

# THE CHURCH IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

by Ed Marks

Although the word *church* is not specifically used in the Gospel of John, the constituents of the church and the fact of the existence of the church are clearly defined. In the Gospel of John the church is referred to in seven ways. First, the church is composed of many grains, which are the many believers produced through Christ's death and resurrection. Second, the church is composed of the Lord's many brothers. Third, the church is the Father's house. Fourth, the church is the Son's vine. Fifth, the church is the Spirit's new child, the new man, born by the consummated Spirit. Sixth, the church is the bride of Christ. Finally and seventh, the church is the flock of God.

## The Church as the Grain of Wheat

John 12:23-24 says, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

For Jesus as the Son of Man to be glorified was for Him to be resurrected, that is, to have His divine element, His divine life, released from within the shell of His humanity to produce many believers in resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3), just as a grain of wheat [John 12:24] has its life element released when it falls into the ground and grows up out of the ground to bear much fruit, that is, to bring forth many grains. (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 23, note 1)

According to the human concept, for the Lord to be glorified would be something of a high, noble positional matter in which He would probably be publicly noticed as the king, but note 1 on John 12:24 in the Recovery Version points out the following:

According to the worldly view, Jesus was in His golden time. A great crowd of the Jews esteemed Him highly and welcomed Him warmly because of the resurrection of Lazarus (vv. 12-19), and even the Greeks were seeking after Him (vv. 20-22). But He preferred to fall as a grain of wheat into the ground and die that He might produce many grains for the church.

These many grains are ground and blended together into one bread, which signifies the church as the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 10:17). The Lord spoke also of His life-releasing death and life-dispensing resurrection for Him to be glorified in Luke 12:49-50, which goes together with John 12:24. He said, "I have come to cast fire on the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am pressed until it is accomplished!" The baptism that the Lord spoke of here was the baptism of His death. He was pressed, or constrained, in His flesh so that the shell of His humanity could be broken on the cross for the fire of His life and concealed glory

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to be released into many grains, which are His believers as His increase, His reproduction. Christ is the one grain, and we are the many grains produced through His death and resurrection. Now the fire of His divine life and the glory of His divinity dwell within us as the impelling force and impetus of our spiritual life in resurrection. Because of the fire of His life with His divine, indwelling glory (Col. 1:27), we can be “burning in spirit, serving the Lord” (Rom. 12:11). We can fan into flame the gift of God that is within us (2 Tim. 1:6), which is directly related to our regenerated spirit containing the fire of the glory of God’s life (v. 7).

John 12:24 speaks of the believers produced through Christ’s death and resurrection as “much fruit.” Note 2 on John 12:24 by Witness Lee in the Recovery Version says,

This “much fruit” became Christ’s increase in resurrection. This increase is the glory into which Christ entered through His death and resurrection (Luke 24:26). The portion from v. 23 of this chapter [John 12] to the end of ch. 17 is a discourse on the mystery of this glory. Christ had the glory with God (17:5). His incarnation caused His divine glory to be concealed in His flesh. Through His death and resurrection His glory was released, producing many grains, which become His increase as the expression of His glory...In the Lord’s last words to the believers in chs. 14—16, there are three concrete, corporate expressions of this glory: the Father’s house (the church) in 14:2, the branches of the vine (the constituents of the Body of Christ) in 15:1-5, and a newborn corporate man (the new man) in 16:21. All three denote the church, showing that the church is the glorious increase produced by the glorious Christ through His death and resurrection. In this glorious increase, Christ, the Son of God, is glorified, causing God the Father also to be glorified in Christ’s glorification, that is, to be fully expressed through the church (Eph. 3:19-21). This expression needs to be maintained in the oneness of the Triune God. Therefore, the Lord prayed in particular for this matter in His concluding prayer in [John] 17:20-23. This glorious increase of Christ is the peak of the mystery revealed in the Gospel of John, and its ultimate consummation is the New Jerusalem in Revelation, also written by John. The new holy city will be the aggregate of Christ’s increase throughout the generations, and in it Christ’s divine glory will be expressed to the uttermost. In the glorifying of God the Son, God the Father also will obtain eternal, matchless glory, which will be His full expression in eternity. Thus His eternal economy will be fulfilled for eternity.

### **The Church as the Lord’s Many Brothers**

John 20:17 says, “Go to My brothers and say to them, I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.” Note 2 on this verse by Witness Lee in the Recovery Version says,

Previously, the most intimate term the Lord had used in reference to His disciples was “friends” (15:14-15). But after His resurrection He began to call them “brothers,” for through His resurrection His disciples were regenerated (1 Pet. 1:3) with the divine life, which had been released by His life-imparting death, as indicated in [John]12:24. He was the one grain of wheat that fell into the ground and died and grew up to bring forth many grains for the producing of the one bread, which is His Body (1 Cor. 10:17). He was the Father’s only Son, the Father’s individual expression. Through His death and resurrection the Father’s only Begotten became the Firstborn among many brothers (Rom. 8:29). His many brothers are the many sons of God and are the church (Heb. 2:10-12), a corporate expression of God the Father in the Son. This is God’s ultimate intention. The many brothers are the propagation of the Father’s life and the multiplication of the Son in the divine life. Hence, in the Lord’s resurrection God’s eternal purpose is fulfilled.

Witness Lee’s note 3 on John 20:17 in the Recovery Version says,

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Through His life-imparting death and resurrection, the Lord made His disciples one with Him. Therefore, His Father is the Father of His disciples, and His God is the God of His disciples. In His resurrection they have the Father's life and God's divine nature, just as He has. In making them His brothers, He has imparted the Father's life and God's divine nature into them. By making His Father and His God theirs, He has brought them into His position—the position of the Son—before the Father and God. Thus, in life and nature inwardly and in position outwardly they are the same as the Lord, with whom they have been united.

Hebrews 2:10 through 12 says,

It was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying, "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You."

**T**he Greek word for *Author* may also be translated as "Captain." Christ is the Captain of our salvation, leading us into glory by sanctifying our spirit, soul, and body (1 Thes. 5:23). He who sanctifies is Christ as the firstborn Son of God (Rom. 8:29), and those who are being sanctified—the believers as the many sons, the many brothers, signified by the many grains in John 12:24—are all out of one source, one Father. The firstborn Son declared the Father's name to His disciples, His brothers, when He first met with them in His resurrection (20:17, 19-23). The church here is composed of the many brothers of the firstborn Son of God. In the midst of the church, the Lord sings hymns of praise to the Father in our singing.

When we, the many sons of God, meet as the church and praise the Father, the firstborn Son praises the Father in our praising...In our singing He sings hymns of praise to the Father. If then we do not sing, how can He sing? The more we sing to the Father, the more we enjoy His presence, His moving, His anointing, and His life-imparting within us. Thus we will grow in Him and be brought into His glorification above all. (Lee, Recovery Version, Heb. 2:12, note 3).

### **The Church as the Father's House**

John 14:2 and 23 say, "In My Father's house are many abodes...If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him." The phrase *My Father's house* is used twice in the Gospel of John. It is used the first time in 2:16, where Jesus referred to the physical temple. After this Jesus said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (v. 19). In verse 21 John clarifies that Jesus was speaking of the temple of His body. At this point there was a great dispensational change. The temple changed from a physical place to a living person. The temple spoken of here was the Lord's physical body. He was the embodiment of God (Col. 2:9). When His physical body was destroyed on the cross, He raised it up in three days for it to become the mystical Body of Christ (Eph. 2:6; 1:22-23). Now the Father's house is a corporate person, the church as the Body of Christ. Indeed, the church is the house of the living God (1 Tim. 3:15), the temple of the living God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Cor. 6:16).

In the Father's house there are many abodes, many dwelling places. These many abodes are the believers in Christ, the many members of the Body of Christ. This is proved by John 14:23, which tells us that if we love the Lord, we will keep His word, and He and the Father will come to us and make an abode with us. This abode is the abode of us abiding in the Father and the Son and of the Father and the Son abiding in us—a mutual abode. In 15:4 the Lord also said, "Abide in Me and I in you." If we want to

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To abide in the Lord and to allow the Lord to abide in us is to abide in His logos so that His rhema may abide in us. We need to remain in the constant, written Word so that His instant, spoken, personal, and direct word can abide in us, and we can live as the branches of Christ.

enjoy this mutual abiding through the Father and the Son's constant visitation, we need to be those who love the Lord to the uttermost. By loving the Lord, giving Him the first place in all things (Col. 1:18), we, together with He and the Father by the indwelling Spirit, become the mutual abode of God and man.

### The Church as the Son's Vine

John 15:5 and 7 say, "I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing...If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you." Christ is the true vine; the Father is the husbandman, the cultivator, of this vine (v. 1); and the many believers are the branches of this vine, through which much fruit, the fruit of new believers, is born. Praise the Lord that we are organically united with Christ to be the branches of Christ! In order to enjoy Christ as the true vine, we need to abide in His constant word (Gk. *logos*), so that His instant word (Gk. *rhema*) may abide in us. This is the practicality of the Lord's word: "He who abides in Me and I in him" (v. 5). In 8:31 Jesus said, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples." This verse indicates that to abide in the Lord is to abide in His word. If so, we would truly be His disciples. In verse 31 *word* is *logos*, which refers to His constant, written word. Thus, for us to abide in the Lord is for us to abide in His logos. John 15:7 says, "If you abide in Me and My words abide in you." Here the Greek word translated "words" is the plural form of *rhema*. Rhema is the instant, intimate, personal, direct, and applied word spoken to us. Verse 7 is saying that we abide in the Lord and His rhema abides in us. In verse 5 the Lord abides in us, and in verse 7 His words (rhema) abide in us. To abide in the Lord is to abide in His logos, and to allow the Lord to abide in us is to allow His rhema to abide in us. Hence, practically speaking, to abide in the Lord and to allow the Lord to abide in us is to abide in His logos so that His rhema may abide in us. In other words, we need to stay and remain in the constant, written word so that His instant, spoken, personal, and direct word can abide in us, and we can live as the branches of Christ, the true vine. We need to daily convert the logos into rhema, so that we can gradually accumulate a storehouse of the Lord's instant, spoken word in our inner being. In this way we can bear much fruit for the Father's glorification (v. 8).

In John 6:63 the Lord said, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." In this verse *words* is the plural of *rhema*, which again is the Lord's personal, direct, and instant word spoken to us. We can convert the logos to rhema by receiving God's word in a spirit and atmosphere of prayer. According to Ephesians 6:17 and 18, we are to "receive...the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God, by means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit." The word of God here is the rhema of God. In Matthew 4:4 the Lord said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.'" Here the Greek word translated "word" is *rhema*—the instant, spoken, intimate, personal word of the Lord to us. Ephesians 5:26 reveals that it is the washing of the water in the word, the rhema, that sanctifies us and beautifies us to be the Lord's glorious church spoken of in verse 27. In *The Glorious Church* Watchman Nee expounds the matter of rhema, distinguishing it from logos:

Only the word which the Lord speaks to us is of any use. The *rhema* reveals something to us personally and directly; it shows us what we need to deal with and what we need to be cleansed from. We must specifically seek after this very matter, because our Christian life is based on this *rhema*. What word has God really spoken to us, and how has He spoken to us? (53)

In another portion he says, "Luke 24:8 says, 'They remembered His words (*rhema*).'"

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In short what is *rhema*? *Rhema* is something the Lord has spoken previously which He is now speaking again. In other words, *rhema* is the word which the Lord speaks the second time. This is something living” (54). Then later he says, “Therefore, the central point of our prayers should be our longing for the Lord’s speaking. Oh, may the Lord speak to us! The Lord’s word being spoken to us will enable us to attain the eternal purpose of God” (57).

As we have pointed out, it is the washing of the water in the *rhema* (Eph. 5:26) that sanctifies us, metabolically cleansing us and washing away everything of our natural life and the oldness of our old man to transform us into the glorious church that the Lord desires for His unique expression (v. 27). It is also by our abiding in His *logos* that His *rhema* may abide in us so that we can be the living and fruitful branches of Christ, the true vine, for God the Father’s glorification.

### The Church as the Spirit’s New Child

John 16:20-22 says,

Truly, truly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she gives birth, has sorrow because her hour has come; but when she brings forth the little child, she no longer remembers the affliction because of the joy that a man has been born into the world. Therefore you also now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and no one takes your joy away from you.

John 16 reveals that “a new child, a new man, was born by the consummated Spirit (John 16:21, 13-15). This new man was created by Christ on the cross by abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances (Eph. 2:15)” (Lee, *Issue* 46). This new child, the new man,

was regenerated by the Father with the resurrected Christ in His resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3; Rom. 1:4) and born by the Spirit in the believers’ spirit (John 3:6b). The first group of Christ’s believers who suffered Christ’s departure through His death was the delivering woman (John 16:20-21). The Christ who returned in His resurrection was the newborn child (v. 22) to be the new man (Col. 3:10-11). (46)

**T**he new man is put on by the believers through their being renewed in the spirit of their mind (Eph. 4:23-24) to consummate the Body of Christ. The function of the new child born of the Spirit is to become the corporate new man as the increased Christ (Col. 3:10-11; John 3:30) in order to “carry out God’s eternal economy through the move and work of the consummated life-giving Spirit in building up the Body of Christ for the consummation of the New Jerusalem” (50).

### The Church as the Bride of Christ

John 3:29-30 says, “He who has the bride is the bridegroom...He must increase, but I must decrease.” The Bridegroom is Christ, and the bride is the church, which is the increase of Christ. The mention of the Bridegroom and the bride by John the Baptist points to the fact that the entire Bible is a divine romance, a record of how God courts His chosen people and eventually marries them (Gen. 2:21-24; S. S. 1:2-4; Isa. 54:5; 62:5; Jer. 2:2; 3:1, 14; 31:32; Ezek. 16:8; 23:5; Hosea 2:7, 19; Matt. 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32; Rev. 19:7; 21:2, 9-10; 22:17). The first bride in the universe was Eve, and Adam and Eve are a picture of Christ and the church.

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Himself (Rom. 5:14; cf. Isa. 54:5; John 3:29; 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:31-32; Rev. 21:9). In the bringing forth of Eve, "Jehovah God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper as his counterpart" (Gen. 2:18). Adam's need for a wife typifies and portrays God's need in His economy to have a wife as His counterpart, His complement. Although God, Christ, is absolutely and eternally perfect, He is not complete without the church as His wife. God desires to have both Adam, typifying Christ, and Eve, typifying the church. His purpose is to "let them have dominion" (1:26); it is to have a victorious Christ plus a victorious church, a Christ who has overcome the works of the devil plus a church that has overthrown the works of the devil. God wants Christ and the church to have dominion (Rom. 5:17; 16:20; Eph. 1:22-23).

**W**e need to see what God did to produce a counterpart for Himself. From the ground God formed every animal of the field and every bird of heaven and brought them to Adam, "and the man gave names to all cattle and to the birds of heaven and to every animal of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper as his counterpart" (Gen. 2:19-20), because a wife must be the same as her husband in life, nature, and expression. Among the cattle, the birds, and the animals, Adam did not find a counterpart for himself, one that could match him. In order to produce a counterpart for Himself, God first became a man, as typified by God's creation of Adam (John 1:14; Rom. 5:14).

Then "Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in its place" (Gen. 2:21). In the Bible sleep often refers to death (1 Cor. 15:18; 1 Thes. 4:13-16; John 11:11-14). Christ's death was a life-releasing, life-imparting, life-propagating, life-multiplying, life-reproducing death, which is signified by the grain of wheat falling into the ground to die and to grow up in order to produce many grains (12:24) for the making of one loaf, which is the Body, the church (1 Cor. 10:17). Through Christ's death the divine life within Him was released, and through His resurrection His released divine life was imparted into His believers for the constituting of the church. Through such a process God in Christ has been wrought into man with His life and nature so that man can be the same as God in life and nature in order to match Him as His counterpart.

Genesis 2:22 says, "Jehovah God built the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman and brought her to the man." The rib taken from Adam's opened side typifies the unbreakable, indestructible eternal life of Christ (Heb. 7:16; John 19:32-33, 36; Exo. 12:46; Psa. 34:20), which, as typified by water, flowed out of His pierced side (John 19:34) to be imparted into His believers for the producing and building up of the church as His counterpart. Out of Christ's side came blood and water, but all that came out of Adam's side was the rib without blood.

At Adam's time there was no need of redemption through the blood, because there was no sin. However, by the time that Christ was "sleeping" on the cross, there was the problem of sin; thus, the blood that came out of Christ's side was for our judicial redemption. Following the blood, water came out, which is the flowing life of God for our organic salvation (Exo. 17:6; 1 Cor. 10:4; Num. 20:8). This divine, flowing, uncreated life is typified by the rib that was taken out of Adam's side (Rom. 5:10, 14). Genesis 2:22 does not say that Eve was created but that she was built; the building of Eve with the rib that was taken from Adam's side typifies the building of the church with the resurrection life released from Christ through His death on the cross and imparted into His believers in His resurrection (John 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:3).

The church as the real Eve is the totality of Christ in all His believers. The church is the reproduction and increase of Christ. Other than Christ's element, there should be no other element in the church. Only that which comes out of Christ with His resurrection

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life can be His complement and counterpart, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 5:28-30). This shows that we need to put off the natural life until the living Christ can be expressed from within our spirit; then we will be the church in reality (Col. 3:10-11). To live out anything other than Christ is not the church. “It is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20); “to me, to live is Christ” (Phil. 1:21)—this is the church! Only that which comes out of Christ can be recognized by Christ; only that which comes out of Christ can return to Christ and match Him. Just as Eve was taken out of Adam and brought back to Adam to be one flesh with him (Gen. 2:24), so also the church produced out of Christ will go back to Christ (Eph. 5:27; Rev. 19:7) to be one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). Christ and the church as one spirit, typified by a husband and wife as one flesh, is the great mystery (Eph. 5:28-32).

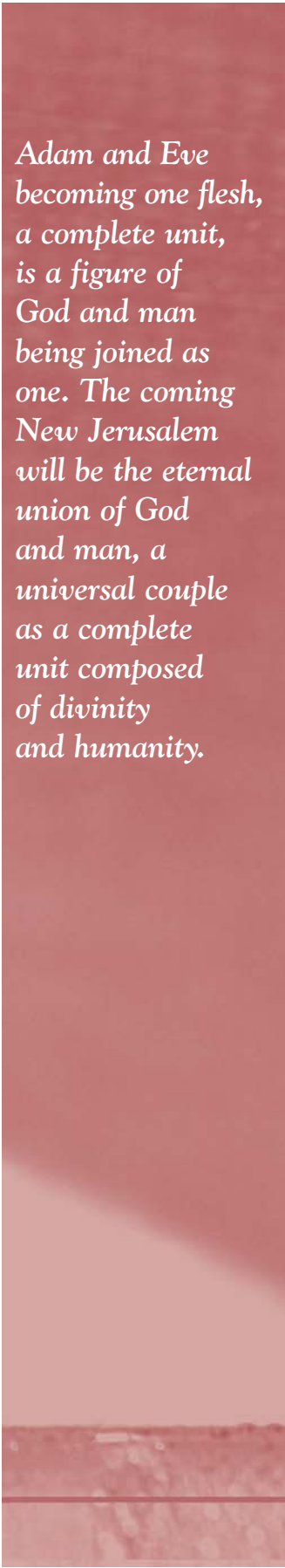
“The man said, This time this is bone of my bones / And flesh of my flesh; / This one shall be called Woman / Because out of Man this one was taken. Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (Gen. 2:23-24). In Hebrew *man* is *Ish*, and *woman* is *Ishshah*. Just as Eve was a pure product out of Adam, the church is a pure product out of Christ. Only those who are regenerated of Christ and who live by Christ as the church can match Christ and complement Him. When Christ sees this, He will surely say, “This time this is bone of My bones and flesh of My flesh” (cf. v. 23; Eph. 5:30). Just as Eve was the increase of Adam, the church as the bride is the increase of Christ as the Bridegroom (John 3:29-30).

**I**n the future Christ as the holy Bridegroom will present us to Himself as His counterpart for His marriage, just as God presented Eve to Adam as his counterpart for his marriage (Eph. 5:27, 31-32; Gen. 2:22-24; Rev. 19:7-9). Ephesians 5:27 reveals the beauty of the bride, saying that Christ will “present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.” The beauty of the bride comes from the very Christ who is wrought into her and who is then expressed through her (v. 26; Psa. 45:9-14).

Adam and Eve becoming one flesh, a complete unit (Gen. 5:2), is a figure of God and man being joined as one. The coming New Jerusalem will be the eternal union of God and man, a universal couple as a complete unit composed of divinity and humanity. Adam and Eve, being one, lived a married life together as husband and wife (2:24-25). This portrays that in the New Jerusalem the processed and consummated redeeming Triune God as the universal Husband will live a married life forever with redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified humanity as the wife (Rev. 22:17). The sovereign Lord, who created the universe and all things, that is, the Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—who, in Christ, passed through the processes of incarnation, human living, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension and who ultimately became the life-giving Spirit, is joined in marriage to the created, redeemed, regenerated, transformed, and glorified tripartite man—composed of spirit, soul, and body—who ultimately constitutes the church, the expression of God. In the eternity that is without end, by the divine, eternal, and surpassingly glorious life, they will live a life that is the mingling of God and man as one spirit, a life that is superexcellent and that overflows with blessings and joy.

### **The Church as the Flock of God**

John 10:14-16 says, “I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.” Christ is the good Shepherd (v. 14), the great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20), and the Chief Shepherd of the church as the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2-4). He is the Shepherd and Overseer of




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our souls (our mind, emotion, and will), exercising His care for our real inward person and overseeing the true condition of our inward parts (2:25). As the good Shepherd, He knows us, and we know Him. His sheep hear His voice, and He knows them, and they follow Him (John 10:27). He is not only the Shepherd of the sheep but also the door for the sheep to enter in and go out of the fold and also the pasture for the sheep (vv. 7-9). "The sheepfold signifies the law, or Judaism as the religion of the law, in which God's chosen people were kept and guarded in custody until Christ came" (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 1, note 2).

Christ is the door not only for God's elect to enter into the custody of the law, as did Moses, David, Isaiah, and Jeremiah in the Old Testament time, before Christ came, but also for God's chosen people, such as Peter, John, James, and Paul, to come out of the fold of the law now that Christ has come. Thus, the Lord indicated here that He is the door not only through which God's elect may go in but also through which God's chosen people may go out. (Lee, Recovery Version, v. 9, note 1)

The pasture here signifies Christ as the feeding place for the sheep. When the pasture is not available (e.g., in the wintertime or at night), the sheep must be kept in the fold. When the pasture is ready, there is no further need for the sheep to remain in the fold. To be kept in the fold is transitional and temporary. To be in the pasture enjoying its riches is final and permanent. Before Christ came, the law was a ward, and being under the law was transitional. Now that Christ has come, all God's chosen people must come out of the law and come into Him to enjoy Him as their pasture (Gal. 3:23-25; 4:3-5). This should be final and permanent. Because they did not have such a revelation, the leaders in Judaism considered the law, on which Judaism was based, as permanent. As a result, they missed Christ and could not participate in Him as their pasture. (Lee, Recovery Version, John 10:9, note 2).

The pasture that we enjoy today is Christ Himself as the divine, eternal life (Gk. *zoe*). He said that He is the life (14:6) and that the reason He came was that we may have life and may have it abundantly (10:10). In order for this to be fulfilled, He died a life-releasing death, and in resurrection He became a life-giving Spirit (1 Cor. 15:45). First, He regenerates us to give life to our spirit, making our spirit life (Rom. 8:10). Then as we set our mind on our spirit, our mind becomes life (v. 6). Finally, as we allow the Spirit of the resurrecting Triune God to indwell us, He gives life to our mortal bodies (v. 11). Eventually, our entire mortal being will be swallowed up by life (2 Cor. 5:4). The Father is the source of life (John 5:26), the Son is the embodiment of life (1:4), and the Spirit is the Giver of life (6:63). The building up of the Body is the growth of the divine life, the growth of God, within us (Eph. 4:16; Col. 2:19). The overcomers are the receivers, enjoyers, and dispensers of life. The Body of Christ is the fullness of life. Finally, the New Jerusalem is the glory of life shining forth in splendor radiantly, with the Father as the light of life, the Son as the tree of life, and the Spirit as the river of life. The New Jerusalem is the ultimate consummation of Christ's flock enjoying Him in the richest way as the green pasture of life. 

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