



Discover God's Unique Design for Your  
**SPIRITUAL GIFT OF SHEPHERDING**

# YOUR GIFT:

**SHEPHERDING**



**Discover God's Unique Design for**

# **YOUR GIFT: SHEPHERDING**

by Dr. Marvin Osborn



Church**Growth**.org  
*Timeless Tools for Christian Growth*

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HOW TO DEVELOP AND USE THE GIFT OF SHEPHERDING

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## **FOREWORD**

Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church – the Chief Shepherd of his flock. In his great sovereignty, he placed under-shepherds to lead, feed and protect his followers. Some of these shepherds are called to the position or office of pastor; others are called to serve as shepherds in other positions in the church.

Paul uses the word *poimen* in Ephesians 4:11, where the term is translated "pastor." This place in Scripture is the only time the word *poimen* is translated pastor. It is used sixteen additional times where it is translated "shepherd." We must recognize that here we are discussing the gift of shepherding, not the position of the pastor. Though the pastor must have the gift of shepherding, everyone who has the gift of shepherding is not called to the position of pastor. In all cases, shepherds have a desire to lead and feed, guard and protect, and oversee their flocks.

*How to Develop and Use the Gift of Shepherding* is designed to help you identify your gift and implement that gift in and through your local church. Whether God has called you into full-time Christian service or to serve as a lay minister, God has a divine plan for you. I trust you will find this book useful in developing your gift to fulfill the role for which God has gifted you.

Dr. Larry Gilbert, Founder  
Ephesians Four Ministries  
Church Growth Institute





## CHAPTER ONE

# What Is the Gift of Shepherding?

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever” (Psalm 23).

Psalm 23 is considered to be the most beloved of all the Psalms. It brings comfort to those who are going through valleys of doubt and fear, peace to those who are facing their own death or the death of a loved-one, and confidence that our Great Shepherd loves us, sustains us, protects us, comforts us and chastens us when needed. What a great picture of our wonderful God.

Jesus, identified himself as the Good Shepherd:

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again” (John 10:11-17).

The Apostle Peter also identifies Jesus as the Chief Shepherd, the Shepherd of our souls (for those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior) and the Chief Shepherd of the church (1 Peter 2:25; 5:4). He saved us, he protects us, he knows us, and he brings us into his fold. He is our shepherd and we are his sheep.

The word “pastor” means shepherd. When you consider that God the Father is called “Shepherd” in Psalm 23 and Jesus called himself the “Good Shepherd” in John 10 and Peter called Jesus the “Chief Shepherd” in 1 Peter, then what a wonderful privilege it is for those whom God has entrusted to care, protect and feed his sheep to be afforded the same title. Pastors are the shepherds, the undershepherds of God’s flock.

What is the greatest job in the world? Is it being the CEO of Disney? Is it being a great military leader? Is it being the President of the United States? Those are certainly noble and worthwhile occupations; however, the greatest job with the greatest

responsibility on the face of the planet is being a pastor/shepherd. A pastor/shepherd is charged with the only eternal possession a person will ever have – his/her soul. No matter whether you shepherd a large church, a smaller church, a Sunday school class or a cell group, as a pastor/shepherd, you are entrusted with caring for the eternal souls of those entrusted to your care.

Jonathon grew up in a lower middle-class family in the suburbs of Washington D.C. Having never attended church until the age of 15. Needless to say, being called to the pastorate was not in his future plans. In eighth grade, he took a vocational exam that indicated he was best suited to becoming either a lawyer or a bartender. But, when he received Jesus as Savior his world changed, his future changed, and his future vocational direction changed.

Jonathon became involved in the church youth group, was discipled by the youth pastor and was thrust into ministry in his teenage years. After returning from a short-term mission trip with his youth group he felt God's calling on his life to go into full-time Christian service. Undergraduate, seminary and doctorate degrees later followed. He currently serves as a pastor.

Is this your idea of the ideal application of the shepherding gift? This gift certainly includes the role of pastor but also includes those who shepherd Sunday school classes, small groups, cell groups, Vacation Bible School, and numerous other leadership roles with the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of others.

Dr. Larry Gilbert, CEO and Founder of Ephesians Four Ministries, defines The gift of pastor/shepherd as “the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by overseeing, training, and caring for the needs of a group of Christians. They lead and feed their flocks as well as coach their teams (their churches, classes, etc.).”

The “Spirit-given capacity and desire” cannot be understated. The two go hand-in-hand. Once a man or woman is converted to Christ, he/she is given at least one spiritual gift. Many desire to be a pastor or to shepherd a church or community of believers but are not spiritually gifted to do so. Therefore the churches don't thrive, errant doctrines abound, frustration and stress prevail, and the work of Christ is hindered.

Desire, no matter how noble, does not necessarily equate to a calling. Yet, your spiritual giftedness is a major indicator to God's will for your life. The pastor/shepherd capacity is given by God but confirmed by one's desire to fulfill its purpose. God's giftedness does not bring frustration it brings fulfillment and satisfaction in the life of the one who fulfills his/her calling.

As stated prior, Dr. Gilbert defines this gift as “the Spirit-given capacity and desire to serve God by overseeing, training and caring for the needs of a group of Christians...” In other words, the fulfillment of this gift lies primarily in the spiritual oversight and care of fellow believers. This includes both the vocational pastor/shepherd position and the lay shepherd position within a local body of believers.

Dr. John MacArthur identifies the vocational role of the pastor as one who is responsible “to lead (1 Timothy 5:17); preach and teach (1 Timothy 5:17); help the

spiritually weak (1 Thess 5:12-14); care for the church (1 Peter 5:1-2); and ordain other believers (1 Timothy 4:14)” (Pg 1864, *The MacArthur Study Bible*).

The Apostle Paul explains the qualifications of a vocational pastor in Titus 1:6-9. This passage could also apply to lay shepherds, depending upon the qualifications sited by any local church.

“If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:6-9).

### **Blameless:**

The term blameless does not mean that the pastor/shepherd is sinless or without sin. There was only one sinless shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ. All others fall short of that standard.

The correct interpretation of this verse means that a pastor/shepherd must be above reproach. Blameless means that no one can bring a credible accusation against you. This would certainly include legal problems, moral failures after receiving Christ and anything that will come out and hurt the testimony of Christ in your church.

A shepherd's ministry is intimately tied to personal reputation. A shepherd with a soiled reputation because of credible accusations will result in a soiled ministry.

### **The husband of one wife:**

Literally “a one spouse person.” To serve as a pastor is the highest calling to obtain. It is a place of honor, respect and of great authority. It is an awesome responsibility to shepherd God’s flock. In this position, there is no place for a pastor/shepherd who cannot keep marriage vows.

This truth became apparent to me when I attended a seminary lecture by a visiting middle-eastern professor. After the lecture, I was invited to have lunch with the guest professor and some of the college's administrators. In the elevator, the guest professor began flirting with a lady. I became uneasy as I listened to the exchange. Afterward, I asked one of the administrators if I had indeed interpreted the scene correctly. He said, “Oh, yes. That is just their culture.” He went on to say that men in that culture often had one or two mistresses. I was incensed. Adultery is adultery no matter what culture you live in. According to Titus 1:6-9, there is no place in the ministry for anyone who refuses to keep their marriage vows.

### **Faithful children not accused of riot or unruly:**

This qualification speaks more about the parenting skills of those who desire to shepherd the house of God. A man or woman who cannot keep his/her children in order will never garner the respect to oversee the house of God. A shepherd

who is not strong enough or mature enough to fulfill the biblical responsibility to raise children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6) cannot be trusted to fulfill his/her duties in the church.

**Not self-willed:**

God's agenda must be the shepherd's agenda. Everyone is accountable to someone and the role of the pastor/shepherd and lay pastor/shepherd is no different. The lay shepherd is accountable to the pastor of the church and the pastor is accountable to the Lord Jesus.

Every member of the church, especially those who administrate the church must submit themselves to the will of God for that ministry.

Too many people enter into the ministry with the desire to make a name for themselves. We are called to serve Christ and to bring glory to his wonderful name. Anyone who is unwilling or incapable of submitting to the God's will is not qualified to serve in a leadership position in the church.

**Not soon angry:**

Not soon angry really refers to those who are quick tempered, those who are characterized as angry people. Righteous anger is justified and was certainly expressed by Jesus when he cleansed the temple of the moneychangers. However, a person who is unable to control his/her own spirit will eventually bring shame to the cause of Christ.

**Not given to wine:**

This qualification does not call for a total abstinence of wine or alcohol, but prohibits being addicted to wine or any alcoholic beverage. A shepherd who is fully convinced that God is favorable toward alcoholic consumption must be temperate.

Alcohol consumption is a major cause for physical abuse, adultery, blasphemy, etc. all of which disqualify someone from serving in a leadership role in the church. Therefore, it is highly recommended, that the shepherd set the example of propriety for the congregation and abstain from all forms of alcohol.

**No striker:**

A church leader cannot be a brawler/a fist fighter. A shepherd whose uncontrolled anger leads to a physical attack on another person has lost the right to teach God's Word.

A visiting pastor was scheduled to speak in a church and arrived a few hours early for the service. He decided to pick up a few things from the grocery store and became enraged with one of the customers in the store. The conflict nearly came to blows. Cooler heads prevailed and the two walked away. Later that night when the visiting pastor went to the pulpit, he saw that same man sitting in the congregation.

The visiting pastor's credibility was lost. The power of the Holy Spirit was quenched. How much credibility do you think that visiting pastor had with that man? Was God glorified in that pastor's life?

The fruit of the Spirit—not the fruit of the flesh—must be evident in a shepherd's life. A servant is not greater than his master. And, we are not greater than our Savior. We must follow in his footsteps and follow his example. Meekness is not weakness. Meekness is allowing God's power to prevail in your life so that Jesus receives all the glory.

### **Not given to filthy lucre:**

Literally, shepherds must not love money; not be motivated by money. Some enter ministry to get rich. They prey on the naive, on the weak, and on the elderly. They abuse their position in order to get rich at the expense of the Gospel.

A shepherd's loyalty cannot be divided. He/she cannot serve God and money. The love of money will eventually have an adverse effect on his/her love for Christ. God will not share his glory with another. Men and women of God must understand that God is their provider and being content in God's provision is great gain.

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness” (1 Tim. 6:6-11).

### **Lover of hospitality:**

Literally, shepherds must love guests. This applies to in the home as well as the church. Gaius was such a man. In 3 John, the Apostle John commends Gaius for receiving traveling teachers of God's Word into the church. Shepherds who are unwilling or incapable of receiving fellow servants of Christ will only prove to be a hindrance to the work of the Gospel.

### **Lover of good men:**

The Greek Word (*philagathos*) literally means a lover of those things that are good. Shepherds enjoy being around those who love Christ and who strive to serve him.

All Christians are called to reach the lost; however, shepherds love to be with fellow believers, caring for God's sheep.

### **Sober:**

Shepherds must be right minded, prudent in their thinking and totally devoted—not deterred from God's Word and will. Shepherds must be single-minded in love and devotion to Christ.

**Just:**

Shepherds must be righteous in character and actions. Our actions speak more about our theology than anything we say we believe. Many people say they love Christ, but their lifestyle says differently. In truth, they are practical atheists. They say they are saved, but they live like the unsaved. Shepherds, although not perfect, must be examples of Christ to those entrusted to their care. Shepherds, like the Apostle Paul, must encourage others to follow them as they follow Christ.

**Holy:**

Holiness means being set apart or separated from sin. The servant of God is set apart for the work of Christ. Holiness is the standard for all believers. Shepherds must understand that as Christ is holy so they are to be holy in word, conduct and deed.

**Temperate:**

Temperate refers to the ability to control one's appetites. Shepherds must be able to control their desires, temptations, and be free of inordinate addictions. Jesus said that "man does not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Our only addiction in life must be God's Word. Anything else (food, relationships, ambition, money, sex, etc.) that does not comply to the will and Word of God is sin. The Bible must be the authority of our lives.

**Holding fast the faithful word:**

Make no mistake about it, a person could possess all of the attributes described in Titus 1:6-9, but be incapable or unwilling to faithfully teach the Word of God, which would disqualify him/her from any leadership role in the church. Too many pastor/shepherds have abandoned sound doctrine. They have forsaken the Word of God for the word of man. They have traded the Gospel of Christ for the gospel of materialism. They forfeited the rewards of God for the praises of man.

There has always been a price for preaching the whole counsel of God's Word. Historically, the preaching of the Gospel has been mocked, ridiculed, maligned by mainstream society. Christian historian Tertullian, understood the high cost of preaching God's Word when he wrote, "The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church."

We sorely lack believers who are willing to endure the ridicule of the world to win souls to Christ. Too many churches are willing to build a crowd rather than a congregation.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things” (Rom. 10:13-15).

Gifted shepherds must set their hearts on proclaiming God’s Word in order to fulfill the purposes of God in the church of God.

### **Why Do Many Women Score So High on the Gift of Shepherding?**

Throughout history, God has used women to accomplish mighty deeds in the kingdom of God. We certainly owe a great debt to Sarah, Esther, Hannah, Deborah, Mary, Mary Magdalene, and the thousands of nameless women of faith on which the seeds of the Gospel of Christ were spread.

When completing the *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory*, many women score high in the shepherding gift because they naturally possess the nurturing, loving and caring characteristics needed to shepherd their children. Those characteristics are also manifested in those who were supernaturally called and spiritually gifted as shepherds in the church, whether as vocational pastors or lay pastors. Women should take their natural mothering instincts into consideration when determining their dominant spiritual gift. They may also want to take a close look at their secondary gift as well as their heart-felt burdens, desires and interests in confirming their dominant gift.





## **CHAPTER TWO**

# **Lay Pastors/Shepherds**

Ms. Oliver had been the eighth-grade Sunday school teacher for as long as anyone could remember. She, and her two children, attended church alone each Sunday. Her husband was not saved and had no use for the church. Yet, Ms. Oliver and her children were actively involved in their local church where she served as the teacher of a large eighth-grade Sunday school class.

What set Ms. Oliver apart from many Sunday school teachers was that she genuinely cared for the children entrusted to her care. She saw her position as more than just leading and teaching the class. She knew their interests, their likes, their goals, and their concerns. She shepherded her class as well as any pastor shepherded a congregation. She visited them when they were sick or absent, she corrected them when they were errant, she loved them when they were unlovable, she taught them God's Word and she was a model of God's love and grace. Many of her eighth-grade students became pastors, pastor's spouses, and served in various roles in the church.

Ms. Oliver shepherded her students. Lay shepherds are vital to the effectiveness and growth of the church. The pastor/shepherd cannot meet the individual needs of everyone in the church. Vocational pastor/shepherds owe a great debt to those who volunteer their time, talent and energy to help shepherd their flock.

### **Lay Pastors/Shepherds include:**

- Sunday School Superintendents
- Sunday School Teachers
- Cell Group Leaders
- Cell Group Teachers
- Youth Leaders
- Children's Church Leaders
- AWANA Leaders
- Music Ministers
- Christian Education Directors
- Christian School Administrators
- Visitation Leaders
- Hospitality Directors
- Spiritual Counselors...and more

## How to Develop Your Gift of Shepherding:

“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:1-2).

### 1. Develop your gift of teaching God’s Word.

Although your dominant gift is not teaching, pastor/shepherds often find themselves in positions that lend to teaching, and may have a secondary gift of teaching. The process of teaching requires a lifelong commitment of study, reading, preparation and research. A shepherd must understand the necessity of developing a personal study schedule in order to be an effective communicator of God’s Word. In addition, a shepherd should develop a resource library that will become an invaluable asset in preparing to teach. Among other things, your basic resource library should include:

- A good study Bible
- A concordance
- A Bible dictionary
- A guide to the Bible
- Bible commentaries on the books you are studying

A number of computer programs and Internet sites will prove useful in your personal study and teaching preparation. As with all resources, you need be careful of the resources you use. Myriads of books, websites, and other resources are available to help you in your lesson preparation. However, not all are spiritually or academically qualified to do so. Therefore, all men and women of God who desire to teach the Bible must show discernment in the resources they use.

Your local church may have a library of helpful resources also. Remember to ask your pastor to recommend authors, books, and publishers. When choosing study resources, a wise teacher should ask:

#### A. Who are the authors?

A simple check on the Internet will help you answer the following questions:

What are the authors’ doctrinal beliefs? What other things have they written? What are their educational qualifications? From what college or seminary did they graduate? Where do they attend church?

#### B. Who is the publisher?

A simple check on the Internet will help you answer the following questions:

What other books have they published? With what denomination are they closely associated? Who are their other authors?

C. Does the resource contain the information for which I am looking?

As with all resources, a quick look at the back of the book jacket and the table of contents should assist you in determining if the book contains the information you need for your studies.

Another valuable resource is Dr. Doug Porter's *How to Develop and Use the Gift of Teaching* published by Church Growth Institute. This book will assist you in developing your ability to teach the God's Word.

2. Reprove.

The word "reprove" means to correct misbehavior, sin or false doctrine. One of the great struggles of shepherds is bridging the gap between leadership and friendship. Whether you shepherd a third-grade Sunday school class or an adult cell group you have the responsibility to correct errant behavior.

Shepherds must realize that when they teach or preach God's Word they are in fact speaking God into the lives of their flocks. They need not shrink back from the reprovng misbehavior or sin from the Word of God. They do not speak on their own behalf, but as God's representative regarding that situation.

I have learned there are times to be blunt and there are times to lovingly reprove misbehavior. I remember counseling a man who had left his wife and was contemplating an unbiblical divorce. He knew the biblical mandates regarding divorce. As I counseled him, I reiterated the biblical mandates about divorce. He rejected my counsel, which was a rejection of God's Word. At that, I became very bold and blunt when I told him if he proceeded with this unbiblical divorce, he was in sin and would encounter church discipline (Matthew 18) and the chastisement of Almighty God. That was not my normal counseling style, but he had to understand the repercussions of his decision.

Lay pastor/shepherds, under the authority of the senior pastor/shepherd, represent God, and his work is eternal. All shepherds must remember:

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20).

3. Rebuke.

The word rebuke deals with the sins and intents of the heart. Jesus addressed this when he said:

"But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man" (Matt. 15:18-20).

“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh” (Luke 6:45).

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matt. 5:27-28).

A shepherd’s job is not just to reprove the outward sin but also the sins of the heart, the secret thoughts, evil intents, lusts that corrupt a person from within. The thoughts and intents of the heart lead to outward sin.

#### 4. Encourage.

Shepherds encourage the flock toward victorious living in Christ Jesus. This certainly entails teaching about the rewards of faithfulness, our eternal home in Jesus, our relationship in Christ, the power of prayer, and the everlasting promises that await those faithfully serve Christ.

### **The Lay Pastor/Shepherd and Authority**

Shepherds have a tendency to become territorial when shepherding their “flock.” But, lay pastor/shepherds must understand that they are responsible to the authority God has placed over their church or organization. To fail to submit to the vision, direction and authority of the church is to be in rebellion to the Lord.

I have dealt with this from time to time in ministry. A youth director referred to his youth group as “my teens.” As such, he felt he knew what was better for the teens entrusted to his care than their parents and me, the pastor of the church. I sat with him and explained that he was wrong on several levels: 1) The three hours per week the youth director spends with the teens does not compare to the other 165 hours their parents spend with them. Ultimately, God entrusted parents to raise up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6). 2) The pastor is responsible for all the people and ministries of the church. 3) The role of lay pastor/shepherds is to answer to the senior pastor/shepherd and to fulfill God’s vision and mission for the church. This can be fulfilled through:

#### 1. Meeting with your pastor, or pastoral designate, on a monthly or quarterly basis:

For the church to fulfill its vision every facet of the church must be moving in the same direction. Meeting with the pastor will allow you to understand your progress in fulfilling God’s vision for the church. This will also afford you the opportunity to share your heart and concerns with the pastor. Communication, communication, communication is the key to your success in fulfilling your part of God’s vision for your church.

#### 2. Submitting your plans for the coming quarter:

All plans for your ministry must fall under the authorization of the senior pastor and the church budget. All lay pastor/shepherds must be willing to adjust and revise their plans to fit the overarching vision and mission of the church.

3. Recruiting other leaders around you:

Begin to pray and seek advice from the senior pastor or other church leaders who you should bring around you to help you accomplish the goals of your ministry. When recruiting volunteers, every church leader should use the *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory* by Dr. Larry Gilbert, published by Church Growth Institute. This valuable resource will allow you to understand the giftedness of each worker and will give you insight about where each leader should be used within your ministry. (Also see *The Big Book of Job Descriptions for Ministry* by Larry Gilbert and Cindy Spear.)

Be careful not to choose just anyone to fill a hole within your ministry. The philosophy of “anybody is better than nobody” has come back to haunt many church ministries. Where God provides the vision, he provides the provision. Pray and wait on the Lord. God will provide the right person in his perfect timing. If you don’t have peace about a person, do not proceed. Wait upon the Lord.

4. Finances and Budgets:

Financial accountability is essential in facet of the church. All church expenditures must be subject to the approved church budget and submitted to the church treasurer for approval. Remember, just because a project or item may be budgeted does not mean that there are funds in the bank to pay for it at this particular time. Therefore, as plans are submitted to the senior pastor/shepherd for approval, a wise lay pastor/shepherd will submit for approval the expected expenditures to fulfill those plans.

Remember to keep careful expense records and turn in all receipts to the church treasurer. These expense records will help resolve any financial discrepancies and will also help you prepare your budget for the coming year.

5. The Ordinances of the Church:

The ordinances of the church are widely accepted as: partaking in the Lord’s Supper (communion) and baptism. Some denominations also include foot washing.

There are differing opinions about whether lay people are biblically permitted to administer the ordinances of the church. Many churches believe that the ordinances were given to the church, and as such, are only to be administered by ordained pastors. Still others believe that the priesthood of believers (1 Peter 2) allows any true believer the privilege of administering the ordinances. I have also heard of parachurch organizations, Christian seminars, and other Christian gatherings that believe they have the right to administer the ordinances. Each church must decide their interpretation of the administration of the ordinances.

A youth pastor of a large church took his youth on evangelistic outreaches in Florida. Many people gave their lives to Jesus Christ. The youth pastor baptized the new converts in the Atlantic Ocean. Unfortunately, he unknowingly violated his church's ordinance policy. His church believed that he should have distributed the names of the converts to area churches who were supporting their evangelistic endeavors for follow-up and baptism.

It is important that lay pastor/shepherds understand their church's interpretation of the ordinances and submit to their beliefs.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

# **Avoiding Leadership Pitfalls**

Several decades ago, a young man was hired as the senior pastor of a prominent national church. He was a gifted communicator, great visionary and by most accounts a wonderful pastor. I visited the church decades ago and can still remember his message on the Potter and the Clay. However, this pastor was not a good-looking man. He was rather homely in appearance. I can only imagine this was something that haunted him. God had been good to him. He was married to an attractive woman and had several good-looking children. The church was thriving and was making a great impact on their city.

Not long after I visited this church, I found out that the pastor had been involved in an extramarital affair. In his weakness, he fell. He subsequently lost his testimony, his ministry and his family. The last I heard about him he was selling funeral packages.

This pastor/shepherd, as so many before him in a church leadership position, failed to understand his weaknesses and to set boundaries in his life. Years of education, years of preparation, years of ministry were lost in a moment.

Unfortunately, this is not uncommon in the church. Church leadership is intimately tied to moral integrity. One decision, one accusation (legitimate or not), one misstep can destroy a lifetime of ministry. I have read accounts of church leaders who have committed suicide because of marital affairs, those who were brought up on embezzlement charges because they did not know how to handle the church's finances, those who were sued because of inappropriate advice in counseling sessions, and those whose ministries were ruined because of the wayward tongue of a disgruntled church member. Ministry is fraught with pitfalls that have destroyed the unaware.

Years ago, I served as executive pastor of a church in Florida. A family that could only be classified as dysfunctional started attending the church. Through counseling several of the family members, I confronted an unbiblical and unhealthy family dynamic. They became disenchanted with me and eventually falsely accused me, and one of my deacons, of lying to them. This was untrue. The man went to the senior pastor and demanded that I be fired and that the deacon be discharged. My pastor, who showed much wisdom in this situation, said, "I have known Dr. Marvin for 20 years. I don't know you." Although I felt totally vindicated by my pastor's confidence in my integrity, I was hurt emotionally by the false accusation. The family eventually left the church.

This story serves to illustrate that even in the best of churches with the best of intentions, Satan will put people there who will seek to tempt and destroy you. Ministry leaders must be aware of pending dangers in the church.

Jesus warned about Satan's evil devices in Matthew 13. In studying this passage we discover Satan will sow his tares among God's wheat. Satan implants his followers into the church. They look like believers, they speak like believers, and they may even give their tithe like believers. They may serve in the Sunday school, on the church board,



and may even be a deacon. But, unlike true believers, they have not been washed in the blood of the Lamb. They are not saved. Satan plants his followers to destroy the pastor/shepherd and the work of God in and through the church.

My old pastor used to say, “you love everyone who comes through the church doors, but you don’t trust everyone who comes through your church doors.” I believe those are words every member should live by. We are to love everyone who names the name of Jesus. However, it would be foolish to put someone you just met in charge of your nursery or church finances. Love is given – trust is earned.

### **Choosing Competent Ministry Assistants**

No shepherd can meet all the pressing needs within their area of oversight. Choosing and training the right assistants is essential in helping you fulfill your ministry goals. With Matthew 13 in mind, a wise shepherd will save a multitude of problems by choosing to:

1. Pray for wisdom and direction when choosing assistants
2. Refrain from choosing leaders based on personal relationships.
3. Examine potential leaders’ and assistants’ dedication to the church, their temperament, and your ability to work with them before you approach them to work in your ministry. Time will eventually reveal the temperament and character of those you are considering. Give yourself time to see their dedication, their support for your leadership, their tithe, and how they react to stressful situations. Remember, it is 100 times easier to put someone into a position than it is to remove him/her. So time reveals most things.

Every once in a while someone will join our church and feel “led” to give me their ministry history. They were a pastor for ten years, they were a deacon for twenty years, or they were involved on their former church’s finance committee. Of course, I’m thrilled when God brings “seasoned” believers into our church. However, I refrain from putting them into a leadership position for at least a year until they have earned my trust through their character, temperament, tithe, etc. Remember, trust is not a right. It must be earned. And, it takes time to earn trust. Don’t allow yourself to be forced, manipulated or pressured into placing someone into a position until you are convinced of his/her trustworthiness.

4. Evaluate leaders’ and assistants’ leadership/management skills. A terrific tool to help discern the leadership/management tendencies of those you are considering recruiting to help you in your ministry is Dr. Larry Gilbert’s *Leadership/Management Inventory*. Ask prospective leaders to take the inventory before you decide to place them in leadership positions.

## **Lack of Transparency**

Many shepherds make the mistake of never acknowledging their shortfalls or temptations. As such, they are perceived to be on a “higher spiritual plain,” that somehow they are exempt from the temptations of this life. Therefore, when they do sin, and we all sin, they are judged more harshly than others.

Your “flock” has the right to know that this life is a spiritual battle for every believer, including their shepherd. It is my belief that if they know you are not sinless, they will be more forgiving when you do blow it. For instance, I once shared an incident that occurred to me after bringing my three-year-old son home from an operation. When I dropped off his pain prescriptions at the pharmacy, I was told I could pick them up in 40 minutes. Two hours later I went to pick up the medicine and it wasn’t ready. The pharmacy had a problem with the insurance information and they failed to call to let me know. To make things worse, the technician was extremely rude. I was under additional stress because I needed to preach that night. The rude technician only added to my frustration. I had to race home, get my son’s insurance card, go back to the pharmacy, pick up the medicines, drop the medicines at home and get to church before the service started. Needless to say, I was so tempted to let loose on that rude technician and give him a piece of my mind. But, I didn’t. I bit my tongue and closed my mouth, got the prescription, took it home, and barely made it to the church on time.

I used that illustration in my message that night to explain the temptations that come upon all of us when we least expect it. I tried to make it funny and I tried to show them how vulnerable we all are to sin. Your congregation, group or class needs to know that you are human and that victory over sin is a continuous battle for everyone, including their shepherd.

## **Personal Spiritual Growth**

We are living in the most biblically illiterate era this country has ever known. The Bible is still outsells every other book published. We have Christian television, Christian radio, Christian magazines, Christian Universities, Christian Internet, etc. We have more Christian information at our disposal, yet believers still do not know their Bible. I heard a noted Bible teacher confess to never having read the Bible through from Genesis to Revelation. Statistically, only 10 percent of Christians will read their Bible through in their lifetime.

There is nothing more important in your schedule than spending time in God’s Word every day. Only two eternal things exist in this world: the Word of God and the souls of people. Wise shepherds will invest their lives in the things that are going to outlive them: evangelism and the Bible. Remember, nothing of eternal significance is ever accomplished apart from the God’s Word. Shepherds are easily tempted to substitute their lesson preparation time for their daily quiet time with Christ. Your personable time with God must be separate from your time spent in preparation to lead and feed your group.

There is no excuse for any church leader to neglect their time with Christ in personal Bible study and prayer. This must be a priority in every shepherd's life and should be priority in every Christian's life.

### **How to Have a Dynamic Quiet Time**

1. *Make Time:* Dedicate a specific time and place for your personal time with Christ. If you are a morning person, like me, getting up 45 minutes early may suit you better than staying up an extra 45 minutes at night. And, if you are a night person, staying up later may suit you better than getting up early. You need to know yourself and the best time of day that will allow you quality time with God.
2. *Designate an Appropriate Place:* Choose a place where you can read God's Word and hear God speak to you. Make sure that you are in a place where you will not be tempted to fall asleep or where you will be easily distracted.
3. *Journal:* Keep a notebook and pen on hand to record any new insights or promptings God may show you.
4. *Worship, Pray, and Give Thanks:* Never underestimate the power of prayer in your life, in your family, and in your ministry. Remember to have a prayer list, a praise list, and a list of what you're thankful for. At times, I use a praise CD to assist me as I cry out or sing out praises to my Lord.
5. *Fast:* Some shepherds choose to fast one day a week, others a few times a year. Whatever you choose to do, know that fasting is an essential spiritual discipline that will enhance your relationship with God.

### **Personal Boundaries**

My old pastor used to say if he was driving alone on a rainy day and one of the little old ladies in his church was standing at a bus stop getting drenched, she would get wet because he would not pick her up. Does that sound harsh? No, he understood the way rumors start in the church. It would not matter if the 25-year-old pastor were driving his 75-year-old female parishioner to the store; people talk. Your reputation is worth more than getting her to the store. It is worth more than counseling a female parishioner alone behind close doors. If you lose your reputation you have lost your ministry.

A pastor friend of mine was contacted by one of his female parishioners who stated that needed to talk to him that night. One of his personal boundaries was that he would not visit a woman alone. He always brought his wife or another member of his staff on these visits. On this particular visit he brought another male member of his staff. The woman obviously did not expect the pastor to bring anyone with him and she answered the door totally naked. A potential moral compromise was avoided because he maintained his boundaries.

I have learned to trust my wife's discernment when it comes to other women. I am pretty naive when it comes to flirtation. Some people are attracted to the office more than the person filling the office. A pastor/shepherd needs to be wise and harmless: "...be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt 10:16).

Every shepherd must set up personal boundaries in order to protect his or her reputation and to keep from falling into sin. Some areas of boundaries are listed below.

## **Priorities**

Many expectations and demands are placed upon a shepherd. Shepherds have to juggle many different responsibilities. This may include sermon, lesson or class preparation; family life; hospital visitation; committee meetings; ministry planning; conflict resolution; budgets; volunteer management; etc. Someone has rightly stated that success is not built on choosing good over evil, rather it is in choosing best over good. There are many good things you could get involved with, but success in ministry, as well as life, will be in choosing what is the best use of your time, talents and treasures for the Kingdom of God. The wise shepherd will choose to invest time in that which brings the greatest eternal impact.

There are three unmovable priorities in a shepherd's schedule: family, God's Word and ministry. As stated prior, only two eternal things exist in this world: the Word of God and the souls of people. Failure to prioritize your time around your family, the Word, and ministry will eventually catch up with you and destroy your spiritual impact.

Learning what and when to delegate to your ministry assistants is essential to your ministry success. Although you may be responsible for all things under your oversight, it is impossible for you to do everything. For instance, I appointed Gene to be the Sunday school superintendent for our church. Under Gene's leadership the Sunday school has seen record attendance. He has done a terrific job. As good as Gene is, he depends upon a fine staff of Sunday school teachers, nursery workers, and assistants to adequately do their jobs in order for the church to meet its ministry expectations. Remember, while you can delegate ministry tasks, no one can take your place with your family or in God's Word.

Now let's do a simple exercise together. What are the demands on your schedule right now? Write them down on a separate piece of paper. Now put the following columns on the paper:

Best = These are your highest priorities today.

Good = These are worthwhile for you to do if time permits but can be delegated to a staff member or a trusted volunteer.

Can Wait = Low priority. These can be put off until another day.

Delegated to = These are the names of those to whom you delegate a particular responsibility.

Using Gene as our example, Gene's priorities lie in teacher training, meeting with me (the pastor) on a regular basis, curriculum selection, scheduling, budgets, etc.

<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>	<b>Can Wait</b>	<b>Delegated to</b>
Teacher training	X (8/1)			
Planning	X (8/15)			
Curriculum	X 7/31			
Teacher Appreciation Day		X 11/15		
Nursery				Erin J. (555-1234)
1 <sup>st</sup> grade				Kim O. (555-2345)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade				Peggy N. (555-3456)
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade				April H. (555-4567)
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade				Lauren V. (555-5678)
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade				Cindy H. (555-6789)
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade				Bud J. (555-7891)
7 <sup>th</sup> - 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade				Lynn C. (555-8912)
9 <sup>th</sup> - 12 <sup>th</sup> Grade				Wayne W. (555-9012)
Adult				Neil J. (555-01234)

## **Pride**

Pride is a dreadful sin. It is so subtle. When shepherds begin to believe and rely on the praises and appreciation of people to inflate their diminished ego, when they begin to put more emphasis on their own ability rather than the power of God at work in their ministry, when they refuse the counsel of others, then the shepherds have fallen into the pride trap. God hates the sin of pride.

“The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate” (Prov. 8:13).

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18).

Too many churches and too many ministries are built around the personality of the pastor/shepherd or another shepherd in the church. If that shepherd were to fall into sin or to die, God forbid, then what would happen to that church or ministry?

Every shepherd’s goal must be the longevity of the ministry. Their ministry must continue to flourish after they are gone. Therefore, the ministry cannot be built upon the charisma or the personality of any shepherd. It must be built upon the Lord Jesus and the Word of God. If you put God first in your life, if you continue to rely upon him, if you continue to give thanks to the Lord, if you continue to give praise to God, you will keep pride from your heart.

## Relationships

Boundaries, as stated previously, are essential in every area of the Christian life. This is especially true when it comes to ministering to those of the opposite gender. I am convinced that Satan places some people in your life to destroy you and your ministry.

Norm was the music minister of a large church. His tremendous vocal talent, his apparent sincerity, his quiet unassuming presence endeared him to the entire church. Norm worked long hours conducting the church's various choirs, music groups, and church orchestra. Working along side of him was his devoted secretary. No one suspected that this sincere married music minister was capable of committing adultery with a married woman. But, he was. Church members were stunned when the truth was inevitably exposed. Families were torn apart, the ministry was hampered and the Gospel was compromised.

Wanda was a pastor's wife. While her husband toiled away at the church, she traveled extensively in her executive sales job. The road began to take a toll on her. Compromises in her dress, in alcohol consumption, and in the places she frequented while on the road began to tear at the fabric of the marriage. Her new lifestyle was contrary to the role of a pastor's wife. When members of the church saw her out with other men the whispers began. She eventually left her pastor husband and three children to live with another woman's husband. Attempts to reconcile were mocked by the unrepentant wife. Divorce soon followed. Two families were forever affected by the selfishness of two wayward spouses.

The shepherd's highest priority after Christ is their relationship to their family. Wise shepherds will guard their hearts and families. Although you may never be able to control the heart of another, you must be proactive in developing a healthy spiritual, physical, emotional, and sexual relationship with your spouse.

Some boundaries to consider adopting are:

1. Never counsel and meet alone with members of the opposite gender. Whenever possible, have your spouse or another staff member present. At the very least, keep your door open.
2. Bring someone of the same gender, or your spouse, with you when you go on visitation.
3. Never drive alone in a car with a person of the opposite gender, other than your spouse, children or parent.
4. Refrain from Facebooking, texting, tweeting, emailing and other form of social media with those of the opposite gender (other than your spouse or close family members).
5. Never travel alone with a person of the opposite gender other than your spouse, children or parent.

6. All of the above also applies to the young boys and young girls in your congregation.

## **Money**

Every servant of Christ must beware of three specific areas of concern: 1) Relationships with the opposite gender; 2) how children are cared for in the church; and 3) how they handle the church's money. To fail to care for these areas is to greatly hinder the effectiveness of your ministry. Even the most ethical shepherd's ministry can be ruined if he/she fails to manage the church's finances in a responsible manner. Therefore, wise shepherds will surround themselves with godly business-minded people who can manage the fiscal affairs of their ministry.

All ministry accounting records should be subject to the church's budget and to the church treasurer. Every shepherd will be responsible to keep careful records, including copies of receipts submitted for reimbursement.

Shepherds must set up personal boundaries in the area of finances in order to maintain fiscal accountability in their ministry. Some areas of fiscal boundaries you may want to consider are:

1. Shepherds will keep copies of all expense receipts given to the church treasurer.
2. Shepherds will never use church monies for personal expenses.
3. Depending on church regulations, shepherds will receive prior permission for all church expenses over \$150.

## **Recruit to Strengthen Your Weaknesses**

Shepherds need to understand their weaknesses and strengths. There is a natural tendency to recruit people who are like us in personality, talents and strengths. A wise shepherd will recruit people who will strengthen their weaknesses. You may be a great visionary, but if you lack the administrative ability to bring your vision to fruition your vision will never be fulfilled.

I have some administrative abilities, but not as much as I once thought. As I look back on my ministry experiences, I now realize that I subconsciously hired to my weaknesses. I certainly managed them well, but much of what was accomplished was due to the administrative abilities of those I hired.

This is where maturity is needed on your part. If you are easily intimidated by the success or the giftedness of others, then you are going to have a problem recruiting people who are gifted in the areas where you are weak. Remember that the church is not about you; it does not survive to fulfill your expectations or desires. We are here to bring glory to God – not to ourselves. The church must be centered on the fulfilling the Great Commission through the gifts of all God's people, not just your gifts.

A senior pastor's church and Christian school ministry was growing at a rapid pace. He decided to hire an administrative pastor who could administrate the church and school, teach the adult Sunday school class, and assist with other ministry

responsibilities. The administrative pastor was particularly gifted and well favored within the church. The ministry began to grow and there was great excitement within the church. Although the administrative pastor did not do anything to threaten the senior pastor's role in the church, jealousy began to creep into the senior pastor's heart. Eventually, the senior pastor fired the administrative pastor and had to hire three people to take his place. People left the church, growth stagnated, and the ministry was hindered. This is certainly a warning for all shepherds.

Recruit good people, equip them for success, set the vision and goals for their ministry, and let them soar! If they succeed, the ministry succeeds and you succeed.

### **Protecting Your Family**

A shepherd's ministry will only be as strong as his or her family. If your spouse is not happy you won't be happy. If your spouse is experiencing trouble in the church, then you're going to have trouble at home and your ministry is going to be affected.

Your family is your first priority, after Christ, in your life. Too many shepherds have skewed priorities. They mistakenly equate the work of the church for the work of Christ. This may not always be true. Your priority belongs to Jesus first, your family second, your church last.

Have you ever noticed that many pastors' spouses look weathered, beaten down, unhappy? Pastors' spouses take the brunt of the criticism of the church. They receive criticism about their dress, their children, if they're not doing enough in the church, or if they are doing too much in the church. The spouses tend to internalize the criticism about their pastor/spouses, their children, and themselves.

Shepherds, do not allow this to happen to your spouses. Shelter them, protect them, spend time with them, and pray for them.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

"Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered" (1 Peter 3:7).





## **CHAPTER FOUR**

# **How to Enhance Your Gift**

Atrophy is a condition that occurs due to the lack of physical exercise. The muscles of the elderly, bed ridden and the paralyzed deteriorate due to lack of use. As it is with the physical body so it is with our spiritual gifts. Many people in the kingdom of God exhibit signs of spiritual atrophy due to the failure to exercise their spiritual giftedness.

Every believer is responsible to develop and use the spiritual gifts entrusted to him or her by the Holy Spirit. Every believer should have the goal to fulfill God's will for his or her life. Enhancing your giftedness is essential to accomplishing this goal.

### **I. Continuing Education**

What a world we live in! At no other time in the history of the world has so much information been available to so many people in a moment's notice. With the advent of the Internet, cell phones, smart phones, personal computers, tablets, and cable and satellite television, it is impossible to digest all of the information readily available for our consumption.

With the increase of information available are opportunities to further one's education like never before. College degrees can be earned without ever stepping foot on a college campus. At your fingertips you have a vast array of resources that would have been impossible to imagine a few decades ago.

In our technological age there really is no reason for any shepherd not to enhance their giftedness through education. Shepherds set the standard for their flock. If a shepherd values education, his or her flock will value education.

Although you can study God's Word and teach God's Word without a formal degree, the degree will give you the tools to teach, preach and administrate with confidence.

Paying for your college is always a challenge. Many online Christian colleges accept student loans and Federal Grants for those who qualify. Some churches choose to invest in their leaders by paying all or a portion of a shepherd's tuition.

With all of the secular and Christian colleges available, how do you know which college to choose?

#### ***How to Choose A College:***

1. Pray and ask Jesus for wisdom and direction.
2. Decide what area of study you wish to pursue.
3. Research your denominational colleges (if applicable). What are their reputations? Do they have an accredited degree (be sure the college offers an accredited degree) in the area you wish to pursue?

4. Research colleges online.
5. Make sure the colleges are accredited by a national accreditation association.
6. Fill out all college application information. Most can be submitted online.
7. Secure funding for your college education.
  - Contact your college's financial aid department and have them send you all financial aid information.
  - Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
  - Apply for scholarships offered by your college.
  - Apply for the Federal Pell Grant.
  - Apply for scholarships offered by your church's denomination, if applicable.
  - Research and apply for scholarships offered by other institutions. The Internet is a great place to begin your search.
  - \* Check to see if your employer offers education reimbursement.
  - \* Apply for student loans: Various banks and government loans are available. Be sure you shop for the best rates and that you fully understand the terms of the loans before applying.
  - \* Remember, there are limited scholarship and grant funds. The earlier you apply the more likely you are to receive funding.

## **II. Your Personal Library**

Someone has rightfully said, "leaders are readers and readers are leaders." If you are not reading you are failing to be the most influential person you can be. Your library will become an essential resource as you counsel, prepare your sermons or lessons, write blogs, etc. Some essential resources are:

1. A concordance
2. A Bible dictionary
3. Commentaries
4. A topical Bible
5. A good study Bible with notes, concordance, dictionary, etc.

Various computerized programs are available for purchase that will prove to be an invaluable help in lesson preparation. Most offer various Bible translations, Bible dictionaries, a concordance, Greek and Hebrew word transliterations, commentaries, a topical Bible, etc. BibleGateway.com offers a free online reference tool for searching Scripture (in your choice of many different versions and translations), topics, passage lookup, keyword search, newsletters, reading plans, a blog, etc.

There is no shortage of places where you can purchase resources to build your personal library. Your local Christian bookstore and Christian Book Distributors

(CBD.com) are recommended locations to find the resources you need. Most denominations publish books, commentaries, pastor helps, Sunday school curriculum, etc. Your church's denomination will prove to be a good source for your library needs. Ephesians Four Ministries (ChurchGrowth.org) offers resources for spiritual-gift study as well as ministry how-to manuals.

Many colleges allow their students to access their libraries online. This will put thousands of books, magazines, videos, etc. at your fingertips.

### **III. Seminars**

Various organizations and denominations offer one- or two-day local seminars to assist church leaders in church growth, developing particular church ministries, church finances, laws concerning the church, local church outreach, etc. The prices of the seminars vary depending on the topic offered and the organization sponsoring the event.

Many colleges accept continuing education credits (CEUs) that help satisfy some graduation requirements. Be sure to contact your college advisor prior to the seminar to see if the CEUs will apply.

### **IV. Personal Mentors**

Every shepherd needs a personal mentor and/or an accountability partner. Your mentor should be someone who has already accomplished what you are trying to obtain.

I once worked for a large national men's ministry that employed hundreds of intelligent, accomplished individuals. One man in particular impressed me, Dr. Rod Cooper. Dr. Cooper was the National Education Director, had his PhD. was an accomplished writer and public speaker. He had accomplished what I wanted in my life. I served as vice president of an organization, was published, and obtained my doctorate degree prior to being hired by this organization, but Dr. Cooper had taken it further than I had. He accomplished more than I had.

I went to Dr. Cooper and told him that I wanted what he had. I asked him to mentor me, to help me refine my abilities. Dr. Cooper was gracious to me and befriended me. I gleaned much from him, especially refining my public speaking skills. I became a better minister of the Gospel because of Dr. Cooper.

Possible mentors you may consider include: your pastor, pastoral staff, Sunday school superintendent, a deacon, an elder, a trustee, your cell group director or other experienced ministry director, a spiritually mature and respected Christian who is experienced in your ministry area or shares the same spiritual gift that you possess, etc.

Areas where you will want mentorship include:

- Personal morality
- Personal Bible study and prayer life
- Answers to your questions

- Advice and guidance in ministry affairs
- Critic of public speaking skills
- Lesson preparation
- Conflict resolution

Remember that to enhance and develop your gift, you need to also exercise your gift in ministry. Before you begin, pray for direction and examine your skills, personal experience and areas of interest along with identifying your dominant spiritual gift. Look for areas of ministry within your church where you might contribute to the work of the ministry through using your giftedness. You may even consider suggesting a new ministry based on need within your congregation and community. Always pray about it and bring it before your church leaders for approval and support before acting on a new ministry start. Remain in an attitude of prayer and humble service as you “study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

## CHAPTER FIVE

# The Shepherd's Role in the Great Commission and the Great Commandment

### The Great Commission

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matt 28:19-20).

If you knew you were dying in a few moments, what would your final words be? Would you tell your spouse that you loved him or her? Would you try to reconcile a past discrepancy? Would you challenge your children to walk with Christ?

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus uses his final moments before his ascension to challenge the disciples, and essentially the church, to complete what he started, to fulfill his mission and to do what he had done: reach souls and disciple them.

Jesus challenged the church to reach and to teach. The church is to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to help others in their walk with Christ.

It is important to note that the Great Commission is THE operating objective of the church universal. It is certainly one of the two grids by which we measure the effectiveness of every church.

The church was never meant to be stagnant and never meant to be confined to an edifice. God's Word is alive and it is proactive.

“He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:15-18).

The gates of hell cannot confine nor stop the church in fulfilling the Great Commission. The Great Commission was not given to an individual nor was it given to an individual church. Jesus Christ gave it to the disciples and to the church universal. When the universal church works as it was designed, as one body, the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 4:12) will fulfill its divine purposes. The late Francis Schaeffer said that the unity of the church is “the final apologetic” of the Christ-less world. Although no one church will ever or is meant to fulfill the Great Commission, every church has the responsibility fulfill their God-given mission, in light of the Great Commission, in their own Jerusalem.

The goal of every church should be to reach and to teach. Every church has the responsibility to reach people with the Gospel of Christ, baptize them into the church

and then to disciple them so that the reaching and teaching process continues, as it has continued since the formation of the church in Acts 2.

Many churches do an excellent job reaching people, but a poor job discipling them. Other churches do an excellent job discipling people, but evangelism has not been perfected in their church.

A Great Commission church is one who is able to reach the lost as effectively as they teach the saved and teach the saved as effectively as they reach the lost. They must be balanced in their evangelism and discipleship, then they will see both numerical and spiritual growth.

The church has the responsibility of fulfilling the purposes for which Christ died. The Apostle Paul said, “even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Eph. 5:25-27).

### **Evaluating Your Ministry**

Shepherds should evaluate every area of their ministry periodically. You may want to use the following suggestions as you evaluate your ministry. Remember, evaluation without follow-up will not result in change. Be prepared to evaluate and make changes as needed.

#### **Staffing:**

1. Are the right people in the right positions?
2. Are your staff members spiritually gifted to do what they are doing?
3. Are enough staff members in place?
4. Have background checks been performed on those working with children?
5. Is the staff adequately trained?

#### **Facilities:**

1. Are your facilities clean?
2. What repairs (paint, carpet cleaning, malfunctioning toilets, lights, etc.) need to be done?
3. How do your restrooms smell?
4. How do your Sunday school or meeting rooms look?
5. Do you have enough seating for your services, groups or classes?  
Remember, once a church or room is 80% full you begin to lose people.

#### **Grounds:**

1. Are your grass, bushes, and flowerbeds maintained?

2. Is snow removed promptly?
3. Does your church sign need maintenance?
4. Are your parking lot lights working?
5. Is enough parking available for your services, meetings, classes?
6. Is the trash receptacle being dumped on a timely basis?

**Budget:**

1. Is your budget being adequately maintained?
2. What are your offerings?
3. Are your offerings meeting budget?
4. Are your expenses meeting budget?

**Growth:**

1. What is your weekly church attendance?
2. What is your weekly Sunday school or group attendance?
3. How many confirmed salvations in the last 12 months?
4. How many baptisms in the last 12 months?
5. How many new members in the last 12 months?
6. How many people left your church or group in the last 12 months? Why did they leave?
7. How many re-dedications in the last 12 months?
8. How many baby dedications in the last 12 months?
9. How many surrendered to full-time Christian service in the last 12 months?
10. How do the above figures compare to the last five years?

**Plans for the coming quarter:**

1. Does each ministry have written plans for the coming quarter?
2. Do their plans help fulfill the overall church vision for the church?

**Discipleship:**

1. Are your Sunday school classes and/or other groups meeting growth goals?
2. What curricula are the Sunday school classes and/or groups using?
3. What percentage of your people are attending your various services, group meetings, classes?

**Outreach:**



1. What outreach programs have your church or group used over the last quarter?
2. What were the results of the outreaches?
3. How many visitors are attending each week?
4. Are the visitors being contacted within 48 hours of their visit?
5. What are the outreach plans for the coming quarter?
6. How many members regularly participate in church or group visitation/visitor follow-up?

**Unity:**

1. Are factions or trouble brewing in your church or group?
2. Do your staff members get along and work together as a team?
3. Are members friendly and talkative ...among themselves? ...with visitors?

**Advertising:**

1. How effective has your church or group advertising been?
2. Has your church or group utilized social media (Facebook, Twitter, Email, etc) to advertise your church and events? How effective has this been?
3. Does your church's website or group's webpage need to be updated?

**Missions:**

1. What is your missions budget this year?
2. Have the missionaries you support participated in your services?
3. When was the last time you had a missions conference or missions emphasis in your church or group?

**The Great Commandment**

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets” (Matt 22:36-40).

The Great Commandment can be summarized as loving God and loving man. Every believer is responsible to love God with every facet of their being and to love others as much as they love themselves.

Many fail to understand the how our relationship with others directly affects our relationship with Christ. The Apostle Peter put it this way:

*“Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Peter 3:7).*

Our personal relationships on earth do matter to God. If a poor relationship with my wife can hinder my prayers then certainly poor relationship with my brother and sister in Christ can affect my relationship with Christ as well. James said it this way:

*“For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be” (James 3:7-10).*

Our horizontal relationship with man directly affects our vertical relationship with God. James tells us that we cannot bless God and curse our brother. How we treat our brother, how we speak to our brother, and how we speak about our brother does matter to God.

When questioned about who our neighbor was, Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10). Like the Samaritan, the church must reach beyond cultural norms and expectations and show our love for God by loving those around us. Jesus called this being salt and light in this world.

What are the salt and light ministries in your church? Are they being as effective as they should be? When I arrived at my present church they had a ministry that fed the dinner to the community once a month. Sounds good, right? Wrong. Unfortunately, we attracted the same people every month – who were not struggling financially. They showed no interest in the Gospel, they never attended the church, and, worse yet, they sometimes complained about the free food they were receiving.

After evaluating our community dinner ministry, I noticed that those serving in the ministry were the same ones who were already serving in multiple other ministries. So my faithful, overworked church people were serving, out of obligation, in a ministry with no spiritual fruit. I made the decision that we would discontinue the monthly community meals and retool the ministry to a more evangelistic outreach ministry several times a year. Good shepherds will not only challenge their people to accomplish great things for God, but will also protect them from getting burned out.

Churches with limited budgets and limited help need to work smarter not harder. Shepherds need to evaluate their ministries and make changes, as necessary, to become more effective without overly taxing their faithful workers.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

# **Growing Your Ministry**

### **1. Develop an atmosphere of expectancy.**

Growing churches have developed an attitude and atmosphere of growth expectancy. The congregation expects and is prepared for visitors, for people to come down the aisle during the invitation, salvations, re-dedications, baptisms, etc. When a church expects growth to occur they desire to enter into that expectancy. They expect it, they prepare for it, the church members fulfill it.

Wise shepherds will recognize visitors and recognize those who brought them. Make a quick call or send a note or email to the visitor, and send a thank-you note or email to the one who brought the visitor to the church service, group meeting, class, etc.

Shepherds can also build expectancy by speaking about it in their lessons. Give an occasional message on the Great Commission. Your 2- or 3-minute testimony during a message will encourage people in your group to bring others with them.

Another way to encourage people to reach out and bring others is to include them in the baptistery when someone they led to Christ is being baptized. Remember, people like to be recognized and appreciated for what they do. When you recognize someone's efforts to bring others to Christ and/or to the church you encourage them and others to continue on in their outreach efforts.

### **2. Teach your people to win others to Christ.**

Few, if anyone, will share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with someone if they have not been trained to do so. Christians need to know how to lead someone to Christ, what to say, where to find the verses in the Bible, and how to get over their fear.

A number of outreach styles and programs are available to assist you in training others how to reach people for Christ. These include such resources as: TEAM Evangelism (available from <http://www.ChurchGrowth.org> ), Evangelism Explosion (<http://www.EvangelismExplosion.org> ), Share Jesus Without Fear (<http://www.sharejesuswithoutfear.com> ), Lifestyle Evangelism, and others.<sup>1</sup> Denominational organizations often offer their own training also.

Evangelism training can and should be taught in a variety of functions throughout the church. It can be taught in Sunday school classes, cell groups, new believer's discipleship classes, etc. Be sure to map out the times and the methods where your church is training people in evangelism...and encourage all your leaders and members to come and learn ways to fulfill the Great Commission.

As a shepherd, make sure your group is trained to reach. Shepherds cannot adequately teach others to reach others for Christ if they are not doing it themselves. Train others, show them how you witness to others, then set them on the course to train others.

### **3. Teach your people to bring others to the church.**

Your ministry cannot grow if visitors do not come. Your evangelistic efforts will be greatly hampered if people are not there to respond to the Gospel proclaimed through your ministry. Teach your flock that an effective way to reach their friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors with the Gospel of Christ is to invite them to attend church where they will hear the Gospel.

Ron Booth was a faithful member of a growing church in Maryland. Ron befriended my father at their mutual place of employment and invited him to attend church with him. My father accepted Ron's invitation and took our whole family to church with him. It was because of Ron's invitation that I got saved, our family joined the church, and we became active members. It is because of Ron's invitation that I am now a pastor and my sister is a pastor's wife in Pennsylvania. Did Ron know what was going to happen when he simply obeyed God and invited my father to church? No. And, neither do your members know how God is going to use their efforts to influence lives. They must be faithful to do what God has called them to do and he will do the rest. Teach your people to invite others to your church events, classes, group meetings and services.

### **4. Reach the non-reached.**

"But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:12-13).

Many churches adhere to an unwritten doctrine that: "We only want people to come to our church who look like us, talk like us, and come from the same culture and/or ethnicity that we do." Church growth experts tell us that most churches are homogenous units that tend to attract people of their own kind. In other words, whites tend to worship with whites, African Americans tend to worship with African Americans, poor with poor, wealthy with wealthy, etc. Is this pleasing to God? I don't believe so. As rightfully stated, 11:00 on Sunday mornings is the most segregated hour of the week.

God has been bringing bikers to our church. They wear their leather, their bandanas, their boots and chains. They can certainly look intimidating to the typical pew sitter. I love them. I go out of my way to welcome them, take an interest in their lives, and help them grow in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Unfortunately, these bikers previously tried to attend another church in the area and were asked to leave. They just did not fit in to their idea of how a believer is supposed to look.

I love the fact that Jesus went after society's "rejects." He went after those the religious crowd stayed away from. He ate, drank and ministered to prostitutes, the poor, the physically handicapped, the possessed, the sinner. He went after people like you and me. A strange phenomenon occurs to believers inside the four walls of the church. The longer we're saved, the more we forget where we came from. We forget what we were before Christ came in our life. We forget what we would be if Christ did not save

us. So, it becomes easy to see someone come into the church who does not fit our expectations or desires for a new church member, and to not welcome them, not talk to them, and simply ignore them. Or we just become complacent and do not go out of our way to welcome them.

If your ministry is not growing, it may be simply because you are not trying to reach those who need to be reached. Go to the mobile home parks, apartments, nursing homes, etc. Go after bikers, truckers, the poor, the rich, Whites, Hispanics, African Americans, American Indians, etc. Go after those other churches have forsaken. Luke 19:10 tells us, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

## **5. Welcome biological growth.**

Biological growth comes to the church when your members give birth to or adopt children. A church experiencing substantial biological growth is a church that is attracting young married couples. Biological growth emphasizes the importance of having a quality nursery and children's ministry.

Take a walk through your nurseries and Sunday school classes. Would you be comfortable leaving your children there? Is it clean? Is it secure? Is the furniture and equipment in good working order? Have background checks been done on your nursery and Sunday school workers? You cannot afford to "cut corners" in these areas of your church. You can lose some of your young couples if they are not satisfied with what you offer.

## **6. Accept and examine transfer growth.**

Transfer growth occurs when someone transfers to your church from another church. Transfer growth is important when you are a small church. However, it may be prudent to do your homework when someone desires to join your church:

1. Meet with them and find out if they are saved and baptize.
2. Find out why they are left their other church.
3. Find out who invited them.
4. Find out why they want to join your church.

If you discern that something does not seem right as you talk to them, call the old church and talk to the pastor. Were there problems in their old church? Were they faithful? Were they leaders? Did they tithe? Where did they serve? Why does the last pastor suspect they left the church?

Transfer growth can prove to be a blessing and a curse. What you don't want is to inherit another church's problems. Chances are if the members caused problems in their last church, they will most likely cause problems in your church. If the newcomers desire to go beyond regular attendees to become members your church, be sure to require each potential member to go through a new member's class before being accepted or voted in for membership.

If you have reason to believe that the new member candidate may cause problems:

1. Along with your deacons, set up a meeting with the candidate.
2. Site your concerns and let them respond.
3. Offer them provisional membership for 6 months or a year.
4. If problems occur during that provisional period they may be asked to leave the church.

It is wise not to put new members into leadership positions until they have been active members of your church for over a year. This will allow you the opportunity to assess:

1. Their attendance in Sunday school and other group meetings; worship, Sunday evening, and weeknight services.
2. Their tithe record. If they do not tithe to the church they cannot be a leader in the church.
3. Their attitude. Do they support your vision and leadership? Do they get along with the other members? Are they respected in the church?
4. Service around the church: Do they have a servant's heart? (For example, are available to clean up after fellowship dinners, willing to help clean the church on church workdays, etc.)
5. Their doctrine: Although no one will agree 100% with you all of the time, they must agree with the church's doctrinal statement in order to be a leader in your ministry. My good pastor friend had an exceptional teacher in one of his adult cell groups. The teacher disagreed with one of the key beliefs of the church and this pastor knew it. But, because the cell teacher had a large following in the church he refused to correct him. As a result, this cell teacher eventually split the church. Doctrine must be cohesively taught by every leader, no exceptions.

## **7. Experience conversion growth.**

There is nothing more exciting in a family than the birth of a child. And, there is nothing more exciting in the church family than the spiritual birth of a new believer.

Biological and transfer growth are certainly important to the growth of your church, but the most exciting and effective growth comes from your people reaching their friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors with the Gospel of Christ. Evangelism is essential to the lifeblood and growth of your church. As stated in section four of this chapter, wise shepherds will teach their flocks how to reach others for Christ.

When the shepherd gives an invitation after the message, the church rejoices as people walk the aisle to receive Christ, supports people as they get baptized, and is encouraged as they witness people growing in faith. Conversion growth is pleasing to God and encouraging and motivational to the church.

## **8. Meet the needs of the community.**

An effective way of spiritually reaching people in your community is to meet their physical needs. What are the needs of those in your community? Who are the hurting? Who are the dying? Are there food needs? Housing needs? Utility needs?

Assessing your community's need, then budgeting to meet those needs is an effective way to show the love of Christ and to reach people for Christ. Your ministry may want to consider these and other avenues of reaching out to your community:

- Offering a food pantry for the needy in your community.
- Handing out school supplies at the beginning of the school year.
- Changing oil for the elderly and single mothers.
- Sponsoring mother's-day-out programs.
- Preaching and/or visiting at nursing and retirement homes.
- Performing yard work for the elderly.
- Offering free gas cards to visitors.
- Hosting monthly community dinners at the church.
- Offering free parenting classes.
- Sponsoring father-son outings.
- Sponsoring mother-daughter outings.
- Having free turkey giveaways at Thanksgiving.
- Awarding free summer and/or winter camp scholarships.
- Providing free tutoring.

## **9. Visit people in hospitals and nursing homes.**

My old pastor did not have a charismatic personality, nor did he have the most vibrant of public speaking skills. But, he was a genius at remembering everyone's names and at reaching people at their point of need. He had the great ability to love, comfort, and pray for those who had lost loved ones, those who were in the hospital, those who were in nursing homes, etc. No matter what time of day or night, he would drop everything to meet the needs of his congregation. As such, he pastored the largest church in his state at that time.

I remember a testimony a mother gave when her son was hospitalized and was given a troubling prognosis. The mother told how my pastor came and comforted the parents and knelt down in the waiting room and called out to God for healing...and God healed that young boy. Those parents became pillars in that church. Never underestimate the value of ministering to the needy and comforting the mourning.

## **10. Follow up with the visitors.**

Every person who takes the time to visit your church should receive a letter or email from the church and a phone call or visit from your church within 48 hours of their visit.

However, if a visitor desires to remain anonymous, do not force yourself on them. Some people prefer to preserve their privacy until they have made up their mind about a church.

During your visit you may want to take baked goods such as homemade bread, cookies, a pie or a cake as a welcome/thank-you gift for their visit. You will want to thank the people for visiting the church, invite them to attend again, answer any questions they may have, find out if they are saved, and ask if you may pray for any special requests they may have.

### **11. Plan event evangelism.**

Every shepherd needs to plan special events that specifically compel the congregation/class/group to invite their unsaved and unchurched friends, relatives, associates and neighbors to attend church or a church-related event with them. These events could include: Friend Day, Christmas Eve services, special recognition days, Palm Sunday, Easter, guest speakers, guest musicians, family fun day, etc.

Plan every aspect of the service. The facilities (especially the nurseries and restrooms) must be clean, the worship coordinated with your message, your ushers and/or greeters in place. Be sure to present a clear gospel message and extend an invitation to receive Christ.

### **12. Use the media.**

Never underestimate the power of the media. One thirty-second commercial can reach more homes than you can reach personally in your lifetime. Wise shepherds will use the graphics and marketing skills available to their ministry to develop professional media advertisements.

With the advent of the Internet and mobile communications came the ability to reach vast audiences at little to no cost. If you are relatively computer illiterate you will want to either hire or obtain a media specialist volunteer within your church. Your media specialist will manage your church's website, your e-mail addresses, and direct all church Facebook pages, tweets, blogs, email blasts, podcasts, live streaming, etc.

A couple of economic options you may consider:

- Public Service Announcements in newspapers, radio, news channels, and your community bulletin board.
- Public Access Channels: Many community Public Access Channels will allow anyone to produce, film and host their own television show for little to no cost. This is a low-cost way of proclaiming God's Word and advertising your ministry and events.

### **13. Have a presence in the community.**

You are not only your ministry's shepherd, but also a shepherd to your community. Participate in community meetings, festivals, the gym, community fundraisers, community work projects, charity events, etc. Never underestimate the power of your



presence within the community. However, be careful not to become so involved in your community that you neglect the work of your ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommended resources in print: *ABCs of Evangelism* by Dr. Stan Toler, Lifestream Resources; *Evangelism Explosion* by Dr. D. James Kennedy, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.; *Evangelism Handbook* by Alvin Reid, Lifeway Christian Resources; *Faith Evangelism* by various authors, Lifeway Christian Resources; *Lifestyle Evangelism* by Dr. Joe Aldrich, Multnomah Books; *Team Evangelism* by Dr. Larry Gilbert, Ephesians Four Ministries; *Team Ministry Facilitator's Resource Kit* by Dr. Larry Gilbert, Ephesians Four Ministries; *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory* OR the revised and expanded version: *Your Gifts Spiritual Gifts Survey* by Dr. Larry Gilbert, ChurchGrowth.org.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

# Finding Your Place on the Ministry Team

As a shepherd, you may be called to serve in a part-time volunteer position or you may be called into full-time ministry. If God has called you into full-time Christian service you will need to seek ordination from your church body. Make an appointment with your pastor to discuss your church's ordination protocol.

Most churches will have you:

1. Prepare and submit in writing your salvation testimony, your calling into full-time Christian service and a summary of what areas of ministry you have served in prior to your ordination.
2. Prepare and submit in writing your personal doctrinal statement, complete with scriptural references. Your doctrinal statement should include: What you believe about God, the Heavenly Father, the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ, Man, Sin, Salvation, the Word of God, the Church, the Last Days, Heaven, Hell.
3. Select an Ordination Committee. This committee will most likely be comprised of ordained pastors of your church's staff, ordained pastors of your choosing, seminary professors, etc.

The purpose of the committee will be to examine your salvation experience, your calling and your doctrinal statement. The committee will also examine you orally to determine the validity of your salvation, the validity of your calling and the orthodoxy of your doctrinal beliefs.

The Ordination Committee can make one of three determinations based upon the written materials presented and the oral examination:

1. A recommendation of ordination.
2. A recommendation of postponement. A postponement may be recommended if the candidate's written materials or the oral examination were found lacking. Additional time will be given for the candidate to better prepare. A later date for the examination, determined by the committee, will be scheduled. It is recommended that the date be at least six months from the prior examination.
3. A recommendation of denial of ordination. The committee may choose to deny the ordination if they determine the candidate is not genuinely saved, is not genuinely called into full-time Christian service, is not biblically qualified for the pastorate, is not morally qualified for the position, and/or is not theologically qualified for the pastorate.

Desire does not necessarily determine the calling. Therefore the committee has the responsibility to determine, without prejudice, the qualifications of one desiring to be ordained.

There are many reasons people desire ordination. Some may have a misconception of the role, function and position of the pastor; some may desire ordination as a means of personal profit; still others may come forth to propagate heretical doctrine. The Ordination Committee must have the “mind of Christ” when determining the spiritual validity of every candidate.

### **Lay Pastor/Shepherds in the Church**

Lay pastor/shepherds are essential to spiritual and numerical growth of the church. If you are led to be a lay pastor/shepherd, determine your place of service in the church by examining your personal passion for ministry. Are you filled with compassion and perhaps have a secondary dominant gift of mercy showing? If so, you may be better suited to serve in the benevolence ministry or the hospice/hospital ministry. Do you have a consuming passion for the Word of God? If so, you may find Christian education, teaching, discipling, etc. better suited for you. Are you driven to reach people for Christ? If so, you may serve best in the church’s visitation, bus ministry, or alter ministry.

Remember, you are there to serve God as a lay pastor/shepherd under the direction of the chief pastor/shepherd. Sometimes your passions do not necessarily determine ministry placement. It is wise to experience various ministries in the church to determine your best place of service.

Some potential areas of service for pastor/shepherds within the church:

- Associate Pastor
- Assistant Pastor
- Benevolence Minister
- Care Group Leader
- Cell Group Leader
- Children’s Lay Pastor
- Christian Education Director
- Church Administrator
- Church Finance Lay Pastor
- Church Counseling Lay Pastor
- Evangelism Lay Pastor
- Interim Pastor
- Media Ministry Lay Pastor
- Men’s Ministry Pastor
- Music Ministry Director
- New Believer’s Class Teacher
- New Member’s Class Teacher

- Preschool Teacher
- Sunday School Class Teacher
- Visitation Lay Pastor
- Women's Ministry Director
- Youth Ministry Director

These are just a few ministry positions where you might serve as a pastor/shepherd. There are many more!

### **Finding a Fulltime Pastor/Shepherd Position**

Resume Preparation: As with all jobs, churches will expect those desiring a pastoral position in a church to present a resume. Your resume should include:

- Personal information: Name, Address, Phone, Email
- Ordination: Date ordained
- Mission Statement: A concise one-sentence statement detailing your personal goal in using your gifts in the church.
- Education: Be sure to include name of educational institution, the year graduated, and the diploma/degree earned. You may want to include any seminars / specialized trainings that are pertinent to the job for which you are applying.
- Ministry Involvement: This should include the ministries you were involved in, what was the extent of your involvement, what were the results of your ministry involvement (Did the ministry grow? Did people get saved? Was there spiritual growth in the church?)
- Secular Positions: Although you are applying for a ministry position, your secular work history will provide additional information about your gifts and abilities.
- Published Works: Are you a published author? If so, include these in your resume.
- References: Include three references, complete with names, addresses, and email addresses. Your references should include the pastor of your church and two other people who can testify of your calling, ministry involvement and moral integrity.
- Doctrinal Statement: Be sure to include the doctrinal statement you prepared for your ordination.

### **Searching for a Pastoral Position**

Many resources are available for pastors searching for a church. Church search engines on the Internet will help connect prospective pastoral candidates with churches

desiring pastors. Church denominations, local newspapers, Christian publications, etc are also areas you will want to explore as you look for a church position.

The process to being hired is usually a long and arduous ordeal. Churches receive hundreds of resumes for every position available. Churches tend to form Pastoral Search Committees who will pray, place ads on search engines, look through the resumes, select qualified resumes, send out job applications, review applications, set up initial phone interviews, and set up formal, in-person interviews.

Those who are qualified are usually sent a job application, a job description, information about the church and a request for additional information. This application usually entails questions about your salvation experience, church background, ministry background, thoughts on various doctrines, etc. It is usually a lengthy application and questionnaire that will take time to fill out. Be sure to make a copy of the application and all completed materials for your records.

Once the church receives the completed, the Pastor Search Committee again weeds out those they deem will not be a good fit for their church. The remaining few will be contacted via phone to set up a lengthy phone interview appointment.

The telephone interview will be comprised of you, the pastor and the committee. The phone interview will last between 45 minutes and an hour, sometimes longer depending upon the size of the committee and how well the interview questions are organized. Be sure to be in a quiet location, free from distractions (television, telephone, pets, children, etc.). You will want to have a pen, a Bible and a copy of the application and material submitted to the committee for reference during the interview.

The committee will narrow down the candidates to one or two potential people. At this point, they will usually fly those candidates in to interview for the position. This process will usually include interviewing with the pastor, interviewing with the pastors already on staff, and interviewing with the committee. They will, most likely, also want to meet your spouse and children during the interview (that is if you are married and have children).

If you are offered the job, expect to be flown back in to locate housing for your family.

The hiring process could take several months or even a year to complete. Prayer, discernment and patience are necessary to determine your fit with any church.

Always remember, as they are interviewing you, you are also interviewing them. Ask yourself: Does the open position fit my giftedness? Are the expectations for the position realistic? What does my spouse feel about this church, location, schooling, church people, etc.? What kind of welcome did I receive from the other church staff? Can I survive on the compensation package offered with this position? What is the church's financial stability? Does the church's doctrinal statement and methodologies fit my ideals? What is the church's reputation in the community? What is the pastor's reputation among the church staff and community?

A little pre-interview investigation on your part may save you a lot of headaches later on. Do an Internet search on the church and the pastor. Is there a recent scandal you need to be aware of? Are any lawsuits associated with the church?

### **Pastor Compensation**

The compensation package for a pastor is different than most positions. A pastor is permitted to opt out of Social Security based on religious convictions and is exempt from paying income taxes on housing allowance. The housing allowance includes mortgage/rent on the primary dwelling, most utilities, all repairs, etc. A wise pastor will hire a competent personal accountant who is well-versed in pastoral compensation to take full advantage of benefits offered to pastors.

Most churches are unable to assist pastors with Social Security, healthcare, education reimbursement, retirement, etc. Therefore, pastors must take all of this into account when negotiating their compensation package. The compensation package should include their housing declaration, salary, and reimbursement for travel, continuing education (seminars, denominational meetings, etc.), expenses incurred for sermon preparation, resources, etc.

There is a delicate balance between what the church can afford and what you are able to live with. It is not noble to live below the poverty level when the church can better afford to compensate you. Some churches believe pastors should not be financially compensated at all for their service to the church. Still others believe that the pastor and his family should be compensated only enough to meet their needs. If the church can afford it, a pastor's compensation should be based upon the pastor's experience, job performance, education, faithfulness, etc.

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward” (1 Tim. 5:17-18).

Another compensation point many pastors fail to negotiate is vacations, holidays, work hours, and the work week. Failure to negotiate all this upfront may cause disappointment and hurt feelings later on. Pastors, like all professions, are entitled to paid vacation time and paid holidays. They are also entitled to regular days off each week. And the church is entitled to set hours and a set work schedule each week. Thus, communication is necessary in this area.

Holidays: Pastors typically are entitled to receive the following days off with pay: New Years Day, the day after Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day (“Fourth of July”), Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas and the week between Christmas and New Years. If a holiday falls on a regular scheduled service time, the pastor will be expected to be in the pulpit.

Vacations: All pastors should receive two weeks of paid vacation a year. Pastors who have had five years of continuous service to the church may receive an additional week of paid vacation each year.

Work Days: Each pastor is expected to work five days a week. Since most church offices are closed on either Mondays or Fridays, that days the office is closed will be a day off for most of the pastoral staff. Even then, one pastor should be on call to handle any emergencies that may arise.

Sick Days: Church staff members may be permitted a limited number of paid sick days per year. A doctor's excuse must be presented when any staff member is absent more than two consecutive days. All staff is usually required to notify the church office by 9:00 a.m. when absent due to sickness.

Note that Church Growth Institute offers a helpful resource entitled, *How to Develop a Pastoral Compensation Plan*, by Dr. Gary L. McIntosh, that is helpful for pastors and churches in developing, reviewing, and maintaining a fair and equitable compensation plan for pastoral staff.





## APPENDIX ONE

# Identifying Your Giftedness as a Pastor/Shepherd

There are at least two ways to determine if you have the Gift of Shepherding.

First, complete the *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory*\* by Dr. Larry Gilbert, published by ChurchGrowth.org, to help you in your spiritual gifts discovery. (\*Revised and expanded edition: *Your Gifts Spiritual Gifts Survey*.)

Second, ask yourself, what am I passionate about? Are you passionate about God's Word? Are you passionate about reaching people for Christ? Are you passionate about teaching people the Word of God? Are you passionate about providing biblical guidance and counsel to others?

### Using the Spiritual Gift Inventory

Your dominant area of giftedness will tend to impact the way you think and feel about things much as other influences such as family or educational background also contribute to the person you are. The *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory* has helped many people discover their spiritual gift(s) by matching certain attitudinal statements to probable areas of giftedness. Those who have the pastor/shepherd gift tend to identify closely with the following statements:<sup>1</sup>

1. I am willing to assume a long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers.
2. I am people centered; I need many relationships.
3. I spend great amount of time praying for other people.
4. I enjoy looking after the spiritual welfare of others; I am protective.
5. I have a burden (compelling desire) to see others to learn and grow.
6. I am more relationship oriented than task oriented.
7. I am very protective of people under my care.
8. Teaching the same material over and over would be boring and unappealing to me.
9. I desire to give direction (guidance, instruction) to those under my care.

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<sup>1</sup> Attitudinal statements taken from the Classic *Spiritual Gifts Inventory*, now available in a new, revised edition: *YOUR GIFTS Spiritual Gifts Survey* published by ChurchGrowth.org. This diagnostic tool is available through <http://www.ChurchGrowth.org> and wherever Christian books are sold.

10. I am willing to study whatever is necessary in order to feed (nurture, guide) those for whom I care.
11. I enjoy doing a wide variety of activities rather than being confined to only one.
12. I perceive myself as a shepherd (an overseer, guiding and ministering to those under my care).

### **Confirming Your Inventory Results**

While the *Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory* (and *Your Gifts Spiritual Gifts Survey*) has proven an effective tool in helping people identify their dominant area of giftedness, be careful about coming to conclusions too quickly on the basis of a single evaluation. In the Old Testament, a matter could not be legally confirmed without two or three witnesses who agreed. When you evaluate your response to any spiritual gifts survey, apply this Law of Two or Three Witnesses to your results by asking the following questions:

1. Is this conclusion consistent with what I know about this gift? Something in your background or even the way you felt as you completed the inventory may have colored your answers slightly, resulting in a false conclusion.
2. Do other Christians who know me see evidence of this gift in me? If you possess this gift, it should be apparent at least in embryonic form to more mature and spiritual Christians who know you.
3. Is the exercise of the gift effective in ministry? When you use your spiritual gift, you will tend to experience maximum effectiveness with minimum effort.

### **Gifts, Passions and Learned Abilities**

Some Christians confuse their spiritual giftedness with a passion for ministry and/or learned abilities they have acquired. Normally, God also gives his people a passion to serve him in some area in which they are uniquely gifted. Also, as Christians begin using their gifts in ministry, they tend to find other learned abilities they have acquired over the years can be used to open ministry doors or enhance the effectiveness of their gifts. Therefore, the challenge of gift stewardship involves determining how to use your gifts and learned abilities in a ministry for which you have a passion. When this balance is achieved, you will realize your maximum effectiveness in ministry and greatest sense of personal fulfillment.

As you look for an opportunity to use your giftedness in ministry, ask yourself, "If I could serve in any ministry in my church, which would I choose?" This will help you identify your passion for ministry. If you have difficulty deciding between several options, determine what these ministries have in common that make them attractive to you. For example, the Christian that has difficulty choosing between a summer day camp ministry to children or accompanying the youth group on their winter retreat may have a passion for a camping ministry rather than children's or youth ministry.

Once you have identified your ministry passion, begin investigating opportunities within that ministry area that would enable you to use your gift(s). This will probably involve talking with others currently involved in that ministry. In some cases, you may need to do some creative thinking to help others see how your unique giftedness could contribute to the effectiveness of the ministry team. In other situations, God may give you a passion to use your giftedness in a ministry that is not yet established in your church. Many pastors and church leaders are waiting for people like that to begin much-needed new ministries in the church.

Having determined a role for your gift(s) in the area of your passion, the third step in gift stewardship involves using your learned abilities to enhance your ministry effectiveness. Some of our learned abilities (perhaps most of them) may not readily lend themselves to the ministry we have chosen. Others may only contribute slightly to enhancing your effectiveness. Still others may open significant doors of ministry that might have otherwise remained closed.

### **Practicing Gift Stewardship**

God has uniquely gifted each of us for effective ministry in our church. He is the giver of the gifts, but as the recipients of his gifts we have a stewardship responsibility (1) to discover our unique giftedness, then (2) to demonstrate that giftedness in ministry, and finally (3) to develop the potential of our spiritual giftedness. The Lord bless you as you are found faithful as a steward of the gift(s) he has entrusted to your keeping.

### **A Profile of the Pastor/Shepherd<sup>2</sup>**

The following characteristics are a mixture of the gift of shepherding in any capacity and the gift of shepherding in the capacity of senior pastor.

- I. CHARACTERISTICS. The Pastor/Shepherd...
  - A. Is usually patient.
  - B. Is usually willing to spend time in prayer for others.
  - C. Is usually a “Jack of All and Master of One.”
  - D. Is people-centered; loves people.
  - E. Is often authoritative.
  - F. Is more a leader than a follower.
  - G. Is expressive, composed, and sensitive.
  - H. Draws people to himself or herself easily.
  - I. Has a pleasing personality.

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<sup>2</sup> Gift profile based on *How to Find Meaning and Fulfillment through Understanding the Spiritual Gifts within You*, which was revised and updated to *YOUR GIFTS: Discover God's Unique Design for You* by Larry Gilbert (for individuals/small groups) and *TEAM MINISTRY: Gifted to Serve* (for pastors/church leaders), Forest, Virginia: ChurchGrowth.org, 2015.

II. BURDENS, DESIRES AND STRENGTHS. The Pastor/Shepherd...

- A. Has a burden to see others learn and grow.
- B. Is protective of those under him/her.
- C. Is burdened to teach the whole Word of God.
- D. Usually doesn't like to present the same material more than once.
- E. Is willing to study what is necessary to feed the flock.
- F. Is more relationship oriented than task oriented.
- G. Wishes to give direction to those under his/her care.
- H. Desires to look after the spiritual welfare of others.
- I. Has a high sense of empathy; is tolerant of people's weaknesses.
- J. Is able to resolve problems between people, compromising rather than going to either extreme—a peacemaker and diplomat.
- K. Is sensitive to hurt feelings or problems that cause loss of unity.
- L. Is sensitive to the overall attitude and spirit of the flock.
- M. Remembers people's names and faces.
- N. Is self-sacrificing when it comes to his/her flock.
- O. Is more concerned with doing for others rather than others doing for himself/herself.
- P. Is faithful and devoted to his/her flock, often becoming a workaholic.
- Q. Learns to become an all-purpose person in order to meet needs.

III. SPECIAL NEEDS AND WEAKNESSES. The Pastor/Shepherd...

- A. Fails to involve other people.
- B. Becomes too involved by doing it all alone, becomes too independent.
- C. Doesn't make people accountable to the rest of the group.
- D. May lack involvement in evangelistic efforts because of already having as many people as he or she can shepherd.
- E. May become overly protective of his/her flock.
- F. Tends to use other people.

IV. HOW THE PASTOR/SHEPHERD IS MISUNDERSTOOD BY OTHERS. Others think the Pastor/Shepherd...

- A. Should do all the work.
- B. Should always be available.

- C. Knows all the answers.
- D. Should be at every social function.
- E. Should do all the evangelism.

V. HOW SATAN ATTACKS THIS GIFT

- A. Causes discouragement because the load gets heavy.
- B. Causes pride because his/her sheep look up to him/her.
- C. Causes family problems because of too little time and attention.
- D. Causes selfishness when “sheep” feed in other pastures.

VI. WHERE TO USE THIS GIFT

- A. As a Sunday school teacher.
- B. As a pastor or assistant pastor.
- C. As a bus captain or bus pastor.
- D. As a special ministry leader (youth, children, seniors, etc.).
- E. As a volunteer or paid staff member in a shelter for abused, homeless, or other needy people.
- F. As a den leader for scout troops.
- G. As a dormitory leader in college, orphanage, children’s home, etc.
- H. As a small group leader.



## **APPENDIX TWO**

# **A Two-Year Plan to Begin Thinking Like a Shepherd**

One of the things Jesus accomplished when he ascended into heaven was to grant spiritual gifts to all Christians to be used in the ministry (Eph. 4:8). Specific spiritual gifts are identified by different names in Scripture. When the various biblical lists of spiritual gifts are examined, there appear to be three kinds of spiritual gifts. One group may be described as miraculous gifts or “signs and wonders.” This group includes gifts such as speaking in tongues and gifts of healing. Then there are four enabling gifts that each Christian appears to have to some degree. These include spiritual discernment, faith, knowledge, and wisdom. These four gifts enhance a third group, the task-oriented spiritual gifts (TEAM gifts). These task-oriented gifts are tools for effectiveness as part of the ministry team. Each of these nine tools for ministry is the subject of one of the books in this series on spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gifts are given to Christians for several reasons. They equip Christians with tools for effective outreach ministries (Eph. 4:12). These same tools equip Christians with the ability to edify, encourage, and care for fellow believers (Eph. 4:12). They also enable each Christian to contribute practically to the unity of the church (Eph. 4:13). Spiritual gifts provide the means by which Christians can experience their greatest personal fulfillment, that which comes from using their gifts in ministry to others (Rom. 12:4-8).

While the focus of this and other books in this series is spiritual gifts, it is important to remember that all gifts are given by the same Giver who distributes those gifts “to each one individually as he wills” (1 Cor. 12:11). When churches develop a gift-orientation to ministry, they recognize Christ’s authority as the head of their church to determine the nature of their ministry. Ultimately, the key to an effective gift-oriented ministry is not the gift, but the Giver. He determines who gets which gift and in doing so, he also designs the unique gift mix within each congregation to accomplish the specific ministry he intends for that church. That is why, despite the failings of the Corinthian church in many respects, Paul could affirm with confidence that they came “short in no gift” (1 Cor. 1:7). God gave them and us every gift we need to accomplish the ministry he wants us to accomplish.

### **Looking at Spiritual Gifts from the Perspective of the Shepherd**

When Paul addressed the Corinthians on the subject of spiritual gifts, he used five different Greek words to describe the nature of these gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-7). Each term tends to emphasize a different aspect of our spiritual giftedness. Paul used the word *pneumatikon* that is translated “spiritual” (1 Cor. 12:1). This adjective describes the character of these gifts as spiritual. The second Greek word used was *charismata*, that



is usually translated “gifts” (1 Cor. 12:4). This term emphasizes gifts as God’s free and gracious gifts. The word *diakonia* is the third term used to describe gifts. This word is translated “ministries” (1 Cor. 12:5) and reveals gifts as opportunities for ministry. Fourth, the word *energema*, translated “activities” (1 Cor. 12:6), suggests that gifts are an endowment of God’s power or energy. The fifth the word used by Paul, *phanerosis*, translated “manifestation” (1 Cor. 12:7), means that gifts are evidence of God working through us.

That last word creates a problem for many Christians. If my spiritual gift is a manifestation of God working through me, it will be frustrated unless I get out of the way. God and the people He made have two different ways of thinking. Speaking on behalf of God, the prophet Isaiah wrote, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways’ says the LORD. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts’” (Isa. 55:8-9). At some point in the development of our spiritual gifts, we need to begin thinking like the Giver of our gifts.

Paul understood this principle. Just before discussing spiritual gifts in his epistle to the Romans, he wrote, “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:2). The key to that renewing of our mind is found in saturating your mind with God’s Word. Paul urged the Colossians, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16). The psalmist wrote, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Ps. 119:9-11).

### **A Two-Year Strategy to Begin Thinking Like God about Your Gift**

In our hurry-up world many people look for quick solutions to fix problems, but learning to think like a pastor/shepherd is a challenge bigger than can be accomplished in a weekend seminar or by reading a book or taking a course. The gap between our way of thinking and God’s way of thinking is so great it could take a lifetime to bridge. Even then we may discover we still have more to learn. But the more we allow God’s Word to saturate our thinking process, the more inclined we will be to begin thinking like him.

As you strive to begin thinking like God about your spiritual gift two spiritual disciplines will help you accomplish that goal. The first is the discipline of reading through the Bible. Christians who depend exclusively on the ministry of their pastor to teach them the Scriptures often end up with a piece-meal understanding of the Scriptures. If a pastor preached on a different chapter each week, it would take him 1189 weeks to preach through the Bible (about twenty-three years and five months). Of course some chapters might take several weeks to preach through and sometimes the pastor may choose to preach on some doctrine, problem, social issue or other topic. Most people don’t stay in the same church long enough to understand their Bible using

this approach exclusively. But despite the size and scope of the Bible, you can read it through your self in a year by devoting fifteen minutes daily to personal Bible reading. There are many “through the Bible” Bible reading guides published as tracts or special edition Bibles to help you accomplish this goal.

The second spiritual discipline to help you begin thinking about your gift from God’s perspective is Scripture memory. While most people believe they cannot memorize, throughout history, this has been the most often used means of teaching the Scriptures. Even those who cannot read can memorize the Scriptures because it involves only two steps, repetition and review. To learn a new verse, continually repeat the verse until you can say it without error. Then to remember the verse, review it often on a regular basis. In the Old Testament, parents were encouraged to review the principles of the law they memorized with their children four times each day, “when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deut. 6:7). Regardless of our lifestyle we can still find time to repeat and review the Scriptures during our wait time and commute time and when we go to sleep and wake up each day.

### **Key Verses Related to Shepherds**

To help you get started in your own personal spiritual gift development plan, the following list identifies key verses regarding shepherds. You may want to memorize these verses by reading them over until they become familiar, one verse at a time. Begin thinking about how these verses may relate to your shepherding ministry.

The following list does not include every verse related to your gift, but offers a sampling of verses that refer to our Great Shepherd and the tremendous responsibilities of shepherds to “lead, feed and protect” their flocks. Read your Bible daily and be alert to how verses relate to your gift. In addition to changing the way you think about your gift, this plan will also help you experience accelerated spiritual growth. Peter understood the link between the Scriptures and spiritual growth when he wrote, “as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). As you mature in Christ and begin to think like God about your spiritual gifts, you will find yourself using your gift with greater effectiveness in ministry. In doing so you will also experience a greater sense of personal fulfillment as you serve God the way he designed you to serve Him.

### **Our Great Shepherd Verses**

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever” (Ps. 23).

“But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock” (Ps. 78:52).

“Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth” (Ps. 80:1).

“Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young” (Isa. 40:10-11).

“And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered” (Mark 14:27).

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd” (John 10:1-16).

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (Heb. 13:20-21).

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25).

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's

heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (1 Peter 5:1-4).

### **Other Verses That Refer to Shepherds**

#### **Confirmation of Great Responsibility as Caretakers, Messengers, and Servant Leaders**

“But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob; (from thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel)” (Gen. 49:24).

“And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock” (Ezek. 34:1-3).

“As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day” (Ezek. 4:12).

“Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it” (Ezek. 34:22-24).

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36).

“And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:32).

“Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd” (Num. 27:17).

“And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace” (1 Kings 22:17).

“Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the Lord said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace” (2 Chron. 18:16).

“The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd” (Eccl. 12:11).

“That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid” (Isa. 44:28).

“Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?” (Isa. 63:11).

“And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord” (Jer. 23:4).

“Hear the word of the Lord, O ye nations, and declare it in the isles afar off, and say, he that scattered Israel will gather him, and keep him, as a shepherd doth his flock” (Jer. 31:10).

“Thus saith the Lord of hosts; Again in this place, which is desolate without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down” (Jer. 33:12).

“Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?” (Jer. 49:19).

“My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place” (Jer. 50:6).

“Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan unto the habitation of the strong: but I will make them suddenly run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me?” (Jer. 50:44).

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?” (Ezek. 34:2).

“And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered” (Ezek. 34:5).

“Therefore, ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord” (Ezek. 34:7).

“As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, and my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did

my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and fed not my flock” (Ezek. 34:8).

“Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord” (Ezek. 34:9).

“As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day” (Ezek. 34:12).

“And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd” (Ezek. 34:23).

“And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them” (Ezek. 37:24).

“For the idols have spoken vanity, and the diviners have seen a lie, and have told false dreams; they comfort in vain: therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd” (Zech. 10:2).

“Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened” (Zech. 11:17).

“But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36).

“And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matt. 25:32).

“And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things” (Mark 6:34).

“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night” (Luke 2:8).

“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us” (Luke 2:15).

“And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds” (Luke 2:18).

“And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them” (Luke 2:20).

## 111 Helpful Memory Verses for Shepherds

1. “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Ps. 119:9-11).
2. “As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2).
3. “And these words, which I command you today, shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up” (Deut. 6:6-7).
4. “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all” (1 Thess. 5:14).
5. “Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another” (Rom. 15:14).
6. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col. 3:16).
7. “These things I command you, that you love one another” (John 15:17).
8. “Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father” (Gal. 1:4).
9. “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).
10. “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).
11. “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9).

12. "Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Rom. 15:14).
13. "Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7).
14. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28).
15. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us" (1 John 4:11-12).
16. "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16).
17. "As you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:11-12).
18. "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality" (1 Thess. 4:3).
19. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).
20. "For this is the will of God that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter 2:15).
21. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26).
22. "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge" (James 4:11).
23. "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ" (Phil. 1:6).
24. "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. 2:3-4).
25. "This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith" (Titus 1:13).



26. "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:7).
27. "And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him" (Acts 8:31).
28. "And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him" (Luke 9:47).
29. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage" (Gal. 5:1).
30. "Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work" (2 Thess. 2:16-17).
31. "For our exhortation did not come from deceit or uncleanness, nor was it in guile. But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts" (1 Thess. 3:3-4).
32. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Cor. 1:3-4).
33. "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way" (Rom. 14:13).
34. "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).
35. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called" (Eph. 4:1).
36. "But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine" (Titus 2:1).
37. "Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing" (1 Thess. 5:11).
38. "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

39. "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us; we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20).
40. "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men" (1 Tim. 2:1).
41. "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1).
42. "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15).
43. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
44. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).
45. "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).
46. "Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion" (Rom. 12:16).
47. "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).
48. "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19).
49. "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).
50. "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more" (1 Cor. 9:19).
51. "Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men" (Titus 3:1-2).
52. "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers" (Eph. 4:29).

53. "Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another" (Gal. 5:26).
54. "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Col. 3:9-10).
55. "Your therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 2:1).
56. "But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18).
57. "Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us" (Heb. 12:1).
58. "And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb. 10:24-25).
59. "If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:1-2).
60. "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:18).
61. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 4).
62. "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35).
63. "Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1).
64. "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (1 Cor. 9:27).
65. "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2).

66. "For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother" (Phile. 7).
67. "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing" (1 Peter 3:8-9).
68. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Tim. 1:7).
69. "Therefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thess. 4:18).
70. "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also make us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Cor. 3:5-6).
71. "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself" (Phil. 2:3).
72. "And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure" (2 Cor. 12:7).
73. "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24).
74. "Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart" (1 Peter 1:22).
75. "A man's heart plans his way, but the LORD directs his steps" (Prov. 16:9).
76. "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14).
77. "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name" (John 1:12).
78. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20).
79. "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24).

80. "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. 2:5-6).
81. "Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins might live for righteousness – by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Pet. 2:24).
82. "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12).
83. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:17).
84. "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth" (Prov. 27:1).
85. "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8:36).
86. "The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9).
87. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Rom. 1:16).
88. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).
89. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9).
90. "But if you do not do so, then take note, you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 33:23).
91. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:13).
92. "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov. 3:5-6).
93. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).
94. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope" (Jer. 29:11).

95. "He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love" (Col. 1:13).
96. "And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:4).
97. "Let my teaching drop as the rain, my speech distill as the dew, as raindrops on the tender herb, and as showers on the grass" (Deut. 32:2).
98. "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye" (Ps. 32:8).
99. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20).
100. "My son, keep your father's command, and do not forsake the law of your mother. Bind them continually upon your heart; tie them around your neck. When you roam, they will lead you; when you sleep, they will keep you; and when you awake, they will speak with you" (Prov. 6:20-22).
101. "Receive my instruction, and not silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold; for wisdom is better than rubies, and all the things one may desire cannot be compared with her" (Prov. 8:10-11).
102. "Whoever loves instruction loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid" (Prov. 12:1).
103. "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You" (Ps. 51:13).
104. "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works" (Ps. 71:17).
105. "Whom will he teach knowledge? And whom will he make to understand the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just drawn from the breast? For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little" (Isa. 28:9-10).
106. "I have taught you in the way of wisdom; I have led you in right paths. When you walk, your steps will not be hindered, and when you run, you will not stumble. Take firm hold of instruction, do not let go; keep her, for she is your life" (Prov. 4:11-13).
107. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring your remembrance all things that I said to you" (John 14:26).

108. “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-12).
109. “Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Titus 1:9).
110. “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42).
111. “The preparations of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD” (Prov. 16:1).

## **APPENDIX THREE**

# **Ministry Essentials**

### 1. Deal With Church/Group/Class Conflicts

Someone once joked, “the church would be a perfect place if it weren’t for the people.” Proverbs 14:4 puts it this way, “Where no oxen are, the crib is clean: but much increase is by the strength of the ox” In other words, people are the cause of problems in the church, yet there is no church without the people.

As long as you have people you are going to have conflicts. Conflicts are a cancer in the church. If left to fester and spread they will destroy your church. A wise shepherd will seek to alleviate conflicts as soon as they arise.

- A. Pray for peace and unity in your church/group/class.
- B. Teach about unity in the church.
- C. Use Matthew 18 as your guide in conflict resolution.
- D. Meet with the conflicting parties and try to resolve the problems.

### 2. Choose Armor Bearers in the Church

Shepherds must surround themselves with a few godly people from their church whose ministry is to be armor bearers. The shepherd’s armor bearers are those who:

- A. Pray for the shepherd daily.
- B. Inform the shepherd if trouble is brewing in the church/class/group.
- C. Will protect the shepherd and the shepherd’s family. You never know what goes on in anyone’s heart. There may be people who will target your spouse for one reason or another and your spouse may not feel comfortable rebuffing them. Your armor bearer will be able to delicately remove your spouse from an uncomfortable situation.

A pastor friend had this problem in his church. His attractive wife seemed to be the target of a couple of mentally unstable men in their church. They always made their way to hug her before or after the services. My friend had to assign an armor bearer to protect his wife when he was not around.

- D. Travel with the shepherd to speaking engagements, when the shepherd’s spouse cannot attend.
- E. Provide transportation for the shepherd, as needed, to speaking engagements.



### 3. Cast the Vision for Your Ministry

It is vital that everyone understand your ministry's vision and their place in fulfilling that vision.

Many shepherds are good at casting the vision for the ministry at the beginning of the New Year, but fail in continuing to cast the vision throughout the year. Shepherds must cast their vision when they teach, in their handouts, in the PowerPoint announcements, in their correspondence, etc. Remember, your vision must be taught and caught. You must teach it and the church/group/class must receive it, own it, and fulfill it.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish...” (Prov. 29:18).

### 4. Conduct Business Meetings

As long as there are differing opinions about any topic there is the opportunity for unpleasantness to occur during business meetings. The business meetings can spur hostility, hurt feelings and disunity within the ministry.

Here are some hints to help your business meetings run more effectively:

- A. Conduct the ministry business meeting on regular basis (such as monthly).
- B. Emphasize and pray for unity, kindness and order before the meeting starts. State the rules and the expectations before the meeting begins.
- C. Conduct your business meeting according to *Robert's Rules of Order*. *Roberts Rules of Order* can be purchased through Amazon.com.
- D. Have a pre-set agenda prior to the meeting. All discussion items must be submitted three days prior to the date of the business meeting. This will keep you from being “blind sided” during the meeting. Unless an emergency decision arises, stick with the pre-set agenda.
- E. Do not be afraid to postpone decisions if discussions get too heated.
- F. When meetings go well, be sure to thank everyone for their Christian conduct.
- G. Pray at the end of the meeting.