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DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A SEMINAR FOR
TRAINING SHEPHERD LEADERS AT NORTHFIELD
BAPTIST CHURCH, NORTHFIELD, OHIO

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Presented to
the Faculty of
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DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A SEMINAR FOR
TRAINING SHEPHERD LEADERS AT NORTHFIELD
BAPTIST CHURCH, NORTHFIELD, OHIO

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To Debbie,
my partner in life and ministry, without whose encouragement and
insights this project would not have been completed;
and to our children Jonathan, Joel, and Jenna,
who afforded me the first opportunities
to experience what it meant to be a
shepherd leader at home,
and cheered me on to
the finish.

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PREFACE

The work of designing and implementing this project was a collective effort, and I deeply appreciate each person who contributed to its completion. Preceding this project was my decision to enter the Doctor of Ministry program, a decision that was motivated by my desire to become a better leader and a more effective leadership trainer. I would not have entered the program without the urging of key people: my wife, our children, church leaders, and trusted friends. Completing the project is a testimony to their encouragement and support throughout the process.

The Lord has blessed me with the privilege of pastoring a wonderful church—Northfield Baptist Church. We have worshipped, fellowshiped, served, and grown together for more than twenty-five years. This congregation has taught me the joys and sorrows of shepherding. They are the flock among whom I have grown up as a shepherd. More than a congregation, this church is my family. Both the church and leaders have supported this educational endeavor from the beginning with their words, prayers, inquiries, and finances. They truly invested in me as I undertook this endeavor. It is a privilege to be their shepherd. My experiences among them have taught me much of what I present in this project.

I am grateful for the guidance my supervisor, Wesley Feltner, offered me throughout the process of completing the project. I awaited his responses to my chapter submissions with apprehension, never quite certain how close I would be to meeting the expectations for each chapter. All along the way, his instructions and suggestions forced

greater clarity in my own thinking and writing. His encouragement has brought me to the fulfillment of this project. I am indebted to Brad Watters, whose meticulous editing, questions, figuring out formatting issues, compilation and synthesis of data, and explanation of statistical analysis saved me countless hours of labor and brought to the project expertise that I lacked. I am grateful for the hours he invested in reading and critiquing the content, which generated hundreds of suggested corrections. Additionally, Amy Chase applied her expertise as a copy editor, improving my grammar and punctuation, helping to clarify my thought processes, and making the content easier to read. She helped me exchange an informal speaking style with the more formal writing style of a doctoral project. The skills of these two editors have made this project far better than it would have been without their assistance.

Thirteen men shared with me the precious gift of their time as they made their Sundays last longer in order to participate in the seminar. I appreciated their enthusiasm to be part of the effort, which continually motivated me throughout the weeks of instruction. The encouragement they offered meant much to me, and the insights I gleaned from them have made me a better leader. Several of them had the ability to lead an effective training seminar, yet they humbly and patiently sat under my instruction and encouraged me with the things they learned. Thank you Tim, Nate, Gary, Rick, John, Chris, Rick, Andrew, Eric, Greg, Matt, Don, and Shannon.

How do I adequately express my gratitude to my wife, Debbie, and our children Jonathan, Joel, and Jenna? I have often said throughout the process of working on this degree and doing this project, my wife should be the one receiving the degree. Without her assistance and encouragement, I would have given up several times and never completed the project. She has been that kind of companion in ministry—my completer. Our son Jonathan served as a sounding board as I tried to formulate my thoughts regarding church leadership. His insights have been helpful. Joel was my

encourager assuring me I would get it done. Our daughter, Jenna, has waited patiently for me to finish so we can spend some more time together. I entered this program and completed it because of my family and I am indebted to them.

Finally, I am grateful for the insights of Eugene Peterson, whose writings have been a breath of fresh air to my pastoral soul. I came across his books on pastoral ministry five years ago, namely *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*; *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work*; *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*; *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness*; and *The Pastor: A Memoir*. They were influential in my decision to pursue further education and shaping my understanding of pastoral leadership. His writings helped me see church leadership as existing under the umbrella of shepherding. He reminded me that my job is to know who the particular people are whom I serve and to be with them in such a way that they can become what God is making them. My prayer is, that as a result of this project, I will be better prepared to help those whom I serve become what God is making them to be.

Mark Ashley

Northfield, Ohio

December 2016

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to design and implement a seminar for training shepherd leaders at Northfield Baptist Church, Northfield, Ohio.

Goals

The first goal of this project was to recruit a mix of at least twelve individuals from the pastoral staff, deacons, and other potential leaders from the membership, who would participate in the shepherd leadership training seminar. This goal was measured by each invited participant completing an enrollment form¹ and being personally interviewed by me prior to the first session of the seminar.² Thirteen individuals committed to participate in the training seminar by completing the enrollment form and participating in the pre-seminar interview, successfully meeting the first goal.

The second goal of this project was to design a curriculum and write the content for the leadership training seminar. This goal was measured by using a review process conducted by a panel of experts who provided feedback on the seminar plans through the use of an evaluation rubric.³ The panel reviewed the content of the seminar via the use of a rubric measuring the specific elements of the seminar and approved the content at a “sufficient” or above level of 90 percent, successfully completing the second goal.

¹See appendix 1.

²See appendix 2.

³See appendix 3.

The third goal of this project was to train the participants in shepherd leadership by implementing the shepherd leadership training seminar. This goal was measured in two ways. First, pre- and post-seminar interviews were conducted with each participant.⁴ Second, pre- and post-seminar leadership surveys were administered to the seminar participants.⁵ Success for the goal was measured by a t-test for dependent samples demonstrating a positive, statistically significant difference between the pre-seminar and post-seminar leadership survey scores, and by observing indications of growth in the responses from the pre- and post-seminar interviews that were compiled and evaluated.

Ministry Context

This ministry project took place within the context of Northfield Baptist Church in Northfield, Ohio. A number of factors within this ministry context were relevant to the project. Northfield Baptist Church was formed in 1954 as the result of a merger of two relatively young local Baptist churches in the Northfield community. The church has a good reputation for its ministry and service to the surrounding neighborhoods. It is one of fifteen churches in the community, and one of the oldest. From its beginning, Northfield Baptist Church has been affiliated with the General Association of Regular Baptist Churches, an association of conservative and fundamentalist Baptist churches that formed after withdrawing from the former Northern Baptist Convention in 1932. The current ethos of Northfield is more in line with conservative evangelicals than with the independent fundamentalist Baptists.

While many changes have been implemented under my leadership, Northfield Baptist Church retains evidences of the structures and methods of many traditional

⁴See appendices 2 and 4.

⁵See appendix 5.

independent fundamentalist Baptist churches. For example, the paradigm for the church's weekly ministry centers around the traditional Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening schedule. The ways in which those core times are used continues to evolve according to ministry needs. Another example of the independent fundamentalist Baptist ministry paradigm is evident in the leadership structure and in the governance of the church.

The leadership structure of Northfield Baptist Church consists of a pastoral team, two boards, and three constitutionally defined committees. The pastoral team is comprised of the senior pastor, a full-time assistant pastor, and a part-time assistant pastor. The deacon board is currently composed of six men who assist in the care of the membership and fulfill a variety of functions relative to the church's life and ministry. The trustee board is composed of nine men who serve in the official trustee capacity but also maintain the church properties. I have served as senior pastor since 1994. I arrived in 1991 and initially served as the assistant to my predecessor, who pastored the church for forty years. This longevity and its resulting stability have firmly established the pastoral team as the key leadership team of the church (in contrast to being a board-led church).

The governance of the church is congregational, exercised in the calling of its pastors, electing its officers, adopting its annual budget, receiving and dismissing its members, deciding whether or not to incur debt, approving other specified financial matters, and amending its constitution. As one examines the leadership terminology used at Northfield, *pastor*, *deacons*, and *board* are familiar to this church while *plurality of eldership* and *lay eldership* are foreign to the church.

Northfield Baptist Church is a plateaued church. In its history, the church reached its highest attendance average and membership in the early 1980s, when Sunday morning worship averaged 393 and the membership was 423. In the mid-1980s, the numbers began to decline and leveled off where they have remained since the mid-1990s.

The current Sunday morning worship average attendance is 236, and church membership stands at 303.⁶ On peak Sundays, such as Christmas and Easter, the church will see 300 in attendance. The church has visitors nearly every week and adds adults to the membership every year, but overall additions are offset by subtractions. Last year the church posted its largest Sunday school and Adult Bible Fellowship (ABF) attendance in more than twenty years with 242 in attendance on a Sunday that saw 251 attend the morning worship service. The church's ratio of Sunday school and ABF attendance to Sunday morning worship attendance is excellent: ninety percent or better for the past five years. This strong ratio is attributable to a change made in 2003 when the Sunday morning schedule was altered to begin with the worship service, followed by the Sunday school and ABF hour. One immediate result of the switch was a lower worship service attendance, which has mostly been recovered, but the change has resulted in a consistently strong ratio of morning worship to ABF/Sunday school attendance.

The stated mission of Northfield Baptist Church is "to glorify God through making disciples of all nations by reaching the lost with the gospel, connecting believers to the local church, equipping them for godly living and service, and sending them into ministry." Current church ministries are evaluated by how they contribute to and advance this process. New ministries are started on the basis of programming needs and specifically identified contributions the new ministry will make to the advancement of the church's mission. The church's strength lies in its preaching and teaching ministries. However, the discipleship program, as it currently exists, is lacking in the realm of ministry training. There are no formalized programs for training volunteers for the various ministries of the church. There is no systematic training for teachers, deacons, committee members, or leaders. The discipleship program currently has no pathway for

⁶The membership figure is from the church's 2015-2016 annual report published in July 2016. The morning attendance figure is from the statistical report presented at the March 2016 church board meeting.

developing pastoral-level leaders from within the church.⁷ The lack of specific pastoral training is due to the traditional expectation that pastoral leaders are trained outside of the local church. Searches for pastoral staff members have consistently begun by looking outside the church for professionally-degreed candidates. Since pastoral leaders are expected to have college or seminary degrees in order to be considered qualified for staff leadership, the need to develop such leaders in the church itself is diminished. This lowered expectation has contributed to the neglect of leadership training in the church.

As Northfield Baptist Church looks to the future, one of its greatest needs is for the leadership and congregation to embrace a vision for ministry training and value this training as an essential part of discipleship. Northfield is a strong and loving community of believers that seeks to be faithful to God's Word. The church currently lacks the necessary momentum to carry it forward into a thriving future. A strategic approach to training people for ministry is missing, one essential element for a thriving future. Training leaders is the starting place to strengthen this part of the disciple-making program. This initiative to train leaders was a first step toward implementing a program that will develop shepherd leaders from within the church's own membership who can lead ministry teams, committees, and boards. Such training will, in time, make it possible to enlarge the church's core leadership team, and may open the door to raising up leaders from within to serve on the church's pastoral team. Increasing the quantity and quality of leaders is vital if the church is going to grow and be ready to meet the opportunities the future will present.

Rationale for the Project

Several factors within the ministry context cited above indicate that a plan for developing shepherding leaders is vital to the church's future. First, this project was

⁷"Pastoral-level leaders" refers to men who could serve as lay pastors or elders if the church was to have such.

necessary because the church's discipleship process does not currently include a strategic plan for training leaders. The lack of leadership training is part of a larger inadequacy in the church's discipleship program. While believers are disciplined in the spiritual disciplines and established in biblical doctrine and Christian living, what is noticeably missing from the church's discipleship program is ministry training, what Ephesians 4:12 calls "equipping the saints for the work of ministry." For example, there is no prescribed or ongoing course for training future deacons. Existing deacon training is contained to an annual orientation meeting. This lack of training means there is no pipeline of new deacons being prepared to serve, and that lack is becoming increasingly apparent in the reduced number of deacons presently serving. The boards, committees, and ministry teams are also in need of being led by trained leaders. The church needs a program for leadership development. Implementing this shepherd leadership training seminar initiates an endeavor aimed at training leaders for all areas of the church's life, whether boards, committees, or ministry teams. Being led by trained individuals will strengthen these ministries.

Another factor motivating this project was the church's present perception that church elders must be professionally trained men and must be part of the paid staff. In practical terms, the church's governing structure is that of a single-elder led church assisted by deacons elected by the congregation and paid assistant pastors as needed. Such a view of church governance tends to blur the roles of deacons and elders and limits the potential number of elders to the number the church can afford to pay. This perspective on church leadership also diminishes the church's sense of responsibility to raise up men from within the congregation who are qualified and trained to serve in the elder role. Northfield Baptist Church currently has neither a sense of need nor a plan for raising up elders from within. The first step toward addressing that need was to begin training shepherd leaders. Success in implementing such training removes these limits and holds out the potential of growing a much larger pastoral team.

Second, this project was necessary to improve the leadership of various ministry groups within the church. Thirteen identifiable teams lead the ministry activities of the church. Additionally, the ABF teachers and the ABF leaders make up informal teams with whom I meet for planning and instruction. None of these teams are led by people who have been specifically trained for leadership in the church. Intentionally training leaders for these teams will yield teams that are more effective in accomplishing the ministry tasks that have been assigned to them.

Third, this project was necessary because the church needs a fresh vision for the future. The plateaued attendance statistics point to the need for fresh approaches to ministries that advance the church's mission. While some people are being saved and added to the church, the current assimilation ratio of the church does not project the kind of growth that is needed for a thriving future. To that end, leaders need to be raised up who have a church planting mindset, with a passion to build and not simply to maintain. A ministry maintenance mindset continues at Northfield, which is natural for an older, established church. Whether or not Northfield starts a new church, adopting a church planting attitude will elevate the urgency for training. Rather than growing existing church ministries into bigger ministries, movement toward a more decentralized ministry with more church life invested in smaller groups scattered throughout the community is becoming the preferred vision for the church. Movement in this direction requires training shepherd leaders who know how to effectively shepherd these kinds of teams.

In summary, the benefits of this project to Northfield Baptist Church were substantial. It addressed a deficiency in the church's discipling program by providing leadership training. It was a step toward strengthening existing teams in the church and initiating the process of producing a pipeline of new leaders, which is vital to the church's future. Finally, developing shepherd leaders within the church more fully reflects the New Testament pattern for advancing church leaders. This project was a step toward

empowering the church to move forward in carrying out its disciple-making mission as well as its vision to raise up the next generation of faithful shepherd leaders.

Definitions, Limitations, and Delimitations

The following definitions are foundational to the material presented in this project and will be operative throughout the project.

Leadership. Wesley Feltner defines leadership as “the ability to impact or inspire others by serving them and empowering them in order to accomplish a vision.”⁸ According to this definition, leadership is an ability that can be learned. This project is built on the foundational assumption that one can strengthen his or her leadership ability through applied instruction and practical experience, accompanied by evaluative feedback. The definition also equates leadership with impacting and inspiring others, which is another way of saying leadership is about influence. How that influence is most effectively asserted is the subject of the various leadership theories. This project examined how leadership influence is modeled by a shepherd. The above definition states that leadership has a unifying aim—the accomplishment of a shared vision. This project aimed to clarify the leadership vision for shepherding in the local church.

Shepherd leadership. Shepherd leadership is a model of leadership patterned after the practice of shepherding sheep. Thus, using the previous definition of leadership, shepherd leadership may be defined as a model for impacting, inspiring, serving, and empowering others in order to help them accomplish a vision. Blaine McCormick and David Davenport define shepherd leadership as “whole person leadership [that is] not just a matter of thinking in certain ways or doing things a certain way. It’s a fully integrated life—a matter of head and hand and heart. . . . It’s a way of thinking and doing and

⁸Wesley Feltner, “Introduction to Leadership” (class lecture presented at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, May 2014).

being.”⁹ According to Timothy Laniak, shepherd leadership is not so much a description of leadership practice—what a leader does—as it is a leadership perspective—how a leader sees himself and those he leads.¹⁰ Kevin Leman and Bill Pentak describe shepherd leadership as a “lifestyle of leadership that places great value on the worth of the flock.”¹¹ Shepherd leadership is neither a theory nor a style of leadership. Rather, it is a model that exemplifies effective leadership, particularly within the church. In this project, shepherd leadership refers to leadership modeled after a shepherd whether or not that leadership is exercised by one who holds a formal position, and whether or not that leadership is exercised within the context of a local church.

Pastor. Three terms in the New Testament identify the pastoral office: ποιμήν (pastor or shepherd), πρεσβύτερος (elder), and ἐπίσκοπος (overseer).¹² In this project, “pastor” is used in its technical sense to refer to one who holds the pastoral office. According to Howard Bixby, “a pastor is set apart by God, biblically qualified, trained, and prepared; then called by the congregation to lead, govern, oversee, protect, and spiritually feed the congregation of God’s people.”¹³ Every pastor is a shepherd leader by definition; however, one does not have to be a pastor in order to be a shepherd leader. When shepherd leadership refers to the official leadership of pastors or church elders it will be noted.

⁹Blaine McCormick and David Davenport, *Shepherd Leadership: Wisdom for Leaders from Psalm 23* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 5.

¹⁰Timothy S. Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, New Studies in Biblical Theology (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 21, 27.

¹¹Kevin Leman and Bill Pentak, *The Way of the Shepherd: Seven Secrets to Managing Productive People* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 100.

¹²I believe the New Testament church office of overseer is held by an elder whose oversight consists of shepherding leadership (or pastoral leadership). See Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet 5:1-3.

¹³Howard L. Bixby, “Multiple Elders as a Pastoral Team,” *The Journal of Ministry & Theology* 11, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 7.

This project was limited to a time period of fourteen weeks during which the seminar was designed, participants recruited, and the curriculum developed, taught, and evaluated. The time limitation imposed on this project prohibited the implementation of a comprehensive leadership development program at Northfield Baptist Church. This project served as the first step in a developing and establishing leadership training as an ongoing practice in the church.

This project was delimited to men in the church membership who are currently serving as pastoral staff members, deacons, and men who manifest the qualifications for deacon or elder. This delimitation was not rooted in the belief that women are disqualified from leadership in the church, nor that they are excluded from the shepherding gift. Both men and women may manifest shepherding leadership apart from any formal position in the church.¹⁴ Since this project was the beginning of a long-range vision to raise up shepherd leaders within the church who may serve as biblical elders and deacons, it was necessary that those who initially would go through the training be eligible to serve in such a capacity. In the future it would be desirable to take women through shepherd leadership training. The vision of Northfield Baptist Church is to raise up the next generation of shepherd leaders. This project was the first step to that end. Therefore, men who demonstrated a potential for serving in such capacities were the focus of the project.

Research Methodology

This project included five instruments that were used to accomplish the goals established to determine the effectiveness of this ministry project.¹⁵ The first goal of the

¹⁴I believe the pastoral office is technically that of bishop, which is occupied by the elder who exercises the gift of pastoring. A woman could have the spiritual gift of pastoring though she herself would be excluded from the office of bishop. The gift of shepherding is not limited to the office of bishop.

¹⁵All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approval of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in this project.

project was to select the participants who would go through the shepherd leadership training seminar. The individuals who were invited to participate were the church's six current deacons and one of the associate pastors of the church. Additionally, seven other men who were currently involved in church ministry leadership or who evidenced eligibility to serve as a ministry leader were also invited to go through the seminar. The process of recruitment involved two elements. First, a letter was sent to each potential participant inviting him to be part of the training seminar. Second, each participant filled out the prepared enrollment form and returned it to me, committing himself to the training seminar. The goal was successfully met when thirteen men were recruited to participate.

The second goal of this project was to design the course for training shepherd leaders at Northfield Baptist Church. Three experts were recruited to assess the curriculum design for the course using a rubric prepared for that purpose. The first member of the expert panel was an individual currently serving on the pastoral staff of Northfield Baptist who has extensive experience as an international church planter, college missions professor, and is the founding director of a missions organization that specializes in discipleship through short-term missions. The second panel member was an active pastor, not on the Northfield staff, who is involved in a church recovery work in the inner city. He has extensive experience in leadership training, having designed a pastoral training program in his own Doctor of Ministry program, which he successfully implemented on the mission field. A third panel member was a recently-retired headmaster for a local Christian high school. He contributed the expertise of his academic training and experience as a professional educator. A rubric was used to evaluate each session and assignment in the areas of content, clarity, methodology, application, and relevance. The evaluation scale for this rubric ranged from insufficient to exemplary. The expert panel was provided with copies of the basic content of each component of the course along with the rubric. They were given two weeks to complete

their evaluations and return them to me. When 90 percent of the evaluation indicators were marked at sufficient or above, this goal was successfully met and the course plan was approved.

The third goal of the project was the implementation of the shepherd leader training seminar. The seminar focused on building the biblical and theological rationale for training local church leaders according to the shepherd model, and describing the characteristics and functions that mark shepherd leaders. The seminar consisted of formal instruction, informal interaction using a variety of learning activities, reading assignments and discussions, and application assignments aimed at creating opportunities to demonstrate shepherd leadership. Leaders cannot be developed in a matter of weeks, but this training seminar provided opportunities for participants to evaluate their own leadership strengths and weaknesses and grow in their understanding and practice of leadership as demonstrated through the shepherd model.

Leadership is not the result of gaining information only, but rather emerges through practice, making practical application a vital component of this training. The time constraints on this project limited the amount of observable leadership growth participants could achieve. One means employed to measure growth was pre- and post-seminar interviews between me and each participant. The pre-seminar interview gave me the opportunity to dialogue personally with each individual in order to gain a sense of his existing leadership experiences and perspectives. The post-seminar interview provided me opportunity to interact with each participant when the seminar concluded in order to evaluate how the participant's insights on leadership had developed as a result of his involvement in the seminar. The second means of measuring project success came through administering a written pre- and post-seminar leadership survey. Whether a statistically significant difference could be detected in such a small sampling and over such a short amount time was uncertain, but the interviews and assessments provided a

means to conclude whether this project intervened positively in meeting the church's need for leadership training.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR DEVELOPING SHEPHERD LEADERS IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

Introduction

When Jesus declared, “I will build my church” (Matt 16:18),¹ he made two fundamental claims: first, the church is his, and second, he is the one who will build it. These claims are supported by Paul’s affirmation that Jesus Christ is the head of the church (Eph 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:19). The church visible and invisible, universal and local, is Christ’s, not man’s. Therefore, everything a church seeks to be and do must conform to the headship of Christ, including a church’s mission, methods, and leadership. Since Christ is the head of the church, those who lead under him are called to emulate his example and lead as he leads. These claims put limits on purely pragmatic approaches to leadership.

Leadership should reflect the model of God himself and that which is modeled by the leaders of his people throughout the Bible. That model is the shepherd. This theme will be developed in this chapter by first looking at the shepherding heart of God. Then, the shepherd leaders of Israel, the ideal Shepherd, and the shepherds in the church will be examined. Finally, the call to raise up shepherding leaders will be presented by looking at the nature of the church and the exhortation in the Pastoral Epistles to raise up the next generations of leaders.

¹All quotations from the English Standard Version unless otherwise noted.

The Shepherding Heart of God

Shepherding flows from the heart of God. Since man was banished from Eden, God has revealed himself as a shepherd leading his people through the wilderness of this earthly life back to their home with him. Jacob claimed God was his lifelong shepherd (Gen 48:15). David declared that the Lord was his shepherd (Ps 23:1) and called upon the Lord to save his people and be their shepherd (Ps 28:9). Asaph remembered how God led his people “like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock” (Ps 78:52). He called God the “Shepherd of Israel” who “led Joseph like a flock” (Ps 80:1). Isaiah described God as tending his flock like a shepherd (Isa 40:11). Jeremiah announced that God would regather his people whom he had scattered and keep them “as a shepherd keeps his flock” (Jer 31:10). In a time of failed leadership, Ezekiel prophesied that God would seek out “his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered” (Ezek 34:11-12). Throughout the Bible, God’s relationship with his people is described as a shepherd who knows (Nahum 1:7; John 10:14), protects (Deut 23:14), provides for (Ps 78:19), and leads (Exod 15:13) his people who are prone to go astray (Isa 53:6; Jer 2:5-7; 1 Pet 2:25). One of God’s most devastating judgments was to cease shepherding his people (Ps 44:11). When Micaiah prophesied his vision of Israel’s defeat in battle due to the sin of King Ahab he described Israel as being “scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd” (2 Chr 18:16). Quentin Kinnison asserts that the Lord as shepherd “is a central theme to understanding God’s leadership, rule, and care for God’s people.”² Thomas Oden is correct when he observes that the leader as shepherd “wells up from the heart of God’s own ministry to the world.”³ Though he is sovereign ruler over all, God leads his people the way a shepherd leads his flock. The image of leadership as shepherding people is clearly rooted in the nature of God and his activity with his people.

²Quentin P. Kinnison, “Shepherd or One of the Sheep: Revisiting the Biblical Metaphor of the Pastorate,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 71.

³Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: The Essentials of Ministry* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1983), 53.

The biblical text that most beautifully portrays God as a shepherd is Psalm 23. David is most often identified as the author of this psalm because of his own pastoral experiences. While David experienced multiple occasions when he faced danger and death threats from his enemies, many scholars place the occasion of writing this psalm within the time of Absalom's rebellion when David was forced to flee for his life.⁴ Even as David fled, exposed to the treachery of his own son, experienced humiliation, and threats against his life (i.e., walking "the valley of the shadow of death"), he feared none of those evils because his shepherd provided for him and protected him. The rod and staff in the Lord's hands were the tools a shepherd used to guide and defend the sheep. God the creator of man and the sovereign over man is a shepherd to his people.

The Shepherds of Israel

The shepherding heart of God is revealed throughout the Bible as he raises up individuals to lead his people. As one surveys the Scriptures, God's people are consistently portrayed as sheep, and the shepherd emerges as the image of divinely-ordained leadership. Moses, Joshua, the judges, David, and eventually all of Israel's leaders, including kings, priests, prophets, and elders, are all called shepherds. This Old Testament metaphor for Israel and her leaders is also carried into the Gospels.

Israel's First Shepherd

Moses was the first leader of the nation of Israel. Raised in Pharaoh's court, and trained to be an Egyptian leader, he distinguished himself by his mighty words and deeds (Acts 7:22).⁵ Yet this professional training was insufficient to prepare him to lead

⁴See Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 5:207; John Peter Lange, et. al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Psalms* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 181; and Jack R. Lundbom, "Psalm 23: Song of Passage," *Interpretation* 40, no. 1 (1986): 6.

⁵F. F. Bruce, *Acts*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1988), 139. In footnote 44, Bruce notes that Hellenistic Jewish philosopher Philo (*Life of Moses*, 1.20-24) described Moses as, "proficient in geometry, arithmetic, poetry, music, philosophy, astrology, and all branches of learning." Likewise, Josephus (*Ant.* 2.229-30) described

God's people. After Moses failed in his first attempt at deliverance, God sent him to the wilderness where he shepherded sheep for forty years. At the end of that time, God called him to shepherd the nation. Rabbi Sholomo Zarchi proposes that Moses the shepherd offers Jews a model for leadership. He suggests that the kind of leadership God seeks is not learned in the academic setting or through leadership courses. Instead, "it is cultivated by a sense of responsibility for the most vulnerable, by being sensitive to the needs of the individual."⁶ He is describing a shepherd.

As Israel's shepherd, Moses was God's prophetic voice. With a shepherd's staff in his hand that became the symbol of his authority, he led the nation out of slavery with many signs and wonders.⁷ Moses was the mediator of the covenant between the Lord and Israel that served as the nation's constitution. When the nation sinned, Moses stood between the people and a God so angry he was ready to destroy them all and start over with Moses. Moses demonstrated a shepherd's heart in his willingness "to offer the loss of his eternal life rather than see the nation of Israel eliminated from the earth" (Exod 32:7-14).⁸ Moses served as the people's judge (שפוט), inquiring from God the answers to the myriad of questions and solutions to the disputes that arose from their day-to-day

him as "unique in wisdom, stature, and beauty."

⁶Rabbi Sholomo Zarchi, "Moses, the Shepherd, Offers Jews a Model of Leadership, Forgiveness," *jweekly.com*, December 13, 2013, accessed January 24, 2014, <http://www.jweekly.com/article/full/70397/torah-moses-the-shepherd-offers-jews-a-model-of-leadership-forgiveness.html>.

⁷Moses' staff is first mentioned when God called Moses at the burning bush and gave him signs to perform (Exod 4:2, 5, 17). In Exod 4:20 (see 17:9) the staff is called "the staff of God." When Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh, the text says Aaron's rod turned into a serpent, thus these rods were one in the same. His staff is used in the plagues (Exod 7:19), and is raised over the Red Sea to divide it for Israel's deliverance (Exod 14:16). When he struck the rock with his staff water came out for the people (Exod 17:5). With his staff, Moses interceded for the army of Israel who defeated the Amalekites (Exod 17:9). When the people rebelled against the authority of Moses and Aaron, God caused the rod to bud as a sign of the ordained role these men played in the nation as their shepherds (Num 17). When Moses used that rod inappropriately, God denied him entrance into the Promised Land (Num 20:1-13).

⁸Douglas K. Stuart, *Exodus*, The New American Commentary, vol. 2 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), 671.

living (Exod 18:13-27).⁹ When the task became too large for him to do alone, he appointed others to assist him, putting in place the beginnings of Israel's legal system.¹⁰ As the prophetic voice to the people, priestly mediator, intercessor, leader, counselor, and judge, Moses' shepherding leadership anticipated the three offices that would eventually be established in Israel: prophet, priest, and king.

Moses' leadership is not called shepherding in the Pentateuch, but several Scripture references describe him as a shepherd. The act of God in bringing his people out of Egypt, leading them through the wilderness, and settling them in the promised land is pictured as a shepherd leading a flock.¹¹ Asaph recalled how the Lord "led out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock" (Ps 78:52). In the previous psalm, he declared that the Lord led his people like a flock, "by the hand of Moses and Aaron" (Ps 77:20). The Lord was Israel's shepherd, but he mediated his shepherding through Moses and Aaron. Isaiah spoke of the works of God on behalf of Israel, remembering that in "the days of old, of Moses and his people, [the Lord had] brought them up out of the sea with the shepherds (רֹעִים) of his flock" (Isa 63:11).¹²

⁹שֹׁפֵט means to "act as law-giver, judge, governor (giving law, deciding controversies and executing law, civil, religious, political, social." Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, and Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), 1047.

¹⁰John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1987), 252.

¹¹Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51-100*. Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 293.

¹²רֹעִים is plural. The LXX translates the word with ποιμένα, which is singular (see Rick Brannan and Israel Loken, *The Lexham Textual Notes on the Bible*, Lexham Bible Reference Series [Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2014], Isa 63:11.). The stronger evidence is for "shepherds" (see John Peter Lange, et. al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Isaiah* [Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008], 677. Whether the "shepherd" is the LORD (see Ps 78:52-53) or the "shepherds" are Moses and those who served with him, commentators agree that it was the LORD through Moses that led the people out of Egypt and through the wilderness. Alec Motyer suggests shepherds could be a "plural of majesty, referring to Moses as the 'supreme shepherd.'" He also notes the possibility of a numeric plural, but either way he sees divine providence at work. Alec Motyer, *Isaiah*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999), 388. Matthew Henry writes, "It was not Moses who led them, any more than it was Moses who fed them, but God by Moses; for it was he that qualified Moses for, called him to, assisted and prospered him in that great undertaking. Moses is here called *the shepherd of his flock*; God was the owner of the flock and chief shepherd of Israel; but Moses was a shepherd under him." Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 1208. J. A. Alexander observes that Ps 77:20, Mic 6:4, and Num 11:17 include Aaron, Miriam and the seventy elders of Israel among these shepherds. J. A. Alexander, *The Prophecies of*

Moses' recognition of his leadership as shepherding is seen in the concern he expressed for Israel's future near the end of his life. He appealed to the Lord to "set a man over the congregation . . . who may lead them out and bring them in, that the congregation of the LORD may not be like sheep which have no shepherd" (Num 27:17). The language of Moses' request conveys the urgent need for a new leader. "Lead them out and bring them in," is military terminology. One of the primary tasks of the next leader would be the military conquest of Canaan. This man would be required to function in the public eye and provide strong leadership. The lack of such a leader would result in helpless, defeated people, or as Moses describes them, "sheep which have no shepherd." Phillip Budd notes that shepherding imagery is also used within the military context (see 1 Kgs 22:17).¹³ This description shows the next leader would parallel the leadership of Moses himself. God's provision was Joshua, who had commanded Israel's military encounters (Exod 17:8-16), been in charge of the tabernacle after the incident with golden calf (Exod 33:11), and served as one of the faithful spies who surveyed Canaan (Num. 13:8, 16).¹⁴ As Moses' closest aid, Joshua was prepared to succeed Moses as the next shepherd leader of Israel.

Israel's Prototypical Shepherd

Next to Moses, Israel's greatest leader was David. David's leadership training took place primarily through his work as a shepherd. He grew up to become the personification of the ideal leader of God's people, the king against whom every other

Isaiah, Zondervan Classic Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), 422. Brevard Childs asserts that "the shepherds of his flock" is unclear but the surrounding context favors seeing it as a reference to Moses and Aaron. Brevard Childs, *Isaiah: A Commentary*, 1st ed., The Old Testament Library (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 524. See also Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), 501.

¹³Philip J. Budd, *Numbers*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1984), 306.

¹⁴R. K. Harrison, *Numbers*, The Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1990), 359.

king was measured. He served as “the prototype of God-honoring shepherd leadership.”¹⁵ God made a covenant with David, establishing his throne as the ultimate seat of earthly authority.¹⁶ He and his divine successor, Jesus, became the enduring model for godly leadership. Based on his own reflections of shepherding, David composed the most picturesque portrait of shepherd leadership in Scripture (Ps 23). His words provide insight into the Lord’s role as shepherd, and the responsibility of kings to be rightly related to the Lord as his under-shepherds. Israel’s promised Messiah, who would come to be the ultimate shepherd leader of God’s people, would be a descendant of David and sit on his throne (Mic 5:2-4; Isa 9:6-7).

Asaph describes David’s rule over Israel as shepherding people: “[God] chose David his servant and took him from the sheepfolds; from following the nursing ewes he brought him to shepherd Jacob his people, Israel his inheritance. With upright heart he shepherded them and guided them with his skillful hand” (Ps 78:70-72). Having prepared David in the pasturelands, God chose David to shepherd his people, a task David performed with an upright heart and skillful hand. Some translators interpret “skillful hand” in this manner: “he led them well because he knew how,” “he showed them what to do and they did it well,” or, idiomatically, “he went ahead of them and showed them how to follow him.”¹⁷ The words of the psalmist echo what God said to David through the prophet Nathan: “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people Israel” (2 Sam 7:8). This ruling prince would shepherd the people.¹⁸

¹⁵Andreas Kostenberger, “Shepherds and Shepherding in the Gospel,” in *Shepherding God’s Flock*, ed. Benjamin L. Merkle and Thomas R. Schreiner (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2014), 34.

¹⁶2 Sam 7:16; Ps 89:4, 29, 36-37; Isa 9:7; 1 Chr 29:23.

¹⁷Robert G. Bratcher and William David Reburn, *A Translator’s Handbook on the Book of Psalms*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1991), 704.

¹⁸The term for “prince” is מֶלֶךְ and is “applied to leaders in several fields—governmental, military, and religious. The word usually is singular and refers to the man at the top, the king, the high priest, etc.” Leonard J. Coppes, “מֶלֶךְ,” in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament [TWOT]*, ed. R.

When the tribes of Israel gathered to anoint David as king, they said to him, “When Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the Lord said to you, ‘You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel’” (2 Sam 5:2). “Led out” and “brought in” are phrases describing a shepherd’s activities as he leads the flock out to pasture and brings them safely into the fold. The people were acknowledging that though Saul had been their king, he had not been their shepherd. In contrast to Saul, David served as the nation’s shepherd leader before he held the official position of king.

David’s greatest failure as a leader was his adulterous affair with Bathsheba, which, ironically, Nathan exposed as a failure of shepherding when he confronted David (2 Sam 12:1-10). Rather than fulfilling his responsibility to protect the sheep by leading them into battle against their enemies (2 Sam 11:1), he stayed home and sacrificed sheep for his own personal pleasure.¹⁹ David’s failure to be a good shepherd had lingering consequences on his reign and foreshadowed failures yet to come for the nation’s leaders.

In spite of his failures, David was called a man after God’s own heart. He shepherded the people with an “upright heart” and a “skillful hand,” signifying both character and ability in his leadership. Jim VanYperen notes that David’s example shows “God’s design for a shepherd leader combines skill and heart, strength and gentleness.”²⁰ This man after God’s heart, the keeper of sheep, giant-slayer, leader of mighty men (2 Sam 23:8-39), and ruler of a nation exemplifies the true shepherd leader.

Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr. and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 2:550. The literal sense of shepherding is “pasturing or tending.” White writes, “From very ancient antiquity, rulers were described as demonstrating their legitimacy to rule by their ability to ‘pasture’ their people.” William White, “רָעָה” in *TWOT*, 2:853

¹⁹Timothy Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 104.

²⁰Jim Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader* (St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2003), 25.

Israel's Failed Shepherds

As the biblical narrative continues, shepherding remains the primary metaphor for all of Israel's leaders, including her kings, priests, prophets, and elders. Sadly, the record of these shepherd leaders is one of consistent failure resulting in trouble for the flock. They did not provide righteous guidance to the people or protect them from the inevitable consequences of rebelling against God. Rather than tending the flock, the shepherds preyed on the flock. Their legacy was the scattering of the flock of Israel among the nations. Their failure forms the backdrop for God's promise to come and be their shepherd himself. Three Scripture texts illustrate the failure of Israel's shepherds.

Jeremiah 23:1-4. Jeremiah's ministry began during the hopeful years of Josiah's reign, but tragically Jeremiah witnessed the demise of the Davidic monarchy, the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, and the deportation of the people to Babylon. The nation's leaders repudiated Jeremiah's ministry, and he shed many tears over the people's refusal to listen. Jeremiah's harshest words were reserved for the leaders of the nation, the shepherds of Israel. In Jeremiah 23, the prophet pronounced, "'Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!' declares the LORD." The word הוי introduces this oracle of woe, which follows a standard format: announcement of coming distress, citing of reasons for the distress, and the prediction of doom. In his study on the literary genre of woe oracles, Steven Horine notes that the funeral lament is one source of woe oracles and offers this description:

As soon as a death occurs in a home, a death wail is raised that announces to the entire neighborhood the sad event. This ritual of mourning sometimes begins prior to the actual death of the person. . . . In much the same way, the prophets were mourners hired by Yahweh. They were the first on the scene to announce the condition of the ill subject (whether Israel or its leaders) who was about to die. The prophet lets out the first wail (*hoy*) to announce the impending death.²¹

²¹Steven Horine, "A Study of the Literary Genre of the Woe Oracle," *Calvary Baptist Theological Journal* (Fall 1989): 82.

Jeremiah's oracle against the shepherds follows this format. It opens with the announcement of coming distress: "Woe to the shepherds" (v. 1). He was speaking of the leaders of Judah, specifically the kings and those who served in the royal court. Then Jeremiah gave the reason for the coming distress: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them" (v. 2). The leaders had not watched over the flock, shown concern, or helped those under their care. The result was that the flock was scattered and driven away, phrasing that always describes a flock in trouble. Shepherds were responsible to protect the sheep; in fact, it was their primary duty. Wild animals were constant threats to the flock as they could scatter and destroy the flock. Jeremiah accused the shepherds of being the wild animals who were destroying the very ones they were to protect.²² Finally in this woe oracle, Jeremiah predicted doom: "Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds" (v. 2). Because these leaders had not tended the flock, God would tend to the leaders by punishing them. Because they did not shepherd the flock, the flock suffered and God removed the leaders. The reason the kingdom of Judah fell was not only because of the people's sin. Their leaders did not shepherd them.

In the face of judgment, God offered hope to his people, promising to raise up shepherds who would take care of them. God said he would be their shepherd and gather them together as his flock (vv. 2-4). Then he promised to raise up new shepherds. Together, God and these shepherds would care for the sheep the way they needed to be cared for, and as a result, they would "be fruitful and multiply" (v. 3), the description of a thriving flock. In the midst of woe, God offered his people hope that would be realized through faithful shepherds. The sheep would have no need to fear that they would be lost, and the shepherds would not have to fear that they would lose a single sheep.²³

²²Peter C. Craig, Page H. Kelley, and Joel F. Drinkard, Jr., *Jeremiah 1-25*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1991), 326.

²³Craig, Kelley, and Drinkard, *Jeremiah 1-25*, 327.

Ezekiel 34:1-16. Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah, and both ministered to Judah. Like Jeremiah, Ezekiel delivered a stinging rebuke of the nation's leaders for their failure to shepherd the people. His indictment opens with אָהִי, translated "Ah," the word of woe Jeremiah pronounced upon the leaders. His indictment of the leaders in verses 2-6 for their failure offers a picture of what shepherd leaders were supposed to do:

Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts. My sheep were scattered; they wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over all the face of the earth, with none to search or seek for them.

Most commentators identify these unfaithful shepherds as the local Israelite leaders. Some identify them specifically as the kings of Judah.²⁴ Ezekiel pictures the nation as a flock of sheep in trouble and in need. They were weak, wounded, scattered, and wandering. They needed leaders who would strengthen and gather them together. The condition of the flock reveals their need for compassionate, nurturing, protective leaders. They needed shepherds. But these leaders were anything but compassionate, nurturing, and protective. They neglected the flock. They harshly ruled over the flock with brute force. Instead of leading for the good of the flock, they exploited their leadership positions for personal gain. Instead of caring for the sheep, they cared for themselves. Margaret Odell notes that the leaders' quest for power drove "the shepherds to destroy

²⁴Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 282. G. A. Cooke agrees, identifying these shepherds as the contemporary kings of Ezekiel's day. G. A. Cooke, *The Book of Ezekiel*, The International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), 373. An alternate view is that the shepherds are the invading foreign kings; see Margaret S. Odell, *Ezekiel*, Smith & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smith & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 423-33. While Odell's observations are valid, Leslie C. Allen makes the point that the disaster in Israel was more than the invasion of foreign powers. It was a consequence of covenant violation. The responsibility for this failure rested mainly upon the shoulders of Israel's shepherds who failed to shepherd God's flock. Leslie C. Allen, *Ezekiel 20-48*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Publishers, 1990), 155-65.

what [had] been entrusted to them.”²⁵ The abuse of their positions scattered the sheep, drove them into the mouths of predators, and was nothing less than what Daniel Block calls “gross malpractice.”²⁶ While it is true that the people’s disobedience brought God’s judgment, it is equally true that the failure of the shepherds to protect the people by guiding them according to the ways of the Lord also brought the judgment of the Lord upon the nation.

Once again, in the midst of the leaders’ failure, the Lord promised that he himself would shepherd his people and do what their leaders had failed to do. God promised to “feed them with good pasture . . . rich pasture . . . and make them lie down” (vv. 14-15). He promised to “seek the lost . . . bring back the strayed . . . bind up the injured, and . . . strengthen the weak” (v. 16). In the face of failed leadership, God assured his people, “I will be your shepherd.” Block observes a paradigm for New Testament pastoral ministry emerging from this text:

Ministers serve their congregations as shepherds under God. They are neither self-appointed nor engaged primarily by the flock; ministers are first and foremost servants of God, called to divine, not personal service. The flock they serve is God’s flock, not theirs. For the sake of the ministry they have to be viewed as *primi inter pares*, especially in their responsibility to nurture and care for the people. But the exploitation of the congregation for personal advantage provokes the ire of the divine Shepherd. Even the Messiah comes to serve, to seek and to save that which was lost.²⁷

Ezekiel’s condemnation of Israel’s leaders makes clear that the leaders of God’s people are called to shepherd those they lead.

Matthew 23. The responsibility of Israel’s leaders to shepherd the people continues in the Gospels, as does the failure of the nation’s leaders to do so. The failure of Israel’s leaders stirred the compassion of Jesus who saw the crowds of people as

²⁵Odell, *Ezekiel*, 433.

²⁶Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 283.

²⁷Block, *The Book of Ezekiel*, 308-09.

“harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36). Laniak notes, “The phrase ‘sheep without a shepherd’ suggests a people without a king, or an army without a commander.”²⁸ Five centuries after Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Israel still did not have leaders who faithfully shepherded the people.

The failure of Israel’s shepherd leaders is the focus of Jesus’ censure in Matthew 23. In this chapter, he warns the people about the scribes and Pharisees and pronounced seven woes upon them. The scribes and Pharisees were part of Israel’s religious leadership. Jesus described them as “seated in the chair of Moses” (v. 2), an affirmation of their expert knowledge of the Law. They were “walking copies of the Law.”²⁹ Jesus told the crowds to “do and observe whatever they tell you” (v. 2), but he warned the people not to follow the example of these leaders because they did not practice what they taught. He denounced them as hypocrites and thus untrustworthy as leaders. Though they did not engage in the same idolatrous and immoral practices of their forefathers, Israel’s leaders during Jesus’ ministry continued to neglect the needs of the flock, and, like their predecessors, were driven by personal ambition and greed.

The woes Jesus pronounced against the leaders are in the form of prophetic lamentation signifying that the state of these leaders was miserable.³⁰ The woes echo Jeremiah and Ezekiel and place the scribes and Pharisees in the succession of Israel’s failed leadership. Jesus described the leaders as “blind guides” (vv. 16, 24; cf. vv. 17, 19), signifying their inability to provide shepherding guidance to the flock of Israel. Speaking earlier in Matthew of the leaders’ blindness, Jesus warned his disciples that the leaders were heading toward disaster as well as all who followed them (15:14). Jim

²⁸Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 185.

²⁹John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2005), 923.

³⁰Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 467.

Nolland observes, “The idea of the blind leading the blind is proverbial. The question of whose lead to follow is a pressing one for ordinary people who inevitably follow the trail of some set of leaders or other. The challenge of the proverb is to choose wisely those whose lead one is prepared to follow.”³¹ In Jesus’ fifth woe (v. 25), he accused the leaders of being greedy and self-indulgent, demonstrated by how they cheated widows out of their property (Mark 12:40). As was true of previous generations, these shepherd leaders preyed on the sheep. The resemblance of these leaders to their predecessors is evident in Jesus’ final woe against them: “You witness against yourselves that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets” (v. 31). Whereas their forefathers murdered faithful shepherds, namely the true prophets, these leaders would soon murder the shepherd promised and sent by God to rescue and care for his people. In their hearts, the shepherd leaders during Jesus’ ministry were just like those in the days of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. The failure of these leaders to shepherd brought disastrous results on the people.

The Ideal Shepherd

The failure of Israel’s leaders to shepherd the nation set the stage for the arrival of the shepherd promised by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Matthew’s Gospel connects Jesus to the Old Testament promise of a coming leader who would shepherd God’s people (Matt 2:6; Mic 5:2). When Jesus announced that he was the “good shepherd” (John 10:11, 14) he was claiming to be that promised shepherd. Jesus’ criticism of Israel’s leaders throughout his ministry echoed Ezekiel’s indictment of the leaders who neglected the sheep, slaughtered them, and left them as prey to the wild beasts.³² When Jesus warned about thieves, robbers, and hirelings he was describing the religious leaders who were supposed to be Israel’s shepherds. In contrast to these false shepherds who led for selfish

³¹Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 623.

³²See John Paul Heil, “Ezekiel 34 and the Narrative Strategy of the Shepherd and Sheep Metaphor in Matthew,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 55 (1993): 698-708.

reasons, Jesus proved himself to be the good shepherd who sacrificed for the sheep (John 10:11). Whereas the hirelings ran away in the face of danger, Jesus would risk his life to search for one lost sheep (Luke 15:3-7). The well-being of individual sheep mattered as much to this shepherd as the whole flock.

As the good shepherd, Jesus is the genuine shepherd, the model of what a true shepherd leader is and does.³³ Jesus brings nourishment and healing to the sheep in contrast to the religious leaders who judged them and laid heavy burdens upon them. The hired hands have no relationship with the sheep, whereas the good shepherd leads from a personal relationship (John 10:3, 4) and is recognized by his voice. He knows his sheep and calls them by name, which, D. A. Carson notes, “at least means he calls them individually” (John 10:3, 4, 14, 27).³⁴ Jesus is neither a distant nor impersonal leader. As a shepherd, he lives among the sheep and involves himself personally in their lives. The good shepherd demonstrates that leading sheep does not only happen from the front of the flock. Kinnison observes the personal involvement of shepherds when he writes that shepherds “move ‘before,’ ‘within,’ and ‘behind’ the flock, depending on the need.”³⁵ While the shepherd is attentive to the whole flock, the value of the individual is demonstrated by a shepherd “who lives with the sheep [and] . . . knows each sheep by name; he nurtures the young, bandages the wounded, cares for the weak, and protects them all.”³⁶ Unlike the shepherds who lead the sheep for personal gain or abandon them in the face of danger, Jesus, the good shepherd, was willing to give his own life for

³³Gerald L. Borchert, *John 1–11*, The New American Commentary, vol. 25A (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 333. Jesus is the “good” shepherd in the sense of being the ideal model of a shepherd who is to be emulated. See also Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 211.

³⁴D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 382.

³⁵Kinnison, “Shepherd or One of the Sheep,” 68.

³⁶Lynn Anderson, *They Smell Like Sheep* (West Monroe, LA: Howard Publishing Company, 1997), 4.

them.³⁷ The welfare of the flock was of utmost importance to him. Jesus showed that shepherd leadership is neither self-promoting nor self-protecting and that a shepherd leads for the sake of the sheep, not the shepherd. According to the model of the good shepherd, self-interested leadership is not leadership at all. Compassion pervades the shepherding of Jesus and characterizes good leadership. Jesus showed that to shepherd was to serve the flock. As the “great shepherd of the sheep” (Heb 13:20) and the “Shepherd and Overseer” of souls (1 Pet 2:25), he is the “chief shepherd” whom all shepherds serve (1 Pet 5:4). Shepherd leaders understand that before serving as shepherds, they themselves are sheep; before being leaders, they themselves are followers. Jesus is head over all shepherds; as the good shepherd he is the model every shepherd leader is to emulate.

Shepherds in the Church

The model leadership of Jesus not only contrasts with that of the failed leaders of his day and previous generations but also sets an example for those who follow him. In the wake of the failure of Israel’s shepherds, God promised to give his people “shepherds after my own heart who will feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jer 3:15). Not only would the Good Shepherd Jesus gather and lead the flock, but he also would appoint other shepherds to do the same and gather the other sheep not of the fold of Israel (John 10:16). The “other sheep” refers to Gentile believers who will be brought into the fold with the birth of the church.³⁸ Oden rightly observes that Christian

³⁷George R. Beasley-Murray, *John*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), 170. Beasley-Murray suggests that the comparison between the good shepherd and the hireling invites translating τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν as “*risks* his life for the sheep.”

³⁸Alternate views of the “other” sheep see them as unbelieving Jews living in the land who would later believe, Jews of the diaspora living outside of the land, and the Christian diaspora of the late first century. See Borchert, *John 1-11*, 335.

leadership is properly regarded “as a continuation of Christ’s own ministry.”³⁹ That ministry was carried on first by the Apostles who then passed it on to local church elders.

The Apostles

Jesus prepared his disciples to be shepherd leaders. The call and commissioning of Jesus’ disciples in Matthew 10 came in response to the compassion he felt for the shepherdless crowds (Matt 9:36). He commissioned his disciples with the shepherding task of searching for lost sheep (Matt. 10:6; cf. Ezek 34:6, 8, 16), warning them that he was sending them out as sheep among wolves (Matt 10:16). The shepherding role of the apostles was one of spiritual authority demonstrated by their performance of miracles and preaching the gospel (10:1, 7, 8). Their assignment carried personal risk (10:16-23), but the Good Shepherd promised to reward their faithfulness (10:40-42).

These shepherds-in-training experienced tragic failure on the night of Jesus’ arrest. When their shepherd was struck, they scattered like sheep (Matt 26:31). One betrayed Jesus, another denied him, and all of them abandoned him. This failure forms the backdrop for one of Jesus’ post-resurrection meetings with his disciples at which he particularly recommissioned Peter (John 21:15-17). Jesus had previously appeared to Peter, but this encounter was Jesus’ follow-up to Peter’s denials, a failure that broke Peter (Luke 21:61-62). Peter’s restoration reveals that the core motivation for shepherding people is love for God. In response to Peter’s three-fold declaration of love, Jesus gave a three-fold shepherding commission to feed (βόσκω) his lambs and tend (ποιμαίνω) his sheep, which together describe the fullness of Peter’s assignment.⁴⁰ With the tenderness

³⁹Oden, *Pastoral Theology*, 59.

⁴⁰Andreas Kostenberger, *John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 597. Raymond Brown concurs: “Those who feed [*boskein*] supply nourishment . . . but those who tend [*poimainein*] have the power of rulers. . . Combined, the two verbs express the fullness of the pastoral task assigned to Peter.” Raymond Brown, *The Gospel According to John* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, 1970), 1105.

of a shepherd, the Chief Shepherd restored his fallen disciple and commissioned him to be a shepherd to the flock that would be entrusted to his care.

Commentators debate whether this shepherding commission was uniquely Peter's or for all the apostles. There are several reasons to see this shepherding commission as applying to more than Peter alone. First, six of the remaining eleven apostles are identified as present on this occasion.⁴¹ Second, Peter was not the only disciple who abandoned Jesus; Matthew indicates they all did (Matt 26:56). According to the gospel accounts, Peter and John are the only two disciples who are present in the story after Jesus' arrest in the garden. Peter was the only one specifically accused of being a follower of Jesus, which precipitated his denials. Of all the disciples, Peter was the most vocal in his pledge of loyalty to Christ, though the other disciples affirmed theirs as well (Matt 26:35). Third, Peter emerged as a leader of the apostles, making it all the more necessary for Jesus to specifically address Peter's failure in order to re-establish his leadership among the apostles and the church. It is appropriate to see Peter in John 21 "as representing the apostles . . . a first among equals."⁴² Finally, subsequent New Testament texts echo the commission of Jesus and apply it beyond Peter himself. Peter's exhortation to the elders in his first epistle basically cites the word Jesus spoke to him (1 Pet 5:2). This recommissioning of Peter and the other apostles carries forward the shepherding model for the leadership of God's people.

Local Church Elders

As the church spread into new territories, local assemblies were organized, and leadership was entrusted to local church elders. On his first missionary journey, Paul

⁴¹Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John (sons of Zebedee), and two unnamed others (John 21:2). John Lange surmises that the two unnamed disciples are Andrew, the brother of Peter, and Philip, the friend of Nathanael. John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, vol.6, ed. Philip Schaff (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 630.

⁴²Beasley-Murray, *John*, 406. Here he is quoting the general perspective of Protestants regarding Peter's commission which contrasts with that of Roman Catholic teaching.

appointed elders to provide spiritual guidance to the churches he and Barnabas planted (Acts 14:23), and he encouraged the churches “to recognize and respect their leaders.”⁴³ On his final journey to Jerusalem, Paul called the Ephesian church elders together (Acts 20:17), giving further evidence that Paul’s method of planting churches included appointing leaders who were responsible to shepherd and guide the churches.⁴⁴ When Paul left Titus in Crete, he instructed him to “appoint elders in every town” (Titus 1:5). In his first epistle, Peter specifically addressed the elders, recognizing them as leaders in the churches (1 Pet 5:1) who were distinguished by their spiritual maturity and ability to provide spiritual guidance and protection to the church.

Paul’s farewell speech to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20:17-35 gives insight as to how churches would carry on the ministry entrusted to them when the apostles were no longer present.⁴⁵ At the heart of Paul’s exhortation to these leaders was a command to be faithful shepherds: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Paul’s description of the congregation as the “church of God” is reminiscent of the Old Testament’s description of Israel as the people of God and provides continuity to the leadership of God’s people into the present age. As overseers (ἐπίσκοπος) appointed by the Holy Spirit, the elders were to shepherd (ποιμαίνειν) the church of God. Those whom Luke refers to as “elders” (v. 17), Paul calls “overseers” (v. 28) who are to “shepherd” the flock. The New Testament does not make a distinction between the elder, overseer, and shepherd; these all refer to one office. Thus, the oversight exercised by elders should be understood to be the responsibility of shepherding.

⁴³Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 280.

⁴⁴Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 626.

⁴⁵Bock, *Acts*, 623.

In Ephesians 4:11-18, Paul reveals that Jesus gave gifts to his church. These gifts are particular people identified as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Christ has given these gifted people to the church for its edification. In this passage, edification includes equipping the saints for the work of ministry, which in turn leads them to maturity in Christ. This task is accomplished through the teaching and leadership of these gifted ministers.⁴⁶ Some scholars distinguish between the pastor (ποιμήν) and the teacher (διδάσκαλος), while others see these two as comprising one gifted group of people (pastor-teachers). For example, Richard Lenski concludes that the τοὺς δέ preceding “pastors and teachers” make the two refer to one group of people whom he identifies as church elders.⁴⁷ Peter O’Brien, who distinguishes between the two groups, also identifies pastors with overseers and elders who are responsible to lead the church, but he does not see the two groups as identical. Though pastors and teachers had overlapping responsibilities, teachers were a distinct group.⁴⁸ John Lange explains the differentiation between the two when he writes,

The ποιμένες (a term probably including ἐπίσκοποι and πρεσβύτεροι) might be and perhaps always were διδάσκαλοι, but it does not follow that the converse was true. The χάρισμα of κυβέρνησις is so distinct from that of διδασκαλία, that it seems necessary to recognize in the διδάσκαλοι a body of men (scarcely a distinct class) who had the gift of διδαχή, but who were not invested with any administrative powers and authority.⁴⁹

The pastor is a teacher and teaching is a primary responsibility of the pastor-elder-bishop. However, teaching is not the essence of pastoring. Pastoring requires leading a

⁴⁶Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians*, The Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books Publisher, 1990), 254.

⁴⁷R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians* (Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937), 528.

⁴⁸Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 300.

⁴⁹John Peter Lange, *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, vol. 8, ed. Philip Schaff (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 150.

congregation, and teaching is a vital part of that. As a person given as a gift to the church, the pastor, in the technical usage of that term, is both a teacher and a leader.

Peter's exhortation to the elders in 1 Peter 5:1-2 reinforces the continuation of shepherding as the model for church leaders: "shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight" (1 Pet 5:2). Where Paul refers to the people of God as the "church of God," Peter calls them the "flock of God." Just as Paul exhorted the elders to exercise shepherding oversight of the flock, so Peter called the elders to the same duty. Philip Ryken asserts, "God's plan was to place the church under the care of shepherds."⁵⁰ God's expectation regarding the leadership of his people is clear: local church elders—the overseers—are to shepherd God's people. Oversight and leadership in the New Testament church are modeled after the shepherd.

The Need to Develop Shepherd Leaders

God's promise to give his people "shepherds after my own heart" (Jer 3:15) is partially fulfilled today as shepherds are raised up to lead local churches. The need for faithful shepherd leaders is no less today than it was in the days of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the first-century church. This section will examine how the nature and identity of the church call for a shepherding approach to leadership. Mistaken perceptions of the local church yield flawed conceptions of what church leadership should be. Next, this section will examine the emphasis in the Pastoral Epistles on the need to continually raise up leaders who provide, protect, and guide God's people through the perilous times in which they live.

⁵⁰Philip Graham Ryken, *City on a Hill: Reclaiming the Biblical Pattern for the Church* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2003), 98.

The Nature and Identity of the Church

The nature of the church is unique. It is an assembly of people called out of the world by the grace of God through the redemption of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. The church is the Bride of Christ (Rev 21:9; cf. Eph 5:25-30) and the Body of Christ (Eph 1:23; 4:12; 5:30; 1 Cor 12:12-27). The Holy Spirit indwells the church (1 Cor 3:16; 2 Tim 1:14), and his baptizing work brings members into mystical union with Christ and believers (1 Cor 12:13). This mystical union creates a family birthed by the Holy Spirit, purchased and cleansed by the blood of Christ, and all related to the Father. As such, the church is a living organism; its essence is organic and not mechanistic. It is a body, not a business. The church is a community, not a corporation, regardless the legal obligations.⁵¹ The leadership God raises up for this unique entity is that which is conducive to the organic, relational nature of the church. Shepherding is the model of that leadership.

The present identity of the church is that of pilgrims, travelers who are not yet home. Shepherding was a nomadic way of life marked by the continual change of “constant movement, constant growth [as a] shepherd and flock are always growing, always moving toward fresh pasture and water.”⁵² Shepherding is most often portrayed by idyllic scenes of sheep grazing in lush pastures by still waters under the attentive watch of the shepherd. However, shepherding was a life on the move, wrought with danger, changing conditions, requiring constant forethought in order to meet the needs of the sheep, and alertness to protect the sheep against all danger at any cost.

The primitive church in the New Testament was more like nomadic flocks of sheep moving under the care of shepherds than like today’s settled and civilized societies

⁵¹E. Glenn Wagner contends that churches have been busy creating corporations rather than true communities and the way back to community is through shepherd leadership. E. Glenn Wagner, *Escape from Church, Inc.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999).

⁵²Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader*, 16.

that depend on the efficient management skills of corporate executives. Shepherd leadership fits the nomadic nature of the church. Laniak describes the church as “pilgrim tent-dwellers, living on the margins of settled society [being led] to their eternal home.”⁵³ The New Testament describes God’s people as outsiders, living as aliens on earth, whose leaders are “called to shepherd God’s flock in a world that is not their ultimate home.”⁵⁴ This perception of the church challenges the tendency of churches to become established institutions. Churches in regions hostile to the Christian faith may have a greater appreciation for their outsider status than churches existing in societies where they feel at home. Churches of worldly affluence and power run the risk of becoming self-sufficient and individualistic, both of which diminish a nomadic consciousness for the need of shepherding leadership.⁵⁵

The social status of shepherds in New Testament times is debated. Shepherds appear to have been despised by the aristocratic class of that day who viewed them as low-class, vulgar laborers.⁵⁶ The lower social status of shepherds may be inferred by their inclusion with other unlikely classes of people in Jesus’ birth narrative, evidence of Luke’s interest in the “dramatic reversal of power and privilege.”⁵⁷ Shepherds, like unwed mothers, barren women, and elderly widows, were not among the esteemed of society. Most shepherds were not owners of the flocks they tended. They were hired laborers, some serving as village shepherds who watched over the sheep of several owners. Even in the first century, shepherds appear to have existed on the margins of a

⁵³Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 23.

⁵⁴Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 87.

⁵⁵Jesus rebuked the Laodicean church in Rev 4:17, “You say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing,’ not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.” Their affluence deceived them so they did not see themselves as straying sheep, and thus they had no sense of need for a shepherd. Wealth and power can have that effect on churches and their leaders.

⁵⁶Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 290.

⁵⁷Laniak, *Shepherds after My Own Heart*, 197.

society that was much more civilized and urbanized than that of the nomadic family clans of the patriarchal era. As culture pushes the church to the fringes of contemporary society, and as the church loses power and privilege, the need for shepherd leaders will increase. Additionally, the dehumanized, mechanistic, shortsighted spirit of this age makes shepherding a refreshing leadership model.⁵⁸

Leadership Succession in the Pastoral Epistles

One of the great concerns addressed in the Pastoral Epistles is the ongoing need to develop leaders in the church. Several factors drive this need, including both the responsibility of church leaders as well as the temporary tenure of their service. These factors will be examined. Then the responsibility of church leaders to raise up new leaders will be addressed.

The need for leadership succession. Timothy and Titus served as Paul's official delegates, representing him in the congregations to which he sent them.⁵⁹ At some time during his missionary activities, Paul visited Crete. Whether or not he started the churches on that island is unclear. What is clear is that the work had not been completed so Paul left Titus in Crete to "put what remained into order" (Titus 1:5). The language suggests that there were unfinished tasks as well as issues to be straightened out.⁶⁰ The most pressing need was to appoint elders in the churches established in many towns on the island. The completion of this task was especially important because the

⁵⁸McCormick and Davenport, *Shepherd Leadership*, 4.

⁵⁹Richard C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians, to the Thessalonians, to Timothy, to Titus and to Philemon, Commentary on the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1937), 481, 887.

⁶⁰Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 678-79. "Put in order" (ἐπιδιορθῶ) conveys the sense straightening out, amending, or reforming. "What remained" (λείποντα): to leave behind, to be deficient.

influence of false teachers was growing in the churches. Elders were responsible to provide sound teaching and warn the church against the opponents of the gospel (Titus 1:10-16).⁶¹

False teachers were also threatening the church in Ephesus, which is why Paul sent Timothy there (1 Tim 1:3). Shepherd leaders are protectors, and Paul sent Timothy to protect the flock from false teaching. Israel's shepherds had failed to protect the people from false prophets, and, as a result, the nation embraced idolatry. Churches in ancient and modern times face the same threat. Timothy was in Ephesus to confront the chaos false teachers were creating.⁶² Paul had warned the Ephesian elders earlier: "fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them" (Acts 20:29-30). Evidently, the elders did not heed his warning or fulfill their role to protect. Consequently, the gospel was at risk of being lost, threatening the vitality of the church.

Surrounded by the threat of false teaching, Timothy received this charge from Paul: "What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Tim 2:2). What Timothy had "heard" from Paul was the gospel in its fullness. The "many witnesses" were all the Christians, including Timothy, who heard the gospel from Paul.⁶³ It was this gospel that

⁶¹I. Howard Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T & T International, 1999), 145-46.

⁶²However, Timothy Johnson asserts, "We are not told where Timothy is at the time of writing." Luke Timothy Johnson, *Letters to Paul's Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New Testament in Context (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 37. Marshall puts the recipients of the Pastoral Epistles in Ephesus and Crete. Marshall, *Pastoral Epistles*, 55. Knight agrees, citing 2 Tim 1:18 and 4:19 for support. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 7.

⁶³William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 506. There is some debate as to whether the witnesses are this large group of Christians who sat under Paul's teaching in the many places to which he traveled, or if the witnesses are a narrow group, i.e. the "eldership" who participated in Timothy's commissioning (1 Tim 4:14; 6:12, 20; 2 Tim 1:6, 14). Towner sees this second scenario as reasonable, but points out that the emphasis rests upon the apostolic origin of the message and thus its authenticity to which many can attest. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490.

Paul had earlier commanded Timothy to guard as a deposit entrusted to him (1 Tim 1:13), and it was this gospel deposited with him that Timothy was to entrust to others.

The gospel is a sacred trust to be preserved in all its purity, at any cost. Entrusting the gospel to future leaders is essential to preserving it. Since guardianship of the gospel is essential to the health of the church, leaders must not only profess the gospel and live by the gospel, they must also be able to teach and defend the gospel. Shepherd leaders must be grounded in God's truth and equipped to pass it on to others. The inability to do so is like a shepherd who does not know how to provide for or protect the sheep under his care. Of all the duties church leaders perform, none is more important than preserving and passing on the gospel. Oden affirms that though

it is God and not our own educational efforts who finally ensures the continuity of the Christian tradition . . . it is perilous to rest passively in that thought. Paul viewed it as an urgent matter to motivate Timothy to enable this orderly transmission. What Paul delivered to Timothy, Timothy must deliver to others of unforeseeable times and places. The deposit entrusted to Paul must be guarded and passed on to those who would ensure its accurate, uncorrupted transmission.⁶⁴

The *sine qua non* of church leadership is not the achievement of grand visions. Rather, it is safeguarding the sacred gospel trust. Preserving this trust is not just a defensive activity because the gospel is in itself transformative. The gospel advances in power, but to do so, it must be preserved in its purity. Shepherding leaders must be immersed in the gospel so that it can form their character, shape their teaching, and direct their activities. To lose the gospel is to fail in the mission, which will scatter the sheep.

New leaders must always be developed because present leaders cannot lead forever. Paul was preparing to die as he wrote 2 Timothy. His letter was part of his hand-off to Timothy, whose ministry would become even more urgent with Paul's departure from this life.⁶⁵ It is not death alone that takes away leaders; abandonment does so as

⁶⁴Thomas C. Oden, *First and Second Timothy and Titus*, Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989), 162.

⁶⁵Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 79.

well. Many of Paul's colleagues and followers abandoned him. He named Hymenaeus, Alexander, Philetus, Phygelos, Hermogenes, Demas, and "all who are in Asia," describing their behavior as shipwrecked faith (1 Tim 1:20) and swerving from the truth. Their abandonment was "upsetting the faith of some" (2 Tim 2:17-18). Nearing the end of his life, these desertions were disheartening to Paul.

Death and defection were not the only issues causing churches to lose leaders; reassignment also contributed. Timothy would soon leave Ephesus to join Paul in Rome (2 Tim 1:4; 4:9, 21). Timothy's departure from Ephesus meant someone needed to take over for him since it would not be a temporary absence. Paul's request for Timothy to join him was an invitation to "share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 2:3), meaning Timothy's freedom and life would be at risk. Like Paul, Timothy's leadership would eventually come to an end.⁶⁶ He needed to prepare others who could carry on in his place.

The defection in Ephesus, the departure of Timothy from Ephesus to join Paul, the desertions in Asia and Rome, and Paul's imminent execution meant "the church leadership ranks were being depleted, and the itinerant Pauline mission was in danger of grinding to a halt."⁶⁷ The command to raise up new leaders was necessary to ensure the continuation of the Pauline mission. New leaders will always be needed because current leaders will eventually depart and the mission will need to continue. Derek Tidball offers this insight on Paul's leadership:

Great leaders do not always serve well those who follow them. They are sometimes so confident in their own abilities and so unaware that they will be on the scene only temporarily that they pay no attention to preparing others to step into their shoes . . . Paul . . . had proved himself not only to be a faithful leader but a wise one in looking to the future and fully preparing the next generation of leaders so that they

⁶⁶Lenski observes that at the time of Paul's second arrest, Christianity had become an illegal religion and "its propagation became a crime against the state." Lenski, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians*, 474.

⁶⁷Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*, 490-91.

would be ready when he and the other original apostles had left the scene. His concern for them was a rounded one. He was concerned about their achieving the task, but was even more concerned about the kind of people they were.”⁶⁸

The responsibility for leadership succession. The threat of leaders who do not guard the gospel entrusted to them and the inevitable departure of leaders from within the church require the constant development of shepherding leaders. Kenneth Gangel writes, “We live in a culture that is crying out for effective leaders . . . in business, government, education and even in the church.”⁶⁹ From where do such leaders come for the church? Paul’s instruction to Timothy answers that question: “entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Tim 2:2). The focus of this admonition is not on Paul or Timothy for both will soon be gone. The focus is on the faithful men and the others they will teach. If the gospel is to be preserved and proclaimed, if new leaders are going to emerge, and if the mission of the church is going to advance, faithful men must raise up other men into leadership.⁷⁰

The faithful men Paul has in view are most likely church elders.⁷¹ They are men who have believed the gospel and thus will be reliable in teaching it (see 1 Tim 1:3-4). Their faithfulness “has more to do with dependability in relation to the apostolic

⁶⁸Derek Tidball, *Ministry by the Book: New Testament Patterns for Pastoral Leadership* (Nottingham, England: Apollos, 2008), 148-149.

⁶⁹Kenneth Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997), 7.

⁷⁰The call to raise up “men” does not exclude women from training or from carrying out appropriate leadership roles in the church. In the New Testament both women and men are equipped. Mounce asserts that the faithful men in 2 Tim 2:2 were men because their task was to teach, which he understands to be teaching the whole church which women were forbidden to do (1 Tim. 2:12; cf. 1 Cor. 14:34ff.). Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 391.

⁷¹This assertion is supported by several factors: (1) Paul’s practice to appoint elders in all the churches he organized (Acts 14:23); (2) his instruction to Titus to do the same in the churches in all the towns in Crete (Titus 1:5); (3) his listing of the qualifications for these men to both Timothy and Titus (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9); (4) his singling out this group in the church and giving instruction regarding properly honoring and caring for them (1 Tim 5:17-22); and (5) the exhortation to these faithful men to teach others; and (6) the ability to teach being one of the qualifications of an elder (1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 2:24). Knight writes, “Since the task committed to these faithful ones is that of teaching others also, it is certain that they are the same group of whom Paul wrote in 1 Timothy, the presbyters who ‘work hard in word and teaching’ (5:17), and also in Titus, the presbyters/overseers who are ‘holding fast the faithful word that is in accordance with the teaching’ so that they are ‘able both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict’ (1:9).” Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 391.

teaching (in contrast to that of the heretics), loyalty to Christ and Paul (in contrast to those who had abandoned him), and commitment to fulfill what one has promised to do (cf. 2:13; 1 Tim 1:12).⁷² These faithful men are like soldiers who are attentive to their commanding officer, athletes who compete according to the rules of the game, and hard-working farmers who patiently tend the crops until the harvest comes (2 Tim 2:4-6). The overseers and deacons described in 1 Timothy 3:1-13 are faithful men.⁷³ The faithful men who are to teach others are men who are willing to learn to teach because teaching is how they will raise up the next generation of leaders. The shepherds and teachers that Christ gives to his church are faithful men whose goal is to bring others to maturity. As the era of the Apostles drew to a close, the responsibility to preserve and pass on the gospel by raising up new leaders was transferred to elders, the shepherd leaders of the church. The apostles or their delegates would not be leading the churches. Elders would now carry out this duty.⁷⁴

Leadership succession in 2 Timothy 2:2 also involves others (ἑτέροις) who are differentiated from the faithful men. The aim is that these others will become like the faithful men. “Others” could refer to more men but more likely refers generally to the instruction of the church as a whole.⁷⁵ Teaching others anticipates outward growth in ministry and the multiplication of disciples and leaders.⁷⁶ Faithful pastors are responsible

⁷²Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 491.

⁷³Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 506.

⁷⁴Lenski astutely observes, "This is the true apostolic succession of the ministry: not an uninterrupted line of hands laid on which extends back to the apostles themselves so that all ordinations which are not in that line are null and void; but a succession of true apostolic doctrine, the deposit of what we still hear from Paul in his writings, this held by us in faithful hearts with competency to teach others the same things. The apostle did not evidently expect the future teachers of the church to produce new or different teaching." Lenski, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Colossians*, 778-79.

⁷⁵Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 507. The ambiguity of “others” as distinct from the faithful men points to the responsibility to pass along the gospel to the whole of the church but with the intent that from among the whole emerge those who will in time become faithful men themselves.

⁷⁶Towner, *Timothy and Titus*, 491.

to raise up, from among ordinary men, faithful men who will lead in the extraordinary task of preserving and propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ, the end result of which will be the multiplication of disciples.

Paul charged Timothy to personally and intentionally develop leaders who could do for others what Paul had done for Timothy. Jesus modeled this practice, as did Paul, who now instructs Timothy to give attention to developing new leaders. Church leadership does not concern itself with the preservation of one's position or the advancement of one's personal agenda. Rather, it concentrates on preparing others to take over and advance the mission. Paul passed the torch to Timothy, Timothy was to pass that torch to others who were to pass it to others. Today, those faithful men are the shepherding leaders of the church who are called to train the next generation. As Neil Cole observes, "Christian leadership is not about having a more compelling vision and larger-than-life goals. . . . It is a race to empower and exalt as many people above yourself that you can in your short lifetime."⁷⁷ Faithful shepherd leaders must continuously be raised up for the advance of the gospel and the building up of the church.

Conclusion

The church needs leaders, but not any kind of leader is suitable to lead in the church. The church needs shepherd leaders like Moses, David, and Paul. The church needs leaders who follow the example of Jesus, the good shepherd and ideal leader. Shepherding flows from the heart of God. It is the model for leadership throughout the Bible, and it sums up the responsibility of church leaders to this day. Thus, it is the kind of leaders churches need to be nurturing.

Shepherding projects a calming image of leadership that can be comforting and reassuring in today's chaotic and uncertain world. Shepherding concerns itself with the

⁷⁷Neil Cole, *Organic Leadership: Leading Naturally Right Where You Are* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), 195.

care of souls, which is very much needed in this depersonalized age. Shepherd leadership is not passive but proactive. Though it is gentle, it is firm. While shepherds focus on the individual, they do not lose sight of their responsibility to lead the whole flock. Shepherds lead, but they seek to consciously lead God's way. Developing this kind of leader, who will be able to reproduce others like himself, is essential to guarding the well-being of the church and multiplying its effectiveness in the world.

CHAPTER 3

A PORTRAIT OF SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP

Introduction

The previous chapter argued that shepherd leadership is the recognized model for church leadership based on examples and instructions in both the Old and New Testaments. This chapter will offer a portrait of the shepherd leader based on scriptural illustrations and findings from leadership research. First, shepherd leadership will be defined. Then, the shepherd leader will be described by focusing on his or her character, abilities, and responsibilities. Since shepherd leadership is an example of servant leadership, an overview of the theory of servant leadership will be included in the description of the shepherd leader.

Defining Shepherd Leadership

It is difficult to simply define shepherd leadership, just as it is difficult to simply define leadership in general. Peter Northouse defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”¹ His definition frames leadership as a *process* of influence. Wesley Feltner’s definition, on the other hand, frames leadership as the *ability* to influence: “the ability to impact or inspire others by serving them and empowering them in order to accomplish a vision.”² Both recognize leadership as consisting of a group of more than one person (i.e., a leader

¹Peter Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice*, 6th ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2013), 5.

²Wesley Feltner, “Introduction to Leadership” (class lecture presented at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, May 2014).

and at least one follower), the impact of influence upon the group, and the pursuit of a shared purpose by the group. The interrelationship between process and ability, combined with the dynamics of impact, inspiration, service, empowerment, and achievement demonstrate that the concept of leadership is complex and multidimensional.³ Leadership is impacted by subjective, unpredictable, contextual, cultural, personal, inter-personal, and positional issues making simplistic definitions inadequate.⁴ For example, the popular concept of leadership as influence is good, but it does not explain how that influence happens. Peter Drucker insisted that “the only definition of leadership is someone who has followers.” But his definition does not begin to explain how someone gains followers.

Concrete illustrations offer insights into leadership that word definitions and theoretical models do not. Writing on shepherd leadership, Blaine McCormick appeals to the arts for rich insights into leadership. He illustrates his point from Emanuel Leutze’s painting of *George Washington Crossing the Delaware*. Observing four historical inaccuracies in the painting, McCormick notes the purpose of the artist was not to record history but to provide a portrait of leadership. He then proceeds to offer several practical observations of leadership illustrated in the painting.⁵ Likewise, Bernard Bass maintains that since leadership is both an art and a science, the humanities, the arts, and the social sciences have complementary roles in explaining leadership. What these two authors are asserting is that one can learn leadership by studying history, drama, literature, and the visual arts.⁶ In this vein, shepherd leadership is a concept of leadership drawn primarily

³Northouse, *Leadership*, 1.

⁴Feltner, “Introduction to Leadership.”

⁵Blaine McCormick, “The Leader as Shepherd,” *Executive Excellence* 21, no. 2 (February 2004): 3-5.

⁶Bernard Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*, 4th ed. (New York: Free Press, 2008), 77.

from the study of history and literature. Correlated with the scientific studies of leadership, shepherd leadership emerges as a robust model for effective leadership in many spheres, but especially in the church. One can argue that the shepherd is the best model for effective church leadership.

As an example of leadership, shepherd leadership is simply leadership that uses the character and work of a shepherd as a pattern. No matter how one chooses to define leadership, shepherd leadership describes the process and the abilities in terms of how a good shepherd tends sheep. Shepherd leadership, then, is impacting, inspiring, serving, and empowering others in a manner modeled by the shepherd. Shepherd leadership is a way of thinking embedded in the mind, heart, and attitude of a leader. It is leadership that flows from one's inner being.⁷ Shepherd leadership is not a style of leadership one puts on or takes off at will according to the situation he or she may be facing. Shepherd leadership flows from one whose heart, head, hands, and habits are formed by the example of a shepherd.

Describing the Shepherd Leader

Shepherding provides a holistic example of leadership. The example of the shepherd contributes more to a biblical and practical understanding of Christian leadership than any leadership theory. Though shepherding has been a metaphor for leadership for millennia, scholarly research on shepherd leadership is negligible. Nearly everything written on the topic comes from Christian scholars and practitioners, which is not surprising since the Bible is the primary source on the subject.⁸ While shepherding is

⁷Blaine McCormick and David Davenport, *Shepherd Leadership: Wisdom for Leaders from Psalm 23* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 5.

⁸In his PhD dissertation, James Swalm states that his research did not find any studies on shepherd leadership based on sources other than what is found in the Bible, and that the studies he found were in a non-scholarly format. He also stated that he was unaware of any validated instrument that had been developed and used for assessing shepherd leadership in an individual. James E. Swalm, Jr. "The Development of Shepherd Leadership Theory and the Validation of the Shepherd Leadership Inventory (SLI)" (PhD, diss., Regent University, 2009), 41-42.

both a descriptive and prescriptive model for leadership in the Bible, it primarily describes what an effective leader does.⁹ The way a shepherd leads sheep models the way God leads his people and the way he expects his people to be led. Shepherding is thus the ideal model for local church leadership.

This section will describe shepherd leaders by explaining who they are and what they do. The description, derived from the life and work of a shepherd, offers a picture of excellent leadership. Five descriptions of shepherd leaders will be explored. First, shepherd leaders are relational leaders who know and care for their followers. Second, shepherd leaders are providers who meet the needs of their followers. Third, shepherd leaders are protectors who guard their followers from threats. Fourth, shepherd leaders are guides for their followers on both the individual and group levels. Fifth, shepherd leaders are spiritual leaders, a dimension of leadership that cannot be overlooked in one's understanding of leadership in the church.¹⁰

Shepherds Are Relational Leaders

Leadership is the exercise of social power, more commonly called influence. One base of social power is relationship, or “referent power” according to French and Raven.¹¹ Shepherds who serve as overseers in the church have legitimate power by

⁹As a “descriptive” model, shepherding offers an illustration of what leadership actually is. As a “prescriptive” model, shepherding offers a model of what leadership should be.

¹⁰Providing, protecting, and guiding were consistently identified as shepherding functions in the literature on shepherd leadership. Timothy Witmer identifies four functions of shepherd leaders: know the sheep, provide for the sheep, protect the sheep, and guide the sheep. Timothy Z. Witmer, *Shepherd Leadership* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010). Swalm focuses on three: guiding, providing, and protecting. Kevin Leman and Bill Pentak summarize the functions of shepherding as knowing, providing, protecting, and leading. Kevin Leman and Bill Pentak, *The Way of the Shepherd* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004). Similarly, Thomas Resane identifies the three functions of shepherd leaders to be leading, protecting, and guarding. K. Thomas Resane, “Leadership for the Church: The Shepherd Model,” *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 70, no. 1, Art. #2045, accessed January 15, 2016, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2045>.

¹¹Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 263, 270. French and Raven identified five bases of power, three of which are relevant to this point: expert power (ability), referent power (attraction), and legitimate power (authority). Helpful to the discussion, particularly as applied to shepherd leadership, is Donna M. Randall, “Leadership and the Use of Power: Shaping an Ethical Climate,” *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 6, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 28-35.

virtue of their God-ordained position.¹² However, effective relational leaders do not rely on positional power to lead; rather, they lead from personal power. Personal power is conferred through relationship, the attraction of the follower to the leader. This relational power cannot be demanded; it must be won. Relational power is not inherent in any leadership position. It must be earned. In an article on relational leadership in the church, Willis Watt develops five relational principles for effective leadership: a shared mission, conflict management, power and influence, collaboration, and reconciliation. Regarding the principle of power and influence, he observes that the ability to be a relational leader resides in one's ability to influence others rather than having power over them. He writes, "Authentic relational power is always given to a leader by those being led."¹³ This kind of relational power is the basis of genuine and effective shepherd leadership.

Shepherd leadership is particularly distinguished by the personal, trusting relationship that exists between the leader and follower. Without sheep there is no need for a shepherd, and sheep will not survive without a shepherd. By nurturing positive, encouraging relationships, a leader communicates value to the follower, which in turn increases a leader's influence.¹⁴ Sheep follow their shepherd because a relationship of trust exists between them. While a shepherd occupies a position of authority over the sheep, shepherd leadership is more accurately perceived as a social phenomenon than a position of authority.¹⁵ Shepherd leadership exemplifies informal leadership more than

¹²Jim Van Yperen argues that a church leader's spiritual authority does not rest in a position in the church but in the Holy Spirit, and it is given to called, gifted, and appointed men or women who evidence godly character ("How to Recognize Who Should Lead," in *The Shepherd Leader* [St. Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources, 2003], 31-47).

¹³Willis M. Watt, "Relational Principles for Effective Church Leadership," *Journal of Leadership Education* (Spring 2014): 131, 135.

¹⁴Jay Ingram and Joseph Cangemi, "Emotions, Emotional Intelligence and Leadership: A Brief Pragmatic Perspective," *Education* 132, no. 4 (2012), 772.

¹⁵Joseph A. Raelin, "Don't Bother Putting Leadership into People," in *Contemporary Issues in Leadership*, ed. William E. Rosenbach and Robert L. Taylor (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2006), 177. He advises that leadership development focus on leadership as a social phenomenon rather than a position

formal leadership. Formal leaders gain legitimacy and power by means of their positions, while informal leaders gain legitimacy and power as a result of their personal attributes. Sheep do not follow a shepherd because he holds a position of authority over them; they follow because they know and trust him. Bass observes that informal leaders are more “communicative, relations-oriented, and authentic,” and emerge “independently of their positions.”¹⁶ Due to the trust he gained from people, King David exemplifies one whose shepherd leadership was recognized before he held official positions.¹⁷ His actions as their shepherd, not his position as their king, generated this trust.

Shepherd leadership shows the power that exists in trusting relationships. Shepherd leaders do not abuse this power. Like servant leaders, shepherd leaders lead for the benefit of the followers. They lead out of a heart of service. This people-focused leadership is humble, compassionate, and personal. Trust is essential to a successful relationship between leaders and followers.¹⁸ The need then, for those who would embrace the example of the shepherd, is to learn how to cultivate these trusting relationships. Several actions will help a leader in this area.

The need to know and be known. Shepherd leaders recognize the importance of knowing their followers and being known by their followers. According to Timothy Witmer, knowing his followers is “the most basic responsibility of the shepherd.”¹⁹ Jesus said, “I know My own sheep, and they know Me. My sheep hear My

of authority.

¹⁶Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 27.

¹⁷2 Sam 5:2 and comments on page 20.

¹⁸For a study of the relationship between ethical behavior and trust, see Lenny van den Akker et al., “Ethical Leadership and Trust: It’s All about Meeting Expectations,” *International Journal of Leadership Studies* 5, no. 2 (2009): 102-22.

¹⁹Timothy Z. Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing Company, 2010), 117.

voice, I know them, and they follow Me.”²⁰ Jesus’ words show that knowing and being known by the sheep is the reason the sheep follow the shepherd. They do not follow because they are commanded or forced to follow; they follow because they want to. This willing followership is what Robert Greenleaf was referring to when he spoke of leadership being “bestowed.”²¹ Something bestowed is given as a gift or an honor. James Kouzes and Barry Posner affirm the voluntary nature of following when they describe leadership as “a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who *choose* to follow [emphasis added].”²²

Apart from relationship, leaders resort to using the power of their positions or their ability to punish or reward in order to coerce their followers into action. Ken Blanchard affirms the need for relationship when he writes, “Leading people is the opposite of trying to control them; it’s about gaining their trust through your integrity, developing their potential through your partnership, and motivating them through your affirmation.”²³ Effective leadership requires the intentional effort of a leader to build positive relationships with those he or she leads. The stronger the relationship, the stronger the trust will be. The better a leader knows his followers, the better he will understand their needs, and know how to develop and motivate each one. Avoiding the painstaking effort to build these relationships is a failure of leadership because, as Roger Smalling reminds leaders, “People are the whole point of their work, not tools toward

²⁰John 10:14, 27 (Holman Christian Standard Bible).

²¹Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), 21.

²²James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, eds., *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), 119.

²³Ken Blanchard, *The Heart of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2007), loc. 909, Kindle.

their own purposes.”²⁴ Truly knowing the people one leads is essential to effectively leading them.

The building of relationship between a leader and his or her followers requires the leader to be present among those who are led. Shepherds do not lead their sheep from a physical distance, and shepherd leaders cannot lead others effectively from relational distance. If sheep are going to know their shepherd’s voice, they must hear it regularly. Shepherd leaders spend time with their followers. They know their followers by name. They make themselves available to their followers in order to provide the help that is needed. Being together enables a shepherd to learn the strengths, passions, attitudes, personalities, and experiences of their followers.²⁵ Leaders will also learn what frustrates their followers and holds them back. This knowledge is invaluable to the leader whose focus is on the complete development of his or her followers.

The art of listening. Relational leaders are good listeners. J. Oswald Sanders says, “A sympathetic ear is a valuable asset.”²⁶ Greenleaf states that a servant leader’s automatic response to any problem is to listen first.²⁷ Effective leaders listen well, and in doing so they hear both what is said and what is not said. They can perceive when someone just wants to be heard on a matter and is not looking for advice. Being a good listener, an effective leader knows when one is asking for counsel or needs reassurance. Listening with understanding means listening in such a way as to discern what a person is seeking and then responding accordingly. Sometimes a leader may be tempted to speak

²⁴Roger Smalling, *Christian Leadership: Principles and Practices* (Miami: Roger Smalling, 2005), loc. 423, Kindle. Writing on shepherd leadership, Van Yperen echoes the same outlook when he asserts, “Leadership is not about leaders, but followers.” Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader*, 14.

²⁵Leman and Pentak talk about knowing the SHAPE of the sheep: strengths, heart, attitudes, personality, and experiences. Leman and Pentak, *The Way of the Shepherd*, 29-40.

²⁶J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), 108.

²⁷Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 31.

when all he needs to do is listen. Eugene Peterson notes that “listening is in short supply in the world today; people aren’t used to being listened to.”²⁸ He insists that listening to people leisurely (as opposed to hurriedly) communicates to them that they are being treated with seriousness, dignity, and importance. Speaking to people does not convey to them the same personal intensity that listening does. Listening with understanding helps a leader discern when to speak and when to remain silent.

Blanchard describes a good listener as one who “sorts by others.” He is an individual who keeps the attention on the person who is speaking. Blanchard contrasts a good listener to one who “sorts by self.” This listener is one who turns the attention of a conversation to himself.²⁹ This is the person who has his own story to tell, his own opinion to share, or his own superior experience to recount. Relational leaders sort by others. By sincerely listening to their followers, they build stronger, more trusting relationships than those who do not listen well. Leadership coach Robert Hargrove adds this thought to the importance of listening: “Don’t just listen to what people are saying about what happened; . . . listen for the underlying beliefs, assumptions, and interpretations people make.”³⁰ He contends that the ability to provide leadership to individuals comes as a result of listening, not of speaking. By listening, a leader learns what his followers are truly passionate about, what they most aspire to accomplish. Knowing these things, effective leaders come alongside and help their followers succeed.

The power of compassion. Along with trust, compassion is a signature characteristic of shepherd leadership. Relational leaders are compassionate people. They care for their followers and make sure none are neglected. The compassion of Jesus is

²⁸Eugene H. Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1989), 21.

²⁹Blanchard, *The Heart of a Leader*, loc. 793.

³⁰Robert Hargrove, *Masterful Coaching* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2008), 94.

evident throughout the Gospels. His compassion for the crowds of people was stirred by the fact they were “harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36). Effective leadership in today’s world is often associated with strength, toughness, and choosing the best people to get the results wanted. In contrast, the compassionate leader seeks to strengthen the weak and restore those who fail. In a highly competitive world where priority is placed on accomplishments, gentle and compassionate leaders may be perceived as lacking what is needed to get things done. Writing on different approaches to leadership, Scott Coromode describes shepherding as passive in nature and asserts that those who follow the shepherding model of leadership “have a hard time getting things done.”³¹ Larry Whitham characterizes shepherding as passive and non-directive leadership.³² Paul Alexander depicts the shepherd, as “someone who cares for the flock through providing counseling, marrying, burying and preaching *nice* [emphasis added] messages that educate people.”³³ Each of these authors describes shepherding as compassionate toward people but ineffective as a model for actually leading them. However, Warren Bennis observes that compassion and empathy are common characteristics of genuine leadership in every field.³⁴ Compassion brings gentleness to a leader’s interaction with people. Kenneth Gangel reminds leaders of the need for compassion and gentleness when he writes, “We identify leadership with toughness and ruggedness; God identifies it with tenderness. We think of leadership as ‘handling’

³¹Scott Coromode, “Multi-Layered Leadership: The Christian Leader as Builder, Shepherd, and Gardener,” *Journal of Religious Leadership* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2002): 74.

³²Larry Whitham, *Who Shall Lead Them? The Future of Ministry in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 200.

³³Paul Alexander, “3 Reasons Big Churches Keep Getting Bigger,” *Church Plants*, accessed January 11, 2014, <http://churchplants.com/articles/5612-3-reasons-big-churches-keep-getting-bigger.html>.

³⁴Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), xxv.

adults; God thinks of it as nurturing children.”³⁵ The compassionate heart and gentle hand of a shepherd is a proven leadership asset.

Compassion is a human-to-human connection based on shared human experiences. It is the genuine care of one for another that stirs sacrificial service. Compassion is what prompts the shepherd to leave a whole flock to search for one lost sheep.³⁶ Synonymous with compassion is empathy, which refers to one’s ability to share another’s feelings. While empathy and compassion both consist of feeling what another person is feeling, compassion goes a step further and translates feeling into action.³⁷ Compassion engages the mind because it is prompted by understanding what another is experiencing and feeling what another person feels. Compassion challenges the will because the understanding and feeling prompt one to take action. The understanding, empathy, and action that are inherent in compassion make it a powerful force in building trusting relationships.

The advantage of emotional intelligence. Compassion speaks to the emotional nature of a shepherd leader. Emotional awareness is a feature of effective leadership that has become the subject of much research under the label of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence refers to one’s ability to identify, understand, and manage to productive ends his or her own emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence has been proven to be a key element in building and sustaining strong relationships. Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee refer to emotionally intelligent leadership as “primal leadership,” and those who demonstrate it as

³⁵Kenneth Gangel, *Team Leadership in Christian Ministry* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997), 74.

³⁶See Luke 15:4.

³⁷“In scriptural usage, compassion is always both a feeling and the appropriate action based on that feeling.” Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988), 504.

“resonant leaders.” These leaders understand that emotions play a powerful role in the workplace. This understanding “sets the best leaders apart from the rest.”³⁸

Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee identify several components of emotionally intelligent leaders. One component is empathy: they are able to identify with and understand the wants, needs, and viewpoints of those who surround them. They are good listeners who relate well to others. They are good at recognizing the feelings of others, even when those feelings may not be obvious. This ability enables them to manage relationships well. Another component of emotional intelligence is self-awareness. Emotionally intelligent leaders have the ability to understand their own emotions and, as a result, are not ruled by them. Such emotional honesty enables leaders to accurately assess their own strengths and weakness in order to improve on them. A third component of emotional intelligence is self-regulation. Emotionally intelligent leaders have the ability to control emotions and impulses, which guards them from making reckless decisions in heated or discouraging situations. They think before acting, express thoughtfulness, and are comfortable with change. An additional component of emotional intelligence is superior social skills. Emotionally intelligent leaders demonstrate ease in their communication with others and are approachable people. They are great team players because they are concerned about helping others develop and excel.

The description Boyatzis and McKee offer of a great leader with emotional intelligence provides a picture of shepherd leaders:

Great leaders are awake, aware, and attuned to themselves, to others, and to the world around them. They commit to their beliefs, stand strong in their values, and live full, passionate lives. Great leaders are emotionally intelligent and they are *mindful*: they seek to live in full consciousness of self, others, nature, and society. Great leaders face the uncertainty of today’s world with hope: they inspire through clarity of vision, optimism, and a profound belief in their—and their people’s—ability to turn dreams into reality. Great leaders face sacrifice, difficulties, and

³⁸Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence* (Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2013), 3-5.

challenges, as well as opportunities, with empathy and *compassion* for the people they lead and those they serve.³⁹

Leaders who lack emotional intelligence deny followers something they need from their leader in order to thrive. They also weaken their own effectiveness as leaders.⁴⁰ Since interpersonal skills are vital to shepherd leadership, and since emotional intelligence can be learned, leaders who desire to be effective will seek to develop emotional intelligence.

The servant as leader. Building trusting relationships requires leaders to serve those they lead. Servant leaders do not focus on personal success but the success of those who are led. Ken Blanchard connects servant leadership to shepherd leaders when he states, “the primary biblical image of servant leadership is that of the shepherd.”⁴¹ Servant leaders orient their leadership in terms of serving their followers. This servant attitude of the leader toward the follower helps to build the kind of trusting relationship effective leadership requires. Since shepherding is the primary example of servant leadership, and since a serving attitude is key to building trusting relationships with followers, a brief examination of servant leadership is in order.

Servant leadership is one of the most positive forms of leadership observed.⁴² This characterization is not surprising in light of the emphasis servant leadership places on service over self-interest and the focus it gives to developing others, to ethical moral

³⁹Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee, *Resonant Leadership* (Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2005), 3.

⁴⁰Goleman refers to this type of leadership as “dissonant” leadership, which he contrasts to “resonant” leadership. There are situations in which dissonant leadership is appropriate, particularly when authoritative action is required. However, dissonant leaders are viewed as cold and distant, and they produce stress and burnout among followers.

⁴¹Blanchard, *The Heart of a Leader*, location 1205.

⁴²Debate exists as to whether servant leadership meets the criterion of being a *bona fide* leadership theory. Bass considers it an incomplete theory. Northouse agrees that it is not a fully developed theory and more research is needed. Travis Searle and John Barbuto note that in its first three decades of existence, “the servant leadership movement thrived on intuitive appeal, compelling anecdotal stories, and illustrative case studies.” Travis P. Searle and John E. Barbuto, Jr., “Servant Leadership, Hope, and Organizational Virtuousness: A Framework Exploring Positive Micro and Macro Behaviors and Performance Impact,” *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies* 18, no. 1 (February 2011): 109. Greenleaf readily admitted that his concepts did not come from scholarship but from his own experiences and from watching and talking to practitioners. Scholars continue to fill in the missing gaps of this theory.

behavior, and to a belief system built upon selflessness.⁴³ Hamilton Beazley asserts the power of servant leadership may be attributed to the fact that it “rests on eternal truths, is driven by deep human needs, and is grounded in existential realities.”⁴⁴ Credit for coining the phrase “servant leadership” belongs to Robert Greenleaf, who argued that “the great leader is seen as servant first.”⁴⁵ According to Greenleaf, great leadership does not flow out of one’s desire to lead others but from a desire to serve them. This order is foundational to servant leadership: serving others first, then leading them. Before Greenleaf created the phrase *servant leadership*, business executive Robert Townsend wrote, “True leadership must be for the benefit of the followers, not the enrichment of the leaders. In combat, officers eat last.”⁴⁶ The heart of leadership is serving others.

Joining the words *servant* and *leadership* appears paradoxical—how can one who is serving people simultaneously lead them? Duane Elmer argues that the first calling of leaders is to be servants, and as such, leaders are particularly responsible to show what the servant life looks like.⁴⁷ Addressing the seeming paradox, Peter Vaill notes that Greenleaf’s actual phrase was “the servant as leader,” and that the phrase “is an application of the philosophy of service to the practice of leadership.”⁴⁸ One criticism of servant leadership is the term *servant* itself. According to Travis Berger, servant in today’s world “does not have a positive or inspiring connotation given its socially

⁴³Searle and Barbuto, *Servant Leadership*, 107.

⁴⁴Hamilton Beazley, foreword in *The Servant-Leader Within: A Transformative Path*, by Robert K. Greenleaf (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2003), 2.

⁴⁵Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 21.

⁴⁶Robert Townsend, *Up the Organization*, commemorative ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 63. Originally published in 1970, Townsend’s book preceded the writings of Greenleaf.

⁴⁷Duane Elmer, *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 161.

⁴⁸Peter B. Vaill, foreword to *The Power of Servant Leadership*, by Robert K. Greenleaf (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998), xi.

constructed history.”⁴⁹ Another criticism is the religious and spiritual overtones associated with the term *servant* that may render it inappropriate for the workplace.⁵⁰ Countering that particular objection, Bass writes of an awakening to the transcendent and spiritual as today’s society experiences a “spiritual revolution.”⁵¹ In a society with greater awareness of and receptivity to the spiritual, perhaps the *servant* component of servant leadership will find greater acceptability.

While hierarchies and top-down leadership certainly make serving and leading paradoxical, Stephen Covey states that servant leadership redefines leadership “as service and stewardship.”⁵² Leading is serving and of the two, serving always comes first. According to Greenleaf’s construct, a conscious choice to lead emerges from the serving. The driving motivation of a servant leader is the success of those who are led. Greenleaf defined success for a servant leader as those who are served growing as persons and becoming themselves servants. By putting their followers first, empathizing, nurturing, and empowering them, servant leaders help their followers “develop their full personal capacities.”⁵³ Thus, by serving, servant leaders lead their followers not only to accomplish a task but also to become more than they were as persons when they started. Bringing about positive change within another person is a fundamental element of effective leadership.⁵⁴ The pursuit of such change is the object of a leader’s service.

⁴⁹Travis A. Berger, “Servant Leadership 2.0: A Call for Strong Theory,” *Sociological Viewpoints* 30, no. 1 (Fall 2014): 162.

⁵⁰Berger, “Servant Leadership 2.0,” 162. Greenleaf himself states that “the idea of ‘servant’ is deep in our Judeo-Christian heritage.” Robert K. Greenleaf, *The Power of Servant Leadership* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1998), 22.

⁵¹Bass, *The Bass Handbook of Leadership*, 213.

⁵²Stephen R. Covey, foreword to *Servant Leadership*, by Robert Greenleaf, 3.

⁵³Northouse, *Leadership*, 219.

⁵⁴Robert R. Agee, “Servant Leadership as an Effective Approach to Leadership in the Church,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 43, no. 3 (2001): 8.

Greenleaf was writing in a time when institutionalized leadership was not trusted and was under attack. In that environment, he observed the emergence of a “new moral principle” governing leadership. This principle is what undergirded his concept of servant leadership: “the only authority deserving one’s allegiance is that which is freely and knowingly granted by the led to the leader in response to, and in proportion to, the clearly evident servant stature of the leader.”⁵⁵ Greenleaf was saying that a person’s competencies and labor may be purchased, but his or her heart, mind, and spirit were not for sale. Followers do not casually accept the authority of institutions. Good leaders, therefore, work to win the confidence of those whom they would lead. This confidence is a result of a trusting relationship nurtured by a leader who serves those he or she leads. As Greenleaf observed, “Leadership [is] bestowed upon a person who [is] by nature a servant.”⁵⁶ His emphasis upon the bestowal of leadership is important. One may have the authority to command and control others, but the most effective and authentic leadership is that which is offered by followers who believe in and trust their leader.

Many descriptions and models have been built to explain servant leadership.⁵⁷ Larry Spears developed the first of these models. A leading expert in the field of servant leadership, Spears distinguished ten characteristics of a servant leader that he derived from his study of Greenleaf’s writings, speeches, and the personal reflections Greenleaf shared with him.⁵⁸ The first is *listening*. Greenleaf proposed that to become a servant

⁵⁵Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 24.

⁵⁶Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 21.

⁵⁷One source states that a composite list of servant leadership descriptions itemized more than forty characteristics, some of which overlap. Northouse offers seven documented descriptions and one model. Northouse, *Leadership*, 221-25. Other descriptions and models are offered by Kathleen Patterson, “Servant Leadership: A Theoretical Model” (Virginia Beach, VA: Regent University, School of Leadership Studies, 2003); Robert F. Russell and A. Gregory Stone, “A Review of Servant Leadership Attributes: Developing a Practical Model,” *Leadership & Organization Development Journal* 23, no. 3 (2002): 145-57; and Dirk van Dierendonck, “Servant Leadership: A Review and Synthesis,” *Journal of Management* 37, no. 4 (2011): 1228-61.

⁵⁸Northouse, *Leadership*, 221-223. Also see, Berger, “Servant Leadership 2.0,” 150-51.

leader one had to learn to listen. As he or she listens receptively to what is said, a leader is able to identify and clarify the needs and desires of the group.

The second characteristic is *empathy*. Greenleaf insisted that “the servant leader always empathizes, always accepts the person but sometimes refuses to accept some of the person’s effort or performance as good enough.”⁵⁹ Servant leaders do not prejudge but work to understand their followers and recognize their uniqueness as individuals.

The third characteristic of the servant leader is *healing*, which refers to wholeness. Servant leaders give attention to the whole person they are leading not just the part of the person related to the task at hand. They recognize a follower who is broken in spirit or emotionally hurt and step in to help. Servant leaders pay attention to the welfare of the team of people they lead.

The fourth characteristic is *awareness*. This quality refers to a leader’s self-awareness: his sense of inner security, which gives inner strength. Inner strength is vital to a leader’s integrity and wholeness. Greenleaf observed that awareness helps leaders meet the stress that life and leadership bring with serenity. Good leaders are aware of their physical and emotional limits, and they have the ability to withdraw and reorient themselves in order to be at their best. Such awareness and renewal are important because servant leaders constantly ask, “How can I use myself to serve?”⁶⁰

The fifth characteristic is *persuasion*. Servant leaders do not rely on positional authority when making organizational decisions. They recognize that convincing a person is a far superior way of influencing them than coercing them from a position of authority.

⁵⁹Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 33-34.

⁶⁰Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 33.

Spear's sixth characteristic of servant leadership is *conceptualization*. Servant leaders are visionary in the sense of being able to see the "big picture." They resist the tendency to become consumed with the immediacy of day-to-day endeavors. This ability unleashes their creativity in problem solving.

The seventh characteristic is *foresight*. Foresight refers to intuitiveness, which is the ability to bring the past, present, and future together in decision-making. A good leader is simultaneously a historian, current analyst, and prophet. As a historian, he understands the past. As a current analyst, she has a grip on present reality. As a prophet, he or she sees the future. So crucial is foresight, that Greenleaf called it "the central ethic of leadership."⁶¹ A servant leader must see what is ahead and know where he is headed if he is to best serve others.

The eighth characteristic is *stewardship*. Not surprisingly, the servant leader sees the institution he or she leads as responsible to not serve itself but the larger society in which it exists. They are responsible to serve the greater good. Greenleaf was especially mindful of the effect leadership had on the least-privileged in society.

The ninth characteristic of the servant leader is his or her *commitment to the growth of people*. This commitment is the essence of empowerment and is rooted in the leader's belief that people have intrinsic value beyond what they contribute as workers. Growth of people is how Greenleaf said servant leadership should be measured: "Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?"⁶² The passion of servant leadership is people-building.

Spear's final characteristic of servant leadership is *building community*. Greenleaf recognized that something human was being lost as the primary shaper of people's lives shifted from local personal communities to larger impersonal institutions.

⁶¹Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 37-39.

⁶²Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 27.

What was being lost was genuine love. He insisted that love could not be dispensed apart from community. Servant leaders love, and the particular way in which they love is by building community among those they serve.

Servant leadership embodies leadership qualities affirmed in Scripture.⁶³ But most significantly, servant leadership is exemplified by Jesus who said of himself that he came into this world not to be served but to serve, and to lay down his own life (Mark 10:45). Jesus gave his followers a lasting example when he knelt before them and washed their feet, the duty of a household servant (John 13:1-20). Jesus served them because he was by nature a servant (Phil 2:6-7). In washing his disciples' feet, he exhibited the essence of leadership. Through his sacrificial service, Jesus made possible the empowerment of all who follow him to become the fullness of all that God created them to be. Leaders who follow his footsteps by serving others become instruments through whom the work of God is accomplished.

The greatest is love. Leaders who desire to build genuine and trusting relationships must love those they lead. Serving is rooted in loving others. Love is what motivates the sacrifice required of shepherd leaders. The power of love in leadership has gained some attention in the business world. In a leadership article posted to the *Forbes* website on February 9, 2014, the author identified love as “the ultimate leadership tool,” citing Gallup research to support her assertion. Writing on the subject of love-based leadership, entrepreneur and businessman John Hope Bryant decries leaders who use fear as a means of coercing people. Though such styles may have worked in past generations, he asserts that love leadership (which he contrasts to command-and-control leadership or leading with fear) is the only sustainable leadership in today's world filled with predatory businesses, distrusted leaders, and hopeless, cynical people. The basis for his concept is

⁶³Some of the qualities include trustworthiness, humility, serving others above self, empowering, stewardship, care for others, nurturing relationships, love, and building community.

his understanding of two primal forces that battle for control in the human psyche: love and fear. Leading with fear, he contends, has created many of today's world problems. The way forward is leading with love.⁶⁴ Loving leaders are ethical leaders who are morally decent human beings committed to doing what they understand to be virtuous.⁶⁵ Loving leaders are authentic leaders who care about people and whose leadership "transcends all things except humanity and care because they see leadership as a social process and a process of actively serving others."⁶⁶ Loving leaders are servants who do not serve themselves but lead with heart as they serve their followers.

Jesus declared that the ultimate duty of any person is to love God and others (Matt 22:37-40). Every ethical and moral obligation can be summed up in that command, including leadership. Jesus also said that the greatest demonstration of love is to lay down one's life for another (John 15:13). Such sacrifice is the ultimate act of service. The Apostle Paul declared that apart from love all is vain (1 Cor 13:1-3), and that would include leadership. He went on to give this description of love: "Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Cor 13:4-7). In leadership, love inspires excellence and perseverance, pulls people together, and overlooks minor offenses, all of which reduce stress. There may be no more vulnerable leadership than that which is loving, but in the end, it is the kind of leadership genuine leaders want to embody.

⁶⁴John Hope Bryant, *Love Leadership: The New Way to Lead in a Fear-Based World* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2009), 6.

⁶⁵Northouse, *Leadership*, 424.

⁶⁶Donovan A. McFarlane, "Impressed and Inspired: Encountering Genuine Leadership with Dr. Barry Posner and Dr. Agueda Ogazon," *Journal of Organizational Learning and Leadership* 9, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 27.

Shepherds Are Providers

The priority of shepherds is meeting the needs of the sheep. Shepherd leaders provide for those they lead. One of the terms frequently associated with shepherding is “feeding.” In the local church context feeding typically refers to teaching God’s Word. While teaching is one of the most important functions of shepherding, feeding means much more.⁶⁷ When a shepherd feeds the sheep he is meeting their basic needs and providing that which nourishes them, producing health and strength. The shepherd in Psalm 23 provides for the sheep by leading them on paths of righteousness to green pastures and still waters. Those who follow that shepherd lack nothing they need in order to thrive. McCormick and Davenport suggest that “shepherd leaders must learn to conceptualize a great deal of their activity in terms of making sure people’s needs are met . . . One of the most important characteristics of the shepherd leader [is] the ability to frame the leadership process as energizing people by meeting their fundamental needs.”⁶⁸ Shepherd leaders think in terms of providing for those they lead; thus, these leaders are attentive to what their followers need and take the initiative to meet the need.

Followers need the big picture. The leader-follower relationship always exists for a reason. The leader must know that reason and be able to communicate it in a compelling way to the follower. A shepherd must know where he is taking the sheep and how he plans to get them there. Like a shepherd with a flock, so leaders must know where they are leading their team. Whether referred to as a purpose, vision, or something else, a team must have something that defines why the team has been assembled and gives them direction. Without a big picture, both the shepherd and sheep will wander.

⁶⁷“Feed my lambs” and “tend my sheep” in John 21:15-16 refer to more than giving them food to eat. Βόσκω (feed) means to tend the needs of animals, and ποιμαίνω (tend) means to serve as a tender of sheep or to watch out for other people.

⁶⁸McCormick and Davenport, *Shepherd Leadership*, 13, 18.

Vision looks to the future. It is a picture of what it would look like for a team to arrive at its destination, realize its dream, complete its purpose, or achieve its goal. A vision is a clear picture that followers can see and understand. It is a realistic picture built upon the group's past that takes into account present realities, and it is a picture of a future significant enough for followers to want to invest in it and sacrifice to achieve it. Followers must believe it can be accomplished and see the benefit of working for it now rather than later. This is what Andy Stanley means when he defines a vision as more than a picture of what could be, but "the conviction that it should be."⁶⁹

Without vision, a group will become distracted, waste resources, lose morale, and splinter. Sanders wrote, "Eyes that look are common. Eyes that see are rare."⁷⁰ A leader must have eyes that see and then he must be able to communicate to others what he sees. The best a group can accomplish without a vision is to maintain what already exists. Good shepherds do more than maintain a flock. They aim to see their flocks thrive. Writing to pastors, Tim Nichols warns, "A leader has the choice: lead with vision or manage the status quo."⁷¹ Blanchard claims that servant leaders must be leaders with a vision. Leadership, he contends, is about helping people live according to the vision. He writes, "It's the vision—the purpose/picture of the future and values—that everyone should serve."⁷² Whether or not a shepherd leader is a visionary leader, he must be a leader with a vision. He or she must be a person who sees what is coming in the future and knows how to prepare for it.

⁶⁹Andy Stanley, *Visioneering: God's Blueprint for Developing and Maintaining Vision* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Publishers, 1999), 18.

⁷⁰Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 80.

⁷¹Tim Nichols, "The Pastor's Role in Vision-Based Leadership," *The Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* (Summer 2007): 30.

⁷²Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2003), 56.

Vision serves a team in several ways. It shapes the playing field for a group like boundaries on an athletic field. Vision gives freedom to followers to act within those boundaries, and it releases people to contribute to the group's success as they plot strategies and make plans that move toward the envisioned destination. Vision unifies a team and directs the efforts of individual members by enabling them to see how they are contributing to the accomplishment of the big goal. Vision also inspires optimism and hope, two qualities an effective leader must possess. Sanders accurately observes, "No pessimist ever made a great leader. The pessimist sees a difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees an opportunity in every difficulty."⁷³ A leader with vision and an optimistic attitude will inspire followers by meeting their need to accomplish something of significance.

Followers need good communication. An indispensable element of the trusting relationship between a shepherd and sheep is familiarity with the shepherd's voice. Because the sheep must hear him and know him before they will follow him, an effective leader must be a good communicator, which nurtures confidence in the follower and trust in the leader. Leaders must clearly communicate vision to their followers and help them chart the progress they are making toward the vision. Good leaders provide the information followers need to fulfill their assignments. Team members need to know their roles. A leader must know how to delegate responsibility and authority. Teams will invariably need to alter course and adjust plans. Every leader-follower relationship comes with expectations. All of these factors require good communication from the leader. Without it confusion, chaos, and conflict will arise. Good communication is vital for direction, progress, problem solving, unity, and encouragement. Effective leaders

⁷³Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 80.

provide for their followers when they communicate in clear, understandable, and compelling ways.

Followers need feedback. Though sheep have a herding instinct, they easily wander. With noses to the ground, they nibble themselves away from the flock and find themselves outside of the boundaries. With his staff, a shepherd nudges the sheep along the way and, when necessary, uses the crook of the staff to pull them out of difficult situations. Shepherds must regularly inspect the sheep in order to tend to their wounds and ward off diseases. Leadership requires the same: leaders must engage in the ongoing task of evaluating the progress of the team and members. An integral part of evaluation is giving and receiving feedback. Feedback provides learning opportunities for both the giver and the receiver. For a shepherd leader, feedback is one way to feed a follower. But giving and receiving feedback are not easy. Based on their extensive research involving more than six thousand team members, Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson concluded that “feedback is threatening. It is difficult to give well, and it is hard to receive objectively. Indeed, the ability to give and receive feedback constructively is our greatest deficiency in relationships.”⁷⁴ Patrick Lencioni identifies five team dysfunctions, three of which are related in some manner to feedback: fear of conflict, avoidance of accountability, and inattention to results. A leader who fears conflict will hesitate to give feedback. A leader who does not hold followers accountable will not be motivated to give feedback. A leader who is inattentive to results will not be aware of what feedback to give. Lencioni warns that allowing any of these dysfunctions to fester will seriously harm a team.⁷⁵ Neglecting this responsibility is a failure on the part of the leader to provide what a follower needs. Leaders understand followers need to receive honest and

⁷⁴Frank LaFasto and Carl Larson, *When Teams Work Best* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2001), 46.

⁷⁵Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 189.

helpful feedback. Followers need to know if they are doing well and making progress or if they have strayed off course and are in need of making corrections. This feedback may come in the form of advice, encouragement, praise, or correction. Providing feedback communicates a leader's care. As threatening as feedback may be to give and receive, followers need it, and receiving helpful feedback from their leader builds trust.

Leaders need renewal. As a provider, a shepherd leader must keep his own resource supply filled. McCormick and Davenport refer to this as creating supply and suggest practices such as reflecting thankfully for the supply one already has, focusing on activities that personally energize, spending time with people who provide supply, and returning to places that give energy.⁷⁶ A leader whose supply runs out cannot provide for others. Boyatzis and McKee describe a great leader as being resonant, a leader who demonstrates strong, deep continuity in contrast to the leader who, under pressure, becomes shrill, short, and unclear. They propose that a key to sustaining resonance is engaging in periods of regular renewal—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Without renewal, the ongoing stresses and sacrifices of leadership will take their toll, throwing a leader into dissonance that leads to exhaustion and burnout.⁷⁷ In his book on self-leadership, Samuel Rima writes, “The true quality and nature of our leadership will ultimately be determined by the condition of our inner life, which, in turn, is the product of the degree to which we do or do not engage in effective personal soul care.”⁷⁸ A leader whose soul is not restored regularly will eventually find himself mentally, emotionally, spiritually, and physically depleted with nothing more to give. As the model shepherd, Jesus replenished his supply by retreating to isolated places where he could

⁷⁶Blaine and Davenport, *Shepherd Leadership*, 89-97.

⁷⁷Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee, “The Cycle of Sacrifice and Renewal,” in *Resonant Leadership* (Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, 2005).

⁷⁸Samuel D. Rima, *Leading from the Inside Out: The Art of Self-Leadership* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 130. Rima offers practical suggestions for self-leadership, or “renewal,” in the intellectual, physical, and spiritual realms of a leader's life.

commune with his Father in prayer. As providers, shepherd leaders must keep themselves renewed and supplied. Failure to be renewed diminishes a leader's capacity to provide for those he or she leads.

Shepherds Are Protectors

Sheep are vulnerable creatures who need a shepherd for protection. Sometimes the way to their destination requires walking through shadowy valleys. If the shepherd does not care for the sheep, they will not thrive. Danger, injury, and disease are constant threats to a flock, and the shepherd's role is to protect them. The patriarch Jacob recounted how he had sustained losses to his flocks because of wild beasts and theft. David recounted the times he protected his sheep from both a lion and a bear. Jesus warned of thieves who come to steal and destroy, and Paul warned of wolves.⁷⁹ Shepherds keep constant watch over the sheep. They gather the sheep into the fold at night and sometimes serve as the gate. They search for lost sheep and bring the wanderers back to the flock. The rod and staff a shepherd carried were tools used to protect, inspect, and correct the sheep. The impulse of a shepherd to protect is demonstrated by his willingness to sacrifice himself for the safety and well-being of the sheep.

As protectors, shepherd leaders seek to create and maintain a safe environment for their followers.⁸⁰ Because threats are always imminent, leaders must be prepared to deal with them whenever they come and from wherever they may arise. Several factors contribute to the creation and maintenance of a safe and healthy environment.

⁷⁹Gen 31:39; 1 Sam 17:34-35; John 10:10; Acts 20:29.

⁸⁰Leman and Pentak state that one of the principles of shepherd leadership is to "make your pasture a safe place." Leman and Pentak, *The Way of the Shepherd*, 53-66.

A leader's convictions. Great leadership is built upon bedrock beliefs. These bedrock beliefs of which a leader is thoroughly convinced are called convictions. Shepherd leaders protect the flock by being leaders of conviction. Leadership naturally tends toward pragmatism, as there is a constant search for what works and what has proven to be successful. Leadership not founded upon conviction will compromise for the achievement of perceived success. Conviction is fundamental to leadership because its first concerns are what is right and what is true. In his book on convictional leadership, Albert Mohler writes, "The leader is rightly concerned with everything from strategy and vision to team-building, motivation, and delegation, but at the center of the true leader's heart and mind you will find convictions that drive and determine everything else."⁸¹ Apart from convictions, leaders will constantly change course or become self-serving opportunists.

Convictions reside in the heart of a leader, that innermost place where thoughts, affections, and volition meet. Bennis asserts that one of the most important lessons of leadership is learning to listen to, or trust, one's inner voice. By "inner voice" he is referring to one's instinct.⁸² The Christian leader recognizes that this inner voice speaks from the conscience and the indwelling Holy Spirit and judges right from wrong. It is the voice that speaks from the platform of convictions. Convictions strengthen leaders in several ways. First, they inspire a leader's courage. Leadership requires moral courage. Sanders clearly communicates this need when he writes these words:

The courage of a leader is demonstrated in his being willing to face unpleasant and even devastating facts and conditions with equanimity, and then acting with firmness in the light of them, even though it means incurring personal unpopularity. Human inertia and opposition do not deter him. His courage is not a thing of the moment but continues until the task is fully done.⁸³

⁸¹Albert Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2012), 24. Mohler contends that Christian leadership is inseparable from passionately held beliefs because leadership is putting beliefs into action.

⁸²Warren Bennis, *On Leadership*, Revised (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 29-30.

⁸³Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 88.

Convictions ignite a leader's passion. As beliefs that hold one in their grip, convictions stir something within the leader. Mohler observes, "Passion arises naturally or not at all. It happens when convictions come to life, and deep beliefs drive visions and plans."⁸⁴ Conviction is what fuels a vision. Convictions form values, which govern the way an individual or group behaves, communicates, and interacts. Together, convictions and values determine a leader's attitudes and opinions, which, in turn govern actions. Convictions give clarity to decision-making. Leaders are sometimes required to make quick decisions based on incomplete information, assess the results of their decisions, adjust their course, and then be ready to act again. Deciding, adjusting, and deciding again are vital, lest a leader miss opportunities or get off course. Convictions keep the leader on course. Finally, convictions provide a compass for leaders, a vital need, according to Bennis.⁸⁵ Shepherd leaders are moral leaders who lead with a clear sense of right and wrong. In a 2001 study, twelve leaders defined moral leadership as "following one's own prescribed definitions of right and wrong."⁸⁶ This definition contrasts the shepherd in Psalm 23 who leads in paths of righteousness, which are not determined by personal definitions of right and wrong. They are determined by convictions founded upon truth. Convictions provide the moral compass that shepherd leaders need.

A leader's integrity. A second way shepherd leaders maintain a safe environment for their followers is by protecting their own integrity. Shepherd leadership is not a set of skills. It is a way of being, which means the leadership of a shepherd flows from his or her inner being. The faithful reliability of a shepherd instills confidence in the sheep. This sense of confidence is comforting and reassuring for the sheep. In

⁸⁴Mohler, *The Conviction to Lead*, 53.

⁸⁵Bennis, *On Leadership*, xxvii.

⁸⁶Nancy L. Maldonado and Candace H. Lacey, "Defining Moral Leadership: Perspectives of 12 Leaders," *Florida Journal of Educational Research* 41, no. 1 (Fall 2001): 89, accessed April 11, 2015, <http://www.coedu.usf.edu/fjer/2001/FJERV41P7900>.

contrast, a leader who lacks integrity is unreliable and generates uncertainty in his followers. Without integrity, a leader is like the hireling Jesus described who ran away from the flock when danger came. If followers do not trust their leader, there will be trouble. Peter Drucker insisted that a person's lack of integrity was enough to disqualify that person from any position of leadership.⁸⁷ Bennis agrees, asserting that integrity is the most important quality of a leader and something that must be demonstrated repeatedly since leaders are under scrutiny all the time.⁸⁸ Leaders who focus on themselves in their leadership will lack integrity, and inevitably they will harm those they lead. Leaders whose self-esteem is tied to the opinions of others will compromise their integrity. Proverbs 29:25 warns that "the fear of man is a snare," and a leader with integrity understands this. Leaders who hide aspects of their personal lives lack integrity. When a leader knows he is hiding, he will lack the confidence that a clear conscience produces. A leader lacks integrity when she does not do what she says she will do. Robert Townsend emphasizes this point when he counsels, "The world is divided into two classes of people: the few people who make good on their promises (even if they don't promise as much), and the many who don't. Get in column A and stay there. You'll be very valuable wherever you are."⁸⁹ People lose confidence in a person who does not keep his word.

A person of integrity is an undivided person. He is not one kind of person at work and another kind of person at home, in the community, or at church; he is the same person in public as in private. Leaders who exhibit the highest levels of integrity gain the trust of their followers. Gayle Beebe observes, "The formation of our character creates predictability to our leadership. Predictability, dependability and consistency: these three

⁸⁷Gayle D. Beebe, *The Shaping of an Effective Leader* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press Books, 2011), 28.

⁸⁸Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*, xviii.

⁸⁹Townsend, *Up the Organization*, 104.

qualities ensure that our leadership is reliable and motivates people to place their confidence in us. The effectiveness of a leader is built on trust.”⁹⁰ Sheep do not follow a leader they do not trust. The reliability of a trustworthy leader provides protection to those he or she leads. Leaders who compromise their integrity betray those they lead and leave them vulnerable.

Conflict management. Any group that comes together for a common purpose will experience conflict. Many things generate conflict: conflicting information, conflicting personalities, conflicting methods and means, conflicting ends or goals, and conflicting values. Conflict manifests itself in criticism, misunderstanding, rejection, distractions, or outright opposition. On more than one occasion Jesus’ disciples experienced conflict with one another. New Testament churches experienced conflict over a variety of issues. The presence of two people—leader and follower—creates a situation where conflict will rise.

Not all conflict is bad. Lencioni identifies the absence of any conflict on a team as dysfunctional since it indicates distrust and a lack of complete honesty among team members. Lencioni points out the value of conflict when he writes, “In many cases, teams have all the information they need, but it resides within the hearts and minds of the team itself and must be extracted through unfiltered debate.”⁹¹ Effective leaders do not seek to eliminate conflict; they manage it wisely. But not all conflict is productive. Executive leadership coach Alyson Lyon warns, “Unresolved and mismanaged conflict leads to hidden agendas, lack of timely communication and reduced collaboration, resulting in . . . mistakes, increased turnover and lost opportunities.”⁹² In his role as

⁹⁰Beebe, *The Shaping of an Effective Leader*, 30.

⁹¹Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, 208.

⁹²Alyson Lyon, “Unresolved Conflict Develops into Unpredictable Consequence,” *Western Pennsylvania Health Care News* (April 1, 2012), accessed April 20, 2015, <http://www.wphhealthcarenews.com/unresolved-conflict-develops-into-unpredictable-consequences>.

protector, a shepherd leader must manage conflict, whether it is between followers, the leader and followers, or between a whole group and the larger organization within which it serves.

The most desirable conflict-management strategy is that which leads to mutual winning, allowing individuals and the group to move forward together. Mike Staver states that one of the tasks of leadership is removing obstacles from the paths of those one leads. He compares those obstacles to kinks in a hose, which he calls “pinch points,” anything that stops or impedes desired results. The way to get water flowing freely through a kinked hose is not to turn up the pressure but to unkink the hose. How a leader handles conflict can either become an obstacle or it can release a pinch point that is holding back a person and hindering the team.⁹³

The goal in managing conflict is to resolve it through collaboration. Merely avoiding conflict delays the inevitable and allows conflict to grow. Settling conflict through compromise means both parties lose since neither ends up with what they were hoping for. Accommodation requires one party to give in for the sake of settling the conflict. Collaboration, on the other hand, brings both parties together as they work out a new solution that is mutually satisfying.⁹⁴ Collaboration requires understanding, and a shepherd leader plays a key role in bring that about. Negative conflict drains energy, passion, and productivity from a group. It increases anxiety among the group and encourages actions that protect oneself but harm the group. Resolving conflict through collaboration and restoring relationships is a vital function of shepherd leadership.

⁹³Mike Staver, *Leadership Isn't for Cowards* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 107-110.

⁹⁴Watt, “Relational Principles for Effective Church Leadership,” 129.

Shepherds Are Guides

Shepherds guide their sheep. The shepherd in Psalm 23 leads the sheep from one place to another. Shepherds do not settle down with the sheep to remain in the same pasture indefinitely. They must move their flocks around or else the sheep will graze the pasture bare. Movement is constant for shepherds as they lead the flock out to pasture, move it to other locations throughout the day as needed, and then bring the flock home. Sheep do not lead themselves; that is why they have a shepherd. The need of sheep is not a judgment regarding the intelligence or skills of followers. The fact is, followers need a leader just like sheep need a shepherd. Shepherd leaders guide their followers individually and as a group by showing them the way, instructing them, and empowering them to take action and make decisions that will help them reach their goals.

The micro- and macro-shepherd. Shepherding exemplifies leadership on two levels: the individual level (the individual sheep) and the group level (the flock). Witmer describes these two levels as “micro-shepherding” and “macro-shepherding.”⁹⁵ Micro-shepherding focuses on the shepherd’s care of the individual. Macro-shepherding focuses on the leadership a shepherd provides to the whole group or team. Shepherd leaders lead on both of these levels. Shepherd leaders frequently find themselves in front of the flock providing leadership, but he or she also has many occasions to lead from within the flock, coming alongside individuals to encourage them.

Micro-shepherding is vital to shepherd leaders because individuals matter deeply to them. Some leaders thrive on this level. Their strengths are displayed in one-on-one situations. Their compassion is genuine and felt by their followers. They are willing to invest limitless amounts of time visiting, listening, counseling, and praying with individuals. People know this leader is there for them whenever he or she may be

⁹⁵Witmer, *The Shepherd Leader*, 103. Witmer uses this two-level distinction to develop each of the four functions of shepherding.

needed. Micro-shepherding is illustrated by a father's leadership of his child and involves what is most often associated with the concept of shepherding.

Macro-shepherding is equally important to shepherd leadership because shepherds must lead the whole group. Shepherds do not take sheep one at a time to the next pasture but lead the whole flock there. Some leaders thrive on this level. They have charisma, communication skills, and team leadership competence. The macro level of leading requires the competencies of effective leadership such as vision-casting, strategic planning, decision-making, and empowering. Macro-shepherding is illustrated by a father's leadership of his whole family and represents a function of shepherding that is missing in much of what is written about the shepherd leadership.

Some leaders thrive on the macro level while others thrive on the micro. Shepherd leaders lead on both levels because shepherds are both micro- and macro-leaders. Understanding these two levels of shepherding is vital to reasserting shepherding as a relevant and dynamic model for church leadership. Leaders who do not connect and serve on the individual level are not shepherds. Being a dynamic leader of a large group does not make one a shepherd. Nor is it true that just because an individual is an excellent teacher or counselor that he is fulfilling his role as a shepherd. Leaders who cannot lead groups do not fulfill the full range of shepherd leadership. While any leader may be stronger on one level than the other, the assignment remains to lead on both levels. When Peterson writes of pastoral obligations to manage the institution and personally care for souls, he is acknowledging the two levels of shepherding. While he places higher priority on the care of souls, he makes it clear that both levels of leadership are required of anyone who shepherds a church.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, 58-59. While Peterson is writing specifically to local church pastors, what he says illustrates that shepherds must lead on both the group and individual levels.

The micro-level of shepherding raises the question as to whether shepherd leadership practically works in large settings or if it is limited to small settings. Can churches, for example, become so big that the shepherd becomes an unworkable model for leadership? This writer believes that the ordained leaders are called to shepherd the flock, and that shepherding is both macro and micro—it is both individual and group. No matter the church size and no matter the organizational structure, leaders are called to be shepherds. This is especially true of the senior leader and those who function as elder-overseers. Shepherding leadership always begins with the senior leader and filters down throughout all the leadership. In a large church setting, the lead pastor will not be able to personally shepherd every member. However, this inability to personally connect with the whole congregation does not exempt him from being a shepherd leader on both micro- and macro-levels to his leadership team. That team may be the maximum he can shepherd in that manner, but as he models shepherding leadership to his staff, he is multiplying shepherds to lead the church. The heart of a true shepherd leader is to shepherd. This is the heart Christ wants for those who lead his church.

The empowering shepherd. Empowering followers may not be an activity one instantly associates with the shepherd model, but it is an important function for the shepherd leader. Peterson’s description of pastoral work illustrates the empowering nature of shepherding: “The pastor’s question is, ‘Who are these particular people, and how can I be with them in such a way that they can become what God is making them?’ My job is simply to be there, teaching, preaching Scripture as well as I can, and being honest with them, not doing anything to interfere with what the Spirit is shaping in them.”⁹⁷ What he is describing is transformational leadership that truly empowers others.

⁹⁷Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, 4.

Richard Roof describes shepherding as more paternalistic than many empowering leadership models. He observes that the shepherd in Psalm 23 did not seek consensus from the flock as to where they wanted to go next but wisely led them to safe, green pastures and chose the right paths for them.⁹⁸ However, as an extension of servant leadership, shepherd leaders empower their followers. Far from being a leadership model that maintains the status quo among followers, shepherd leaders seek to nurture growth and transformational change in those they lead. The desire of shepherd leaders is for those they lead to thrive, to become something more at the end of the journey than they were at the beginning. Serving their followers means that, rather than clinging to a position of authority, shepherd leaders empower their followers to reach their fullest potential.

Empowerment is the process of handing leadership over to followers by giving them decision-making authority. Empowered followers rightfully claim a sense of ownership, a place in the leadership process, and an expectation to be involved. Empowering leaders embrace the right of followers to be involved.⁹⁹ As servant leaders, shepherd leaders are committed to the growth of those they lead; they seek to unleash the potential of their followers. The goal of shepherd leadership is not to keep followers dependent upon the shepherd but to transform them into shepherd leaders themselves. Empowerment requires several things of both the leader and the follower. First, the leader and follower must share the same vision. Second, the leader and follower must share the same values. Followers need to hear and see what their leader values. Exemplary leaders make the vision and values of a group tangible through their own behavior. Third, followers must be trained so the leader is confident of the follower's

⁹⁸Richard A. Roof, "Lessons on Leadership from the Shepherd Metaphor." This is a chapter written for a book that was never published. A copy of this chapter was provided directly to me by Roof, who is a professor in the School of Business and Leadership, Regent University.

⁹⁹Susan R. Komives, Nance Lucas, and Timothy R. McMahon, *Exploring Leadership: for College Students Who Want to Make a Difference* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998), 77.

competence. The follower needs the right information and skills in order to be able to make decisions and act. If any of these requirements are not met, the leader will not have enough confidence in the follower to release control. Such confidence is vital for a leader to hand over decision-making authority. Fourth, the leader must be willing to trust the follower. Finally, the leader must be humble enough to admit that others can do the job and perhaps do it even better. A follower may be ready for responsibility, but if a leader is not willing to relinquish power, he will hold the follower back. Demonstrating such trust and humility will encourage the heart of the follower.

In the church, this process is called *equipping* and is the work that shepherd leaders are called to do. Equipping entails teaching and training that lead toward maturity, growth, and preparation for service. To equip the saints for the work of ministry is to empower them to fulfill their roles in the church and reach the fullness of their potential in Christ. George Cladis issues this challenge on the necessity of church leaders empowering followers: “The church in the postmodern world must return the ministry to the people. . . . The clergy must get out of the way of the people and encourage them on!”¹⁰⁰ Empowerment will grow both the individual and the church.

Shepherds Are Spiritual Leaders

The model for shepherd leadership is primarily drawn from Scripture, is reflective of the heart of God, is consistently associated with the leadership of God’s people, is descriptive of the oversight exercised by church leaders, and is intensely personal in its focus. That shepherd leadership has a spiritual facet is not surprising; recognition of this facet is not exclusive to Christian leadership. One book that explores the dimension of the spiritual in leadership invites readers of all religious beliefs to

¹⁰⁰George Cladis, *Leading the Team-Based Church: How Pastors and Church Staffs Can Grow Together into a Powerful Fellowship of Leaders* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1999), 124.

“explore why soul, spirit, faith and hope belong at the heart of leadership.”¹⁰¹ The shepherd as a spiritual leader is a familiar concept for Christian leadership. This final part of the portrait of a shepherd leader will develop four components of a shepherd’s spiritual leadership

Awareness of spiritual calling. A Christian understanding of leadership must begin with God, no matter who the leader is or where he or she may exercise leadership. Leadership is commonly perceived as a self-motivated endeavor; that is, the initiative to lead comes from the leader. Leadership is also vulnerable to becoming an exercise that is self-interested. However, as is true of all things, leadership exists for the glory of God and the accomplishment of his purposes.¹⁰² A leader who lacks this perspective is missing something very important from his leadership. The best leadership does not find its initiation in human passion. Rather, it begins with the call of God and is performed for his glory.

Os Guinness clarifies this starting point in his explanation of calling. He differentiates primary calling from secondary callings. The primary call is grounded in creation and is a call to God. The primary call is not to a specific task, certain role, or exact geographic location. It is the call to live by God, to God, and for God. The primary call is fulfilled as one lives out what he or she was created to be, namely an image-bearer of God living for the glory of God. The secondary call is a response to the primary call. This calling is how one lives out the primary call. As Guinness observes, “Calling means that everyone, everywhere, and in everything fulfills his or her (secondary) callings in response to God’s (primary) calling.”¹⁰³ One may aspire to

¹⁰¹Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, *Leading with Soul: An Uncommon Journey of Spirit*, 3rd ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011), 10.

¹⁰²Scripture makes clear that it is not just leaders of God’s people that exist for this purpose but all leaders. Rulers of the nations are shown to ultimately be doing God’s will. Leaders of all kinds are ordained of God (Rom 13:1-6; Ps 75:7; Dan 2:21; John 19:11).

¹⁰³Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville:

leadership and may even sense a call to leadership, but he or she must be aware that this desire or call to lead finds its source in God's primary call. Understanding leadership as an activity of living out the call of God for his glory distinguishes Christian leadership from leadership in the world. Christian leaders and shepherd leaders must understand this starting point.

Shepherd leaders do not take upon themselves positions of power, nor do they assume spiritual authority over others by virtue of their own will or initiative. They shepherd because it is in their hearts to do so, but it is a desire placed there by God as part of his call. Positions of authority may come to them by God's direction, opportunities that arise, and the invitation of others. Paul appointed elders in he gave instructions to churches as to the kind of men they should appoint as leaders. Some shepherd leaders in the church serve in the office of elder-bishop. This office is established by God, and it is associated with spiritual authority. Those who serve in this office do not acquire the position by virtue of inheritance, nor does the authority of the office descend upon them by virtue of a vote. God calls them to the task and that calling is affirmed by others. Leadership in the church is not self-appropriated. Desiring to serve in leadership is not the same as feeling one deserves to lead or demanding it. As one faithfully lives out the primary call of God, he or she can be assured that God will guide them into the secondary callings in which they can fulfill his primary call upon them. One who has the heart of a shepherd will not lack for opportunities to shepherd people.

Evidence of spiritual character. Spiritual leadership flows out of spiritual character. Van Yperen states, "shepherding starts with the heart, that is with character."¹⁰⁴ In choosing leaders, Scripture unmistakably places greater emphasis upon

W Publishing Group, 2003), 34.

¹⁰⁴Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader*, 23.

the character of an individual than on his or her ability.¹⁰⁵ The word of God and the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit form spiritual character. Within the context of the church and for any Christian who leads, leadership development must be situated within the context of spiritual formation. The Pastoral Epistles emphasize spiritual character when identifying qualifications for leaders. Two requirements of particular note are the qualifications of being “blameless” and “tested.” According to Paul, the blameless character of a spiritual leader is demonstrated in the following qualities: morally pure and faithful, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent, gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, a good leader of his home, not be a recent convert, and having a good reputation with people outside the church. The requirement that a spiritual leader be tested means spiritual character is something that is observable to others. Spiritual leaders model these characteristics. Apart from spiritual character one is disqualified for a recognized role of spiritual leadership.

Dependence on spiritual gifting. Spiritual leadership is a spiritual ability that finds its source in the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. This enabling is called gifting. The term *χάρισμα*, translated “gift,” refers to that which is freely or graciously given: a favor that is bestowed. Spiritual gifts are the result of God’s grace, thus spiritual gifts enable one to do what he or she does not deserve to do and would not be able to do apart from God’s grace. Gifts are manifestations of God’s grace and are directed toward the building up of the church. Since Christ is the builder of the church, it stands to reason that anything that actually builds up his church is supplied by him, which, in fact, is the case through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Spiritual gifting is the ability for ministry

¹⁰⁵Ability is a necessary component of leadership: planning, decision-making, and delegating for example. Ps 78:72 commends the fact that David demonstrated both “an upright heart” and “a skillful hand.” Leaders need both character and competence, but of the two, character is the greater.

energized by the grace of God through the enablement of the Holy Spirit. The grace of gifting is manifested in God making whatever skills, abilities, competencies, or experiences one may have usable for the building up of the church. Spiritual gifting reveals that the ability to serve God and his church requires more than natural ability, professional training, eloquence, mercy, generosity, or leadership skill. Unserved people may have all of those qualities. The ministry of the Holy Spirit in one's life enables a person to serve God and to spiritually lead others.

The New Testament identifies both shepherding and leadership as gifts given by the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁶ Since all gifting comes from God, Van Yperen makes the important observation, "Leadership in the church, therefore, whether vocational or volunteer, must always relate to giftedness. The leaders lead in and through their gift."¹⁰⁷ Whether serving as an elder, deacon, or leader of a broad variety of groups or teams within a church, the ability to lead comes from God. Shepherd leadership, therefore, is more than a natural ability based on human compassion, excellent people skills, and a great mind for strategic planning. It is an ability given by the Holy Spirit.

Engagement in spiritual care. Spiritual leadership is deeply personal. The individual and spiritual focus of shepherd leadership brings two people together—a leader and follower—for spiritual ends. C. S. Lewis insightfully observed, "There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal."¹⁰⁸ He exhorts that people must take each other seriously and warns against flippancy, superiority, and presumption. Spiritual leaders understand this, and it shapes how they interact with those they lead: how they pray for them, listen to them, and speak to them. The priority of relationship in

¹⁰⁶Eph 4:11 mentions shepherds; Rom 12:8 refers to "the one who leads"; 1 Cor 12:28 identifies the gift of administration.

¹⁰⁷Van Yperen, *The Shepherd Leader*, 38.

¹⁰⁸C. S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (New York: HarperOne, 1980), 46.

shepherd leadership and the responsibility of soul care call for a word of caution. The relationship between leader and follower is complex and filled with both pleasure and peril. Leadership is fundamentally about the influence one has over another. This dynamic raises an ethical and spiritual question: to whose ends is this influence exercised—the leader’s or the follower’s? In other words, a leader may be tempted to build a relationship with a person for reasons other than the person’s soul need. Andrew Root is a leading youth ministry scholar who has thought deeply on this issue. He raises thoughtful questions that all relational leaders should ponder.

What are relationships and what are they for in the context of ministry? Is a relationship simply a tool used to leverage with another in order to influence him or her in the direction one desires? . . . Are not relationships something more (or at least something different)? According to Dietrich Bonhoeffer, relationships in which human persons are with and for each other (sociality) are the place of God’s transcendent presence in the world. Therefore, for Bonhoeffer, relationships are not simply about earning leverage for influence, but rather about sharing in each other’s existence, in each other’s suffering, as one shares in the other’s place . . . and in so doing stands in with Christ.”¹⁰⁹

Root’s words describe the spiritual role of shepherd leaders in the church as being those who “stand in with Christ” as they care for immortal souls. These souls must not to be used or manipulated. They are to be loved, provided for, protected, and guided for their sake. The care of shepherd leaders for their followers is to be the care of Christ himself for those followers.¹¹⁰ Leaders may be tempted to use the influence of personal relationships to accomplish their own purposes, but the relationship between a shepherd leader and follower cannot be regarded as a way for the shepherd gets things done. Yielding to such a temptation is a betrayal of trust on the part of a shepherd leader. The relationship must be regarded as a sacred trust, the means by which the leader enters into the life of a follower and shares Christ’s place in his or her life. A leader who

¹⁰⁹Andrew Root, “Reexamining Relational Youth Ministry: Implications from the Theology of Dietrich Bonhoeffer,” *Word & World* 26, no. 3 (Summer 2006): 270.

¹¹⁰Believers are exhorted to submit to their leaders in Heb 13:17 because church leaders watch over the souls of people and will give account to God himself.

understands this place sharing is positioned to meet the follower's deepest needs and to guide in a way that truly will bring him or her to Christ. For the shepherd leader, the ultimate goal is to lead the sheep safely home into the sheepfold of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

Shepherds are relational leaders who generously provide, courageously protect, faithfully guide, and spiritually serve those under their care. They are trusted by their followers because they are reliable and willing to sacrifice for the benefit of their followers. Called and empowered by God, they lead with an immense awareness of accountability. To form faithful followers of Jesus, a shepherd must first be one. To lead sheep on righteous paths, the shepherd must first walk those paths. To provide for the sheep, a shepherd must first have a storehouse from which to provide. To protect the sheep, he must first know the dangers within and without and prepare himself to meet them. To guide the sheep, he must lead the whole flock, sometimes one at a time. He must serve them in such a way as to bring out the fullness of who they are. To spiritually lead the sheep, he must be a spiritual man and she must be a spiritual woman who sees his or her leadership as an extension of the presence of Christ in the lives of those he or she leads. Shepherd leaders know that their leadership will not be measured by their personal accomplishments but by the lives of those they lead.

The shepherd leader model works for the church: it lacks no dimension of leadership needed in the church. But more importantly, this model reflects the way in which God leads his children. He is personal, compassionate, an all-sufficient provider, an all-powerful protector, and a wise and righteous guide. This is the model to emulate. This is the kind of leader the church needs today.

CHAPTER 4

THE SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR

Introduction

Most people, even those who possess some natural leadership capacities, need training in order to become more effective leaders. Believing leadership is an ability which can be learned, and also believing leadership training to be one of the greatest needs of the church, this project's focus turned toward designing a leadership training seminar which would be presented on a regular basis at Northfield Baptist Church.

With the recognition that a comprehensive leadership training program would be too broad a goal for the time constraints of this program, I narrowed the focus of the leadership training seminar to two primary objectives. The first objective was to establish a vision for the type of leadership churches need today. Leadership books, leadership conferences, and personal interaction with both pastors and lay people led to an understanding that something was missing in today's church leadership culture. Much of the contemporary writings on church leadership presented common misrepresentations of shepherd leadership, portraying it as an ineffective model for the church in today's world. Listening to discouraged pastors and frustrated church members increased my awareness of the absence of gentle, relational, and purposeful shepherd leadership. The desire to reassert a vision of shepherding as a robust model for leaders at Northfield Baptist Church to emulate became a primary focus of this project.

The second objective of the leadership training seminar, a result of presenting a vision of shepherding as a model for leadership, became the implementation of a plan to regularly train and develop shepherd leaders at Northfield Baptist Church. Previously there has not been an established plan of consistent leadership training at the church. To

progress from having no leadership development strategy to raising up fully trained and experienced shepherd leaders would not be able to be achieved in the limited time allotment of this project. Much consideration led me to believe the way forward was to develop an eight-week shepherd leadership training seminar. Because one develops into a leader by leading, I was uncertain as to the effectiveness of a classroom approach to this training. However, George Barna's book on team leadership confirmed the legitimacy of this approach. He identifies seven methods for training leaders. One of these methods is formal, classroom-style instruction, which he notes is a universal leadership training method and one particularly suited for training people in the basics of leadership.¹ The classroom-styled seminar I developed is the first step towards a comprehensive plan for leadership training at Northfield Baptist Church.

Designing and implementing the leadership seminar spanned fourteen weeks. The first five weeks were devoted to designing the seminar and recruiting the participants. The remaining nine weeks included one week of pre-seminar interviews, six weeks of the seminar session, and two weeks for the post-seminar interviews.

Goals of the Project

In chapter one, I presented three specific goals for this leadership training project: (1) recruiting twelve participants, (2) designing the seminar curriculum, and (3) conducting a seminar. The following sections of this chapter will describe the strategies and methods employed to accomplish those goals.

Recruiting Seminar Participants

The first goal of the project was to recruit twelve men from within the church to participate in the leadership training seminar. I invited fifteen men who are either

¹George Barna, *The Power of Team Leadership* (Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2001), 131.

currently serving as church leaders or who are prospective church leaders for the future. The selection process included invitations to deacons, an associate pastor, and key men in the church who demonstrate potential for becoming church leaders in the future. From among the deacons invited, most have been in the church longer than the twenty-five years I have served here. All of them serve or have served as teachers in the church. They are spiritual men whose lives model consistency and support of the church. The associate pastor, a college and seminary graduate, has served with me since 2002 and provides oversight to the children's ministries of the church as well as business and financial areas. The other men invited to participate are individuals who either currently or previously were involved in ministries at the church and demonstrated qualification for further leadership responsibilities.

Demographic profile. The demographic profile of the seminar participants was diverse except for the fact that all were men. The invitation was extended only to men for several reasons. The associate pastor and deacons, all men by constitutional requirement, were key to the implementation of this first seminar. In addition, the plan to pair the deacons and pastor with the other participants made it appropriate to invite only men. Also, as this was the first leadership training seminar, it seemed most strategic to begin with men in the church. I hope to provide leadership training for women in the future as well.

Additional demographics are worth noting including the age demographic of the church, of which two were in their twenties, four were in their thirties, two were in their forties, four were in the fifties, and one was in his early sixties. In terms of marital and family status, twelve participants were married and one was single. From among the married men was a representation of forty children ranging in age from newborn to the thirties. Four of the participants had grandchildren. Since shepherd leadership begins in the home, it was encouraging to have strong homes represented.

In terms of racial demographics, eleven of the participants were white, one was Asian, and one was African American, resulting in 15 percent ethnic minority. The Northfield Baptist Church membership consists of approximately a 7 percent minority, thus the seminar demographic more than adequately represented the diversity that has consciously been embraced within the church. In addition, the vocations of the participants were varied, ranging from executives to teachers, from construction workers to a program coordinator for a group home. Most, though not all, serve in positions of leadership at their jobs.

Spiritual experience. When considering the spiritual experience of the group as a whole, there was an existing balance between the newest Christian (less than ten years) and the most mature Christian (more than fifty years), with a variety in between. In terms of church membership, the range was again evenly balanced, with some having joined the church less than five years ago and some having been church members for over thirty years.

Overall, the recruitment process was a success, having exceeded the original goal of twelve participants by one and also assembling a group that clearly represented the church membership as well as a range of church leadership and ministries. All participants expressed enthusiasm for the opportunity to be part of the seminar.

Designing the Training Seminar

The second goal of the project was to design the training seminar, which happened in the first five weeks of the fourteen-week project. The first step in this design process was to create a syllabus.² Since I was not using an existing leadership training curriculum, the seminar's objectives needed to be clearly identified. The syllabus explained the following six training objectives for the seminar: an individual who

²See appendix 6.

participated in this leadership training seminar would be able to (1) define shepherd leadership; (2) explain the essential features and functions of shepherd leaders; (3) value shepherd leadership as the biblical model for church leadership; (4) compare and contrast leadership in the church with leadership in the world; (5) write a personal philosophy of church leadership based on the shepherd leadership model; and (6) demonstrate qualities of shepherd leadership in an observable setting. In addition, the syllabus described the various activities and assessments that would be utilized during the eight weeks of the seminar. These will be described in greater detail in following sections.

After designing the seminar syllabus, creating the seminar curriculum was the next task. The curriculum was organized into six sessions. I drew the content for the sessions from material I gleaned from the D.Min. courses and reading of the past several years. I supplemented these resources with additional books, two Ph.D. dissertations, and seven journal articles on the specific subject of shepherd leadership, along with other resources covering topics such as servant leadership, exemplary leadership, team leadership, and spiritual leadership. The synthesis of these resources led me to correlate the six sessions with six themes. Each lesson incorporated an outline of the content as well as a desired participant response. Further development of the curriculum included the identification of teaching methods and assignments that would achieve each lesson's objective.

Upon completion of the design of the seminar, the next step was to assemble an expert panel to review my curriculum plan. I distributed a notebook to each panel member which contained the syllabus, an outline of each session, and all discussion questions, assessments, assignments, and evaluation rubrics for the seminar. The panel was instructed to evaluate the seminar design on the basis of seven criteria: (1) Was the content of the session relevant to the topic of shepherd leadership? (2) Did the content demonstrate biblical integrity? (3) Was the content theologically sound and was it consistent with the beliefs and values of Northfield Baptist Church? (4) Were the

session's objectives clear and did the session material clearly support the objective? (5) Did the session use strong teaching methods that complemented the desired objective? (6) Did the session material provide points of application that fulfilled the objective and reinforced the content? (7) Was the content of the session relevant to the training to the needs of Northfield Baptist Church? These criteria were identified to be either *insufficient*, *requires attention*, *sufficient*, or *exemplary*. The goal for the curriculum evaluation was to achieve a *sufficient* or above rating for 90 percent of the criteria evaluated.

The panel was given approximately two weeks to complete their evaluations. The first expert evaluated the curriculum as *exemplary*. He particularly noted the multiple correlations between the material on shepherd leadership and the five exemplary leadership practices identified by Kouzes and Posner, a correlation I made in the sessions of the seminar. Another panel member suggested more time for group discussion from the book the participants would be reading. He also suggested that I prepare a worksheet to assist the trainees in writing their personal leadership philosophy essays. Both of these recommendations were incorporated into the seminar. The third member returned the evaluations with rankings but no additional comments. The evaluations returned by the panel members rated every criteria of the seminar design at the *sufficient* or above level.

Implementing the Training Seminar

The third goal of this project was to implement the training seminar. This section will describe the four steps that comprised the seminar implementation: conducting pre-seminar interviews, completing pre-seminar leadership surveys, teaching the seminar, and completing post-seminar follow-up activities.

Pre-seminar interviews. The initial step in the implementation of the training seminar was to conduct pre-seminar interviews. Prior to the first session, I interviewed each participant, conducting thirty-minute interviews over the course of three days. The

interview consisted of five questions which the participants were not given in advance.³ I encouraged them to think out loud as they answered, explaining that I would take notes as they talked. The aim was to document their existing perspectives on leadership. If time allowed, I gave each participant the opportunity to ask questions relative to the upcoming seminar. Most were interested in the format of the training. All expressed a desire for emphasis on practical application of the training. Each interview was concluded with prayer. These pre-seminar interviews provided insight into the group's perceptions of shepherd leadership, their expectations of the seminar, and their personal evaluations of their own strengths and weaknesses. The interviews also provided a baseline for the group's understanding of the topic, which I was later able to use as a comparison to their post-seminar understanding.

Pre-seminar leadership surveys. The second step of the seminar implementation was the participants' completion of a pre-seminar personal leadership survey.⁴ As part of this project, I developed a fifty-statement personal leadership survey for each participant to complete. The survey was based on my study of effective leadership with an emphasis on shepherd leadership. Each statement expressed an action, attitude, or description related to a feature of shepherd leadership. The survey made use of a Likert scale, asking respondents to register their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. The survey was administered at the beginning of the first session, prior to any instruction. This provided a baseline of information used for measuring the effectiveness of the seminar when compared with the results after the same survey was re-administered at the conclusion of the seminar.

³See appendix 2.

⁴See appendix 5.

Teaching the seminar. The third step of the seminar implementation was the presentation of the leadership training material in a weekly seminar setting. The content of the seminar revolved around six themes: a definition and defense of the shepherd as a model for effective leadership, a description of the relational priority of shepherd leadership, an explanation of the providing, protecting, and guiding roles of the shepherd leader, and an explanation of the spiritual nature of shepherd leadership.

Included in the weekly seminar implementation were selected resources. These resources included notebooks containing a syllabus, outlines for each session, discussion guides, and assignments to be completed. A second resource utilized in the seminar was the book, *Shepherd Leadership: Wisdom for Leaders from Psalm 23*, by Blaine McCormick and David Davenport. The participants were instructed to read this book over the course of the seminar. This book was chosen because of its emphasis on presenting shepherding as an effective leadership model in all kinds of leadership settings, not just the church.

Key to the success of the weekly seminar implementation were the assessment tools utilized throughout. In addition to the personal leadership survey previously mentioned, two additional assessments were used. The first one was an emotional intelligence self-assessment the participants completed at the end of session two.⁵ This assessment contained forty statements that measured four domains of emotional intelligence: emotional awareness, emotional management, social emotional awareness, and relationship management. After rating their effectiveness in each of these domains, participants were instructed to do three things: first, to give an example of how they demonstrated their strongest domain in daily life; second, to think through how their weakest domain affected them and others in their daily lives; and third, to identify steps

⁵I did not design this assessment but used “The Quick Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment,” obtained from the San Diego City College website, accessed April 5, 2016, http://www.sdcity.edu/portals/0/cms_editors/mesa/pdfs/emotionalintelligence.

they could take to strengthen their weakest area and how this would benefit them in their daily life. The second assessment administered focused on spiritual growth.⁶ This assessment was intended to challenge the participants to think deeply about their spiritual development in six disciplines: abiding in Christ, living in the word, praying in faith, fellowshiping with believers, witnessing to the world, and ministering to others. This assessment became the basis for a follow-up assignment in which participants developed personal spiritual growth plans.

Another significant factor in the presentation of the weekly training material was the incorporation of mentoring relationships among the seminar participants. One of the most effective methods of training leaders is through mentoring relationships. For this reason, I paired each deacon and pastor with one of the other participants. During the seminar, these pairs carried out various assignments and activities together, including leading class discussions, completing a visitation assignment, and sharing with each other the results of the emotional intelligence assessment and appropriate corrective action. Desiring the mentor relationship to continue after the seminar, the pairs were asked to stay in contact for four months following the seminar for the purpose of accountability in implementing their spiritual growth plans.

The seminar assignments also served as an important element in the seminar training each week. The participants were asked to complete four outside assignments during the weeks of the seminar. The first assignment required them to observe a ministry team from within the church. Due to the limited time frame of the seminar, it was not feasible to give the participants specific leadership assignments for the purpose of evaluating observable growth. I chose instead to have them evaluate an existing

⁶The “Spiritual Growth Assessment Process” was obtained from the Lifeway website, accessed April 7, 2016, <http://www.lifeway.com>.

ministry team in action. An observation form was provided to them, with the opportunity for them to evaluate what they had observed as it related to the seminar training.⁷

The second assignment given involved the participants visiting a widow or shut-in from the church, with this visit to occur within the time frame of the seminar. The participants completed this visit in pairs and were encouraged to implement the skills of listening, encouraging, and empathizing, all topics that had been discussed in the seminar as being related to shepherd leadership. Following the visit, each paired team wrote a brief account of their visit and what had been learned as a result.

A third assignment completed by the participants was a four-month spiritual growth plan, a follow-up to the spiritual growth assessment completed after session four. Each participant was instructed to ask three people to complete a “spiritual growth observation response sheet” on him. Using both their own spiritual assessment and the three assessments from the others as guidelines, the participants then prepared a plan of action for improvement. Suggested actions steps were offered in the seminar materials to help the men think through a specific plan of action.

The final assignment asked the participants to put into writing their personal philosophy of shepherd leadership. This assignment gave them the opportunity to synthesize what they had learned and express it in their own words. The length of this assignment was limited to seven paragraphs, and a template was provided.⁸ These written essays provided me with another resource for evaluating what they had learned during the seminar.

Post-seminar follow-up activities. The fourth step of the seminar implementation consisted of post-seminar follow-up activities designed to evaluate the

⁷See appendix 9.

⁸See appendix 10.

effectiveness of the seminar.⁹ The first follow-up activity was a seminar evaluation which was distributed at the conclusion of the last weekly session. This anonymous evaluation posed five questions that gathered feedback on the content, activities, and assignments of the seminar. The purpose of this tool was not to measure the growth of the participants but to receive feedback on the seminar itself. I intend to offer this seminar again in the future and plan to use this feedback to improve it.

The second follow-up activity used to assess the seminar's effectiveness was post-seminar interviews, conducted with the participants shortly after the conclusion of the seminar. I utilized the same questions I had used in the pre-seminar interviews, again writing down their responses and giving them opportunity to share comments.¹⁰ The interviews were thirty-minutes in length and concluded with prayer. The responses to these interviews provided comparative results helpful in the final project analysis.

The final follow-up activity was a post-seminar leadership survey. This survey was identical to the pre-seminar leadership survey completed in the first session. The survey provided an additional tool for post-seminar evaluation. The men were asked to write their personal leadership essays before completing the survey, and to return both at the time of their post seminar interview.

Conclusion

When I designed the shepherd leadership training seminar, I wrote six objectives I desired to accomplish with the participants. The first objective was that they be able to define shepherd leadership. This objective was carried out through the seminar instruction, and the personal philosophy of leadership essays the participants wrote. The second objective of the seminar was that they be able to explain the essential features and

⁹See appendix 11.

¹⁰See appendix 4.

functions of shepherd leaders. This objective was also achieved through the seminar instruction and the participants' written philosophies. The third objective was that they value shepherd leadership as the biblical model for church leadership. This objective was accomplished by studying passages of Scripture that demonstrated the priority of shepherding as the model of leadership for God's people. The "Shepherd Leader or CEO" case study was a discussion that concentrated on the value of shepherding as a relevant model for leadership.¹¹ The fourth objective of the seminar was that participants be able to compare and contrast leadership in the church with leadership in the world. This objective was accomplished by the relevance of the shepherd model and by explaining the role of the shepherd as a spiritual leader. The fifth objective was that the participants write a personal philosophy of church leadership based on the shepherd leader model. This objective was achieved by their completion of this writing assignment. The sixth and final objective of the leadership seminar was that the participants be able to demonstrate qualities of shepherd leadership in an observable setting. This objective was accomplished in the seminar through younger participants leading the book discussions, through the visitation assignment, and through the completion of the seminar assignments.

Conducting the leadership seminar was an exciting challenge through which I have grown. The participants made the task easier, and several of them took time to encourage me throughout the weeks of the seminar. I learned from both the seasoned leaders and the young inexperienced men in the seminar. Taking this first step to initiate intentional leadership development at Northfield Baptist Church provided me the opportunity to see the enthusiasm for leadership development and the desire of these men to grow as leaders. The evaluation of my project in the next chapter will measure the overall success of the seminar and the achievement of its stated goals.

¹¹See appendix 7.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

Introduction

This final chapter will provide an evaluation of the project. The evaluation will be accomplished by reviewing the project's purpose and goals, the degree to which the purpose and goals were met, and data to support the conclusions. Strengths and weaknesses of the project will be identified along with recommendations for future improvements. Finally, this chapter will offer theological considerations and personal reflections on the project.

Evaluation of the Project's Purpose

The purpose of this project was to design and implement a seminar for training shepherd leaders at Northfield Baptist Church in Northfield, Ohio. This purpose was successfully achieved in the conducting of the training seminar itself and in the positive feedback received from all who participated in the seminar.

Evaluation of the Project's Goals

The purpose of this project was achieved by accomplishing three goals. The first goal was to recruit twelve individuals from the church membership to participate in the eight-week seminar. I personally invited fifteen men—six deacons, an associate pastor, and eight other individuals—to go through the training. Thirteen accepted the invitation, successfully achieving this goal.

The second goal of this project was to design a curriculum for the six sessions of the shepherd leadership training seminar. The curriculum plan was submitted to a panel of experts consisting of a pastor outside of Northfield Baptist Church, an assistant

pastor serving on the church staff of Northfield Baptist, and a retired Christian school administrator who is a member of Northfield Baptist. This goal was successfully achieved when the panel reviewed the content and each rated it at an “exemplary” level in all seven categories designated on the evaluation rubric.

The third goal of this project was to train the participants in shepherd leadership through the implementation of the six-session training seminar. I administered a personal leadership survey to each participant at the beginning of the seminar and again when the seminar concluded (see appendix 5). To provide additional information that would help measure the success of this goal, I conducted pre- and post-seminar interviews. Also, each participant wrote a personal philosophy of leadership essay. The results gleaned from these tools will now be evaluated.

Quantitative Results of the Seminar

The null hypothesis was that there would be no difference between the means of the pre- and post-seminar leadership survey scores. The research hypothesis was that there would be a difference in these scores. Analysis of the data showed that the pre-seminar mean score of 4.66 decreased to 4.62 after the seminar was conducted (see table A1). A two-tailed t-test for dependent samples was performed. The *t*-Stat of .35 was less than the *t*-Critical of 2.18, and the change in scores was therefore found to be not statistically significant. The *p* value of .73 confirmed that the result was not statistically significant, and the null hypothesis was not able to be refuted. Further analysis indicates that although there was a trend for the scores of the younger participants to improve their post-seminar scores more than older participants, the effect was not strong enough to reach the level of statistical significance.¹ A number of reasons may explain this result.

¹The pre-seminar mean for the younger six participants was 4.35, and their post-seminar mean was 4.44, a slight increase ($t_{(5)} = .5, p < .64$). The pre-seminar mean for the older seven participants was 4.92, and their post-seminar mean was 4.78, a slight decrease ($t_{(6)} = 1.21, p < .27$).

First, this result may in part be due to the small sample size of thirteen. Added to the small sample size was the fact that only seven participants attended every session, while six missed one or more sessions.² The effect of the absenteeism cannot be substantiated, but combined with the small sample, both are likely to have impacted the results.

Second, the level of previous training and experience by the majority of the participants left little margin for statistically significant improvement. Ten of the thirteen participants were experienced leaders both within and outside of the church setting, while only three had little or no experience. Additionally, pre-seminar interviews indicated that eleven of the thirteen participants already felt they were equipped to varying degrees as shepherd leaders. New leaders would more likely have experienced increased impact. A third reason is related: the seminar may have had an opposite effect on some participants by raising their awareness of needed growth. The pre-seminar mean of 4.66 was higher than expected (see table A1). According to the Lickert scale used for the survey, the group's average response to all the statements approached "agree" before the seminar was conducted. The seminar may have effectively communicated a biblical perspective on leadership, resulting in the participants becoming more aware of ways in which they fell short of the leadership descriptions offered on the survey, which was translated into decreased post-survey scores. Fourth, the survey itself was heavily behavior- and attitude-based (12 percent of the statements were related to knowledge and 88 percent related to behavior and attitude) while the seminar content was more heavily knowledge-based. A knowledge-based measuring tool for a knowledge-based seminar would have more likely produced a statistically significant result.

²While the mean for those who attended every session slightly increased (.06), it was statistically insignificant ($t_{(6)} = .35, p < .74$). The mean for those who missed one or more sessions decreased by 0.14, which was also statistically insignificant ($t_{(5)} = 1.18, p < .29$).

Qualitative Results of the Seminar

Though the seminar did not produce a statistically significant increase in the dependent sample of survey scores, a qualitative analysis supports the conclusion that the seminar yielded beneficial results. This qualitative analysis will draw data from the leadership survey, responses in the interviews, and statements from the essays. The information gleaned from these sources indicates growth. Responses from both younger participants and veteran church leaders reveal that personal improvements resulted from their participation in the seminar.

Survey data. None of the statements on the leadership survey, when analyzed statistically, demonstrated a significant increase in the pre- and post-seminar scores. However, the following statements from the survey offer helpful evaluative insights in measuring the quality and effect of the seminar. Four of them registered the greatest amount of overall improvement. Also, they were tied to core concepts taught in the seminar.

Statement 31 on the research tool probed whether participants believed that “the primary task of leadership is meeting the needs of others.” On the post-seminar survey, six participants increased their scores, two decreased their scores, and five scores remained the same (see table A2). Here again, after the seminar was completed, there was a tendency for participants to come more into agreement with the statement, but this trend failed to reach the point of statistical significance ($t_{(11)} = .94, p < .36$). Interestingly, one person marked “strongly disagree” on the pre-seminar survey, but a different person marked “strongly disagree” on the post-seminar survey. Overall, the surveys had very few “strongly disagree” responses making the presence of two on this statement an anomaly.

Statement 42 asserted, “The style of leadership with which one leads is equally as important as completing the task” (see table A3). On the post-seminar survey scores, one participant’s response decreased, five increased, and seven scores remained the same.

Although there was a tendency for the seminar to increase agreement with the statement, the increase did not reach the level of statistical significance ($t_{(12)} = 1.90, p < .08$). This concept is fundamental to asserting the importance of a shepherding approach to leadership. Noteworthy is the fact that two of the younger participants initially disagreed with this statement, but agreed after the seminar.

Statement 43 honed in on a leader's need for renewal: "I regularly take time to encourage my own heart" (see table A4). Once again, while the tendency was for the seminar to increase agreement with the statement, the increase was not statistically significant ($t_{(12)} = 1.3, p < .22$). On the post-seminar survey four participants increased their scores, two decreased them, and seven remained unchanged. Post-seminar discussions with the three individuals who decreased their scores suggested that the decrease was due to a greater awareness of the need for inward renewal than they had at the beginning of the seminar. This insight gained from personal conversations and the interviews provides confirmation that in some cases, lower scores on the post-seminar survey may, in fact, be attributed to what one learned and took to heart during the weeks of the seminar

Statement 49 raised the issue of a leader's spiritual character: "The character traits of a spiritual leader are evident in my life" (see table A5). After the seminar was completed, the level of agreement remained virtually unchanged ($t_{(12)} = .43, p < .67$). On the post-seminar survey three participants increased their rankings, two decreased their rankings, and eight remained unchanged. The two who decreased their score were the same two who also decreased their scores on statement 43 and for the same reason of increased awareness.

Interview data. The pre- and post-seminar interviews I conducted with each participant also provided information that may be used to qualitatively measure the implementation of the leadership training seminar. A comparison of the information

gathered through these interviews and through written essays on their personal philosophy of shepherd leadership indicated a successful implementation of the training seminar. A sampling of those the post-interview responses supports this conclusion.

Responses from the younger seminar participants support the conclusion that the seminar was successful. One such participant said he felt that in the pre-seminar interview he had described what he called a more “worldly” outlook on leadership. As a result of the seminar he said he came to understand that shepherding was the model God provided to show leadership that works (participant 7). Likewise, another younger leader affirmed that as a result of the seminar he was more grounded in shepherd leadership as the model God set forth in Scripture for all church leaders. He placed significant value on the interaction with other men who were committed to growing together as leaders (participant 12). Another young man shared his dream of being in ministry and affirmed his belief that God still wants to use him in ministry, encouraged by the shepherd model of leadership (participant 13). A fourth younger participant stated that the seminar had stirred his desire to lead at home and in the church by providing foundations which he would continue to develop as a leader (participant 8).

Responses from veteran church leaders who participated in the seminar support the conclusion that the seminar was successful. Several stated that the seminar had reinforced their calling to lead and had increased their desire to be multipliers of other leaders (participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 9, and 10). One veteran deacon stated the seminar had encouraged his sense of making progress as a leader, thus helping him to gain greater confidence (participant 1). Another deacon indicated his participation had confirmed his existing leadership strengths as being appropriate for church leadership (participant 3). Yet another deacon stated the seminar had provided him with a new model for his own teaching responsibilities in the workplace and shared how the training had inspired him to submit a proposal to his boss for a new leadership training idea (participant 4). Still another veteran leader observed how the seminar had confirmed his understanding of

effective leadership, reminding him that one does not have to be a pastor to be a shepherd leader (participant 9). These responses provide evidence that participants grasped the concepts of shepherd leadership as a model for true leadership, not simply a way of identifying pastoral ministry. These responses also indicate application of themes repeated throughout the seminar, such as the essential features and functions of a shepherd leader and the need to multiply leaders in order to raise up the next generation of shepherd leaders.

Though the personal leadership survey did not indicate statistically significant growth, the survey did provide evidence of progress in the lives of those who participated. The interviews and personal leadership essays together provide testimony of qualitative growth in the leadership development of the participants. Thus, the information gleaned from these tools indicates the goal of seminar implementation was successfully met.

Strengths of the Project

There are several strengths to this project. Four will be highlighted: a solid biblical foundation, a concrete leadership model, an effective correlation with current leadership research, and useful application of the shepherd leadership concepts.

The Solid Biblical Foundations

The content of the seminar was strong. Part of that strength was due to its solid biblical foundation. My research for the shepherd model began with a systematic research of Scripture. Studying numerous Old Testament texts showed the recurring picture of God's pattern for leaders. The Gospels presented Jesus Christ as the supreme model of the shepherd leader. Acts and the epistles affirmed the biblical priority of shepherd leadership. The study of Scripture yielded the features of shepherd leadership that were developed in the seminar. Thus, the core of what I taught was not the pragmatic imposition of leadership theories upon biblical examples. Rather, the core was

solidly biblical, derived from exposition and examples. The content and the rationale for teaching this content were thoroughly in keeping with what the Bible teaches about church leadership.

The Model of Shepherd Leadership

The second strength of the project was the development of a well-defined model for shepherd leadership. That model proposed five features of shepherd leadership: relationship, provision, protection, guidance, and soul care. These features provided the overall framework for the content of the sessions. Additional leadership concepts introduced in the content were presented as practical applications of those key features. The features also provided direction regarding the selection of the practical assignments the participants completed in the seminar, like the visitation assignment and the spiritual growth assessment.

The Correlation to Current Leadership Research

A third strength of the project was the correlation of shepherd leadership to existing leadership research. The seminar was not a Bible study on leadership that restricted itself to biblical content. It was a leadership seminar built upon a biblical core and connected to a much broader body of leadership material. Rather than using an existing leadership curriculum, I chose to synthesize the wealth of material gleaned from the lectures, discussions, readings, and application assignments of my doctoral program as well as supplementary reading that was part of the research conducted on shepherd leadership. I discovered that the connections between shepherd leadership and current theories of leadership were easily made. Greenleaf's writings on servant leadership, Kouzes' and Posner's model of exemplary leadership, and Mohler's exposition of convictional leadership all contributed to and strengthened the practical leadership

content of the seminar. The strength of the content was verified by the expert panel who evaluated the curriculum and by the feedback of participants.

One tool that particularly correlated the biblical model of shepherd leadership with current leadership theories and practices was the book the participants read: *Shepherd Leadership: Wisdom for Leaders from Psalm 23*, by Blaine McCormick and David Davenport. I chose this book because it specifically developed shepherd leadership, which complemented the material I was presenting in the seminar, and it helped them see that shepherding is a strong model for leadership in general, not just in the church. Reading this book was a strong feature of the seminar.

The Applications of Shepherd Leadership

The biblical study and research of contemporary leadership resources to yielded the seminar curriculum clearly showed the need to incorporate effective applications of shepherd leadership in the lives of the participants. As a result, I was intentional in the selection of the teaching methods assignments, which I believe were another strength of the project.

The pairing of participants. One of the best practical features of the seminar was pairing the older, more experienced leaders with the younger participants. The matching of the participants was intentional. Since mentoring is both an effective and necessary method for training leaders, I desired to make use of this method in the seminar. Mentoring is a practical way of heeding Paul's exhortation to train men who would be able to train men—a vision for multi-generational leadership development. My vision for raising up the next generation of leaders requires the active engagement of the older generation with the younger. This method provided an opportunity for that to happen, and as such, it was a clear strength of the project.

Specific leadership development activities. The activities I developed for the seminar gave the participants opportunities for action. First, each pair visited one of the church's widows or shut-ins. Since shepherd leaders are caring leaders, this assignment provided practical experience in caring for someone in need. The assignment also challenged them to practice the skill of listening. I provided questions to ask the individual they were visiting, and then instructed them to write down what they learned about that individual from the visit.

The second activity the participants completed was to observe a church ministry team in action. The strength of this assignment was how it helped them apply what they were learning by observing and evaluating leaders of the boards, committees, and ministry teams in action. I prepared a written evaluation form for them to complete that covered eight areas. Specifically, they were encouraged to look for effective shepherd leadership practices and their impact on the group or the absence of the same and its effect (see appendix 9). The assignment provided a means for reinforcing the principles being presented in the seminar.

A third activity in which the participants engaged was leading a book discussion at the beginning of the seminar sessions. The chapters of the book the participants ended with reflection questions and application points, which provided a starting point for the book discussions. This activity accomplished several things. First, the activity was carried out by the pairs with the younger one leading the discussion. This required the pair to meet in order to prepare to lead the discussion. Second, the activity created an opportunity for the younger men to lead the whole group. Third, it helped participants process what they were reading with their partner. Fourth, it gave the discussion leaders the opportunity to put thoughts into words, which is a crucial discipline for good communication, which in turn is essential for effective leadership.

Leadership self-evaluations. Another way in which the participants applied the leadership material was through the completion of two self-evaluations. The first one was an emotional intelligence assessment, which was a tool I found in the process of reading on the subject. The assessment helped participants examine themselves in this area, identify their weaknesses, and think through the negative impact of the weaknesses as well as the positive impact of improving. The pairs spent time reviewing and discussing the results of their assessments together.

The second self-evaluation was a spiritual growth assessment.³ Shepherd leaders are spiritual leaders. Therefore, I felt it was important to have the participants assess themselves in this area and develop a plan of action for growth. The men completed the self-assessment and then developed a personal spiritual growth plan as a follow-up assignment. The growth plan served as a catalyst for accountability in the post-seminar follow-up assignment.

Leadership discussions. A final strength of the project was the inclusion of the participants in teaching the sessions through discussions. The discussions kept the seminar from becoming too centered on the teacher and drew upon the wealth of knowledge and experience possessed by other leaders participating in the seminar. These discussions helped translate the content from theory into practice. I knew the participants desired to learn more than leadership theory but to be assisted in practical application. The discussions provided insights from the real life experiences of the men. I agree with the follow-up evaluations of the seminar that cited these discussions as one of the strongest elements of the seminar.

I believe these application activities—pairings, leadership opportunities, practical activities, self-evaluations, and discussions—were effective in complementing

³See Chapter 4 for information on both the emotional intelligence and spiritual growth assessments.

the strengths of the project and led to even greater outcomes in the lives of the participants.

Weaknesses of the Project

Four weaknesses diminished the results of the project. First, the amount of material was too much for the amount of time set aside for the seminar. In the six sessions of the seminar, no fewer than eighteen different leadership-related topics were raised. Several participants evaluated the seminar as heavy on content. According to several participants, more time each week and more sessions would have been good. The curriculum will be revised in the future to allow for more concentrated attention on specific topics in a given session rather than attempting to cover multiple topics.

A second weakness of the seminar was a lack of hands-on leadership experiences. Because leadership is learned by doing, the more opportunities one had for doing, the more growth they will experience. The seminar included a variety of practical activities, but opportunities for participants to be involved in actual leadership were limited. More intentional experiences would address this weakness. Future plans for leadership training will limit the breadth of knowledge content to allow for more practical experiences.

A third weakness was the process by which the seminar content was evaluated. While I appreciated the feedback from the curriculum review panel, they offered few suggestions for improving the plan. I did not expect to receive such high evaluations across all the categories on the first review of my plan. Virtually no changes were recommended by the panel. More critical input could have strengthened the seminar, and may have provided additional ideas for leadership formation.

A fourth weakness of the seminar was the overall attendance. The letter of invitation stated that attending the six sessions was essential to participating in the seminar. When each participant signed the enrollment form, he agreed to complete the

requirements of the seminar to the best of their ability, which included an attendance commitment. Prior to the seminar, three participants indicated they would each need to miss one session due to prior commitments. One person was missing from the first session, which was expected; two were missing from the second session, which was also expected. Everyone attended the third session. The fourth and fifth sessions were each missing one person, which was not expected; four were missing from the sixth and final session, which was unexpected. Of the thirteen men in the seminar, only seven were present for every session. In the future, the attendance commitment will need to be clarified and agreed upon by all participants prior to enrolling in the seminar.

What I Would Do Differently

There are a number of changes that would make this project better. First, I would change the scheduling of the seminar. Conducting the seminar so closely to the end of the school year and the beginning of the summer season when vacation travels began proved to be a hindrance. Also, the sessions occurred after the Sunday evening service (with the exception of one session), which was not an ideal time within the current context of the church's schedule. I seemed to make a long and full day even longer for participants. I am considering two options. One is to conduct the training session on Sunday evenings in the place of an evening service. The other option is to offer leadership breakfasts one Saturday per month with each meeting focusing on one topic of shepherd leadership with a follow-up assignment.

Second, I would recruit differently. Inviting more individuals to participate, twenty for example, would increase the sample size for testing purposes. A larger number of participants would make it feasible to throw out survey results of those who missed sessions, lessening the impact of absenteeism on the overall measurable results of the seminar. Inviting more new leaders into the seminar would also make a positive difference in the overall measurable results of the seminar.

Third, I would choose the expert curriculum review panel differently. Two of the three members belonged to my church, which may have introduced a bias into their evaluations. Choosing a panel of entirely external people would likely produce a more objective and helpfully critical evaluation. Also, I would include face-to-face meetings with the evaluators at which time we would go over and discuss their written evaluations. Such an added activity would probably generate more helpful input regarding the seminar curriculum.

Fourth, I would utilize mentoring more as a training method in the seminar. This change would require pre-seminar mentor training. Also, to make greater use of mentoring, more of the leadership seminar could be conducted in the one-on-one or one-on-two setting, and less of the seminar taught in the large group setting. The seminar leader could still cover the material presented in this project but do more of that presentation through the mentors to their mentees. Providing more opportunities for mentors and mentees to actually lead together would make the seminar stronger.

Fifth, I would provide greater clarity regarding the seminar assignments. Participants were not always clear as to when assignments were due, and in the end, not every participant turned in all the assignments. In the future, I would prepare a syllabus listing all of the assignments and when they were due. I would then review that syllabus at the end of each session, particularly noting what was due the next week.

Finally, I would utilize a different leadership assessment tool. The survey I designed did not effectively measure what I hoped to measure. If the seminar remained knowledge-based, as this one was, I would redesign the tool to measure shepherd leadership knowledge. If the seminar was revamped to focus on more practical leadership experiences, I would design the tool to measure progress in the areas experienced. Another alternative would be to use an existing assessment tool. In the course of research, I discovered a tool called “The Shepherd Leadership Inventory.” This twenty-six item assessment, based on the three shepherd leadership behaviors of

providing, protecting, and guiding, was designed to measure the degree to which individuals lead as shepherds in their workplaces. The tool has been analyzed and determined to be valid and reliable in measuring shepherd leadership behaviors.⁴

Theological Reflection

As I reflect on this project, three beliefs rise to the surface. First, shepherd leaders understand leadership to be a fundamentally theological phenomenon rather than merely a social phenomenon. Such a perspective on leadership sees it as a relationship existing between the leader, the follower, and God. One cannot ignore God in the equation of leadership and still maintain an understanding of leadership with theological integrity. All leadership exists for the glory of God, is to be performed out of love for God, and is to pattern itself after the example of God. This fact may be taken for granted in the contemporary literature on church leadership, but it seems to get lost in the affirmation of the social dynamics of leadership. While leadership certainly is the ability to influence others, that dynamic of influence must be regulated by the will and work of God through a leader.

Second, shepherd leaders understand the church to be a community before it is a corporation. As a community, the church is a people who share together in the life created by the redeeming work of Jesus Christ and the regenerating, baptizing, and empowering work of the Holy Spirit. The church belongs to Christ; he is its head. The church is indwelt and filled with the Holy Spirit; he is its power. The church is neither a physical building nor the sum total of its programs. This community is the body of Christ functioning as his presence on earth, the bride of Christ being formed into the beauty of

⁴“The Shepherd Leadership Inventory (SLI)”, accessed August 19, 2016, <http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/shepherd-leadership-inventory-sli/69742>. See also James E. Swalm, Jr., “The Development of Shepherd Leadership Theory and the Validation of the Shepherd Leadership Inventory (SLI)” (PhD diss., Regent University, 2009).

his likeness as it awaits his return, and the temple of the Holy Spirit that displays the glory of God's transforming grace. Leadership in the church should reflect this identity.

God has given this community of the redeemed his vision for their future: a people ransomed from every tribe, language, people and nation who will become a kingdom of priests to God and reign on the earth (Rev 5:9b-10). This vision drives the mission of the church to "make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19). To accomplish this mission, God raises up leaders to "equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Eph 4:11-16). If I desire to be a faithful and effective leader, I must embrace this vision, engage in this mission, and devote myself to fulfilling this assignment.

Church leaders are shepherd who must accept the responsibility to equip the saints to serve and mature the saints to stand true to God in the midst of spiritual warfare. Anchoring the saints to God's truth and leading them according to God's love results in the building up of God's church. This task governs the work of shepherd leaders. Churches need systems for managing finances, maintaining properties, assimilating people, training volunteers, developing leaders, and implementing strategic plans. However, the systems of the corporation must always serve the community, not the other way around. Those who oversee the systems of the corporation must do so as shepherds, entrusted with a divine vision and mission, who seek to serve the community.

Third, shepherd leaders understand their leadership to be a gifting. While God calls and ordains individuals to certain positions of oversight in the church, shepherd leadership is not exclusively reserved for those who have been professionally trained to occupy those positions. Scholars explain leadership both in terms of process and ability. While both explanations are beneficial, they are incomplete explanations of the nature of leadership God wills for the church. Leading God's people requires the enablement of God's grace, which animates the process and empowers the ability. The ability to lead in a manner that builds up the church is a result of God's working through a leader.

Therefore, to be a truly effective shepherd leader in the church, one must be in right relationship with God and dependent upon the Holy Spirit.

Personal Reflections

This project sometimes discouraged me, often overwhelmed me, but ultimately inspired me as a leader. I was sometimes discouraged by how much I have failed to do as a leader—cast vision, give feedback, empower others, and mentor new leaders. The awareness of these failures was humbling, but what strengthened me throughout was remembering the source of my adequacy (2 Cor 2:16). I was overwhelmed by the immensity of the subject of leadership and the pressing need to develop new leaders within my church. Reading on the subjects of transformational, exemplary, servant, resonant, and team leadership, I was overwhelmed as to where to begin. I have always had difficulty breaking down the big picture, but this project compelled me to do so in the task of developing leaders. More than being discouraged or overwhelmed, I was inspired by this project as I interacted with other leaders and put into practice the things I was learning. I was inspired as I studied materials that confirmed beliefs I have regarding church leadership but have never clearly articulated. As I finish this project, I finish encouraged and motivated with new zeal to raise up the next generation of church leaders. I will conclude with several personal reflections.

First, this project helped me become a more confident leader. One of my greatest weaknesses as a leader has been a lack of confidence. Part of this lack of confidence may be attributed to personality (my DISC profile identified me as a stable-contemplative-influence (SCI) personality type), which tends to be security-oriented and cautious. I am a person who has depended on receiving assurances from others before confidently initiating action. There is wisdom in consulting with others, but this desire for assurance was rooted more in emotional need rather than spiritual wisdom. This project has helped me become more comfortable with who I am. Personality type does

not have to determine one's leadership potential. While leadership is expressed through personality, personality itself is not the substance of leadership.

Additionally, as a result of this project, I believe I have found, what Kouzes and Posner call, my own voice as a leader. I have sometimes felt that my leadership did not flow from my innermost being, but from my head where the leadership insights of others were lodged. Studying, discussing, writing, and teaching on leadership has helped me move from explaining what others say to expressing what I believe about leadership. Now that these insights are mine, I feel greater authenticity as a leader and more confidence as I live them out.

Second, this project helped me grow into a more confident trainer. This reflection is related to the previous one. Lacking confidence undermined my belief that I could credibly teach leadership to others. My previous attempts to train leaders felt like I was dispensing someone else's insights rather than teaching leadership from my own experience. This project committed me to train a group of leaders, several of whom were more experienced than me, farther along in the process of leadership growth, and as capable of teaching a leadership seminar themselves. Yet, I knew I was the one who needed to conduct the training. As I prepared and led the seminar, I realized that I have insights, experiences, and beliefs regarding leadership that I felt compelled to share, confident that it would benefit others. More than any time in the past, as I trained these men, I felt like I was speaking confidently with my own voice. I have already started planning the next steps for leadership development at Northfield Baptist Church and am eager to train other leaders in the church.

Third, this project deepened my conviction that the way I lead others is just as important as what they accomplish under my leadership. Church success is not ultimately discovered in the number of members, the size of its budget, the breadth of its programming, or its net worth on a balance sheet. The success of a church is revealed in the life of its members. Shepherd leaders are committed to the full development of

people, not just the accomplishment of tasks. I am more committed than ever to being a shepherd leader and advocating shepherding as the model for all church leaders. To be a credible advocate requires that I continue to improve my own leadership, especially leading the whole church forward with vision-casting, strategic planning, decision-making, empowerment, and mentoring. I am a capable preacher and effective shepherd of individuals, but I must continue to become a more effective leader of the entire church. Shepherd leaders lead on both the individual and group levels; I am committed to becoming effective on both levels. I want my leadership to be a living illustration of the effectiveness of shepherd leadership, not just for pragmatic reasons, but because it is the model provided by Jesus.

Fourth, this project has impressed upon me the necessity of empowering others to lead. In the earliest stages of this project, I expressed the desire to see the leadership structure of Northfield eventually changed to be led by a plurality of elders, both paid and volunteer. Such a change would be momentous for the church requiring biblical instruction for the congregation, significant reorganization of the church's leadership structure, and training people. As I reflected on this desire, I realized that creating a new structure for the church's leadership was not the greatest need. Rather, empowering more individuals was our greatest need. No matter the organizational structure, more people must be empowered to lead. If I empower more leaders, whether or not the structure is ever changed, the leadership will be more effective. If Northfield Baptist Church is going to be built according to Christ's design, and if it is going to experience healthy growth, I must be a pastor who empowers other leaders.

Finally, church leadership is humbling. It is not a platform for self-recognition and advancement but an opportunity to serve others. The shepherd exemplifies this fact. As a shepherd, my leadership must always be directed toward the well-being of the flock with a keen sense of accountability to the flock's true owner. My success will not

ultimately be measured by how many people I lead but by what the people I lead become as a result of my commitment to protect, provide, and guide the flock.

Conclusion

Though there are many ways to improve this project, its success demonstrated that men of Northfield Baptist Church desire to be trained as leaders. Their enthusiasm motivated me throughout the seminar. I asked each of the participants to describe how they envisioned themselves functioning as shepherd leaders in the next one to five years. Several veteran leaders envisioned themselves mentoring younger leaders. Others saw themselves serving as youth leaders, ABF leaders, and ministry team leaders. Some realized they must accept the responsibilities of greater levels of leadership within the church, whether as deacons or, as I would envision, lay elders. For some, vocational ministry may be in their future. For all of these futures to be realized, more training will be needed. This project has better prepared me to come alongside these men, and others like them, to help them realize their hopes for leadership. I am thankful for how I have grown through this experience, and will be grateful for the opportunity to help others do the same.

APPENDIX 1

ENROLLMENT FORM FOR THE SHEPHERD
LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR

Name: _____

What are the two best ways to contact you and receive a prompt response?

- Cell phone text (provide number) _____
- Cell phone call (provide number) _____
- Email (what address) _____
- Home phone (provide number) _____

Please provide the following information; you may attach another sheet as needed.

1. What is your age?

____under 20 ____20-29 ____30-39 ____40-49 ____50-59 ____60-69

2. What is your marital status?

- Single
- Married

Have you ever been divorced?

- No
- Yes

3. Please provide the first names and ages of the individuals living in your household.

4. How long have you been a Christian (in years)?

___less than 10 ___11-19 ___20-29 ___30-39 ___40-49 ___50-59

5. How long have you been attending Northfield Baptist Church (in years)?

___less than 5 ___5-10 ___11-15 ___16-20 ___21-25 ___26-30 ___31-35

6. Describe any leadership roles (formal or informal) in which you have participated either inside or outside the church.

7. What are your expectations of this leadership training seminar?

8. What are you not expecting from this leadership training seminar?

Agreement to Participate

I commit to participate in the Shepherd Leadership Training Seminar and to complete the requirements associated with this seminar to the best of my ability.

Signature

Date

APPENDIX 2

PRE-SEMINAR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. This seminar will focus on shepherd leadership. How would you define shepherd leadership?
2. Think of experiences you have had as a leader, both formal and informal, both within and outside of a ministry context. What did you find to be your strengths as a leader? What did you find to be your weaknesses as a leader?
3. Based on your understanding of leadership today, how would you describe an effective leader?
4. As a result of participating in this seminar, what do you expect to learn that will make you a more effective leader?
5. Do you currently view yourself as being equipped to serve as a shepherd leader at Northfield Baptist Church?
Follow-up: Why or why not?

APPENDIX 3

SEMINAR CURRICULUM EVALUATION RUBRIC

Shepherd Leadership Seminar Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
Session # ___ Evaluation					
1=insufficient 2=requires attention 3=sufficient 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The content of this lesson is relevant to the seminar topic of shepherd leadership training					
The content of this session accurately presents what the Bible teaches on shepherd leadership.					
The content of this session is theologically sound and consistent with the church's Articles of Faith.					
The objective of this session is clear and the content supports and develops that objective.					
This session utilizes strong teaching methods that complement the desired objective of the session.					
This session presents points of application that effectively fulfill the session's objective and reinforce the content presented.					
This session offers training that is relevant to the needs and setting of this particular church.					

APPENDIX 4

POST-SEMINAR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. This seminar focused on shepherd leadership. As a result of participating in this seminar, how would you define shepherd leadership?
2. In the pre-seminar interview you identified your strengths as a leader to be _____; and you identified your weaknesses as a leader to be _____. In what ways has your participation in this seminar enhanced your strengths as a leader? In what ways has your participation in this seminar improved your weaknesses as a leader?
3. Based on your understanding of leadership today, how would you describe an effective leader?
4. As a result of participating in this seminar, what did you learn that will make you a more effective leader?
5. Do you currently view yourself as being equipped to serve as a shepherd leader at Northfield Baptist Church?
Follow-up: As a result of this seminar, in what areas do you feel more equipped as a shepherd leader?

APPENDIX 5

SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR
PERSONAL LEADERSHI SURVEY

Name _____ Pre-Seminar ____ Post-Seminar ____

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to identify the participant’s current understanding, practices, and requirements of church leadership. This research is being conducted by Mark Ashley for the purpose of project research. In this research, you will be asked to complete the following written survey. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.* By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Using the following scale, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by marking your response in the appropriate column for each statement. It is important that you respond to each statement.

- Possible Responses:
 1 = strongly disagree
 2 = disagree
 3 = disagree somewhat
 4 = agree somewhat
 5 = agree
 6 = strongly agree

Statement	Responses					
	1 SD	2 D	3 DS	4 AS	5 A	6 SA
1. I have a desire to be a leader.						
2. The primary focus of shepherd leadership is on the pastoral care of individuals.						
3. I consider myself to be a people person.						
4. I am comfortable when people share differing opinions.						
5. I am a person who lives by my convictions.						
6. I enjoy planning for the future.						

Statement	Responses					
	1 SD	2 D	3 DS	4 AS	5 A	6 SA
7. I consider myself to be a good listener.						
8. I seek opportunities for personal growth and look for ways to improve.						
9. I openly share my feelings with others.						
10. I consistently submit my life and decisions to the Lord.						
11. Others would see me as an encourager.						
12. When I need to correct others I find it is positively received.						
13. Tolerance and flexibility are characteristics I possess.						
14. I do not avoid conflict.						
15. I proactively seek to know personally those with whom I work or serve.						
16. I take the initiative to provide the information people need to accomplish their goals.						
17. Others would say I treat them with dignity and respect.						
18. I put the interests of others ahead of my own.						
19. I am proactive in nurturing my spiritual life.						
20. I am aware of my own strengths and weaknesses as a leader.						
21. I believe shepherding is a relevant model for leadership in today's society.						
22. People feel they can be candid with me.						
23. I admit my mistakes to others.						
24. I am comfortable attempting something new without a guarantee of success.						
25. I consider myself to be a good follower.						
26. When I engage with people they often want to follow my lead.						
27. I have friends who energize me.						
28. On the job (whether paid or volunteer) I am aware of what people need and am eager to help meet those needs.						
29. I would rather work with other people than work alone.						
30. My experiences lead me to believe I am gifted in leadership.						

Statement	Responses					
	1 SD	2 D	3 DS	4 AS	5 A	6 SA
31. The primary task of leadership is meeting the needs of others.						
32. Others would describe me as honest and fair.						
33. I am in a spiritual accountability group.						
34. I follow through on decisions I make.						
35. I am able to establish and achieve measurable goals.						
36. People view me as a clear communicator.						
37. I am able to state my core values.						
38. I work to nurture a “one another” community.						
39. I am able to manage conflict in a positive manner.						
40. I tend to see the probability of success rather than of failure.						
41. In a group setting, I have a desire to take charge.						
42. The style of leadership with which one leads is equally as important as completing the assigned task.						
43. I regularly take time to encourage my own heart.						
44. I pray for those I lead.						
45. I accept responsibility for the outcomes of assignments given to those whom I lead.						
46. The people whom I lead feel valued.						
47. I find it easy to sympathize with another person’s situation.						
48. I have a plan for personal growth in my life.						
49. The character traits of a spiritual leader are evident in my life.						
50. I have, at some point, sensed God’s call to leadership.						

APPENDIX 6

SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP SEMINAR SYLLABUS

Shepherd Leadership Training Seminar

Northfield Baptist Church, Northfield, OH

April 17-June 14, 2016

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

The Shepherd Leadership Training Seminar is a basic leadership training seminar designed for local church leaders based upon shepherding as the model for leadership.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

An individual who participates in this leadership training seminar should be able to:

1. Define shepherd leadership.
2. Explain the essential features and functions of shepherd leaders.
3. Value shepherd leadership as the biblical model for church leadership.
4. Compare and contrast leadership in the church with leadership in the world.
5. Write a personal philosophy of church leadership based on the shepherd leadership model.
6. Demonstrate qualities of shepherd leadership in an observable setting.

READING

McCormick, Blaine and Davenport, David. *Shepherd Leadership: Wisdom for Leaders from Psalm 23*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

SEMINAR ACTIVITIES AND ASSESSMENTS

1. Participants will read the book chosen for the training seminar prior to Session 1. Reading and personally interacting with the material prior to the seminar will better prepare participants to engage in seminar discussions.
2. A pre-seminar interview will be conducted by the instructor with each participant. These thirty-minute interviews will be conducted on Sunday, April 17 and Monday, April 18.
3. Each participant will complete a leadership assessment which will be administered during the seminar.
4. Each participant will complete several in-session assessments and develop subsequent action plans for improvement.
5. Each participant will write a personal philosophy of church leadership based on the shepherd leadership model.
6. A post-seminar interview will be conducted by the instructor with each participant. These interviews will be conducted on Sunday, June 12 and Monday, June 13.
7. Accountability partnerships will continue for four months in which there will be follow-up on personal growth plans.
8. Participants will be challenged to take on new leadership roles in the months ahead.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

April 17-19	Pre-Seminar Interviews
April 24	Session 1: Shepherds Are Model Leaders
May 1	Session 2: Shepherds Are Relational Leaders
May 8	Session 3: Shepherds Are Providers
May 15	No Session
May 22	Session 4: Shepherds Are Protectors
May 29	Session 5: Shepherds Are Guides
June 5	Session 6: Shepherds Are Spiritual Leaders
June 12-14	Post-Seminar Interviews

APPENDIX 7

CASE STUDY: SHEPHERD LEADER OR CEO?

[Instructions: Please read the following article/interview prior to the seminar session this week so you will be prepared to discuss it. As you read, highlight what you agree with and what you disagree with. Please bring this article to the session with you.]

Andy Stanley is one of the foremost pastors and Christian leaders today. With 36,000 Sunday attenders between six campuses in Metro Atlanta, plus more than thirty satellite locations internationally fed by his videos, and the thousands of young leaders attending his Catalyst conferences, Andy has proven himself to be an exceptional leader with far-reaching influence on the church. Additionally, he has authored several books on leadership.

In a 2006 interview with *Leadership Journal*, Andy Stanley strongly defended his business CEO approach to church leadership, stating that shepherding is a cultural illustration of leadership that is irrelevant today. The following is a partial transcript of that interview.

What is distinctly spiritual about the kind of leadership you do?

Andy Stanley: *There's nothing distinctly spiritual. I think a big problem in the church has been the dichotomy between spirituality and leadership. One of the criticisms I get is "Your church is so corporate." I read blogs all the time. Bloggers complain, "The pastor's like a CEO." And I say, "OK, you're right. Now, why is that a bad model?"*

A principle is a principle, and God created all the principles.

So what's the principle behind the CEO model?

"Follow me." Follow we never works. Ever. It's follow me. God gives a man or woman the gift of leadership. And any organization that has a point leader with accountability and freedom to use their gift will do well. Unfortunately, in the church world, we're afraid of that. Has it been abused? Of course. But to abandon the model is silly.

Churches should quit saying, that's what business does." That whole attitude is so wrong, and it hurts the church.

In terms of the shifting culture, I say thanks to guys like Bill Hybels and others who have been unafraid to say we have a corporate side of our ministry; it's going to be the best corporate institution it can possibly be, and we're not going to try to merge first century—

The church wasn't an organization in the first century. They weren't writing checks or buying property. The church has matured and developed over the years. But for some reason the last thing to change is the structure of leadership.

So why do pastors resist using business terms for leadership?

Because there are people in our congregation who have red flags go up.

If you're a preacher's kid, you see the church differently. Having seen church from the inside out, it was very easy for me to abandon all that because I did not confer spirituality on congregational decision making. To me that system was just chaotic. It works against the gifts of the Holy Spirit, in my mind, and it works against godly leadership principles.

Here's an incredibly important principle. You cannot communicate complicated information to large groups of people. As you increase the number of people, you have to decrease the complexity of the information. Congregational rule, when you're trying to make a complicated decision, works against the principle. So consequently, the guy with the microphone and the clearest message always wins. The most persuasive person in the room is going to win. Whether right or wrong.

Should we stop talking about pastors as "shepherds"?

Absolutely. That word needs to go away. Jesus talked about shepherds because there was one over there in a pasture he could point to. But to bring in that imagery today and say, "Pastor, you're the shepherd of the flock," no. I've never seen a flock. I've never spent five minutes with a shepherd. It was culturally relevant in the time of Jesus, but it's not culturally relevant any more.

Nothing works in our culture with that model except this sense of the gentle, pastoral care. Obviously that is a facet of church ministry, but that's not leadership.

Isn't shepherd the biblical word for pastor?

It's the first-century Word. If Jesus were here today, would he talk about shepherds? No. He would point to something that we all know, and we'd say, yeah, I know what that is." Jesus told Peter, the fisherman, to "feed my sheep," but he didn't say to the rest of them, "Go ye therefore into all the world and be shepherds and feed my sheep." By the time of the Book of Acts, the shepherd model is gone. It's about establishing elders and deacons and their qualifications. Shepherding doesn't seem to be the emphasis. Even when it was, it was cultural, an illustration of something.

What we have to do is identify the principle, which is that the leader is responsible for the care of the people he's been given. That I am to care for and equip the people in the organization to follow Jesus. But when we take the literal illustration and bring it into our culture, then people can make it anything they want because nobody knows much about it.

OK. You are creating a culture here that is corporate, "get it done," make an impact in the Name and for the cause of Jesus.

We've created a church culture that attracts those kinds of people, especially in leadership, because they come from corporate culture where the goals are clear, the mission is clear, there's not a lot of fluff. And I think that's why the average local church can't get business guys connected. There's no place for them to connect.

In our multi-campus strategy, for example, those who are running it dwarf me in their leadership skills. They're intimidating in terms of their knowledge. They have the freedom to go do strategic ministry. The structure attracts them and connects them and empowers them.

Because you value efficiency and you value Structure, order. Decisiveness.

Decisiveness. Yeah. These principles work anytime you have men and women with character. The first sentence in our church constitution says, "The system we use will never be as important as the people we choose." The real issue is the character of the people and then a system that allows the gifts of the Spirit to be used without constraint.

(From the interview, "State of the Art," *Leadership Journal* (Spring 2006), at the *Christianity Today* website, accessed January 13, 2016, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2006/spring/stateofart.html>).

Case Study Group Discussion Questions

Regarding a biblical understanding of leadership in the church, Stanley argues in this interview that the shepherd model is culturally irrelevant in a 21st-century non-agrarian, technologically advanced setting, and that a more culturally relevant way to think of leadership is modeled by the current business CEO.

1. You have previously read this article and highlighted statement Stanley makes with which you agree. Share these statements in your group and explain why you agree with them.
2. You also previously read and highlighted statements Stanley makes with which you disagree. Share these statements with your group and explain why you disagree with them.
3. As you consider Stanley's overall assessment of shepherding as an irrelevant model for leadership today, replaced by the CEO model, what long-term impact might this have on church leadership over the next generation?

Written Responses to the "Shepherd Leader or CEO?" Interview

Write out your responses to the following questions:

1. Stanley, in support of the CEO model for church leadership, says that "congregational decision making . . . works against the gifts of the Holy Spirit . . . and it works against godly leadership principles." Do you agree or disagree with his statement? Explain your answer.
2. Stanley says, "By the time of the Book of Acts, the shepherd model is gone. It's about establishing elders and deacons and their qualifications. Shepherding doesn't seem to be the emphasis. Even when it was, it was cultural, an illustration of something." Using the notes from the seminar as well as scriptural references, write a brief response to Stanley's statement.
3. Stanley says that if Jesus were here today teaching about leadership he would not talk about shepherds, but would more likely offer the CEO as an example. Based on the information given in the seminar and your own understanding of Scripture, write down what you think Jesus would teach about church leadership if he were here today.

APPENDIX 8

GROUP STUDY ON THE SHEPHERD AS PROVIDER

Each group of four-five will organize itself by selecting one person for each of the following tasks:

1. A person to read the text
2. A person to lead the discussion
3. A person to write down the group's observations and responses
4. A person to report the results to the whole group when called back together

Read the following passage and observe how a shepherd leader is depicted as a provider, including specific examples, whether positive or negative.

Group 1: Psalm 23

Group 2: Ezekiel 34:2-10

Group 3: John 10:1-16

APPENDIX 9

EVALUATION OF A MINISTRY TEAM AT NORTHFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH

1. Describe the type of meeting you observed (a board meeting, a ministry team meeting, a volunteer group working together, an activity carried out by a team).
2. Describe the components of the team (leadership, number of team members, approximate age, gender composition of the group in general).
3. Describe any examples of effective shepherd leadership in action you observed in this team situation.
4. If effective shepherd leadership was demonstrated, describe any positive impact on the team you were able to observe that occurred as a result.
5. Describe any example of ineffective shepherd leadership in action you observed in this team situation.
6. If ineffective shepherd leadership was demonstrated, describe any negative impact on the team you were able to observe that occurred as a result.
7. Using two- to three-word phrases, describe the level of trust, effective communication, conflict resolution, and decision-making you observed within the team.
8. Would you consider this team to be working together effectively? Why or why not?

APPENDIX 10

MY PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SHEPHERD LEADERSHIP

Leaders must be communicators, whether verbally or in writing. In this assignment you will write a seven-paragraph essay using the following guidelines for each paragraph:

1. **Introduction:** Include a brief statement of your purpose for this essay.
2. **Defense:** Write out your personal definition of shepherd leadership and a brief defense for shepherd leadership as a viable model for church leadership in all realms of leadership.
3. **Essentials:** Describe the essential behaviors of a relational shepherd leader and explain how you plan to live these out in your own life.
4. **Responsibilities:** Describe the elements a shepherd leader is responsible to provide to the flock and explain how you anticipate providing these to your flock (team, group) in the future.
5. **Principles:** Explain the essential areas of preparation a shepherd leader must participate in to protect his flock, and describe how you plan to incorporate these areas of preparation into your personal life.
6. **Competencies:** Describe the competencies a shepherd leader must possess and explain how you will personally demonstrate these competencies in future leadership opportunities.
7. **Conclusion/Future Goals:** Summarize how and where you might envision yourself functioning as a shepherd leader at NBC in the next 1-5 years.

APPENDIX 11

PARTICIPANT SEMINAR EVALUATION

Thank you for your participation in this leadership training seminar. It is helpful for me to have input from you, as I anticipate leading this seminar again in the future. With that in mind, please answer the following questions:

1. What would you say is the most important lesson you have learned in this seminar?
2. What activity or assignment has been the most beneficial to you?
(Examples: in-class discussions, one-to-one discussions, reading the book, spiritual growth assessment, emotional intelligence assessment, visitation opportunity, assessment of a ministry team)
3. How would you rate the balance between the content elements of the seminar and the application elements of the seminar? Please explain your answer.
4. What is one thing you would change about this seminar?
5. What is one thing you would keep the same about this seminar?

APPENDIX 12

TABLES

Table A1. Personal leadership survey scores ranked by participant's age, oldest to youngest

	Pre-seminar average	Post-seminar average	Difference
Participant 3	5.06	4.90	-0.16
Participant 11	5.02	4.49	-0.53
Participant 5	4.98	4.70	-0.28
Participant 4	5.12	4.90	-0.22
Participant 1	4.48	4.93	0.45
Participant 9	5.46	5.22	-0.24
Participant 10	4.34	4.34	0.00
Participant 7	4.12	4.72	0.60
Participant 13	4.50	3.92	-0.58
Participant 12	4.74	4.52	-0.22
Participant 6	4.38	4.60	0.22
Participant 2	4.04	4.38	0.34
Participant 8	4.34	4.50	0.16
Average	4.66	4.62	-0.04

Table A2. Research data for statement 31 on the personal leadership survey

<i>The primary task of leadership is meeting the needs of others.</i>			
	Pre-seminar score	Post-seminar score	Difference
Participant 1	5	5	0
Participant 2	4	4	0
Participant 3	6	6	0
Participant 4	5	6	1
Participant 5	5	--	--
Participant 6	1	6	5
Participant 7	4	6	2
Participant 8	4	6	2
Participant 9	4	6	2
Participant 10	4	6	2
Participant 11	6	6	0
Participant 12	6	5	-1
Participant 13	4	1	-3
Average	5.08	5.25	0.17

Note: Participant 5 did not provide a response to this statement on the post-seminar survey, and thus no difference could be calculated.

Table A3. Research data for statement 42 on the personal leadership survey

<i>The style of leadership with which one leads is equally as important as completing the assigned task.</i>			
	Pre-seminar score	Post-seminar score	Difference
Participant 1	5	4	-1
Participant 2	2	4	2
Participant 3	4	4	0
Participant 4	6	6	0
Participant 5	5	5	0
Participant 6	3	4	1
Participant 7	5	5	0
Participant 8	4	6	2
Participant 9	5	6	1
Participant 10	4	5	1
Participant 11	5	5	0
Participant 12	6	6	0
Participant 13	5	5	0
Average	4.54	5.00	0.46

Table A4. Research data for statement 43 on the personal leadership survey

<i>I regularly take time to encourage my own heart.</i>			
	Pre-seminar score	Post-seminar score	Difference
Participant 1	5	5	0
Participant 2	1	3	2
Participant 3	5	5	0
Participant 4	5	5	0
Participant 5	6	5	-1
Participant 6	4	5	1
Participant 7	4	5	1
Participant 8	3	4	1
Participant 9	6	5	-1
Participant 10	5	5	0
Participant 11	4	4	0
Participant 12	4	4	0
Participant 13	4	5	1
Average	4.31	4.62	0.31

Table A5. Research data for statement 49 on the personal leadership survey

<i>The character traits of a spiritual leader are evident in my life.</i>			
	Pre-seminar score	Post-seminar score	Difference
Participant 1	4	5	1
Participant 2	4	4	0
Participant 3	5	5	0
Participant 4	4	5	1
Participant 5	5	4	-1
Participant 6	4	4	0
Participant 7	4	5	1
Participant 8	4	4	0
Participant 9	6	5	-1
Participant 10	5	5	0
Participant 11	5	5	0
Participant 12	4	4	0
Participant 13	4	4	0
Average	4.46	4.54	0.08

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ABSTRACT

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A SEMINAR FOR TRAINING SHEPHERD LEADERS AT NORTHFIELD BAPTIST CHURCH, NORTHFIELD, OHIO

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016
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The purpose of the project was to design a training program for developing shepherd leaders in the local church. Chapter 1 presents the purpose, goals, context, rationale, definitions, and limitations of the project. Chapter 2 explores the biblical and theological foundations for shepherd leadership. The chapter specifically looks at the shepherding heart of God and the shepherd identity of those who lead God's people in both the Old and New Testaments. The need and responsibility for developing shepherding leaders is examined in the Pastoral Epistles. Chapter 3 offers a five-fold description of shepherd leaders: they are relational leaders, providers, protectors, guides, and spiritual leaders. Chapter 4 details the design and implementation of the eight-week shepherd leadership training seminar at Northfield Baptist Church. Chapter 5 offers an evaluation of the project along with changes that would improve the effectiveness of the training program in the future. The premise of this project is that shepherding is the model for local church leaders and is therefore, the model that should be foundationally used in training leaders for the local church.

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