

I. **As believers in Christ, we may become a reproduction of Christ as our model**—1 Pet. 2:21:

- A. The living of the Lord Jesus under the government of God is a model so that we may follow in His steps by becoming His reproduction—1 Pet. 2:21-23; Eph. 4:20-21.
- B. The Greek word for *model* in 1 Peter 2:21 denotes a master copy used in the teaching of writing—a writing copy, an underwriting, for students to use in tracing letters as they learn to draw them:
 - The Lord Jesus has set His life before us as an underwriting for us to copy by tracing and following His steps—Matt. 11:28-30.
 - It is not God’s intention that we try to imitate Christ by our own effort; what we need is not imitation but reproduction—Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18.
- C. We need to become Christ’s reproduction, copies of Christ, by a process that involves the riches of the divine life; when this process is completed, we will become a reproduction of Christ—John 3:15; Eph. 3:8.
- D. The making of xerox copies may be used to illustrate what Peter means by Christ being a model for us.
- E. In order to become a reproduction of Christ as our model, we need to experience Christ as the One living in us, being formed in us, and making His home in our hearts—Gal. 2:20; 4:19; Eph. 3:16-17a:
 - The New Testament reveals that Christ is deeply related to our inner being—Gal. 1:16; Col. 3:10-11.
 - The pneumatic Christ—Christ as the life-giving Spirit—is living in us—1 Cor. 15:45b; Gal. 2:20:
 - God’s economy is that the “I” be crucified in Christ’s death and that Christ live in us in His resurrection—John 14:19.
 - We are one spirit with the Lord, we have one life with Him, and we should now be one person with Him—1 Cor. 6:17; Col. 3:4; Phil. 1:21a.
 - Since Christ dwells in us as the Spirit, we need to let Him live in us—John 14:16-19; Gal. 2:20.
 - To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ fully grown in us—Gal. 4:19:
 - Christ was born into us at the time we repented and believed in Him, then He lives in us in our Christian life, and finally, He will be formed in us at our maturity—John 1:12-13; 3:15; Gal. 2:20; 4:19.
 - To have Christ formed in us is to allow the all-inclusive Spirit to occupy every part of our inner being, to have Christ fully grown in us—Col. 2:19; Eph. 4:15-16.
 - To have Christ formed in us implies that we are being constituted with Christ organically—Col. 3:10-11.
 - *Formed* in Galatians 4:19 corresponds to *image* in 2 Corinthians 3:18; Christ will be formed in us so that we may express Him in His image.
 - The Christ who lives in us and who is being formed in us is making His home in our hearts—Eph. 3:16-17a.
 - As Christ lives in us, is formed in us, and makes His home in our hearts, we become a reproduction of Christ for the corporate expression of God—Rom. 8:29; 12:4-5; Rev. 21:2.

- II. **As we become a reproduction of Christ, we can experience and enjoy Christ as the Shepherd of our souls**—1 Pet. 2:25; Matt. 11:28-30; Phil. 1:27; 2:2:
- A. **As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being:**
 - Christ's organic shepherding primarily takes care of our soul—Psa. 23:3.
 - Christ shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being—Heb. 13:17.
 - This kind of shepherding is an inward, intrinsic, organic comforting.
 - B. **Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul, to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and our problems, needs, and wounds**—John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17:
 - As our pneumatic Shepherd, Christ takes care of us from within our spirit.
 - His shepherding begins from our spirit and spreads to every part of our soul.
 - From our spirit Christ reaches all the parts of our soul and takes care of us in a tender, organic, all-inclusive way.
 - C. **As the Shepherd of our souls, Christ restores our soul**—Psa. 23:3a:
 - For our soul to be restored means that we are revived.
 - Restoring our soul also includes renewing and transforming—Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 3:18.
 - D. **As the Shepherd of our souls, the Lord gives rest to our soul**—Matt. 11:28-30:
 - The Lord calls those who are striving to keep the law or struggling to be successful in any work to come to Him for rest—Matt. 11:28.
 - This rest refers not only to being set free from the toil and burden under the law or religion or under any work or responsibility but also to perfect peace and full satisfaction.
 - To take the Lord's yoke is to take the will of the Father—Matt. 12:50.
 - The Lord lived such a life, constrained by and caring for the will of His Father; He was fully satisfied with the Father's will and had rest in His heart—John 4:34; 5:30; 6:38.
 - The rest that we find by taking the Lord's yoke and learning from Him is an inward rest, a rest for our souls—Matt. 11:29-30.
 - E. **As the Lord shepherds our soul and restores our soul, we not only experience Christ but also enjoy Him**—Phil. 2:2; 3:1a:
 - The experience of Christ is a matter primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment of Christ is in our soul—Phil. 1:27; 2:2.
 - If there is a problem with our soul, we may have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ.
 - Regarding Christ, our taste is mainly with our soul; this is the reason that in order to have the enjoyment of Christ, we need the Lord to shepherd every part of our soul, especially our mind.

I. **As believers in Christ, we may become a reproduction of Christ as our model**

- The living of the Lord Jesus under the government of God is a model so that we may follow in His steps by becoming His reproduction. The Greek word for *model* in 1 Peter 2:21 denotes a master copy used in the teaching of writing—a writing copy, an underwriting, for students to use in tracing letters as they learn to draw them. The Lord Jesus has set His life before us as an underwriting for us to copy by tracing and following His steps. It is not God's intention that we try to imitate Christ by our own effort; what we need is not imitation but reproduction.

[1 Pet. 2:21] For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered on your behalf, leaving you a model so that you may follow in His steps.

[2 Cor. 3:18] But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

- We need to become Christ's reproduction, copies of Christ, by a process that involves the riches of the divine life; when this process is completed, we will become a reproduction of Christ. The making of xerox copies may be used to illustrate what Peter means by Christ being a model for us.
- In order to become a reproduction of Christ as our model, we need to experience Christ as the One living in us, being formed in us, and making His home in our hearts. The New Testament reveals that Christ is deeply related to our inner being. The pneumatic Christ—Christ as the life-giving Spirit—is living in us. God's economy is that the "I" be crucified in Christ's death and that Christ live in us in His resurrection. Since Christ dwells in us as the Spirit, we need to let Him live in us. To have Christ formed in us is to have Christ fully grown in us. To have Christ formed in us is to allow the all-inclusive Spirit to occupy every part of our inner being, to have Christ fully grown in us. It also implies that we are being constituted with Christ organically. *Formed* in Galatians 4:19 corresponds to *image* in 2 Corinthians 3:18; Christ will be formed in us so that we may express Him in His image. The Christ who lives in us and who is being formed in us is making His home in our hearts. As Christ lives in us, is formed in us, and makes His home in our hearts, we become a reproduction of Christ for the corporate expression of God.

[1 Cor. 6:17] But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit. [Gal. 2:20] I am crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me;...

[Gal. 4:19] My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you.

[Eph. 3:17a] That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, ...

II. **As we become a reproduction of Christ, we can experience and enjoy Christ as the Shepherd of our souls**

- As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being. Christ's organic shepherding primarily takes care of our soul. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being. Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul, to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and our problems, needs, and wounds. As our pneumatic Shepherd, Christ takes care of us from within our spirit. His shepherding begins from our spirit and spreads to every part of our soul. From our spirit Christ reaches all the parts of our soul and takes care of us in a tender, organic, all-inclusive way.

[1 Pet. 2:25] For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

[1 Cor. 15:45b] ... the last Adam became a life-giving Spirit.

- As the Shepherd of our souls, Christ restores our soul. For our soul to be restored means that we are revived, it also includes renewing and transforming.

[Psa. 23:3a] He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness ...

[Rom. 12:2] And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

- As the Shepherd of our souls, the Lord gives rest to our soul. The Lord calls those who are striving to keep the law or struggling to be successful in any work to come to Him for rest. This rest refers not only to being set free from the toil and burden under the law or religion or under any work or responsibility but also to perfect peace and full satisfaction. To take the Lord's yoke is to take the will of the Father. The Lord lived such a life, constrained by and caring for the will of His Father; He was fully satisfied with the Father's will and had rest in His heart.

[Matt. 11:28-30] Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest. 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. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

- As the Lord shepherds our soul and restores our soul, we not only experience Christ but also enjoy Him. The experience of Christ is a matter primarily in our spirit, but the enjoyment of Christ is in our soul. If there is a problem with our soul, we may have the experience of Christ without the enjoyment of Christ. Regarding Christ, our taste is mainly with our soul; this is the reason that in order to have the enjoyment of Christ, we need the Lord to shepherd every part of our soul, especially our mind.

[Phil. 2:2] Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing.

Sometimes the Lord shepherds us in the same way that He shepherded the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We also may speak to Him in a nonsensical way or ask Him nonsensical questions. We may even rebuke Him, and He may pretend not to know what we are talking about. Many of us can testify of having the Lord Jesus shepherd us in this way. As the life-giving Spirit dwelling within us, He is the Shepherd to us in our experience.

<Excerpts from "Life-study of First Peter", Message 21, "Christian Life and its Sufferings (3)">

Christ's living revealed in the four Gospels is the master copy used in this spiritual xeroxing. For xeroxing, we must first have a copy. The xeroxed copy made from this original is a reproduction, not an imitation. We know from experience that trying to imitate Christ does not work. We are not able to imitate Him. What we need is not imitation but reproduction. There is a great difference between imitation and reproduction.

In the process of spiritual xeroxing, the Spirit of Christ is the light, and the riches of the divine life are the inking substance. We are the paper on which the reproduction of the original is to be made. This paper must be put under the light of the Holy Spirit, and it must pass through the inking substance in order to have the original copy—Christ Himself— reproduced on it. Through this process we eventually become a reproduction of the original, a reproduction of Christ.

To understand Christ as grace and the writing-copy, we need experience. From experience we know that as we are living out Christ day by day, we are under the process of spiritual xeroxing. As a result, others will be able to read Christ on us, for we shall become a letter of Christ.

<Excerpts from "Life-study of First Peter", Message 20, "Christian Life and its Sufferings (2)">