christ our Shepherd takes care of the needs of our soul. He is not the Shepherd of our body; He is the Shepherd of our soul, our inner being. We all have a spirit, and the spirit is our inward organ. But our being is a soul. Therefore, Christ mainly shepherds us by taking care of our soul. He takes care of our mind, emotion, and will.

We may think that our problems are with the body. No doubt, the body does give us many problems. Nevertheless, our real problem is in our soul. Our mind, emotion, and will all have problems. Unbelievers are wanderers in the soul, and they do not have a shepherd to take care of them. But...we have a Shepherd who takes care of our soul. Not only do we have the Lord's life within us, but we also have Him as our Shepherd. He is now shepherding us in our soul.

This Epistle was written to Jewish Christians who were suffering much persecution. Apparently persecution is related to our body outwardly. Actually, persecution is aimed at the soul. Because it is our soul that suffers, it is our soul that needs the Lord's shepherding. It is not our body that needs this kind of care, nor is it mainly our spirit. It is our soul—our mind, our emotion, and our will—that needs the Lord as the Shepherd.

In our experience sometimes we just do not know what to think about. We do not know where to direct our thoughts. This is an indication that our mind needs the Lord Jesus as the Shepherd. I can testify that many times in this kind of situation the Lord Jesus has been a Shepherd

to me. As a result of His shepherding our mind is directed and set in the right way.

Our emotion, being complicated, is easily upset. This is especially true of the sisters' emotion. Therefore, we need the Lord Jesus to shepherd us in our emotion. His shepherding comforts our emotion.

Our will also needs the Lord's shepherding. As human beings, we often find it difficult to make the right decision. Sometimes the hardest thing to do is to make a decision. Unbelievers have no one to lead them and guide them in making decisions. But we have a Shepherd to lead us and guide us. The Lord's leading and guiding is primarily related to our will. As the living Shepherd, the Lord continually directs our will. I cannot tell you how many times I have experienced this. The Lord is truly the Shepherd of our soul. He directs our mind, comforts our emotion, and leads and guides our will.

As our Shepherd, the Lord leads us first and then guides us. He leads us to the right place, and He guides us to the exact spot. This is Christ, our Shepherd. (*Life-study of 1 Peter*, pp. 190-192)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations - Week 11, Day 4*

Corporate Reading of "The Mystery of Christ"
Chapter 2 – Sections: *The Body Of Christ Being; The Consummation Of The Work Of The Cross*

Friday 12/18

Related Verses

John 21:15-17

15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

16 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.

17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

Acts 20:28, 31

28 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.

31 Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.

1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12

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.

11 Just as you know how we were to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you and consoling you and testifying,

12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

2 Cor. 12:15

15 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?

1 Pet. 5:2

2 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;

Suggested Reading

If we do not know how to shepherd, we will not be able to feed others. The main purpose of the small groups and the vital groups in the church life is not merely to take care of one another but to shepherd one another. You shepherd me, and I shepherd you....This is mutual shepherding. In shepherding others, we should first cherish them in order to make them happy, and then we should feed them. This kind of feeding is the real shepherding. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 4, "The Secret of God's Organic Salvation—'The Spirit Himself with Our Spirit,'" p. 239)

John 21 reveals the apostolic ministry in cooperation with Christ's heavenly ministry. After Christ ascended to the heavens, He began His heavenly ministry. In doing this,

He raised up a group of His followers as His apostles who could fully cooperate with Him. These apostles were commissioned by the ascended Christ to cooperate with Him to carry out God's New Testament economy. What He was doing in the heavens, the apostles did on earth to carry out His heavenly ministry.

The Lord's shepherding is in His heavenly ministry (1 Pet. 5:4) to take care of the church of God, issuing in His Body. When He was on the earth, He was shepherding. After His resurrection and ascension to the heavens, He is still shepherding.

When the Lord stayed with His disciples after His resurrection and before His ascension, in one of His appearances, He commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep in His absence, while He is in the heavens (John 21:15-17). Shepherding implies feeding, but it includes much more than feeding. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive tender care of the flock.

This is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to take care of God's flock, which is the church that issues in the Body of Christ.

The following words of the apostle Paul confirm this.

In Acts 20:28 Paul told the elders of Ephesus, "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 [or, purchased] through His own blood." Although Paul was on an urgent trip back to Jerusalem, while he was journeying, he sent word for the elders in Ephesus to come to him.

Paul says in Hebrews 13:20, "God...brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant." The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body and consummating the New Jerusalem. The eternal covenant of God is to consummate the New Jerusalem by the shepherding. God raised up our Lord from the dead to be the great Shepherd to consummate the New Jerusalem according to God's eternal covenant.

Peter exhorts the elders to shepherd the flock of God among them so that when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, they, the faithful elders, will receive the unfading crown of glory (5:1-4).

Peter's word indicates that the heavenly ministry of Christ is mainly to shepherd the church of God as His

flock, which issues in His Body. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 4, "Crystallization-study of the Gospel of John," pp. 446-448)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations - Week 11, Day 5*

Corporate Reading – no reading today.

Saturday 12/19

Related Verses

Luke 15:4-5

4 Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?

5 And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

Matt. 9:12-13

12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.

13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.

1 Tim. 1:5,14-15, 17, 19

5 But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and out of a good conscience and out of unfeigned faith;

14 And the grace of our Lord superabounded with faith and love in Christ Jesus.

15 Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost.

17 Now to the King of the ages, incorruptible, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Holding faith and a good conscience, concerning which some, thrusting these away, have become shipwrecked regarding the faith;

Eph. 4:16

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.

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Suggested Reading

Luke 7:34 says, "The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." If we see one who is a drunkard drinking beer, we certainly would stay away from him. We would rather go to one who is a saint living properly in corporate living. This kind of spirit now is spreading everywhere around the globe in the Lord's recovery. We love those in the proper corporate living, but we do not love the ones who go to the movies or drink beer. Instead, we may gossip about them. This is the spirit that fills all the churches.

We do not have such a loving spirit that loves the world, the worst people. We classify people, choosing who are the good ones....Do not classify people. Who can tell what they will be? When I was playing mah-jongg [behind my mother's back] at the age of eighteen or nineteen, who would have thought that this mah-jongg player would sit in America many years later to talk to people about the Lord? Who brought me here? It was Christ as the heavenly ladder. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 5, "A Word of Love to the Co-workers, Elders, Lovers, and Seekers of the Lord," pp. 19, 21-22)

While I was playing mah-jongg, [a certain pastor] came to me every week....Finally, at the end of December he said, "...I will not come to you next week. I will wait until the New Year is over."...The second day of the Chinese New Year is a day of rottenness, gambling, and all manner of entertainment. On that day...I said, "I shall go to Pastor Yu's church."...Then I went to that denominational church. That was my first time to climb the heavenly ladder. Christ went to a house full of sinners and tax collectors. The vital groups, the co-workers, and the elders should pick up this spirit, the spirit of God loving the world, the spirit of Christ coming to the worst homes in order to gain people and put them upon Him as the heavenly ladder so that they may ascend on Him.

The God-man concept is that Christ came to save sinners, especially the top sinners. He saves the "gangsters," even the leader of the "gangsters," Saul of Tarsus. Paul said, "Faithful is the word and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am foremost" (1 Tim. 1:15). Paul could say this

because he was the top sinner opposing Christ. He rebelled against Christ, but while he was rebelling, Christ knocked him down, called him, and saved him. Jesus Himself said, "Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill...I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matt. 9:12-13). That is why He was there among the sinners and tax collectors, eating and feasting with them, reclining at table and enjoying with them.

If we lose this spirit, whether we are elders, co-workers, or serving ones, we are finished. This is the main reason why we are so barren, bearing no fruit for so many years. Recently, a brother went to care for a couple, but he did not have this spirit. He visited them no more than ten times and became disappointed. Since the couple had no heart for this brother, he reported that it was useless to visit them further. When Pastor Yu visited me, I did not care for him, but he continued to come for three or four months, week after week. We need to have this spirit. We all have to change our concept. Therefore, we need discipling. We have too much of the natural thought. We need to be disciplined to have the divine concept, the concept of the Father's heart and the heart of the Lord Jesus, who came to save sinners. (*CWWL, 1994-1997*, vol. 5, "A Word of Love to the Co-workers, Elders, Lovers, and Seekers of the Lord," pp. 20, 22-23)

Further Reading: *HWMR Crystallization-Study of Jeremiah and Lamentations – Week 11, Day 6*

Hymns, #1068

1
In tenderness He sought me,
Weary and sick with sin,
And on His shoulders brought me
Into His flock again.
While angels in His presence sang
Until the courts of heaven rang.

Oh, the love that sought me!
Oh, the blood that bought me!
Oh, the grace that brought me to the flock,
Wondrous grace that brought me to the flock!

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2
 He washed the bleeding sin-wounds,
 And poured in oil and wine;
 He whispered to assure me,
 "I've found thee, thou art Mine:"
 I never heard a sweeter voice,
 It made my aching heart rejoice.

3
 He pointed to the nail-prints,
 For me His blood was shed;
 A mocking crown so thorny,
 Was placed upon His head:
 I wondered what He saw in me,
 To suffer such deep agony.

4
 I'm sitting in His presence,
 The sunshine of His face,
 While with adoring wonder
 His blessings I retrace.
 It seems as if eternal days
 Are far too short to sound His praise.

5
 So while the hours are passing,
 All now is perfect rest;
 I'm waiting for the morning,
 The brightest and the best,
 When He will call us to His side,
 To be with Him, His spotless Bride.

Lord's Day 12/20

Related Verses

2 Jer. 23:1-4

1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture, declares Jehovah.
2 Therefore thus says Jehovah the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who shepherd My people, You have scattered My flock and driven them away and have not visited them; I will visit upon you the evil of your deeds, declares Jehovah.

3 Then I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply.

4 And I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they will no longer fear or be dismayed, nor will any be missing, declares Jehovah.

Ezek 34:25-31

25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish evil beasts from the land, so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

26 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.

27 And the trees of the field will yield their fruit, and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure in their land; then they will know that I am Jehovah, when I break the bars of their yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

28 And they will no longer be prey to the nations, nor will the beasts of the earth devour them; but they will dwell securely, and no one will make them afraid.

29 And I will raise up for them a planting place of renown, and they will no longer be consumed with famine in the land and no longer bear the disgrace of the nations.

30 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.

31 And you are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God, declares the Lord Jehovah.

Further Reading

Life-Study of Ezekiel msg. 16

Life-Study of Jeremiah, msg. 6-7, 19

Life-Study of John msg. 22, 49