

Message 3: The Pattern of the Apostle Paul in Cooperating with Christ's Heavenly Ministry to Shepherd People for the Building Up of the Body of Christ

I. Paul was a pattern of shepherding people for the building up of the Body of Christ—Heb. 13:20, Eph. 4:16

Paul was a pattern of cooperating with Christ's heavenly ministry to shepherd people for the building up of the Body of Christ—Heb. 13:20; John 10:11; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Acts 20:20, 31; 2 Cor. 12:15; Eph. 4:16.

* PAUL'S BEING AND DOING

II. The manner of Apostle Paul – You know what kind of man I was—1 Thes. 1:5

(BEING)

The apostles were a pattern of the glad tidings that they spread—“you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake”

- A. **Your being or your doing:** In the church the most important thing is the person; the person is the way, and the person is the Lord's work; what you are is what you do—Phil 1:20; Matt 7:18.
- B. **Life more than work:** We need to follow the pattern of the apostles to pay more attention to life than to work—John 12:24; 2 Cor. 4:12

III. The service of Apostle Paul – Live Christ, supply Christ, build up the Body of Christ—1 Tim 1:16; Rom 8:16

(DOING)

Paul was a pattern to the believers of living and ministering Christ as the Spirit in his spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ.

- A. **Be the witness of the Lord:** The Lord appeared to Paul to make him a minister and a witness of the things in which Paul had seen Him and of the things in which He would appear to Paul—Acts 26:16-19.
- B. **Take Christ as everything:** Paul took Christ as everything—as his living, pattern, goal, and secret—Phil 1:20; 4:11-13.
- C. **Live by the Spirit:** Paul lived by the Spirit, walked by the Spirit, sowed unto the Spirit, and ministered the Spirit as a spiritual man who lived and served in his spirit—Gal 5:16, 25, 6:8.
- D. **Shine forth God:** Paul was infused with God to shine forth God in the ministry of the new covenant, which is the ministry of the Spirit, the ministry of righteousness, and the ministry of reconciliation—2 Cor. 3:18,8,9,5:19.
- E. **Serve in the Body:** Paul lived and did everything in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body—1 Cor. 12:12, Eph. 4:16; Col 2:19.

EXPERIENCE: The proper way to foster the saints is to show them the pattern. By showing them a pattern you water them, supply them, nourish them, and cherish them. This is fostering. If you feel your experience is somewhat lacking, point them to the pattern from the Bible or church history. It is ninety percent a matter of feeding and ten percent a matter of teaching. By reading the biographies of saints throughout the ages, we nourish ourselves and experience a kind of fostering.

BURDEN: we need to be pure in our motives, especially concerning money. Our greed must be dealt with, and money matters must be under our feet. We should never speak words of flattery, we should never have any pretext, and we should never seek glory for ourselves. Moreover, instead of trying to please man, we should do our best to please God. Then other believers will have a good pattern to follow.

* DESCRIBE THE PATTERN TO LIVE CHRIST

IV. **The best way to shepherd people is to give them a proper pattern:**

The best way to shepherd people, to cherish and nourish them, is to give them a proper pattern; Paul fed his spiritual children with his own living of Christ.

- A. **Preach the gospel by living the gospel:** The apostles not only preached the gospel but also lived it; their ministering of the gospel was not only by word but also by a life that displayed the power of God—[1 Thes. 1:5-7](#).
- B. **Make them as imitators to follow the Lord as their pattern:** The saints in Thessalonica became imitators of the apostles; this led them to follow the Lord, to take Him as their pattern, thus making them a pattern to all other believers.
- C. **Describe Paul's manner of life:** The apostle Paul stressed repeatedly the apostles' entrance toward the believers; this shows that their manner of life played a great role in infusing the gospel into the new converts:
(Paul's care as nourishing mother and exhorting father)—[1 Thes. 1:9, 2:1](#):
1. **Preach the gospel in much struggle:** The apostles were struggling and speaking the gospel to the Thessalonians in the boldness of God—[1 Thes. 2:2](#).
 2. **Honest and faithful:** The apostles were free from deception, uncleanness, and guile—[1 Thes. 2:3](#).
 3. **Being Approved by God to please Him:** The apostles were first tested and approved by God and then were entrusted by Him with the gospel; hence, their speaking, the preaching of the gospel, was to please Him—[1 Thes. 2:4](#); [2 Cor. 1:12](#).
 4. **No flattering or pretext for covetousness:** The apostles were never found with flattering speech or with a pretext for covetousness—[1 Thes. 2:5](#).
 5. **Not seek glory from men:** The apostles did not seek glory from men—[1 Thes. 2:6](#).
 - Lucifer became God's adversary, Satan, because of glory-seeking; anyone who seeks glory from men is a follower of Satan—[Isa. 14:12-15](#).
 - How much we will be used by the Lord and how long our usefulness will last depend on whether we seek glory from men—[John 7:18](#).
 6. **Not stand on their dignity:** The apostles did not stand on their authority or dignity as apostles of Christ—[1 Thes. 2:6](#).
 - To assert authority, dignity, or right in Christian work damages that work; the Lord Jesus, while on earth, gave up His dignity, and the apostle preferred not to use his right—[John 13:4-5](#); [1 Cor. 9:12](#).
 - If we follow this pattern, we shall kill a deadly disease germ in the Body of Christ, the germ of assuming a position—[Mat 20:26-28](#).
 7. **As nourishing mother to cherish believers:** The apostles cherished the believers and yearned over them as a nursing mother would cherish and yearn over her own children—[1 Thes. 2:7-8](#); [Gal. 4:19](#).
 - To cherish people in our natural humanity is not genuine; we must cherish people with the Lord's presence as the charming factor, as the reality of resurrection.
 - Cherishing includes nourishing; to nourish people is to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ in His full ministry of three stages.
 8. **Impart their own souls:** The apostles not only imparted the gospel of God to the Thessalonians; they also imparted their own souls—[1 Thes 2:8](#).
 - To live a clean and upright life and to love the new converts, even by giving our own souls to them, are the prerequisites for infusing them with the gospel—[2 Cor. 12:15](#).
 9. **As exhorting father to enable them to enter into the kingdom of God:** The apostles considered themselves as fathers in exhorting the believers to walk worthily of God, to have a walk that will enable them to enter into the kingdom of God and usher them into the glory of God—[1 Thes 2:11-12](#).
 - As worshippers of idols, the believers were in the kingdom of Satan.
 - Now, through the salvation in Christ they were called, and they have believed into the kingdom of God, which is the sphere in which they can worship and enjoy God under the divine ruling with the view of entering into God's glory.

I. Paul was a pattern of shepherding people for the building up of the Body of Christ.

[Acts 26:18] To open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light and from the authority of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

[1 Tim 1:16] But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.

* PAUL'S BEING AND DOING

II. The manner of Apostle Paul – You know what kind of man I was. (Being)

[1 Thes 1:5]....even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

A. Your being or your doing:

[Matt 7:17] Even so every good tree produces good fruit, but the corrupt tree produces bad fruit.

B. Life more than work:

[2 Cor. 4:12] So then death operates in us, but life in you.

III. The service of Apostle Paul – Live Christ, supply Christ, build up the Body of Christ. (Doing)

A. Be the witness of the Lord:

[Acts 26:16] But rise up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you as a minister and a witness both of the things in which you have seen Me and of the things in which I will appear to you;

B. Take Christ as everything: as his living, pattern, goal, and secret.

[Phil 1:20] According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.

C. Live by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit:

[Gal 5:25] If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit

D. Infused with God to shine forth God:

[2 Cor. 3:8] How shall the ministry of the Spirit not be more in glory?

E. Live and work in the Body, through the Body, and for the Body.

* The PATTERN TO LIVE CHRIST

IV. The best way to shepherd people is to give them a proper pattern.

A. Preach the gospel by living the gospel:

[1 Thes 1:5] For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance,

B. Make them as imitators to follow the Lord as their pattern:

[1 Thes 1:6] And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word

[1 Thes 1:7] So that you became a pattern to all those who believe in Macedonia and in Achaia

C. Describe Paul's manner of life:

1-3 Preach the gospel in much struggle, out of honesty and faithfulness, to please God

[1 Thes 2:2] God to speak to you the gospel of God in much struggle.

[1 Thes 2:3] not out of deception nor out of uncleanness nor in guile

[1 Thes 2:4] not as pleasing men but God

4-6 No flattering or pretext for covetousness, not seek glory from men, not stand on their dignity

[1 Thes 2:5] For neither were we found at any time with flattering speech, nor with a pretext for covetousness

[1 Thes 2:6] Nor did we seek glory from men,... though we could have stood on our authority

- Lucifer became God's adversary, Satan, because of glory-seeking
- How much we will be used by the Lord will last depend on whether we seek glory from men.
- If we follow this pattern, we shall kill a deadly disease germ in the Body of Christ, the germ of assuming a position.

7-9 As nourishing mother to cherish believers, to impart their own souls, and to be exhorting father

[1 Thes 2:7] But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children

[1 Thes 2:8] we were well pleased to impart to you ... our own souls, because you became beloved to us.

[1 Thes 2:11] .. we were to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you ..

[1 Thes 2:12] So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

- To cherish people must have the presence of Christ as the reality of resurrection.
- To nourish people must supply them with the richness if all inclusive Christ.
- To impart the life into the believers is the requirement of infusing gospel into their being.
- The goal is to make them walk worthily of God to enter into the kingdom of God.