

Crystallization-Study – Gospel of John

The Apostolic Ministry in Cooperation with Christ's Heavenly Ministry

John 21 Being the Completion and Consummation of the Gospel of John

- The Gospel of John has 21 chapters, but it actually ends with chapter 20.
 - **John 21** is the **completion** and **consummation** of the Gospel of John.
 - It consummates the entire Gospel of John by showing that **Christ's heavenly ministry and the apostles' ministry on the earth cooperate together** to carry out God's New Testament economy.
- First, the Lord's shepherding was in his **earthly ministry**. The Lord as the **Shepherd** of God's elect prayed, and God told His sent One to **appoint twelve apostles** that they might take care of the sheep of God.
- Second, the Lord's shepherding is in His **heavenly ministry** to take care of the church of God, issuing in His body. After His resurrection and ascension to the heavens, **He is still shepherding**.

Commissioning Peter to Feed His Lambs and Shepherd His Sheep

- The Lord commissioned Peter to **feed His lambs** and **shepherd His sheep** in His absence, while He is in the heavens.
 - 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.

Peter's Impression with the Lord's Commission to Feed His Lambs and Shepherd His Sheep

- **1 Pet. 2:25** – For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of you souls.
 - **Christ's shepherding** of His flock includes His caring for their **outward things** and also their **inner being**, their souls.
- 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.
- 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.

The Main Purpose and Goal of the Apostolic Ministry Incorporated with Christ's Heavenly Ministry

- The main purpose and goal of the apostolic ministry incorporated with Christ's heavenly ministry are to **build up the Body of Christ**, which will consummate the New Jerusalem for the accomplishment of the eternal economy of God.
- The **shepherding way** of preaching the gospel by visiting people warms them up.
- We should learn to **feed**, to **shepherd**, and to **flock** together.
 - All the churches have to learn how to flock together so that they can be **blent together**.

A Concluding Note

In view of the eternal economy of God, there is the tendency through the whole writing of John to have the **church of God** issuing in the **Body of Christ** for the accomplishment of **God's eternal economy**. Its judicial section qualifies and positions the believers to carry out its organic section by the divine life of the processed and consummate Triune God. But today most Christians are just **lingering** in its judicial section and are satisfied with it, paying very little attention to its organic section and missing the **critical point** of the fulfillment of the eternal economy of God. The **critical need** of the Lord's recovery today is not to be held back by the satisfaction of the judicial section but to **press forward** to carry out the organic section so that there may be the possibility of accomplishing the eternal economy of God.

(Crystallization-Study of the Gospel of John – Message 13)