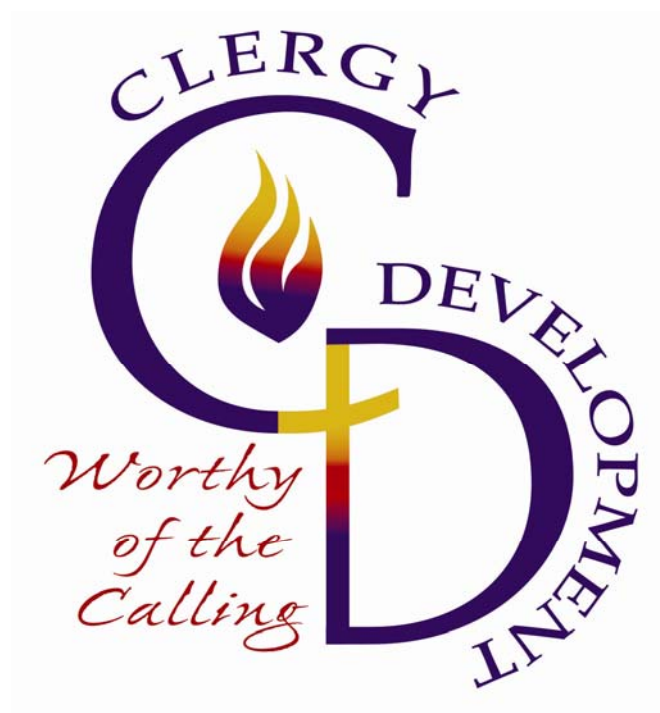


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Faculty Guide

# Shepherding God's People



Clergy Development  
Church of the Nazarene  
Kansas City, Missouri  
816-333-7000 ext. 2468; 800-306-7651 (USA)  
2003

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The **Modular Course of Study** is an outcome-based curriculum designed to implement the educational paradigm defined by the Breckenridge Consultations. Clergy Development is responsible for maintaining and distributing the Modular Course of Study for the Church of the Nazarene.

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**Principal contributors** for each module are listed in specific Faculty Guides.

## Series Foreword

### **A Vision for Christian Ministry: Clergy Education in the Church of the Nazarene**

The chief purpose of all persons—indeed, all of the creation—is to worship, love, and serve God. God has made himself known in His deeds of creation and redemption. As the Redeemer, God has called into existence a people: the Church, who embody, celebrate, and declare His name and His ways. The life of God with His people and the world constitutes the Story of God. That story is recorded principally in the Old and New Testaments, and continues to be told by the resurrected Christ who lives and reigns as Head of His Church. The Church lives to declare the whole Story of God. This it does in many ways—in the lives of its members who are even now being transformed by Christ through preaching, the sacraments, in oral testimony, community life, and in mission. All members of the Body of Christ are called to exercise a ministry of witness and service. No one is excluded.

In God's own wisdom He calls some persons to fulfill the ministry of proclaiming the gospel and caring for God's people, in a form referred to as the ordained ministry. God is the initial actor in this call, not humans. In the Church of the Nazarene we believe God calls and persons respond. They do not elect the Christian ministry. All persons whom God calls to the ordained ministry should continue to be amazed that He would call them. They should continue to be humbled by God's call. The *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene states, "we recognize and hold that the Head of the Church calls some men and women to the more official and public work of the ministry." It adds, "The church, illuminated by the Holy Spirit, will recognize the Lord's call" (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 400).

An ordained Christian minister has as his or her chief responsibility to declare in many ways the whole Story of God as fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. His or her charge is to "tend the flock of God . . . not under compulsion, but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock" (1 Pet 5:2-3, NRSV). The minister fulfills this charge under the supervision of Christ, the chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4). Such ministry can be fulfilled only after a period of careful

preparation. Indeed, given the ever-changing demands placed upon the minister, "preparation" never ceases.

A person who enters the Christian ministry becomes in a distinct sense a steward of the gospel of God (Titus 1: 7). A steward is one who is entrusted to care for what belongs to another. A steward may be one who takes care of another person or who manages the property of someone else. All Christians are stewards of the grace of God. But in addition, in a peculiar sense a Christian minister is a steward of the "mystery of God," which is Christ, the Redeemer, the Messiah of God. In all faithfulness, the minister is called to "make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel" (Eph 6: 19, NRSV). Like Paul, he or she must faithfully preach "the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things; so that through the church the wisdom of God in its rich variety might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" (Eph 3: 8-10, NRSV).

In fulfilling this commission, there is plenty of room for diligence and alertness, but no room for laziness or privilege (Titus 1: 5-9). Good stewards recognize that they are stewards only, not the owners, and that they will give an account of their stewardship to the master. Faithfulness to one's charge and to the Lord who issued it is the steward's principal passion. When properly understood, the Christian ministry should never be thought of as a "job." It is ministry—uniquely Christian ministry. No higher responsibility or joy can be known than to become a steward of the Story of God in Christ's Church. The person who embraces God's call to the ordained ministry will stand in the company of the apostles, the Early Fathers of the Church, the Reformers of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformers, and many persons around the world today who joyfully serve as stewards of the gospel of God.

Obviously, one who does not recognize, or who understands but rejects, just how complete and inclusive a minister's stewardship must be, should not start down the path that leads to ordination. In a peculiar sense, a Christian minister must in all respects model the gospel of God. He or she is to "shun" the love of money. Instead, the minister must "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness." He or she must "fight the good fight of the faith" and "take hold of the eternal life, to which you were called" (1 Tim 6: 11-12, NRSV).

Hence, the Church of the Nazarene believes “the minister of Christ is to be in all things a pattern to the flock—in punctuality, discretion, diligence, earnestness; ‘in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left’ (2 Cor 6:6-7)” (*Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, paragraph 401.1). The minister of Christ “must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, <sup>9</sup>holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching . . . able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” (Titus 1:7-9, NASB).

In order to be a good steward of God’s Story one must, among other things, give oneself to careful and systematic study, both before and after ordination. This will occur not because he or she is forced to do so, but out of a love for God and His people, the world He is working to redeem, and out of an inescapable sense of responsibility. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the attitude one brings to preparation for the ministry reveals much about what he or she thinks of God, the gospel, and Christ’s Church. The God who became incarnate in Jesus and who made a way of salvation for all gave His very best in the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. In order to be a good steward, a Christian minister must respond in kind. Jesus told numerous parables about stewards who did not recognize the importance of what had been entrusted to them (Mt 21:33-44; 25:14-30; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:35-40; 19:11-27; 20:9-18).

Preparation for ministry in Christ’s Church—one’s education in all its dimensions— should be pursued in full light of the responsibility before God and His people that the ministry involves. This requires that one take advantage of the best educational resources at his or her disposal.

The Church of the Nazarene recognizes how large is the responsibility associated with the ordained Christian ministry and accepts it fully. Part of the way we recognize our responsibility before God is seen in the requirements we make for ordination and the practice of ministry. We believe the call to and practice of Christian ministry is a gift, not a right or privilege. We believe God holds a minister to the highest of religious, moral, personal, and professional standards. We are not reluctant to expect those standards to be

observed from the time of one's call until his or her death. We believe Christian ministry should first be a form of worship. The practice of ministry is both an offering to God and a service to His Church. By the miracle of grace, the work of the ministry can become a means of grace for God's people (Rom 12: 1-3). One's education for ministry is also a form of worship.

The modules comprising the Course of Study that may lead a person to candidacy for ordination have been carefully designed to prepare one for the kind of ministry we have described. Their common purpose is to provide a holistic preparation for entrance into the ordained Christian ministry. They reflect the Church's wisdom, experience, and responsibility before God. The modules show how highly the Church of the Nazarene regards the gospel, the people of God, the world for which Christ gave His life, and Christian ministry. Completing the modules will normally take three or four years. But no one should feel pressured to meet this schedule.

The careful study for which the modules call should show that before God and His Church one accepts the stewardly responsibility associated with ordained ministry.

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## Introduction

### **Intended Use of This Faculty Guide**

This faculty guide serves as an instructor's guide for teaching principles of Shepherding God's People to adult learners who are preparing for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene. The content is based on intended outcomes defined through the collaborative process conducted at Breckenridge, CO, USA, between 1990 and 1997. The materials prepare the pastor-teacher to present the topic by providing background reading, lesson plans, lectures, instructions to the teacher, and teaching resources for each class session. In most lessons complete lectures, questions for guided discussions, and defined learning activities are provided.

The pastor-teacher who will lead this module should hold a master's degree. Ideally, the pastor-teacher should have participated as a student in a module using this material prior to teaching the material to others. This faculty guide assumes that the pastor-teacher has some basic understanding of the practice of Shepherding God's People in the local congregation.

It is further assumed that learners participating in a module using this material will be high school graduates and be adult learners beyond the traditional college age. Learners are assumed to be motivated to learn, and to have adult life-experiences. No prior college classroom experience is assumed on the part of the learners.

### **Acknowledgments**

Every module is the accumulation of effort by many people. Someone writes the original manuscript, others offer suggestions to strengthen the content and make the material more easily understood, and finally an editor formats the module for publication. This module is not different. Many people have contributed to this module. Every effort has been made to represent accurately the original intent of the principal contributors.

### **Principal Contributor**

The principal contributor for this module is Bruce L. Petersen. Dr. Petersen was born and raised in Brainerd, Minnesota. He completed a bachelor's degree



in psychology from Olivet Nazarene University and the master of divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary before taking his first job as senior pastor. Later he graduated from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, with a doctor of ministry degree.

Bruce has held part-time pastoral positions in Chicago, Illinois, and Olathe, Kansas. He held senior pastor positions in Saginaw, Michigan; Springfield, Ohio; and Nampa, Idaho. He is presently a professor of religion at Mount Vernon Nazarene University. He continues an active preaching ministry as a supply pastor in many churches in Ohio, as well as conducting seminars for pastors.

Dr. Petersen has written articles for such Nazarene periodicals as the *Herald of Holiness*, *Preacher's Magazine*, and *Come Ye Apart*. He is the author of the book *God's Answer for You: Psalms That Speak to Real-life Needs*. He has contributed to other book collections on the subjects of preaching, worship, and pastoral care.

Bruce and his wife, Jackie, have two grown children. He enjoys traveling, reading, and playing golf.

### **Responder**

Each module was reviewed by at least one content specialist to ensure that the content did not represent a single, narrow view or opinion. The responder provided suggestions the principal contributor could integrate into this module.

Ron Dalton was the responder for this module. Dr. Dalton is in his eleventh year at Olivet Nazarene University and is tenured as professor of practical theology. He was the founding director of the Church Growth Research and Resource Center at Olivet. He is the director for the Institute of Pastoral Leadership that includes two graduate programs at Olivet: the Master of Pastoral Counseling, and the Master of Church Management. He previously taught in the graduate programs of Vanderbilt University, Antioch University (Yellow Springs), and Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

Dr. Dalton pastored congregations in Missouri, Tennessee, and Ohio. While at Olivet, he has worked in collaboration with the USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department, Clergy Development, and with Compassionate Ministries of the Church of the Nazarene. He maintains a busy schedule throughout

the region speaking in revivals, camp meetings, retreats, and local churches. He has served for extended periods as interim pastor at Valparaiso (IN) First Church of the Nazarene and at Kankakee (IL) First Church of the Nazarene and a number of other congregations in both Illinois and Indiana.

He holds degrees from Mount Vernon Nazarene College (A.A), Trevecca Nazarene College (A.B.), Nazarene Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and Vanderbilt University (D.Min.) with additional studies done at Wright State University (Mathematics), University of Tennessee (Philosophy), and Cincinnati Bible Seminary (Hebrew).

He is married (25 years) to Martha (Gomer) Dalton of Nashville, TN. She is the associate professor of music at Olivet Nazarene University.

They and their three sons (John, James, and Stephen) reside in Bourbonnais, Illinois where they are members of the First Church of the Nazarene.

## Revision History

*Fourth Quarter 2007, Revision 5*, the current version,

- Lessons were keyed to *Foundations of Pastoral Care*, 2007.

*Third Quarter 2005, Revision 4*,

- Module guides edited for gender inclusiveness

*First Quarter 2004, Revision 3*,

- Module title changed from *Pastoral Care* to *Shepherding God's People*

*Fourth Quarter 2003, Revision 2*,

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*First Quarter 2003, Revision 1*,

- the Lesson Overview, Introduction, Body, Close format was established.
- the companion Student Guide was created.

## About This Module

This module introduces the student to the important task of pastoral care and counseling in the context of the local church. Caring for people is a central part of the role of those who enter the ranks of ordained ministry. Jesus' words to Peter, "Take care of my sheep" (Jn 21:16), apply to all who are called to shepherd or pastor.

This module will help the student understand and practice the principles of Christian "care of souls" in a manner that is comprehensively faithful to the biblical faith and human existence. This "care of souls" is not

the exclusive responsibility of the ordained clergy but includes the laity in the ministry of the whole church. This curriculum is intended to help the student apply caring principles to the context of any local church. Pastoral care and counseling need to fit with the other pastoral responsibilities of preaching, teaching, leading, equipping, administrating, and many other tasks. This module introduces the student to the many broad topics commonly associated with the title of *Shepherding God's People*. Because of the time constraints of the course, the student is encouraged to begin a lifelong journey of discovery and learning to hone the skills needed to be an effective pastor.

### **Module Materials**

We have tried to design this module to be flexible and easy to adapt to your situation. For each lesson, there are several support pieces, which we have called simply "resources." These can be used in many different ways. Resources have been reproduced in the student guide for this module. The instructor will want a copy of the student guide for his or her own use.

1. The instructor may photocopy these to use for his or her own lecture outlines. There is space to add notes from the faculty guide, from the textbook, or from the additional suggested readings. Add in your own illustrations too!
2. The pages may be photocopied onto overhead transparencies for use in class.
3. These pages appear in the Student Guide for the students' use and participation.

One reason for developing this module is for the benefit of extension education. We understand that teachers all over the world are called upon to teach courses not in their area of specialty, but they teach them because they want to see pastors trained and leaders developed for the church. Extension education is basic to rapid church growth. We want to provide this as a resource for extension educators. If it helps others along the way, that's fine too.

Another reason for developing this module is to equip indigenous faculty. We believe a class like this is best taught and contextualized by someone from within the culture of the students. Many fine teachers, who are leaders in our churches around the world, do not have higher degrees in theology but have the skills to teach a module like this effectively. We want to set them free to do so, and in so doing, to actually improve the module and make it more dynamic and meaningful for

their context than it would have been had we held onto it and insisted on teaching it ourselves.

## Intended Outcomes for the Module

The *Manual*, Church of the Nazarene, and the *International Sourcebook on Developmental Standards for Ordination* define educational preparation for ordination. Additionally, each region of the International Church of the Nazarene has developed educational guidelines to qualify educational programs for ordination offered within their region.

The USA Region *Sourcebook for Ministerial Development* defines outcomes for the overall ministerial development program. The module assists candidates in developing these skills. Other modules in the program may also address the same outcomes. The specific outcomes that relate to this module are:

### Program Outcomes

- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry
- CP 5 Ability to provide oversight of a congregation using management skills including leadership, conflict resolution and administration
- CP 8 Ability to develop team-building skills, identify and cultivate spiritual gifts, recruit volunteers, diagnose and intervene in problems
- CP 12 Ability to appropriately express pastoral care and concern for individuals and families in crises, passages, and the normal routines of life
- CP 13 Ability to offer spiritual counseling and to discern for referral counseling needs beyond the minister's ability
- CP 14 Ability to apply the knowledge of basic helping skills gained from historic Christian and appropriate contemporary models
- CP 17 Ability to lead the church in discipling and assimilating new converts into the church
- CH 1 Ability to apply basic understanding of ethical theories to teach and nurture ethical behavior in the Christian community
- CH 5 Ability to apply Christian ethics to the issues of the integrity of the minister and the congregation for authentic Christian faithfulness and public witness
- CH 12 Ability to practice faithful stewardship of personal relations including gender relationships, marriage and family, personal finance, and professional conduct

CH 13 Ability to describe and cultivate healthy interpersonal relationships through personal communication skills, conflict resolution skills, nurturing relational strategies for marriage, family and congregational interaction

CH 14 Ability to maintain a healthy balance between family, church, and community commitments

### **Outcome Statements**

- Ability to nurture the whole person in Christian life and practice
- Ability to facilitate holistic care within the church
- Ability to equip the laity in ministry
- Ability to focus one's time and energy to empower the laity for effective service
- Ability to apply the knowledge of basic counseling techniques to be used within the larger context of pastoral ministry within the local church
- Ability to keep pastoral counseling in balance with other functions of ministry so as to maintain a healthy and growing church
- Ability to safeguard personal ethical integrity
- Ability to conduct one's personal life to build up the church, one's marriage and family, and oneself, in order to be faithful to the call to ministry

## **Suggested Meeting Schedule**

The module lessons are designed to last 90 minutes each. Each lesson is complete in itself with an opening, a middle, and a closing. They are sequential. Each lesson assumes the learners have mastered material presented in previous lessons. The lessons can be grouped in a variety of ways to accommodate the schedules of your learners.

When lessons are taught in the same meeting, instructors will need to adjust homework assignments because participants will not have time between lessons to prepare homework. It is very important for the instructor always to be looking ahead and planning for upcoming lessons.

Here are three suggestions (out of many) for ways the meetings can be organized.

1. Resident campus. The class can meet two days a week for 90 minutes. Present one lesson per meeting time. Total time: 8 weeks.
2. Extension education. The class can meet one day (or evening) each week for 3 to 3½ hours. Present

two lessons per meeting with a break period between lessons. Participants will need to travel to a centralized location for meetings, so make it worth their time. Total time: 8 weeks.

3. Intensive module. The class can meet five consecutive days for 7 to 8 hours per day. Present two lessons in the morning with a break period between lessons, and two lessons in the afternoon with another break period between the lessons. Participants must complete reading assignments before arriving at the module site, and written assignments can be submitted 30 to 60 days following the class meeting. Total meeting time: 1 week. (Elapsed time including reading and written assignments: 2 to 3 months.)

The module is divided into four units. The progression of these units can be seen in the chart below. Space is given for you to fill in the dates when your class sessions will meet.

Date	Lesson
	<b>Unit 1: Pastoral Care</b>
	1. Introduction to Shepherding God's People
	2. The Pastor as Shepherd
	3. Pastoral Soul Care and Guidance
	4. Caring through Small Groups
	5. Pastoral Care by the Laity
	6. Equipping and Empowering the Laity
	<b>Unit 2: Pastoral Counseling</b>
	7. Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor—Our Model
	8. Short-term Counseling, Part 1
	9. Short-term Counseling, Part 2
	10. Community Resources and Referrals
	<b>Unit 3: Pastoral Presence</b>
	11. Pastoral Presence in Conflict
	12. Pastoral Presence in Crisis
	13. Pastoral Presence in Celebration

	14. Pastoral Presence to Comfort
	<b>Unit 4: Pastoral Practice</b>
	15. The Pastor's Conduct
	16. The Pastor's Personal Life

## About This Faculty Guide

*Note: It is critical to remember that active participation by the learners will enhance their learning. That means you will not be an information giver. This module is not about you. The focus of the module is helping students learn. Your role is to design an environment in which your students will learn. Sometimes you will give lectures. At other times you will guide discussions or assign your students to work in groups. These kinds of activities keep the participants actively involved in the learning process. Learning is a team activity.*

The faculty guide has been written to guide an instructor as he or she prepares to teach this module. It contains complete lesson plans and resources to provide a solid educational design for the topic. You will need to prepare for each lesson well in advance of the meeting time. Often there are background reading suggestions for the instructor, or you may know additional reference materials you want to interject into the lesson. Questions intended to be answered or discussed by the students are in italic type.

**A two-column format was chosen for the faculty guide.** The right-hand column contains the content of lectures, descriptions of activities, and questions to keep students involved. The left-hand column is to give suggested instructions to you, the teacher. It also contains examples you can use to illustrate concepts in the lectures. Whenever possible you should use examples from your own experience and from your students' real-life context.

Large white space has been left in the left column to allow you to write notes and personalize the faculty guide.

**The faculty guide has three major components:** the Faculty Guide Introduction, the Lesson Plans, and the Teaching Resources. The Introduction and Lesson Plans are in this document and the Resources are contained in the companion student guide. You are reading the Faculty Guide Introduction now. It provides a teaching philosophy for adult learners, background information for organizing the module, and ideas about conducting the lessons.

**Each section of the faculty guide is numbered** with a two-part page number. Page 5 of Lesson 3 would be numbered "3-5." The first number is the lesson number and the second is the page number within the lesson. Each resource sheet is numbered for

the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

**The Lesson Plans are complete in themselves.**

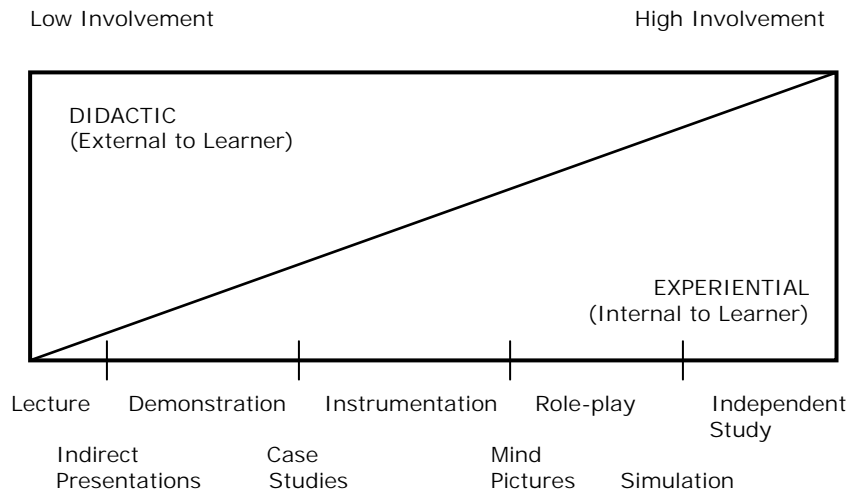
They contain an Overview, Introduction, Body, and Close. The Lesson Overview provides you with a planning tool for preparing and conducting each lesson.

*The Lesson Introduction* should get participants' attention, orient them to the place this lesson holds in the overall module, define the intended objectives, and prepare them for the learning activities.

*The Lesson Body* is the core message of the lesson. The key is to keep the learners actively involved. Even in lectures, ask questions that prompt learners to think about the content, not just hear the lecture.

The following chart shows a continuum of learner involvement in different teaching methods. Lecture requires the least learner involvement, and independent study requires the most learner involvement.

## METHODS CONTINUUM



A variety of learning activities are used to present information and allow learners to experiment with their new knowledge. Each learner has a set of preferred methods of learning and has different life experiences that can color or filter what one actually learns. A variety of learning activities help adults adapt to the learning task—by hearing, by doing, by reading, by discussing, or by combinations of these. The learners should have opportunities to test and clarify their new learning by talking with the instructor and other



participants, and applying new knowledge in real or contrived situations as soon as possible.

*The Lesson Close* provides a time for answering questions, reviewing the information, connecting this lesson to future lessons, making assignments, and punctuating the finish. The close does not provide any new information but gives a sense of closure to the lesson.

**Homework assignments** are important learning activities. They provide the student with an opportunity to synthesize classroom learning. Working on these assignments also extends the learning experience beyond the time constraints of class time.

The student—especially the adult student—needs frequent and timely feedback about his or her learning. While interaction with other students helps the learner refine what he or she is learning, feedback from the instructor is also critical to the quality of learning and ultimately to his or her persistence in the Course of Study.

It is your responsibility as the instructor for this module to provide students with timely responses to homework assignments in order to enhance the learning process. Reviewing and responding to homework will also provide you with critical information about what your students are learning and whether or not the teaching-learning process is succeeding.

Since these modules are preparing the learner for ordination rather than leading to a university degree, a letter grade may not be appropriate. Your response to the learners' assignments should be thoughtful and in most cases it should be written. Its purpose will always be to refine and enhance the learning of the student.

**Teaching Resources** are reproduced in the student guide. Each resource sheet is numbered for the lesson in which the resource is first used. The first resource page for Lesson 2 is numbered "2-1."

You must determine how each resource will be used in your context. If an overhead projector is available, transparencies can be made by replacing the paper in your photocopy machine with special transparency material.

The student guide for this module contains the series foreword, acknowledgments, syllabus, copies of all

resources, lesson objectives, and assignments. A copy of the student guide should be made available to each student.

**Recommendations for printing.** You may print this faculty guide if desired. The introduction and lesson plan segments are formatted for printing on both sides of the paper. The resource pages of the student guide should be printed on one side for use as transparency or handout masters.

The student guide should be printed on one side.

## Recommended Reading

Each module within the Modular Course of Study is intended to be textbook independent. This does not imply that the modules are textbook irrelevant, or that the module content cannot be enriched by selecting and requiring that students study a textbook along with the lessons provided in this faculty guide.

If these modules are adapted for use outside of the English-speaking countries of North America, a specific textbook may not be available in the language of the students. Therefore, the module does not rely on one textbook. The instructor may select any doctrinally sound textbook available to the students.

The recommended text for this module is  
Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*.  
Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas  
City, 2007.

There are additional recommended texts within certain class sessions to help the student be able to do additional reading or provide pastoral resources for the subject matter. If one will become a lifelong learner, it is important to collect as many resources as possible. These recommendations are only suggestions and do not imply there are not other good materials available. New resources are being developed all the time in book and electronic form. The pastor needs to be a learner as well as a teacher and trainer.

## A Hidden Agenda

### **Hidden curriculum issues . . . because the way we teach teaches**

In each session, there are certain methodological and environmental things to consider.

**First**, consider the classroom arrangement. Whenever possible, the room should be arranged to encourage a sense of community. Either the group should sit in a circle or around a table. If the group is very large, chairs can be arranged for easily moving into clusters for discussion.

**Second**, consider how you present yourself as teacher. Standing behind a lectern with your students facing you in rows says you are above the students and have something to give them (although in a very large group this standing to teach may be unavoidable). Sitting as part of the circle makes the teacher a co-learner at the same level as the students. Speak naturally. Pay close attention to your students, and value the things they share. Learn their names. Encourage participation. Remember that you are modeling for them, and the way you teach will teach them far more than the words you say.

**Third**, invite the Holy Spirit's presence in the classroom. Do this each time the class meets.

**Fourth**, the sharing-of-stories activity does more than help the students begin to reflect on their own Christian experiences. It is a way to build community between the students. This is more than an exercise to be checked off. It is vital to set the tone of your intentional community.

When meeting times exceed 90 minutes, consider adding break times. The break between segments is an important time for community building. Remain available to the students during this time. Consider offering coffee or tea during this time as a way to encourage fellowship.

## Journaling: The Key to Spiritual Formation

Journaling is a major assignment of each module in the Course of Study. It is the integrating element that helps draw spiritual meaning and ministerial application from the content of each module whether the module concentrates on content, competency, character, or context. It ensures that the "Be" component of "Be, Know, and Do" is present in every module in which one participates. What is journaling and how can it be meaningfully accomplished?

*The Syllabus contains this explanation of journaling. Journaling provides the spiritual*

### **Journaling: A Tool for Personal Reflection and Integration**

*formation component for the module and is an integral part of the learning experience.*

*Have students read the journaling section during the Syllabus review in Lesson 1 and emphasize that journaling is an assignment for each lesson in the module.*

*When giving assignments in each lesson, assign journal writing each time the group meets.*

Participating in the Course of Study is the heart of your preparation for ministry. To complete each module you will be required to listen to lectures, read books and articles, participate in discussions, and write papers. Content mastery is the goal.

An equally important part of ministerial preparation is spiritual formation. Some might choose to call spiritual formation devotions, while others might refer to it as growth in grace. Whichever title you place on the process, it is the intentional cultivation of your relationship with God. The module work will be helpful in adding to your knowledge, your skills, and your ability to do ministry. The spiritual formation work will weave all you learn into the fabric of your being, allowing your education to flow freely from your head through your heart to those you serve.

Although there are many spiritual disciplines to help you cultivate your relationship with God, journaling is the critical skill that ties them all together. Journaling simply means keeping a record of your experiences and the insights you have gained along the way. It is a discipline because it does require a good deal of work faithfully to spend daily time in your journal. Many people confess this is a practice they tend to push aside when pressed by their many other responsibilities. Even five minutes a day spent journaling can make a major difference in your education and your spiritual development. Let me explain.

Consider journaling time spent with your best friend. Onto the pages of a journal you will pour out your candid responses to the events of the day, the insights you gained from class, a quote gleaned from a book, and an 'ah-ha' that came to you as two ideas connected. This is not the same as keeping a diary, since a diary seems to be a chronicle of events without the personal dialogue. The journal is the repository for all of your thoughts, reactions, prayers, insights, visions, and plans. Though some people like to keep complex journals with sections for each type of reflection, others find a simple running commentary more helpful. In either case, record the date and the location at the beginning of every journal entry. It will help you when it comes time to review your thoughts.

It is important to chat briefly about the logistics of journaling. All you will need is a pen and paper to begin. Some folks prefer loose-leaf paper that can be placed in a three-ring binder, others like spiral-bound

notebooks, while others enjoy using composition books. Whichever style you choose, it is important to develop a pattern that works for you.

Establishing a time and a place for writing in your journal is essential. If there is no space etched out for journaling, it will not happen with the regularity needed to make it valuable. It seems natural to spend time journaling after the day is over and you can sift through all that has transpired. Yet family commitments, evening activities, and fatigue militate against this time slot. Morning offers another possibility. Sleep filters much of the previous day's experiences, and processes deep insights, that can be recorded first thing in the morning. In conjunction with devotions, journaling enables you to begin to weave your experiences with the Word, and also with module material that has been steeping on the back burner of your mind. You will probably find that carrying your journal will allow you to jot down ideas that come to you at odd times throughout the day.

It seems we have been suggesting that journaling is a handwritten exercise. Some may be wondering about doing their work on a computer. Traditionally, there is a special bond between hand, pen, and paper. It is more personal, direct, and aesthetic. And it is flexible, portable, and available.

With regular use, your journal is the repository of your journey. As important as it is to make daily entries, it is equally important to review your work. Read over each week's record at the end of the week. Make a summary statement and note movements of the Holy Spirit or your own growth. Do a monthly review of your journal every 30 days. This might best be done on a half-day retreat where you can prayerfully focus on your thoughts in solitude and silence. As you do this, you will begin to see the accumulated value of the Word, your module work, and your experience in ministry all coming together in ways you had not considered possible. This is integration—weaving together faith development and learning. Integration moves information from your head to your heart so that ministry is a matter of being rather than doing. Journaling will help you answer the central question of education: "Why do I do what I do when I do it?"

Journaling really is the linchpin in ministerial preparation. Your journal is the chronicle of your journey into spiritual maturity as well as content mastery. These volumes will hold the rich insights that will pull your education together. A journal is the tool

for integration. May you treasure the journaling process!

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## Lesson 1

# Introduction to Shepherding God's People

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 1-1
0:25	The Pastoral Context	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 1-2
0:50	Historical Context	Lecture	Resource 1-3
0:55	Pastoral Care for Today	Small Groups	Resource 1-4
1:10	Pastoral Counseling Today	Small Groups	Resource 1-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

*Clinebell, Howard.* Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth. *Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984*, chs. 1-3.

Oden, Thomas C. *Classical Pastoral Care, Volume One: Becoming a Minister.* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987, chs. 1-2.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care.* Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 1.

# Lesson Introduction

(25 minutes)

## Orientation

*Call on one of the students to read the passage.*

*Refer to Resource 1-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Lead the students to understand Jesus crossing the cultural barrier of speaking to Samaritans, who were hated by the Jews, v. 9.*

- *Jesus talked to her as a woman. Jewish men did not talk to other women.*
- *Jesus drew her into conversation about spiritual matters.*

*Possible responses:*

- *He turned the focus upon her life concern of failed relationships with men.*
- *He confronted her with the facts of her many husbands and adultery.*
- *He offered her hope and spiritual wholeness.*

*Possible responses:*

- *Look for people who may be different, yet are hurting.*
- *See the value of caring and compassion in relating to people.*
- *Understand that life problems may stem from spiritual needs.*

*Review the syllabus.*

- *Read through the Series Foreword.*
- *Point out the rationale, the requirements, and the schedule.*
- *Be sure and point out the Community Research Notebook assignment detailed in the syllabus.*

*Have each student give a personal introduction answering these three questions.*

## A Look in the Book

Open your Bibles to John 5: 1-26.

*How did Jesus show the Samaritan woman He cared about her?*

*How did Jesus counsel the Samaritan woman?*

*What are some lessons we can learn from Jesus about pastoral care and counseling?*

## Class Introductions

- *What is your name?*
- *Where are you from?*
- *What is the most important thing you hope to learn from this course/module?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the roles of pastoral care and counseling in the context of pastoral ministry today
- understand the roles of pastoral care and counseling in order to nurture the whole person in Christ
- place the care of persons in its proper biblical and historical context

## Motivator

The apostle Paul wrote letters to two pastors, Timothy and Titus. Paul impressed upon them the awesome responsibility they had assumed as pastors of God's people. This was a responsibility not shouldered in the same way by anyone else in the Church. Through succeeding centuries, faithful Christian pastors have realized Paul's charge to Timothy and Titus was given to them as well. To accept responsibility as a minister of the gospel for the care of Christ's people is one of the most demanding and blessed charges a person can ever receive. Paul warned no one should ever shoulder this responsibility lightly.

Paul told Timothy and Titus that in a unique way they were responsible for "training [Christians] in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16). Then he spelled out many of the dimensions of this assignment. In response to "the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior" (Titus 3:4, NRSV), Timothy and Titus were charged to teach what is consistent with sound doctrine (Titus 2:1, NRSV). They were to reprove, correct (2 Tim 3:16), and "rightly explain the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15, NRSV).

The work of pastoral care involves leading the people of God, who have been "justified by [God's] grace," to "become heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus 3:7, NRSV). This course explores many of the avenues by which a pastor accomplishes this.

## Lesson Body

### Lecture/Discussion: The Pastoral Context: What Does a Pastor Do?

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 1-2 in the Student Guide.*

*Draw a large circle on a board, overhead, or paper pad and label it "Pastoral Ministry."*

*Have students list the various activities while the instructor writes them on the board.*

*These could include such activities as: preaching, leading worship, teaching, administration, leadership, recruiting volunteers, training, hospital calling, counseling, evangelizing, conserving converts, community involvement, and many others.*

*Draw a second circle half the size inside the first circle and write "Pastoral Care."*

*Have the students list these activities while the instructor writes them on the board.*

*These could include: hospital calling, visiting shut-ins, helping those who need food or housing, comforting the dying, planning funerals, counseling those in need, discipling believers, helping Christians become involved in ministry, and other activities.*

*Draw a third circle inside the second circle and write "Pastoral Counseling."*

Pastoral ministry is the broadest context of the work of the pastor in a local church.

*What are the major roles a pastor must fulfill in doing the work of pastoral ministry?*

Pastoral ministry can seem overwhelming with so many tasks to be carried out with a certain degree of expertise.

In this sense, a pastor functions as a medical doctor who is a general practitioner or family doctor. Such a doctor must have very broad knowledge and skills but cannot be expected to be a specialist in every field. Pastors may be gifted spiritually or feel competent to do certain tasks well. However, the pastor will be expected to carry out all the functions of ministry, even those he or she may feel are not personal strengths. There may be laypeople in the church who can assist the pastor in those weaker areas.

Pastoral care incorporates all of the helping or caring functions of the pastoral role.

It is a smaller part of the larger ministry responsibility of the pastor.

*What are some of the specific helping or caring functions of pastoral care?*

The caring functions of the pastor fall within the biblical image of being a shepherd to the flock. We will explore this idea further in the next class session.

Pastoral counseling is understood as a specific type of pastoral care. It is distinguished from most other

helping functions in that it is problem-oriented and usually the pastor does not initiate the process.

*What are some of the specific types of problems pastors will encounter in counseling?*

*The instructor should write these on the board as students list the problems.*

*Among the specific counseling problems students may mention: premarital, marriage, church conflicts, crisis, spiritual, decisions, vocational, troubled teens, family, divorce recovery, substance abuse, and others.*

There is one other, smaller circle within the pastoral counseling sphere: pastoral psychotherapy. This counseling is long-term and requires extensive training, far beyond the scope of this course. Usually such psychotherapy is done outside the context of the local church and there is usually a fee for such services. People needing such care should be referred to professionals with proper training and credentials.

*Emphasize this!*

## **Lecture: The Historical Context of Pastoral Care and Counseling**

(5 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 1-3 in the Student Guide.*

Various Old Testament personalities concerned themselves with the needs of the people under their care. Moses was charged with responsibility for the physical wellbeing of the Israelites in addition to giving leadership. David, Israel's greatest king over the united nation, had a deep sense of the needs of the people. It is interesting that both of these men were trained to care for sheep before taking their leadership roles.

In the New Testament pastoral care focused on the needs of the developing church. Christ became the model for shepherding the flock. Our next lesson will deal with that image extensively. Acts 6: 1-7 describes the Early Church addressing the needs of certain widows in the church by appointing seven men as deacons, specifically responsible for responding to this issue. Paul's letters are filled with exhortations for the church to encourage and care for one another. His writings to Timothy and Titus focus on the responsibilities of pastors to care for and strengthen the flock.

Throughout the centuries the developing church continued to focus ministry on the spiritual growth and physical well-being of its members. In the sixth century, Pope Gregory the Great wrote a paper,

*Pastoral Care*, instructing priests on the importance of moral and spiritual guidance for the church and the world. The Protestant Reformation rekindled an emphasis on the priesthood of all believers. Luther argued anyone could hear confession and pronounce the forgiveness of God.

John Wesley early emphasized the importance of pastoral care in his Methodist class meetings. The idea of lay Christians working to bring accountability and care to one another struck a responsive cord in the expanding frontiers of the young country of the United States.

The 19th-century camp meeting movement, which helped birth the Church of the Nazarene, stressed the need for Christian perfection as a means of pastoral care. Spiritual maturity meant more than simply personal holiness. The movement developed concerns for social evils such as alcohol, children without education, and women being led into prostitution.

With the 20th century came an emphasis upon more formalized training for pastors and courses specifically focused on pastoral care and counseling. The development of psychiatry and psychology as disciplines also influenced the church. After much suspicion the church began developing Christian counseling centers and graduate programs to understand psychology within a biblical context. Most recently the church has placed strong emphasis upon lay counseling, small groups, and recovery groups as specific ways to provide specialized pastoral care for the twenty-first century.

## Small Groups: Pastoral Care for Today

(15 minutes)

Refer to Resource 1-4 in the Student Guide.

Thomas C. Oden, *Classical Pastoral Care, Vol. 1, Becoming a Minister* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1987), 5.

### Definition of Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care is that branch of Christian theology that deals with care of persons by pastors. It is pastoral because it pertains to the offices, tasks, and duties of the pastor. It is care because it has charge of, and is deliberately attentive to the spiritual growth and destiny of persons.

Pastoral care is generally expressed within the context of the church and the community where the pastor serves. It often occurs naturally in the flow of pastoral activities within the ongoing life of church. The pastor sometimes gives care by his or her presence, simply because that minister represents Christ and His church

to the individual in need. As Jesus' representative, the highest priority for the pastor must be the spiritual development of the flock. In a world that is becoming increasingly impersonal and uncaring, people inside and outside the church want to know there is someone who knows and cares for them. In this "high-tech age" people want a "high-touch church" where someone cares.

In groups of three or four discuss the following questions about pastoral care. Each group needs to select one person who will report back to the entire class.

Discussion #1: How important is pastoral care to the individuals of a local church, especially in light of the isolation many feel within their culture?

Discussion #2: Is there a problem with the pastor as the only caregiver in the congregation? How many people can one person realistically care for? Does the pastor have ministry responsibilities beyond pastoral care? Does the demand that the pastor be the only caregiver limit the growth potential of a local church?

*Allow about 5 minutes for reports.*

## **Small Groups: Pastoral Counseling Today**

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 1-5 in the Student Guide.*

*Howard Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984), 26.*

### **Definition of Pastoral Counseling**

Pastoral counseling, one dimension of pastoral care, is the utilization of a variety of healing (therapeutic) methods to help people handle their problems and crises more growthfully and thus experience healing of their brokenness.

A pastor, no matter the level of training, does not have the luxury of deciding whether or not to counsel. People will come to the pastor with their problems. The fact that the pastor is the spiritual leader of the church is enough reason for some to come for help. The pastor is known and respected, is available at most hours of the day or night, knows how to pray and read the Bible, and believes God can work in the lives of people. The question is not whether or not to counsel, but whether in counseling the pastor will use effective skills in helping people solve problems.

In your same groups discuss these questions on pastoral counseling. The group should select another person as reporter.

*Some advantages: counselee is generally known, pastor does not charge, usually does not need an appointment far in the future, pastor is an expert in the spiritual dimension, training in the Bible and theology, will not draw a person away from one's faith, can provide support through the church.*

*Some disadvantages: the parishioner may reveal things that are embarrassing and the pastor could lose confidence, the pastor could reveal the parishioner's dark hidden secrets to others, the pastor's lack of training could hinder healing, the pastor may not have time to spend, the person may not take the pastor seriously because he or she is free or doesn't have professional credentials for counseling.*

*Some resources would include: scripture, prayer, the sacraments, anointing, God's grace, support from the church, Christian books.*

Discussion #1: Why would people turn first to a pastor rather than a trained psychologist for counsel? What advantages and disadvantages do pastors have?

Discussion #2: What are some of the helping tools pastors have available when counseling people?



# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Call on one student to give the definition of pastoral care.*

*Call on another student to give the definition of pastoral counseling.*

## Look Ahead

During our next lesson we will be taking a look at Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor. Jesus is our model for giving care to others.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

List six characteristics of Jesus' shepherding or care-giving ministry in the Gospels. Give a scriptural reference for each characteristic and how it applies to a pastor in ministry. Be prepared to share your findings in class discussion in the next session.

Write a 2-page paper on why you think pastoral care and counseling is an important part of a pastor's role.

Begin the Community Research Notebook as described in the Syllabus.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Peterson, chapter 1.

Write in your journal. Give an accounting of a time recently where you received care, pastoral or otherwise, from someone. Express your feelings to be on the receiving end of someone else's concern. Then write about an opportunity you took to express care, concern, or counsel to someone else. How did you feel about the experience? Would you do something different next time?

## Punctuate the Finish

Our culture treats with great reverence physicians who care for the physical bodies of their patients. And yet bodies get old and will eventually die. It is ashes to ashes, dust to dust for the body. Pastors have the privilege of working with the spiritual part of people. Our work has eternal significance. The importance of a

pastor's work is not measured in checking accounts and community acclaim. Somewhere in the distant future, as you are walking down the golden streets of heaven, you will see someone you cared for on that person's journey through earth. From that perspective, the care of people's souls is the most important job a person can have.

*In the next lesson you will need to provide large pieces of paper (preferably 3 feet by 4 feet), and colored markers or crayons. You will also need some way to hang these papers on the wall for all to see.*

## Lesson 2

# The Pastor as Shepherd

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Jesus, the Model Shepherd	Small Groups	Homework Large paper Markers, crayons
0:35	The Church as a Flock of Sheep	Lecture	Resource 2-1
0:45	The Job Description of a Shepherd	Guided Discussion	Resource 2-2
1:05	Present-Day Shepherding	Lecture	Resource 2-3 Resource 2-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Switzer, David K. *Pastoral Care Emergencies*.  
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*.  
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 6.

Wiersbe, David W. *The Dynamics of Pastoral Care*.  
Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two to three students to read their essays.*

*Collect all essays.*

## Orientation

*Read Psalm 23 or have a student read, preferably from a modern translation, so the fresh treatment of the text opens new insights.*

*You should talk about the security and safety the shepherd brings to the flock.*

## Beginning in the Word

*Where do you see yourself in the psalm? Why?*

There are several places to be, or viewpoints in the psalm: the sheep, a shepherd, totally above the scene as a spectator, a sheep outside the shepherd's care.

*Why is this psalm so meaningful to people?*

People make the connection between the shepherd here and Jesus, the Good Shepherd.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the role of shepherd as illustrated in Scripture and modeled by Jesus
- explain the functions of a shepherd in a church context
- exercise shepherding functions in home and hospital visitation

## Lesson Body

### Small Groups: Jesus, the Model Shepherd

(25 minutes)

The term “pastor” is used only one time in the Bible to explain the role of the spiritual leader of a local church: “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be *pastors* and teachers” (Eph 4:11, italic added).

The concept, however, is found throughout the Scriptures. “Pastor” is another word for shepherd. Jesus himself declared, “I am the good shepherd” (Jn 10:11).

*In order to answer the question, divide the class into groups of three to four students.*

*Give each group a large piece of paper (3 feet by 4 feet) and colored markers or crayons.*

*Allow the group about 10 to 15 minutes to work on their drawing.*

*Hang the finished drawings on the wall near the front of the classroom.*

*Ask a representative of each group to explain the symbolic significance of the picture.*

*What images come to our minds as we think of Jesus, the Model Shepherd?*

In your group you are to draw a symbolic picture illustrating the characteristics of Jesus, the shepherd. Each group member is to contribute one or two characteristics from the homework assignment.

As a group decide how to best picture the shepherding qualities of Jesus. The emphasis is not on artistic skill but on symbolic representation.

*Is the image of Jesus as the Model Shepherd impossible for human pastors to really follow or imitate?*

### Lecture: The Church as a Flock of Sheep

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 2-1 in the Student Guide.*

Throughout the Bible the people of God are pictured as sheep. As Moses was about to turn over the reins of leadership to his successor, he asked God for a leader “so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without a shepherd” (Num 27:17). Jesus had the same concern for the nation of Israel as He worked among the people. Matthew, one of the Twelve who worked alongside Jesus, comments in 9:36, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.”

Sheep are defenseless animals. They lack

- the sharp teeth of a wolf
- the slashing claws of a bear

- the outer protection of a turtle
- the speed of a cheetah
- the cunning of a fox

Sheep are defenseless without a shepherd.

Sheep have a natural tendency to wander off. Isaiah put it well in 53:6, "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way." The sheep can be so focused on satisfying their hunger pangs that they fail to realize they have left the shepherd's sight. They are not always discriminating in what they eat. Noxious weeds go in the mouth right along with healthy grass. The shepherd has an important role in leading the flock to green pastures and quiet waters.

Sheep are in need of first aid treatment when they are scratched by briars or fall upon the rocks. Sometimes a sheep with a full coat of wool will fall down and be unable to get up without the shepherd's help.

Sheep need a shepherd. Jesus is the Good Shepherd, the Master and Model Shepherd. But He calls men and women to be undershepherds. If He has called you to be a pastor, shepherding is part of the job description.

## Guided Discussion: The Job Description of a Pastor/Shepherd

(20 minutes)

*Discuss the preaching and teaching as one form of feeding and watering.*

*Restoring could be encouraging, helping sheep to grow, lifting up the fallen.*

*The pastor protects the congregation against false teaching, prepares the people for Satan's attacks, provides an assuring presence in difficult moments such as death and pain.*

*The pastor brings the healing oil representing the Holy Spirit and anoints for physical and emotional healing.*

There are at least 11 descriptive images of the shepherd in Scripture we will be examining closely. After we read the term and the reference, find the contemporary application to the pastor today.

**Feeding:** Psalm 23:2, "He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters."

**Restoring:** Psalm 23:3, "He restores my soul."

**Protecting:** Psalm 23:4, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."

**Healing:** Psalm 23:5, "You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows."

*Pastors gently mentor and disciple young believers with a compassionate heart.*

*People in the church need to know that a pastor or staff person knows them and there is a sense of belonging. A pastor of a very large church may not know everyone, but part of the job description is to be sure someone knows and cares for each person.*

*A shepherd leads his or her sheep, never driving them. You may drive cattle, but not sheep. Part of being a shepherd is a willingness to lead so the sheep know where to go.*

*Jesus demonstrated humility by washing the disciples' feet in John 13. Sometimes it is harder to be a servant leader daily than to be a Christian martyr.*

*This could refer to cross-cultural ministry. Jesus showed His evangelistic concern for all peoples, not just the Jews.*

*Pastors are to equip the flock for works of service, just as Christ has equipped us (Eph. 4:12).*

*Pastors lead by showing people, not telling people what to do or acting self-righteous. 1 Cor 11:1: "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ."*

**Nurturing:** Isaiah 40:11, "He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young."

**Knowing:** John 10:3, "He calls his own sheep by name."

**Leading:** John 10:3, "He . . . leads them out."

**Selfless service:** John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

**Welcoming:** John 10:16, "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also."

**Equipping:** Hebrews 13:20-21, "May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will."

**Modeling:** 1 Peter 5:2-3, "Be shepherds of God's flock . . . not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock."

## Lecture: An Example of Present-Day Shepherding— Visitation

(20 minutes)

*These illustrations of visitation are western and North American in context. In other world areas, the instructor should feel free to substitute culturally appropriate examples in place of these illustrations.*

Pastoral ministry is one of the few professions where our skills are taken to people. It is rare for a physician to make a house call unless it is an emergency. Yet pastors often go to the homes and workplaces of congregants and others. Calling in the North American context has changed dramatically in the last 50 years. Pastors make fewer calls today than earlier generations. There are several reasons.

*Refer to Resource 2-3 in the Student Guide.*

## Reasons Pastors Make Fewer House Calls

- **Fewer adults are at home in the daytime hours.**  
Both spouses work when the children are in school. People work swing shifts and may not want to be disturbed from their sleep. It may be a challenge to find anyone at home for daytime calling.
- **People value privacy.**  
Many live in gated communities or locked apartment buildings. They enter their homes in their cars through garages, closing the garage doors behind them. People are often afraid to open a front door for someone they do not recognize.
- **People value personal time.**  
People work more hours and spend more time getting there. They spend valuable private time exercising, pursuing hobbies, and taking their children to soccer games. Time is almost more precious than money for many. They don't necessarily want interruptions.

Yet, being with and ministering to people is central to what pastoring is all about. With the value of privacy comes isolation. Many people work in tiny workstations staring at computer screens all day. They travel to and from work in metal cocoons that separate them from others. Technology is a poor substitute for human contact. Pastors must find ways to connect with members of their church family to encourage them, pray for them, and most importantly, love them.

What does a pastor do to reach out to people, when it would be easier to do nothing? It takes creativity to make those important pastoral contacts. Here are some suggestions:

- Make an appointment if you know there is a crisis or there is trouble brewing. There are times when a person or family needs immediate attention and an appointment may be the only way that will happen. This may need to be in the evening or early morning.
- Take daytime opportunities to visit senior adults, shut-ins, and those hospitalized.
- Take advantage of breakfast and lunchtimes to make pastoral contacts.
- Train laypeople to make additional contacts. Utilize a small group to show personal care to keep in touch with people. We will say more about this in a later session.



## Hospital Visitation

*Refer to Resource 2-4 in the Student Guide.*

People are especially receptive when they are in the hospital. Since rising insurance costs mean shorter stays in the hospital, the pastor must be alert for the brief opportunities.

- Go to the hospital as soon as possible in an emergency. Get as much information about the patient's location as possible. You can be a great comfort to both the patient and family members.
- Try to visit before serious surgeries. Patients often have great anxiety over the procedure or the disease they are facing. A prayer and a short scripture can help patients realize God is with them in the midst of their surgery.
- Remember, you are a professional and an important part of the healing team. Many hospitals are recognizing the healing potential in prayer. While you want to respect the medical personnel doing their jobs, you can be of great help to the patient as the pastor.
- Make hospital visits brief and positive for the patient. After all, you are the representative of the God who loves and cares for that person. Staying too long can drain valuable energy that is needed for the patient to get well.
- A hospital visit can be an opportunity for evangelism. People are more aware of their mortality in that setting. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading as you speak to people about spiritual matters.
- Recognize the needs of family members and friends. Your presence may be more important than any answers you may be able to give.
- Don't hesitate to touch the patient unless there is a medical reason to maintain distance. A touch on the hand or shoulder when you talk or pray communicates compassion and a willingness to connect physically.
- Try to assess the patient's emotional needs. On one day it may be an encouraging word to overcome fear or loneliness. At another time it may be overcoming the physical weakness of surgery. Be sensitive to what the patient communicates by voice strength and body language.
- If there is any question of whether you should go to visit in the hospital, go. This may be an opportunity for a pastoral moment that may never come again in the same way.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

Looking back over this lesson, can you now:

- understand the role of shepherd as illustrated in Scripture and modeled by Jesus?
- explain the functions of a shepherd in a church context?
- exercise shepherding functions in home and hospital visitation?

## Look Ahead

In our next class session we will be looking at the role of the pastor as a spiritual director for the flock. The responsibility of the pastor to provide soul care is as old as the church.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a 3-page paper reflecting on the job description of the pastor/shepherd from the lecture. List the three images you feel most comfortable fulfilling as a pastor. Then list the three functions you feel most inadequate or uncomfortable doing as a pastor. Explain why you see each of these as strengths or weaknesses in your ministry.

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: Foundations of Pastoral Care by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 6.

Write in your journal reflecting on how the life of Jesus influences your understanding of your task as a pastor. Write out a prayer in which you ask God for wisdom, strength, gifting, and insight to be an effective shepherd.

## Punctuate the Finish

The pastor left the hospital room after visiting a young man in his early 30s. Outwardly he seemed the picture of health. When the pastor stepped out on the street the Holy Spirit strongly urged him to go back and talk to this patient about his spiritual condition. When the impression would not go away, the pastor walked back into the young man's room and led him to saving faith in Christ. The patient soon left the hospital but unexpectedly died within weeks. The pastor was so thankful he did not neglect an opportunity to care for a person in his congregation.

## Lesson 3

# Pastoral Soul Care and Guidance

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Pastoral Soul Care	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 3-1
0:45	Spiritual Guidance	Lecture	Resource 3-2
0:50	Providing Spiritual Guidance	Small Groups	Resource 3-3
1:10	Characteristics of a Spiritual Guide	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 3-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Benner, David G. *Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 2.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two to three students to read their papers.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

John Frye, in his book *Jesus the Pastor*, tells of working in a medical hospital while in seminary. An attractive young woman came into the emergency ward with a split lip, a swollen eye, and abrasions on her forehead. She told the sad story of a fight with her husband outside a bar. She began to cry. It wasn't the physical injuries, she indicated, but fear for her children who might be suffering abuse from their drunk and angry father. After the medical personnel cared for her wounds, Frye sensed there was a deeper pain that went to the relational issues that could not be as easily bandaged and stitched. Then a question began to form within John Frye's mind, "But who will doctor her soul?"

*John W. Frye, Jesus the Pastor (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 84-85.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- appreciate the significance of the soul
- understand the definition of soul care
- know ways to express soul care in the life of the local church
- explain the meaning of spiritual direction
- discover ways to provide spiritual guidance to individuals and groups

## *Lesson Body*

### **Lecture/Discussion: Pastoral Soul Care**

(35 minutes)

#### **Jesus' Concern for the Soul**

In our last lesson we talked about Jesus as the Model Shepherd. Jesus was concerned for people far beyond their physical need for food and good health. While Jesus performed many miracles to alleviate suffering, it was not His primary concern. He understood nothing was more valuable than the soul, the individual. (The Greek word for "soul" includes the whole person. It is the seat of religious sensitivity, moral responsibility, and human feeling.) Christ said to His disciples, "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mt 16:26).

Jesus knew the value of the soul, a person's religious sensitivity and moral awareness, because this was the focal point from which a human relationship with God would develop. Yet, Jesus never forced people to make decisions at the soul level before they were ready. He planted seeds in the form of parables and allowed them to germinate to life as people thought about them.

While He never made a sales pitch for cheap grace or halfhearted discipleship, He was ready to respond to the softest cry of the human soul. For those beaten down and abandoned, Jesus made the offer, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Mt 11:28-29).

The Apostle John prayed for his friend Gaius in 3 John 2: "Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting well." As pastors and shepherds following the model of Christ, one of our unique tasks is to care for spiritual needs as we lead people to wholeness in Christ.

## What Is Soul Care?

David Benner in his book *Care of Souls* writes:

Caring for souls is caring for people in ways that not only acknowledge them as persons but also engage and address them in the deepest and most profoundly human aspects of their lives. . . . In summary, therefore, we can define soul care as the support and restoration of the well-being of persons in their depth and totality, with particular concern for their inner life.

*David G. Benner, Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 23.*

## What do we understand about soul care?

**Soul care is a Christian function.**

*What makes soul care Christian?*

*Discuss the Christian virtues of love, acceptance, and forgiveness. Christians who have been born again should show great concern for the spiritual well-being of others.*

**Soul care is done in the context of community.**

*Why is soul care done best within the body of believers, the church?*

*Lead the discussion toward the understanding that Christianity is not a "lone wolf" or individualized religion. We are Christians in relationship to other Christians as well as God. An important aspect of soul development is corporate worship. We are part of the family of God and we must not neglect our dependence on, and responsibility to, fellow church members. We are bound together, not by human kinship, but by the blood of Jesus that makes us one family.*

**Soul care is a compassionate focus upon others.**

*Should we not be most concerned about ourselves if this seems to be the philosophy of our age?*

*Emphasize in this discussion that, while we should be concerned about our own spiritual welfare, soul care is focused on others and not on ourselves. Study the passages in Paul's writings where the words "one another" are used. The church has historically stressed the need for believers to care for others within and outside the fellowship.*

**Soul care is nurtured through interpersonal relationships.**

*Why is it so important that we really get to know a group of people within the church?*

*Discuss the importance of accountability, encouragement, and burden bearing that can come through small-group interaction. We will discuss this further in the next lesson.*

*Talk about Jesus' willingness to address first the physical and emotional needs of people before speaking to their spiritual needs. Read James 2: 14-17.*

**Soul care is a holistic concern of the total individual.**

*How did Jesus emphasize concern for the whole person?*

**Soul care is a privilege for everyone.**

*Emphasize that while there is the priesthood of all believers, there are specific responsibilities for spiritual care and nurture of the flock under your care. Pastors should train others to assist in giving care to the spiritual needs within the church.*

*Does this mean pastors do not need to concern themselves with soul care?*

## Lecture: Spiritual Guidance

(5 minutes)

*Have your students turn to Resource 3-1 in the Student Guide and read the definition aloud together.*

*Howard Rice, The Pastor as Spiritual Guide (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1998), 61-62.*

### What Is Spiritual Guidance?

Howard Rice, in his book *The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, defines pastoral guidance this way:

Spiritual guidance is a process of pointing people and groups, small or large, beyond the visible realities to the reality of God as the One without whom we cannot possibly understand our present situation . . . The pastor, as spiritual guide, assists the whole congregation to discover the presence of God in its corporate life.

*What are the important words in this definition?*

*Why is each word significant?*

If a pastor takes seriously the call of God, helping people within the church to grow spiritually has to be an important part of the pastoral role. The psalmist David's model for the Lord as shepherd is described in Psalm 23:3, "He *restores* my soul. He *guides* me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

For a pastor to be a spiritual guide he or she must show parishioners the importance of the spiritual dimension of life. As a part of that responsibility, pastors instruct people how to pray, have private devotions, read Scriptures, and become involved in corporate worship. Spiritual guidance can take place in a group setting, or it may be personal and individual. People may seek spiritual guidance in order to grow as Christians. However, the pastor also must be seeking the one who may have sinned and fallen away or seems to be losing interest. Generally, the context of

spiritual guidance and direction is the church and congregation the pastor serves.

There are many areas of pastoral care and counseling where a pastor may not have the necessary skills to help an individual and must refer to someone with specific skills. But spiritual guidance should be an area where the pastor excels. Pastors care for the spiritual needs of the flock. They should be attentive to their people's level of faith development and be ready to give individual direction when they can.

## Small Groups: Providing Spiritual Guidance

(20 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 3-3 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide the class into groups of three to four students.*

*Allow 10 to 15 minutes for group discussion before calling for reports.*

In your group discuss the questions and select a reporter who will share the group's findings with the class.

What are the qualities of spirituality a pastor should look for in an individual to determine that person's level of spiritual development?

What are some ways a pastor can provide spiritual guidance to an individual? What are some ways to promote spiritual development within groups or within the entire church?

How would a pastor benefit from having a spiritual director for his or her life?

How can a pastor with limited weekly time be a personal spiritual guide for several individuals in the congregation in a given week?

*Most pastors just don't have that kind of time. However, there are some suggestions for pastors who want to have personal involvement in the spiritual growth of people. One option would be to host a regular small group with the purpose of promoting spiritual growth. Another idea would be an overnight or one-day retreat. Within this small group a sense of community, caring, and accountability can quickly develop. Group sessions can include such things as singing, times of prayer, sharing needs, questions of accountability, Scripture study, and encouragement.*

## Lecture/Discussion: Characteristics of an Effective Spiritual Guide

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 3-4 in the Student Guide.*

**Learn to be a good listener.** Hear what the person is trying to say, but learn to listen between the words. What is the person conveying through the unspoken messages that come through voice inflections, body



positions, and movements? Keep your eyes and your focused on the speaker so that person knows you are really present and listening.

*What can a pastor do to become a better listener?*

**Give helpful suggestions.** Guides give guidance. Some of your sharing will come from your understanding of Scripture, the experience of the church in the past, what is reasonable, and what you or others may have experienced in real-life situations. A pastor should never try to “lord over” the life of a parishioner. History is littered with the casualties of over-controlling shepherds.

*How can we guard against the temptation to try to control the other person?*

**Discern the voice of the Spirit.** As a spiritual guide you need to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, the intent of God for the person is obvious. A person who has committed a sin needs to confess that sin to God and receive His forgiveness. Other times, you may sense the Spirit’s voice to respond in a specific way. Remember, as a shepherd, you are acting on God’s behalf. If you listen, the Spirit will guide you.

**Be the voice of encouragement.** People sometimes listen to the voice of Satan who reminds them of their failure and the probability they will not succeed. They don’t need the pastor to reinforce the fact that they have fallen short. Your goal is to be a Barnabas, whose name meant “Son of Encouragement.” You can affirm a person’s spiritual self-worth by pointing out victories and measurements of growth. People can build on their successes more than their failures.

*Can you think of any time when giving encouragement may be difficult for you?*

**Lift the person to the Father in prayer.** Being a spiritual guide has a priestly dimension of intercession. It is not that you have some kind of inside track to God. Prayer is one way of expressing to the person our confidence in God’s power to work. There may be times when you need to declare, on the basis of a personal confession to God, that the person has been forgiven through the blood of Jesus. Most of the time, a person will not ask you to pray, but will deeply appreciate it when you offer to take him or her to the throne of grace.

*What do you do if, when you ask permission to pray, the person says "no"?*

**Call people to the holy life.** The experience of entire sanctification can empower Christians to live the Christlike life they long for but cannot live in their own strength. Calling a believer to follow the holy life flows very naturally out of a pastor's personal guidance. When you talk personally to a person about this experience you can answer questions and objections. You can present a realistic picture of what someone can expect God to do as well as what God expects of us as surrendered followers. Guiding a person to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit may be the most important thing we can do to promote personal spiritual growth and development.

*What are the essential elements we need to share to enable a person to seek this sanctifying experience?*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Call on several students to give one significant idea they learned today.

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be discussing the role of small groups to provide care for others.

## Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.

Read through Philippians. Find three types of spiritual guidance or methods of spiritual encouragement Paul communicated with the church in Philippi. Write a 2-page paper listing the three types and then give contemporary practical applications for each type.

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 2.

Write in your journal an honest appraisal of your spiritual position. Discuss your spiritual growth in the last six months. What have been some of the obstacles to growth? What have been the spiritual victories you have recently experienced? What challenges has God given you to experience growth in the near future?

## Punctuate the Finish

A physician and a pastor were talking together, discussing their roles. The doctor said, "I do my best to help bring healing to the physical bodies of my patients. But you, pastor, are a doctor of the soul." Maybe you have never thought of your role as a soul doctor. Yet, the soul care and spiritual guidance of your people is one of your most important responsibilities. One last thing, don't neglect your own soul.

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## Lesson 4

# Caring through Small Groups

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Small Groups in the Early Church	Guided Discussion	Resource 4-1
0:20	The History of Small Groups	Lecture/Discussion	
0:30	Types of Small Groups	Guided Discussion	Resource 4-2
0:40	Small Groups as Shepherds	Small Groups	Resource 4-3
1:05	Small Group Experience	Small Groups	Resource 4-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Donahue, Bill, and Russ Robinson. *Building a Church of Small Groups*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

George G. Hunter, III. *Church for the Unchurched*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996, ch. 5, "How Small Groups Shape an Apostolic People."

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 5.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In groups of two to three have the students read his or her homework papers.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

Jesus once said that when two or three people gather in His name, He would be in the midst of them. That is the principle behind small groups. A small group is generally thought of as a small number, perhaps 8 to 20 people, gathered in Jesus' name to give care, pray, encourage, and build up one another. And with Jesus in the middle of the group very significant things can happen. Jesus had His 12 disciples. He taught these men, cared for their families, and sometimes just enjoyed their company as they walked or fished. He demonstrated to us that He likes to do His work in the context of a small group.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the small-group dynamics of the Early Church in Acts
- appreciate the influence of John Wesley in the modern small-group movement
- be aware of the development of small groups in the 20th century
- know the various types of small groups
- realize how small groups can respond to the needs of people
- experience the dynamics of a brief small-group gathering

## Lesson Body

### Guided Discussion: Small Groups in the Early Church

(10 minutes)

*Have one student read the passage.*

*Refer to Resource 4-1 in the Student Guide.*

*This consisted of both teaching on Old Testament passages and beliefs about Jesus.*

*This was fellowship based on their unity through Jesus' redemptive work. The fellowship became family when many were cast out of their own families for their faith.*

*Early Christians ate together in a community meal, called an agape or love feast. The Communion meal, remembering Jesus' death and resurrection, was a part of the gathering.*

*The early gatherings made prayers an important part of their worship together.*

*There was a unity borne from a common purpose.*

*If anyone had a need, the group pooled their resources to help the person.*

*They recognized the need for regular celebration times as a congregation.*

*This may refer to informal, casual fellowship times. They enjoyed being together.*

The early followers of the risen Christ met, not in specially designed buildings at the corner of Elm Street and Sixth Avenue, but in homes. There were times when the larger group of followers in Jerusalem came together for celebration moments in the Temple courts. However, the most common form of gathering was in a home with a small group of fellow believers. Turn to Acts 2: 42-47.

Identify as many group activities as you can. Then make a contemporary parallel to the activity.

#### **They devoted themselves to:**

- the apostles' teaching
- to the fellowship
- to the breaking of bread
- to prayer
- All believers were together.
- They gave to anyone as he had a need.
- Every day they continued to meet together in the Temple courts.
- They broke bread in their homes.

*There was an attitude of thanksgiving for all God had provided.*

*They built rapport with the people of Jerusalem who witnessed their mutual care.*

*This concern for each other naturally led to an outward focus on the lost around them.*

- Praising God
- Enjoying the favor of all the people
- And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

*Are any of these characteristics beyond the scope of a functioning small group?*

## **Lecture/Discussion: The History of Small Groups**

(10 minutes)

### **John Wesley**

John Wesley was concerned that 18th-century England sense an awakening such as he had felt in his Aldersgate experience. However, the Church of England was in such a state of spiritual dryness and anemia that Wesley chose to work with small groups. Wesley borrowed ideas from various religious groups and then developed his own plan for working with several types of small groups. He believed small groups provided the best framework for teaching the truths of the Bible, nurturing those who had been saved, as well as providing accountability and support necessary to continue in the faith.

Every person identifying with the Methodists was a member of the basic group—the “class.” This was open to believers and those who were interested and searching. Class meetings provided care and concern for the individual as well as answering questions that could lead to personal faith. After attending weekly for three months, these “class” participants could then join the Methodist Society. For those who wanted to learn the disciplines of the Christian life Wesley offered another small group, the “band.” There were also special groups designed to draw those who had strayed from the faith back to the society.

### **Twentieth-Century Development of Small Groups**

Following World War II the college campuses of America became the focus of ministry and evangelism. Several parachurch agencies such as Campus Crusade, InterVarsity, and the Navigators began developing small groups as a way to evangelize and conserve converts at secular universities. The few churches that used small groups saw them as extensions rather than an integral part of church life and growth.



In the 1960s and 1970s Bruce Larson and Lyman Coleman began to introduce the use of small groups in the church. Part of this was a response to some in secular psychology who were emphasizing interpersonal relationships as a means of mental wholeness. Christian small groups of this period encouraged people to relate to others within the group for inner strength and spiritual accountability.

During the 1980s, the evangelical church became fascinated with the rapid growth of churches in third world areas. The common denominator was the use of cell or small groups within the church. Leaders in the Church Growth Movement began advocating small groups as a viable way to grow a church. Probably the pastor with the greatest single influence on the growth of small groups around the world was Paul Yongge Cho who pastored the world's largest church in Seoul, Korea.

A new term emerged in the 1990s to identify churches with a small-group focus. The term *metachurch* means a church made up of small groups. This is not simply a church that offers small groups. A metachurch uses the small group as the basic building block for church care and functioning. Dale Galloway, the founding pastor of New Hope Community Church in Portland, Oregon, was a leading proponent of the metachurch movement in the United States during the 1990s. The pastors of two of the largest churches in America: Rick Warren at Saddleback Community Church in Viejo, California, and Bill Hybels, the pastor of Willow Creek Community Church in South Barrington, Illinois, have made small groups a top priority.

*Discuss the need for knowing and caring for a small group of people within a very large church.*

*Why have these churches stressed the importance of small groups?*

*How could these small groups be important in caring for others within the group?*

*Could the ability of a small group to know their fellow group members in a large church also be an advantage in a smaller church? In what way?*

## **Guided Discussion: Types of Small Groups**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 4-2 in the Student Guide.*

### **Mutual Support Groups**

These are short-term groups focusing on Bible study, prayer, and mutual encouragement in order to build relationships among the group members. These groups

can lengthen their commitment for a longer duration. There is very little emphasis on reaching to the unsaved since the chief concern is to the others in the group.

*Have you been a part of a group like this? If so, what were the pros and cons?*

### **Sunday School Integration Groups**

These groups study the material presented either in a Sunday School class or pastor's message. It provides for teaching to continue from a pastor's sermon so there can be a clearer understanding of the church's doctrine.

*What would be some of the advantages and disadvantages to this type of group?*

### **Cell Groups**

These are the small groups of the metachurch movement. Everyone is encouraged to be in a group, which provides encouragement to believers and motivation to reach out to the unsaved. These cell groups become the building blocks for the life of the church.

*Why is it important for everyone in the church to have the opportunity to be a part of a small group?*

### **Recovery Support Groups**

These groups focus on a specific problem of hurting people, often outside the church. Typical groups stress one type of problem such as drug or alcohol abuse, or recovery from divorce. These groups offer the support and encouragement people need to face addictions or life problems. They should not be advertised as offering formal group counseling.

*What are some groups outside the church dedicated to meeting these types of problems?*

### **Accountability Groups**

The emphasis of these groups is to promote a deep walk with God through Bible study, prayer, and accountability.

*What might be advantages and disadvantages of these groups?*

## Ministry Groups

People join together to perform a specific ministry such as a nursing home ministry or Work and Witness project. Many of the group functions are focused on others and not on the needs of the group members.

*Is it legitimate to classify these as small groups?*

## Small Groups: Small Groups as Shepherds

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 4-3 in the Student Guide.*

*Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, Building a Church of Small Groups (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 111.*

*Divide your class into four groups, with each taking one of the four areas.*

*Each group will report their discussion to the rest of the class. Part of the report must be a dramatic presentation of their group's response to a need. The group should take 10 to 15 minutes to discuss the image and decide on a presentation. Plan for 10 to 15 minutes for the presentations.*

*If the class is not large enough for all four group activities, decide on which ones to assign.*

When we think of a shepherd, we immediately associate issues of concern. But small groups can shepherd people as well. Bill Donahue and Russ Robinson, in their excellent book *Building a Church of Small Groups*, explain this shepherding role in a medical metaphor.

Small groups function much like a hospital. They provide emergency care, rehabilitative care, long-term care, and wellness care.

### Group 1

How can a small group function as a hospital emergency room, providing a response to a crisis? What are some of the activities that would be a part of this small-group caring responsibility?

### Group 2

How can a small group function as a provider of rehabilitative care, helping people to recover? What problems would need recovery and restoration? How could the small group meet these needs?

### Group 3

How can a small group provide the support needed for long-term care? What types of problems require an extended response? How does the group continue to work with those who require extra consideration?

### Group 4

How can a small group provide wellness care of mutual support for its members? What are some of the wellness issues group members face? How important is discipleship within the group when people have so many other pressing needs?

## Small Groups: Small-Group Experience

(20 minutes)

*If your class is 8 or less, the entire class can function as a small group. If the class is larger, divide into two equally-sized groups or multiple groups of 8 to 10 people. Have the groups sit in circles.*

*Refer to Resource 4-4 in the Student Guide*

### Small-Group Instructions

The leader of the group is the person with a birthday closest to today's date.

1. Discipleship: Have someone read Galatians 6:2, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

Discuss the implications of this verse in your life as a believer.

2. Sharing and caring prayer: Have each person briefly share with the group the biggest personal problem, family need, or other concern facing that person. Have the one on the person's right pray briefly for the need. Move clockwise around the circle until all have shared and received prayer.
3. Close the session by everyone repeating the Lord's Prayer in unison.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Call on two students to give two things the Early Church devoted themselves to.*

*Call on another student to name two types of small groups.*

*Call on another student to express one thing that he or she learned from the group presentations.*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be discussing the role of the laity in providing pastoral care.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Write a 2-page paper on the importance of small groups and how you would implement small-group ministry in a local church.

Optional Reading: Foundations of Pastoral Care by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 5.

Write in your journal. Reflect on your experience in the small-group exercise in class or another recent small group experience. What did God say to you in the Bible reflection time? How did you feel as other members of the group shared their needs? Is there anything you need to do or say as a result of that experience? Is there someone who needs follow-up or continued prayer?

## Punctuate the Finish

*Donahue and Robinson, 119.*

*In the next lesson you will need to provide large pieces of paper and markers for a brainstorming activity.*

Community building is an act of love. Ultimately and supremely community means the giving of our lives to one another—no more, no less . . . A church built on small groups will become a community that can reach a wider community . . . This is worth giving ourselves to—one life at a time.

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## Lesson 5

# Pastoral Care by the Laity

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 5-1
0:10	Clergy and Laity	Lecture	
0:15	Qualities of Lay Caregivers	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 5-2
0:40	Lay Pastoral Involvement	Small Groups	Resource 5-3 Paper and markers
1:05	Developing Lay Pastoral Care	Lecture	Resource 5-4 Resource 5-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Howe, Leroy. *A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 4.

Stone, Howard W. *The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share their homework papers.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

*Refer to Resource 5-1 in the Student Guide.*

Dr. George Hunter III emphasizes, in his book *Church for the Unchurched*, that one of the characteristics of churches that are effective in ministry is a willingness to have much of the pastoral care done by lay-people. He states:

Most people in most churches do not, and cannot, get adequate ongoing pastoral care from their pastor; crisis care yes, but ongoing care no. Christians need pastoral care when life is good, as well as when life is hard, but the pastor's expanded job description now makes that impossible for the pastor to be every member's personal chaplain. Few churches have, can afford or can find enough ordained pastors and staff to go around. Every church has enough people within the church membership with the appropriate abilities and spiritual gifts, to "shepherd a flock". We are learning that many lay people, with training, can do 90 percent of what an ordained pastor does.

*George G. Hunter, III, Church for the Unchurched (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 134.*

*How do you respond to Hunter's observation that a pastor does not have enough time to provide adequate pastoral care?*

*Is this an indication of failure on the part of pastoral professionals really to take seriously their role of being good shepherds of the flock? Is this an indication that pastors are too removed from their flocks?*

*Do you think trained laypeople can literally do 90 percent of pastoral care?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the need for the laity to be involved in caring ministries



*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

- identify the qualities needed for effective lay pastoral ministry
- list ways the laity can be active in caring within and outside the church
- develop training opportunities for effective lay ministry

## *Lesson Body*

### **Lecture: Clergy and Laity**

(5 minutes)

The New Testament did not make a sharp distinction between clergy and laity. 1 Peter 2: 9, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." Martin Luther and the other Reformers made a very strong case for the priesthood of believers. This means every believer is a minister in the church of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul informed the church in Ephesians 4: 12 that the role of the pastor/teacher is "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

Adult Christians have both an occupation and a calling. An occupation is what a person does for what we call "a living." Generally we work at an occupation for money to provide for our personal or family needs. A person may be "a butcher, a baker, a candlestick maker" in the words of the children's rhyme. The occupation may lean toward the high-tech, such as a computer programmer or aerospace engineer. It may be a job concerned with helping people like nurses and teachers perform. Our occupation can be a way we can show the love of Jesus to people who may not know Him.

But every Christian is also a part of the priesthood of all believers. That means we all have a second job—a sense of calling that could be understood as a second vocation. Being a part of the body of Christ means each of us has a responsibility to carry out Jesus' work here on earth. We, as members of Christ's church, become His hands, His feet, His voice, as though Jesus himself is here on earth caring for people. The New Testament uses the phrase "one another" over 50 times to emphasize the responsibility all Christians have to comfort and confront, to edify and encourage other believers. Our next class session will address the issue of equipping this earthly representation of Christ's body for service. This lesson will focus on the people-helping efforts of the laity of the church.

While most Christians today do not argue the issue of the priesthood of believers, many do question whether lay involvement in pastoral care is crossing the line

into the sacred world of the paid professional clergy. Some pastors are hesitant to turn over responsibility for the care of parishioners to laypeople in the church. These pastors may worry they will not be valued as highly if they surrender the traditional roles of pastoral care to others. Many laypeople also fear taking on the responsibility of caring for others because they do not have the proper training. Some would say, "Why should we do pastoral care? Isn't that what we pay the pastor to do?" Yet the New Testament is plain that we are all to care for each other within the body of Christ. It is the best way for the love of God to be shared with people in need.

Pastoral care is simply personal care shown to others in the name of Jesus. This is generally carried out within a compassionate relationship that focuses on the needs of the person receiving the care.

## Lecture/Discussion: Qualities of Lay Caregivers

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 5-2 in the Student Guide.*

### Compassion

This quality is probably best illustrated in Jesus' parable of the shepherd and the lost sheep of Luke 15. Although 99 sheep are safe, all the shepherd can think about is the one sheep out in the storm, exposed to the elements, in danger of attack by wild animals, lacking the skills to find its own way home to the fold. The shepherd searches until the sheep is found, hoists it over a shoulder, and rejoices with friends over the rescue.

Compassion should not be confused with manipulation or autocratic control over the person being helped. A compassionate bird watcher may find a wounded bird and spend much time nursing it to health. But the ultimate success would be to be able to release that bird back into the wild to be able to live again as an independent creature. Likewise, the people-helping goal is not to control people like a puppeteer pulling strings, but rather like cutting the strings to free people from the issues hindering them.

*How can we recognize people with the special ability to be compassionate?*

*How can helpers guard against the temptation to become all-wise parents with all the answers for other people?*

*How can helpers be compassionate without being controlling?*

### **Involvement**

The priest and Levite in Jesus' parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 have suffered at the hands of preachers across the ages who have labeled them as uncaring. Actually, these two men faced a difficult quandary. Here was an injured man who might be dead. Could they risk touching what might be a dead corpse and then be eliminated from religious service until they could be ceremonially cleansed? The issue for them may not have been a question of compassion but a question of involvement.

Christian caregivers are willing to take the step from feeling to acting on behalf of a person in need. There are risks in taking action. The gesture of help may be outright rejected. It could be misunderstood by the person needing help or by onlookers on the side. The person may take your helping actions to the point of becoming dependent on you. But generally caregivers disregard the risks because the need is great.

*Is the whole issue of getting involved with others less popular today? If so, what are the reasons people avoid involvement?*

### **Affirming**

Picture a man standing at an intersection with a sign saying, "Will work for food." A compassionate person might think, "What a poor man, standing there without a job. I wonder if he is hurting in his stomach?" An involved person might roll down the car window and hand the man some money for food. An affirmer might see the man's dignity and worth, and take him to a place where he could get a job. In John 9 Jesus and His disciples saw a man born blind. "His disciples asked Him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned,' said Jesus, 'but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life'" (Jn 9: 2-3).

People-helpers see the incredible worth of every person who is created in the image of God. The late Mother Teresa of Calcutta taught the world that even the poorest of the poor, dying on the streets of the city, deserve to be treated with love and dignity in their final hours. Jesus reached out to lepers, prostitutes, and tax collectors with the same respect He gave to the rich and the powerful and the religious

of His day. We need to respect people as God's creation, loved and accepted by Him.

*How do we learn to look beyond the exterior of a person and down to his or her heart?*

*Is being a person like Mother Teresa impossible for most people?*

*What would it take to become more affirming to others?*

### **Encourager**

Early in the development of the church Luke introduces us to a person so quietly that it is easy to miss. In Acts 4:36-37 Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means Son of Encouragement), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet. There are many people who gain a nickname for a personal or physical characteristic that so dominates the person's image that it overshadows the person's given name.

This Joseph was so encouraging to people that people started calling him "Son of Encouragement" or "Barnabas" instead of the name his parents gave him. When he starts his first missionary journey with Paul in Acts 13, he is simply called Barnabas. He encouraged a relative, John Mark, to travel with the group. Mark left the group early with a cloud of failure hanging over his head. But when Paul started talking about a second journey it was Barnabas who insisted that John Mark be given a second chance. Barnabas believed so strongly John Mark needed encouragement that he was willing to forgo his trip with Paul in order to help his cousin.

People-helpers are there to buoy up the spirits of those who don't believe in themselves or are convinced they are bound to fail. The words "I believe in you" from the lips of a caring friend can make the difference between giving up and trying again.

*Does one's personality type or disposition affect one's ability to be an encourager?*

### **Determination**

Early in Mark's account of Jesus' ministry, an event changed the lives of five men dramatically. Jesus was healing inside a home in the village of Capernaum surrounded by curious crowds. Four men carried a

paralytic man on a pad to the house. When they couldn't get near the door they went up on the roof and tore a hole big enough to lower their friend down. When Jesus saw *their faith* He said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven" (Mk 2:5). The helpless man was forgiven and then healed because of the determination of his four friends. An attitude of determination can make the difference when other people might be tempted to quit. The shepherd of Luke 15 sought the lost sheep until the animal was found. Caring Christians will go the second mile to help a person who is hurting. That is determination.

*How can caring Christians know when to go on trying and when to stop?*

### **Authenticity**

In John 1 we find several stories about Jesus calling various disciples to follow Him and be His disciples. After Philip received his call he went to tell his friend Nathanael. When Jesus saw Nathanael approaching Him, He made the comment, "Here is a true Israelite, in whom there is nothing false" (Jn 1:47). Being authentic, real, or genuine means we are the same on the inside as we are on the outside. "In shepherding terms, being genuine involves offering ourselves as finite, fallible, and fallen creatures, redeemed by God's grace and love, called and equipped to help others in the name of the One who continues to work redemptively on their and our behalf."

Leroy Howe, *A Pastor in Every Pew* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000), 30.

When we are being transparent to those in need, we convey the attitude of real compassion. As we open ourselves to others we find that the resistance and defense mechanisms people use for self-protection are lowered toward us. The trust level goes up when we are willing to be vulnerable. Authenticity is being yourself, warts, imperfections, and all.

*How much should you share about yourself in an attempt to let others get to know you?*

*Is it possible to reveal too much about yourself?*

### **Being Positive**

Often people in need have lost any hope there is a solution to the problem they face. They need someone who has faith because they have no faith themselves. Hebrews 11:1, "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." When people are at the end of their rope they need a caring

person who will come alongside and tie a knot in the rope for a handhold. Positive people-helpers do not want to instill an unrealistic hope that is not going to happen. They do not want to ignore the obvious pain a person is experiencing. On the other hand, when a caring individual shows a positive attitude, it can have the effect of stimulating a spark of hope in the heart of the hopeless person. Positive change can come about when needy people can lift their eyes above the circumstances to rely on a God who offers hope and change. Psalm 121:1-2, "I lift up my eyes to the hills—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

*How is it possible to remain positive when the situation seems hopeless, or you don't feel positive yourself?*

## Small Groups: Lay Pastoral Involvement

(20 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 5-3 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a large sheet of newsprint and markers or crayons for writing. Have each group make a list of activities lay pastoral care workers could do in each of the categories. Or, if you have several groups, divide up the categories so each group deals with three or four.*

*Take 10 to 15 minutes for discussion and 5 to 10 minutes for reporting by hanging the newsprint on the wall with tape.*

In your group make a list of activities lay pastoral care workers could do in each of the categories.

1. Pastoral Care for the Troubled
2. Pastoral Care for the Sick
3. Pastoral Care for the Elderly
4. Pastoral Care for Christians
5. Pastoral Care for Unbelieving Prospects
6. Pastoral Care in the Community

## Lecture: Developing Lay Pastoral Care

(20 minutes)

While it is possible for a pastor to give individual guidance and training for a church member to become effective in providing care, the most obvious way for lay development is to develop a class for training. Several issues must be addressed.

*Refer to Resource 5-4 in the Student Guide.*

### 1. Open vs. Closed Classes

Some churches have simply announced training classes available to anyone who is interested. Others have extensive screening processes such as personal interviews and psychological tests to determine who would be most effective after training. One reason for having training by invitation only is that some people with serious problems of their own will seek training in

order to find help. One way to deal with this is to announce that a lay care program is starting but everyone will need to be approved by interview. This will eliminate those who are unsuitable and should not be a part of the training.

## **2. Commitment**

If those who are trained will be "certified" by the local church, a certain level of commitment to the training process is essential. At the end of the training all trainees need to decide if their continuing involvement is going to be formal (on call as a part of the pastoral care team of the church) or informal (responding to needs as they present themselves in normal life).

## **3. Conducting Classes**

Training classes can be taught during the Sunday School hour or on a weekday. It is also possible to train people on a weekend retreat with follow-up sessions. Sessions can last one hour over 10 or 12 weeks, or fewer sessions of two to three hours in length.

It is advantageous to have some actual on-the-job experiences by visiting at a nursing home or at a local hospital. Local chaplains or nurses can help connect students with people needing care. Graduation recognition with a commissioning is an appropriate way to let the congregation know these people have been trained and are being sent out.

## **4. Training Materials**

Gary R. Collins, *How to Be a People Helper* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1976, 1995). The original book has been used by churches for many years. There are 12 sessions with growth exercises for personal reflection and group interaction for each chapter. Its primary focus is upon lay counseling rather than the broader issues of pastoral care.

Leroy Howe, *A Pastor in Every Pew: Equipping Laity for Pastoral Care* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2000). This is an excellent book with 20 chapters of overview on lay counseling and a 10-session training manual called "A Program for Lay Shepherds." This is an excellent resource.

Howard W. Stone, *The Caring Church: A Guide for Lay Pastoral Care* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991). Stone's book, although brief, has eight sessions for training and has a "Service for Commissioning Lay Pastoral Carers" in the appendix.

*Refer to Resource 5-5 in the Student Guide.*



Continue with Resource 5-4 in the Student Guide.

## 5. Lay Leadership

For lay pastoral care to function well within a local church setting, there should be a structure of lay leadership to coordinate lay activities within the overall leadership of the pastor. An empowered laity can multiply the caring ministry of the local church many-fold over a clergy dominated care approach.

## 6. Opportunities for Cross-cultural Care

Gary Collins observes that people who arrive from another culture experience a five-stage reaction cycle. First, there is *enthusiastic acceptance* where everything is wonderful. Second come feelings of *doubt and reservation* as the reality sets in that this may not be utopia. Next come feelings of *resentment and criticism* when the new culture seems inferior to the old. The fourth stage is *adjustment* as the person takes a more objective view of the new culture. Finally comes the stage of *accommodation and evaluation* as the person achieves a level of confidence and acceptance with the new culture. Lay-people may be uniquely gifted and interested in crossing cultural barriers to share Jesus' love. Even though there may be differences in language and customs, love has a way of bridging the gap between people. Meeting people's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs is often the first step in helping people adjust to a new culture.

Ideas from Gary Collins, *Innovative Approaches to Counseling* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1986), 145-46.

## 7. Cautions for Lay Pastoral Care

- **Confidentiality:** The tradition of the seal of the confessional has been a part of the Christian church across the centuries. When an individual shares a confidence with a person representing the church, whether the listener is lay or clergy, that person has the right to understand the words will be held in strictest confidence. A lay caregiver would be bound legally to the same restrictions as would a clergy person. There are two exceptions to this principle: when a person expresses the intent to do harm either to oneself or to another person. In the case of a suicide threat, the helper must take steps to try to protect the counselee from harming himself or herself. If a threat is made on someone else's life or safety, the helper must act to protect that person if possible.
- **Unsuitable helpers:** Churches must be sure individuals who may be manipulative, emotionally unstable, or prone to gossip not be sanctioned as pastoral caregivers. Those who are people-helpers

need to understand the limitations of their skills and not overstep their training and abilities.

- **Lay burnout:** There are those in a congregation who will demand more attention than a caring person can possibly give. Both lay leadership and the pastor must be alert to the signs of emotional or physical burnout. Part of the answer is to have monthly support meetings for the caregivers to be able to share their personal needs. Also, the group can give guidance and help for the chronically dependent people who may sap one person's strength.
- **Referrals:** Just as clergy need to develop a network of helping professionals in the community, lay helpers should have access to that network or establish their own referral system. The object of all pastoral care is to provide help for needs whether that is within the church or outside the walls.

## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

*Allow for student response.*

*Are there any questions or comments on today's lesson?*

### Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be discussing the role of the laity in providing pastoral care.

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Study Acts 6 (especially vv. 1-7). Write a 2- to 3-page reflection paper on the need of the Early Church mentioned and how the church responded. What was the significance of the qualifications for those chosen to be people-helpers? What was the result of this change in strategy? What are some implications for the church today?

Read Resource 6-6, "The Connecting Church: Ministry."

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: Foundations of Pastoral Care by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 4.

Write in your journal. Reflect on your own attitudes toward the laity doing pastoral care in the church. What are some ways you can encourage laypeople to become more involved in caring ministries?

### Punctuate the Finish

George Hunter tells of an incident in the life of Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church. A charter member suffered a heart attack and Rick Warren went into the emergency room. "I'm Pastor Rick, here to see Walt Stevens." The head nurse frowned and asked, "How many pastors does this church have anyway? I'm sorry, you can't see him. Too many pastors have already seen him." After the nurse walked away, Warren shot into the room anyway. The patient said, "What are you doing here? I must be really sick! Five lay pastors have already visited me!" After a brief prayer Rick Warren left the room saying,

*Quoted in Hunter, Church for the Unchurched, 136.*

*In the next lesson students will need large pieces of paper and markers for the small-group activity.*

"That is the way God meant for the church to operate. God never meant it to be a one-man show . . . God works through the ministry of the laity, and they have the right to know that God is working in their life."

## Lesson 6

# Equipping and Empowering the Laity

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Pastoral Resistance to Lay Ministry	Guided Discussion	
0:25	Employing Volunteers for Ministry	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 6-1
0:40	Motivating People for Lay Ministry	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 6-2
0:55	Assessing Gifts and Abilities	Small Groups	Resource 6-3 Paper and markers
1:15	Retaining the Workforce	Lecture	Resource 6-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Galloway, Dale E., ed. *Building Teams in Ministry*.  
Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City,  
2000.

Johnson, Douglas W. *Empowering Lay Volunteers*.  
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*.  
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 3.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two students to read their reflection papers.*

*Call on two students to share one key idea that they gained from the reading assignment.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

In Acts 6 the church in Jerusalem had grown at such a rapid rate some felt they were being left out. The Greek-speaking widows, originally from other areas but living in Jerusalem, claimed the local widows were getting special treatment in the church's daily food distribution. The clergy, the 12 apostles, did not have the time, or the desire, to daily deal with the problem. Their answer? Verses 3-4: "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and we will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

It was a big challenge for the Twelve to realize they could not do everything, and then turn over a ministry to laypeople. However, it worked. The seven effectively did their job. The Twelve were able to focus on their responsibilities of prayer and preaching. Verse 7: "So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith." Thus, lay ministry has its birth very early in the Early Church history.

*What does this passage say to us in the contemporary church?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the biblical role of the laity in ministry
- discover ways to draw the laity into the vital task of ministry

*learners to key information and concepts.*

- list ways the laity can be motivated to become involved in ministry
- identify New Testament list of spiritual gifts and understand their importance
- appreciate the importance of retaining those who do ministry within the church

## *Lesson Body*

### **Guided Discussion: Lay Ministry**

(15 minutes)

#### **The New Testament Basis**

You can use the football game as a metaphor for what is often seen in the church. Someone described football as 22 men on the field desperately needing rest and 80,000 fans in the stands desperately needing exercise. Or consider the general who says to the 1,000 troops in his command, "I am a well-trained professional. I have been educated at the best military academy in the world. I have faced the enemy before and know what to expect. Besides, you might make a mistake and so I have decided, I will go out and fight the battle against the enemy army of 1,000 . . . all by myself."

What's the problem here? While football may be a spectator sport, the church cannot afford to have people who simply watch. Everyone needs to be involved. An army will never win if only the general fights. The general will be overwhelmed, and the troops need to be active participants if the army has any hope of winning. And yet many churches believe it is the pastors' job to do all the ministry. "After all," they say, "that's what we pay them for."

Let's revisit a scripture from last session, Eph 4:11-12, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up." Paul is very clear the people in roles mentioned in verse 11 are to focus on carrying out the responsibility of verse 12. The pastor/teacher role is not doing ministry. It is to prepare God's people (the church) for works of service.

Jesus took 12 ordinary, uneducated, unsophisticated, men and equipped them for a little over three years before sending them out to change the world. These men trained others and the church spread as an expanding tidal wave—from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth. It is the pattern Paul instructed Timothy to follow, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be



qualified to teach others" (2 Tim 2:2). The church's challenge is to get spectators out of the stands and onto the field of action. It means activating God's army that has been AWOL (absent without leave) to take an active role in the front lines in the conflict against the enemy of the human soul. To do this the pastor must take on the role of player/coach, equipping and empowering the laity to do the work of ministry.

### **Overcoming a Great Obstacle—Pastoral Resistance**

*Write on the blackboard or overhead "Reasons Pastors Resist Lay Ministry." Then list the responses of the class. You may want to steer the discussion to the following issues.*

- *Pastor as leader. Some may be unwilling to relinquish control over church ministries.*
- *Praise for work. Many pastors like the attention and acclaim when people see their work and brag on them.*
- *For professionals only. Ministry cannot be entrusted to people who do not have professional training.*
- *Personal satisfaction. There is fulfillment from being involved in seeing people helped. Many pastors do not want to share that joy with anyone else.*
- *Fear of lay failure. Some laity will not do a ministry opportunity effectively. Maybe that will mean extra cleanup work for the pastor.*
- *Difficulty in recruiting. After trying to get a layperson unsuccessfully to take on a ministry, sometimes it is easier just to do the job yourself.*

Pastoral resistance may be the single greatest hindrance to lay ministry in a local church. A change in attitude must begin with an understanding the New Testament teaches lay ministry is the norm for the church. Each Christian has been gifted by the Holy Spirit to do some type of ministry. To release the laity for ministry brings a sense of personal fulfillment. When all the fans in the stands get down on the playing field, the labor shortage is over. While the pastor may not be able to find enough hours in the day to do all the ministry needed, when the laity become

involved in ministry all the needs of the church can be addressed.

*How do we equip and empower the laity to become effective in ministry?*

## **Lecture/Discussion: Employing Volunteers for Ministry**

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 6-1 in the Student Guide.*

*John Ed Mathison, "Niche-Pickin'—New Paradigm for Lay Ministry," in Building Teams in Ministry, ed. Dale E. Galloway (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2000), 56.*

John Ed Mathison, "Most churches recruit people to do various tasks. At Frazer [Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Alabama] we do not recruit anybody to do anything. Rather we say to every member 'As a follower of Jesus, you are expected to volunteer to serve someplace in the life of the church.' Then they are given the opportunity to freely decide where they will serve."

Frazer Memorial Church has an annual commitment time where a person can volunteer in one of 200 ministries for one year of ministry service. At the end of the year the volunteer can either revolunteer for the same task or switch to a new area of service. This provides for a person to leave one ministry for another without feeling burned out or guilty. Individuals can identify their own interests better than anyone else, with guidance from the Holy Spirit. If no one volunteers for a certain task, perhaps it is God's way of saying the task is no longer needed in the church. People who volunteer tend to take their responsibility seriously. Even volunteers must be trained. Frazer Memorial trains each January so the volunteers can serve effectively.

*Do you think this idea of volunteering would work in the church you attend or pastor?*

*What do you see as the advantages of such an approach? Disadvantages?*

*Do you think some tasks will need recruitment?*

*What would be needed to implement this at your church?*

### **Beginning the Process**

Where do you begin the process of developing a volunteer ministry force?

- Compile a Ministry Inventory.  
List every ministry currently being done in the church. Organize this list by categories such as

Sunday School, missions, discipleship, and maintenance. List all the weekly, monthly, and seasonal tasks.

- Develop a Ministry Dream List.  
This could include things that should be done or could be done if there were enough volunteers and resources. What concerns in the church have been neglected? What community needs seem to be unmet by any other church or organization? This is the time to envision ministries that would bring glory to the kingdom of God. This list could be developed by the church board, or better still, a survey of the church members.
- Matching Ministers to Ministries.  
Jesus was concerned about workers. Matthew 9: 37-38: "Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'"

Begin by gathering the church for a prayer time for workers. Then begin the volunteering process. This could be done by simply making a list of current Ministry Inventory Tasks and Dream List opportunities. Have an annual Sign Up Day a month or two before the beginning of the church year. A more creative approach might be a Ministry Job Fair prior to Sign Up Day. The various departments and ministries of the church decorate display tables and provide handout sheets describing opportunities for ministry. This can educate people about present ministry opportunities as well as expose them to potential new ministries inside and outside the church.

## Lecture/Discussion: Motivating People for Lay Ministry

(15 minutes)

Many pastors see the answer to meeting ministry needs in hiring staff members. Yet in most churches the needs are far greater than the financial resources. Even larger churches today realize lay volunteers can provide those needed ministries at a fraction of the cost of paid staff and often with greater effectiveness. One of the keys of ongoing volunteer ministry is motivation. There are several things a pastor can do to motivate laypeople who are involved in ministry.

*Refer to Resource 6-2 in the Student Guide.*

**Respect Them.** Pastors are the only ones called and gifted for full-time ministry. People who volunteer for church roles are sacrificing their time, their energies,

and often their resources to serve in a ministry role. They are not second-class or inferior to the pastor in doing ministry.

*What are some ways pastors can show respect for those doing lay ministry?*

**Train Them.** The equipping role of the pastor in Ephesians 4 is nothing more or less than training people to do effective works of service. Training can take place in periodic classes designed to educate people in leadership or skill development. The local church can pay the expenses for people to attend conferences and classes for church ministry.

*What training opportunities would you recommend for lay development?*

**Resource Them.** What equipment or curricular resources would help the layperson do a more effective job in ministry? Many times the church finances will not allow for expensive purchases. But doing something to help might provide the motivation a person needs to keep working at the task. As a pastor, find creative ways to keep ministry programs operating with as much resource support as possible.

**Communicate with Them.** Volunteers can feel they are out of the loop, not knowing what the church board or the pastor is planning. That's why the pastor needs to take the initiative in creating channels of communication. When information is flowing in both directions volunteers feel good about what they are doing. They sense the pastor's heart, understand the church's vision, and feel positive about being heard. As a pastor there is no such thing as communicating too often or too clearly. Communication means cohesiveness and connection, the glue that holds the ministries of the church together.

*What are some specific ways a pastor can communicate effectively?*

**Develop a Team Spirit.** We have all seen examples of athletic teams or work teams who lost the sense of teamwork. When people start doing their own thing for their own reasons, the team loses its effectiveness. Teamwork can be developed in several ways. Hold staff meetings where volunteers and paid staff (if you have them) are treated as equals. Invite key leaders to retreats for planning and team building.

*What are some other team building strategies a pastor can implement in a church?*

**Build Them Up.** Find ways to brag on lay volunteers in public services. One church featured a "Lay Worker of the Month," complete with a large picture of the worker on the front page of the church newsletter with a description of the person's current ministries. Mention successes in lay ministry in the church bulletin and newsletter. A church could consider having an annual lay ministry appreciation banquet as a way for the church to express their appreciation for the lay ministry workforce. People work harder if they know their efforts are noticed and appreciated.

*How does your church express appreciation to its lay workers?*

**Reward Them.** Give people in charge of significant ministries a title and include the person's name with the listing of other staff. Provide office space if it is possible. Remember lay leaders with Christmas gifts. Present a gift certificate when an important ministry task has been accomplished. One way to help leaders who are hesitant to give rewards, is to help them understand the cost to the church if the volunteer worked for the church or outside help had to be hired. Gifts do not always need to be large. The old adage is true: it's the thought that counts.

*What are the dangers or cautions in giving such rewards?*

**Release Them to Minister.** Nothing discourages lay workers more than a pastor or staff member looking over their shoulders, worrying the work will not be done right. Laypeople do need to be held accountable to carry out assignments. However, workers will respond much better when they are trusted to carry out the task. Pastors need to get over the idea they can do everything better than anyone else in the church. A smart pastor will recognize there are people who are much more gifted in certain areas. Releasing others to minister means the pastor has more time to carry out the responsibilities that cannot be shifted to others.

## **Small Groups: Assessing Gifts and Abilities**

(20 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 6-3 in the Student Guide.*

In your group look at Rom 12:6-8; 1 Cor 12:4-11, 28; and Eph 4:11.

*Divide the class into groups of three to four students.*

*Combine to compile a class list.*

*When compiling the list of spiritual gifts, give attention to Raymond W. Hurn's list of gifts given below. There are other lists, but this is a guideline.*

*Romans 12—prophesying, serving, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, showing mercy*

*1 Corinthians 12—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing spirits, tongues (languages), interpretation of tongues (languages)*

*Ephesians—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers*

*Raymond W. Hurn, Finding Your Ministry (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1979), 21. Also see his leader's guide, Strategy Manual for Finding Your Ministry.*

*For additional information see: James L. Garlow, Partners in Ministry: Laity and Pastors Working Together (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1981).*

*For a spiritual gifts inventory see the Sourcebook for Ministerial Development. It is called the "Nazarene Strengths and Gifts Survey."*

List as many spiritual gifts as possible.

After you list the spiritual gifts, give at least one present-day expression of that gift.

List the gifts and applications on a large piece of paper or newsprint and tape them in the front of the classroom.

## **Lecture: Retaining the Workforce**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 6-4 in the Student Guide.*

One of the best ways to keep people working is to make sure they are well-trained for their task. If there are several needing equipping, a training class can be effective. To help an individual understand a new role, the pastor or a staff member may need to do one-on-one training. Another option is for several churches to work together to bring an expert to the community for equipping. Sending volunteers to conferences and conventions can provide a wonderful opportunity for specialized training and inspiration. Equipping may be simply reading a book or instructional material on the assignment.

Write a job description for the ministry task. Anyone will do a better job if the expectations are clearly

spelled out. Explain in this job description what the person is responsible to do, the chain of accountability, and membership to committees and boards that accompany the position.

Douglas Johnson suggests a coordinator of volunteers, no matter what the size of the church.

*Douglas W. Johnson, Empowering Lay Volunteers (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 62.*

A coordinator of volunteers is a key person to those pastors who believe that the church ministers through the mobilization of lay members. The coordinator of volunteers relieves the pastor of administrative and training activities related to volunteers—freeing the pastor to be the pastor.

This person is empowered by the pastor to lead and administrate the lay ministry workforce. The coordinator works to collect and organize the list of available tasks, evaluate the spiritual and natural gifts of workers, and then connect opportunities for ministry with those interested in volunteering. There will also be times when this person may need to deal with people who are not a good fit for the responsibility they have taken.

Since the church is a voluntary organization, the spiritual growth and well-being of the volunteer should always be of paramount importance. We want people to feel positive toward the church and be willing to volunteer again for another task in the future. A lay coordinator of volunteers can be a valuable liaison between the pastor and the lay ministry workers in a local church.

*If there is time, you may want to list a few key volunteer positions in a church and have the class come up with an appropriate job description.*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Call on two students to name one reason pastors resist lay ministry.*

*Call on two students to name one way to retain the workforce.*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be starting a new unit on pastoral counseling.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Write a 2-page paper on what is currently being done in your church by the laity. What are some steps your church could take to involve more people in ministry within your church and in your community?

Optional Reading: Foundations of Pastoral Care by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 3.

Write in your journal. Let God speak to you about how you can be a minister right now, in your church and community. Allow God to dream His dreams for you and others around you. Reflect on the way God seems to be leading you presently on your spiritual journey. Who are the people in your life you should be teaming with to do God's work?

## Punctuate the Finish

Gary Morsch and Eddy Hall tell the story of a Nazarene layman, Jim Couchenour, who has served on many committees and boards at the general church, district, and local level. He has invested many hours each year as the chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Mount Vernon Nazarene University. But Jim understands ministry to his hometown, Columbiana, Ohio.

In 1987 he responded to the desperate call to help a friend at a local tavern. Although the man had left the establishment, Jim couldn't get the people sitting at the bar out of his mind. God began leading him back to minister to the needs of people. A singing group from the church spent a Saturday evening sharing the gospel through music. And Jim began going back each



Wednesday night to talk to people about their spiritual needs. Out of that concern a multifaceted outreach ministry called The Way Station developed to address issues such as sexual abuse, drug dependency, eating disorders, and a multitude of community programs. Jim Couchenour—a layperson—and a host of volunteers have found a way to care for the needs of an entire county. The tavern has closed but The Way Station is flourishing.

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## Lesson 7

# Jesus, the Wonderful Counselor—Our Model

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 7-1
0:10	Jesus, the Model Counselor	Small Groups	Resource 7-2
0:30	Foundational Principles for Pastoral Counseling	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 7-3
0:45	Skills of an Effective Pastoral Counselor	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 7-4
1:05	Mistakes in Pastoral Counseling	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 7-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Benner, David G. *Strategic Pastoral Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992.

Collins, Gary R. *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Revised edition, Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 7.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share their papers on the laity ministry in their church.*

*Return and collect all homework.*

## Orientation

A man named John came to the study after requesting an appointment with his sister's pastor. The pastor spent a few minutes getting acquainted before John launched into his story. Although John had been raised in a godly home, he moved away from his mother's prayers to live a rather self-centered life. Now his marriage had fallen apart, his children were estranged, his teaching position was unfulfilling. John summed it up by saying, "I feel empty and very depressed." Very gently the pastor began to probe at the spiritual issues and the man prayed in the pastor's office to receive Christ as Savior and Friend.

In the next three months the pastor and John began working together to bring his life back together. Although the marriage was beyond repair, John came to the place of acceptance. He worked to mend the broken relations with his children, and they readily accepted this new and different dad. And as the issues of his life became aligned with God's will, his depression began to lift. Finally, one Sunday morning John stood at the front of the sanctuary and became a member of that body of believers. The pastor was especially satisfied as he recounted in his mind the journey they had made together through the counseling sessions to John's present state of wholeness.

*Refer to Resource 7-1 in the Student Guide.*

David Benner defines pastoral counseling as:

a helping relationship where, through a series of structured contacts, the counselor seeks to alleviate distress and promote growth in the one seeking help. Such counseling aims to help the person think, feel, and behave differently, and it does this through dialogue within a relationship.

*David G. Benner, Strategic Pastoral Counseling (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992), 18.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand how Jesus worked in the lives of people to bring wholeness
- know the foundational principles for pastoral counseling
- appreciate the skills needed to be an effective pastoral counselor
- be aware of and avoid some of the mistakes pastors make in counseling

## Lesson Body

### Small Groups: Jesus, the Model Counselor

(20 minutes)

*Divide the class into three equally sized groups. If your class is small divide into two groups. Assign two gospel passages to each group—three passages if two groups.*

*Refer to Resource 7-2 in the Student Guide.*

*The instructor or a class member should write the characteristics on a board, overhead, or newsprint. As these are written, ask students about the implications for pastors today.*

*Possible responses:*

- *Listened to people*
- *Compassionate*
- *Confrontation*
- *Encourager*
- *Valued people*
- *Supported behavior changes*
- *Required personal responsibility*
- *Taught people how to live and act*
- *Sensitive to people's needs*
- *Spoke with authority on certain issues*
- *Lifted their gaze from their problems to God*
- *Prayed for people*
- *Healed them*
- *Personally involved in their lives*
- *Stood with the downtrodden and the powerful*

In your group, after studying the passages answer this question: What were the qualities or characteristics, mentioned or implied, that made Jesus so effective in working with people?

Each group is to record the responses with one member reporting when the class reconvenes. There will be 15 minutes for class discussion and 10 minutes for reporting and discussion.

#### Group 1

Mark 7: 31-8: 13  
John 8: 1-11

#### Group 2

Luke 7: 1-17, 36-50  
John 5: 1-15

#### Group 3

Mark 9: 14-32  
John 4: 1-26

### Lecture/Discussion: Foundational Principles for Pastoral Counseling

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 7-3 in the Student Guide.*

#### 1. A pastor must understand his or her own strengths and limitations.

A pastor in active ministry does not have the luxury of choosing whether or not to do pastoral counseling. As long as there are people with problems in the church, the pastor will be called upon to counsel. So, the real question is whether to counsel in an unskillful way or work hard to develop skills in order to counsel to the

best of one's ability and education. In an ideal world, every pastor would have a doctorate in pastoral counseling, theology, biblical studies, and the list goes on. In the real world, most pastors do not have the time or opportunity to become experts in any field. The role of pastor is much more that of a generalist rather than a specialist. There are those who have earned advanced degrees focused on pastoral counseling. Most pastors must be content with a course or two on counseling, with extended training coming through books and conferences.

Since most pastors lack the formal training of a Christian psychologist, there may be a tendency to back away from counseling. This module will not equip you to put a sign on your door as a licensed pastoral counselor. However, the church has long understood that a caring pastor can be very effective in helping people work through problems. The trick is to know when you are getting in over your head and then be willing to refer the counselee to a professional. There are some people who would never consent to go to a professional counselor. Others cannot afford to pay for help even though they may need it. For the needy parishioner, the pastor may be the first, and sometimes the only one a hurting person will turn to for help.

*Allow for response.*

*How can a pastor overcome this feeling of inadequacy when other, more highly trained people-helpers are in the community?*

## **2. Every person coming for help is created in God's image and has value.**

Just as Jesus valued the unappreciated in society, such as tax collectors, lepers, and prostitutes, the pastor must resist the temptation to devalue people based on social status, personal appearance, or repulsive actions. The unspoken attitude of acceptance can be a powerful word to those who may doubt God's love for them.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some situations where this could be difficult for a pastor?*

## **3. The primary goal of pastoral counseling is to help the counselee solve problems and find wholeness in Christ.**

This focus on the spiritual issues separates pastoral counseling from secular counseling and even some Christian counseling. A pastor's concern is first of all,

the care of souls. Many, if not most problems people face have a spiritual dimension. The pastor is uniquely equipped to do spiritual counseling because of the theological and biblical preparation required for ministry. However, helping people with spiritual needs requires great skill and a dependence on the Holy Spirit for guidance.

*Allow for response.*

*Why does the spiritual dimension of pastoral counseling provide an advantage over other types of counseling?*

#### **4. Every person has the right to choose to receive help or reject help.**

Part of what makes humans unique in God's created universe is the God-given right to make choices. Jesus had real compassion for the rich, young man in Mark 10. When Christ shared the one requirement lacking for him to experience eternal life, this man was left with a choice. The young man chose earthly treasures over heavenly treasures and walked away sad. Jesus did not run after him because He knew every person has the power to choose his own destiny. A pastor can offer help and assistance, but the individual in need must be willing to receive it.

*Allow for response.*

*Why would a pastor find it difficult to respect the right of the individual to choose?*

#### **5. Pastoral counseling is the cooperative work of the pastor and the counselee.**

The counselee can't enter a counseling relationship expecting the pastor to solve all problems and work out all the difficulties. The pastor can't sit there detached and uninvolved while the counselee struggles alone. Pastoral counseling is more than advice-giving. Effective counseling involves teamwork, a commitment from all parties concerned to work together to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

*Allow for response.*

*What can a pastor say or do to help the counselee understand that counseling must involve all the people in the situation? For instance, in a marriage problem, what if one partner does not want to counsel?*

#### **6. The pastor should make use of the spiritual resources of the church.**

Pastors have the opportunity to use Scripture for insight, instruction, hope, and faith in a counseling setting. Bible assignments can also be a source of help



and encouragement between sessions. Prayer can be a powerful tool for both the pastor and the counselee. The prayer of confession and forgiveness can be a powerful tool to bring spiritual healing to the soul. Church tradition also includes the use of the sacraments, anointing, and the laying on of hands for healing.

Today there is a wealth of helpful Christian literature pastors can use as a way to extend the benefit of the counseling sessions for the counselee. The congregation itself is a wonderful resource. There are people with resources and skills who can be used to bring resolution to many problems. Every pastor should understand the need for depending on the Holy Spirit to give insights needed to help the person in need. The Spirit can also be at work in the heart and mind of the counselee to give self-understanding and a desire to make the right spiritual decisions.

*Allow for response.*

*Should a pastor ask permission from the counselee before using Scripture or prayer in a counseling setting?*

## Lecture/Discussion: Skills of an Effective Pastoral Counselor

(20 minutes)

*Lecture on all the skills and then divide the group into triads to discuss how each quality can be developed by a pastor.*

*Allow 8 to 10 minutes for discussion. It is not necessary for class reporting.*

*Refer to Resource 7-4 in the Student Guide.*

*Gary Collins, Effective Counseling (Carol Stream, IL: Creation House, 1972), 25.*

### Listening

Listening may seem so obvious that it would not need to be mentioned. Yet many pastors find it difficult because much time each week is spent talking. Listening is hard work. It is easier to dispense advice than listen to problems. It is easy to ask how a person is without really listening to the reply. In order to keep our minds from wondering, Gary Collins suggests: "An occasional head nod, smile, 'un-huh' or general question (such as 'What then?' 'How did you feel about that?' or 'Anything else?') can keep the counselee talking."

Listening also involves the eyes. What is the counselee's body language? Nervous hands, quickly darting eyes, or slumped posture communicate unspoken messages about the person. A good

counselor also listens to the silences without feeling the need to say something.

### **Presence**

The pastoral counselor with a counselee should devote full attention to this person in need. Looking out the window, shuffling papers, glancing at a clock, all say the counselor is not really paying attention. Presence is not as much physical as it is focus. There is something powerfully comforting in simply having someone who is standing with you in an hour of need. David Benner calls counseling "a structured being-with the person who seeks help."

*Benner, Strategic Pastoral Counseling, 20.*

### **Empathy**

Empathy is the skill of trying to enter into feelings and emotions of that person's current experience. Sympathy expresses pity from an outside, objective view. But empathy, while admitting it cannot fully know what the other person is feeling, does its best to understand the other person's state by trying to walk in the other person's shoes. The counselor needs to think, "How would I be thinking, feeling, or deciding, if I were experiencing this person's situation as I understand it?"

### **Openness**

The counselee wants to feel the pastor is a real, genuine person. Sometimes the pastor is placed on a pedestal, with a lot of superhuman expectations. The pastor needs to show instead that he or she is sensitive, vulnerable, honest, and sincere, not hypocritical, or trying to project a false image. Openness means allowing the counselee to see and know the real you. Your genuineness will encourage the person in need to be open with you.

### **Acceptance**

Jesus certainly did not approve of the lifestyle of the woman at the well in John 4. However, it is obvious from the narrative that He accepted her as a person of worth and value. It is easy for a person with great needs stemming from acts of sin to imagine a pastor looking with the judgment of God upon this messed up life. Jesus showed us that God loves sinners. He sometimes enjoyed eating with them more than being with the self-righteous religious leaders. Gary Collins calls this quality warmth. "This word implies caring, respecting, or possessing a sincere, non-smothering

*Gary R. Collins, Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide (Rev. ed., Dallas: Word Publishing, 1988), 41.*

concern for the counselee regardless of his or her actions or attitudes.”

## Lecture/Discussion: Mistakes in Pastoral Counseling

(20 minutes)

Refer to Resource 7-5 in the Student Guide.

### 1. The pastor who is desperate for human relationships.

The pastorate can be a lonely place even when there are many people around. Counseling does provide an opportunity to make a connection at a deeper level with an individual than one might have with a crowd. It is possible for the pastor to continue counseling longer than necessary because of the satisfaction that comes from being a helper in a close personal friendship.

Allow for response.

*What might be a solution for the pastor who needs those closer friendships?*

### 2. The pastor who tries to solve his or her own personal problems.

Psychologists call this countertransference. If a pastor is currently dealing with a similar issue as the counselee or has been strongly impacted by that issue in the past, it may make counseling difficult. Gary Collins states, “When the counseling session becomes a place for solving your own problems, counsees are not likely to be helped, and you could be tempted to make statements or act in ways that would be regretted later.”

Collins, Christian Counseling, 29.

Allow for response.

*What should a pastor do when he or she seems to be too involved with the problem or the person at a personal level?*

Responses may include:

- finding someone else to do the counseling
- discussing the issue with a fellow pastor, associate, or friend

### 3. The pastor who takes on the role of parent or even dictator to the flock.

One of the problems of pushing the shepherd-sheep motif too far is that shepherds make all the decisions for the flock, where they eat, drink, and sleep. That doesn't work with people. It's easy for the pastor to think that because of spiritual training and experience, he or she can see a better solution than the counselee. This is especially true if the pastor is a rescuer, desiring to save people from the personal responsibility of their actions. While pastors will at times give spiritual advice, the parishioner must make the final decision and accept the consequences.

*Allow for response.*

*What can a pastor do to keep from falling into the trap of being a parental authority over the members of the church?*

#### **4. The pastor who is a voyeur.**

It is possible for a pastor to find a fascination in the intimate details of others' lives. This may simply be an interest in how other people live their lives. Or, it can involve the sexual gratification of peering far too deep into the intimate, private part of a person's life beyond what is necessary in the counseling process. This is a dangerous tendency and can lead to the next mistake.

#### **5. The pastor who becomes entangled sexually with the counselee.**

The openness in sharing intimate personal details, even if they are nonsexual in nature, can create a connection between pastor and counselee that can move quickly to sexual attraction and arousal. This is not an uncommon experience, and if the pastor is not careful it can mean the loss of one's reputation, ministry position, and even one's marriage. This subject will be discussed in greater detail later in the lesson on the pastor's conduct.

*Since this will be covered in greater detail later, reserve discussion for that time.*

#### **6. The pastor who takes sides in a dispute.**

It is easy to listen to one side of an argument and decide the person telling the story is right. People give their version of a story from a prejudiced position, wanting to persuade the listener they are correct. It is especially easy for the pastor to side with one side if there is moral wrongdoing on the other side of the dispute. However, when a pastor chooses a side, he or she often becomes an adversary to the other side, eliminating the opportunity to work redemptively with all involved.

*Allow for response.*

*Answers to the second question may include the idea from Mt 18 and 1 Cor 5, that if a person is absolutely resistant to repentance, counsel, and church discipline, expulsion may be the only choice.*

*What can a pastor do to try to be available to all parties in a dispute? Are there times when taking a side is impossible to avoid?*

#### **7. The pastor who can't keep confidences.**

People come to their pastor assuming their words will not leave the counseling setting. To hear their story as a thinly veiled illustration in a sermon, or referenced by

a fellow church member in conversation, is more than simply unfortunate. The counselee may forever lose confidence in the pastor. The only exceptions to confidentiality of the confessional would be if the pastor felt the counselee intended to do bodily harm, either to himself or herself or to someone else. Such exceptions should be stated up front when counseling begins.

*Allow for response.*

*Answers may include:*

- *gaining permission from the counselee to share information with a specific person*
- *develop a “what if . . .” scenario leaving out all personal information that could identify the counselee*

*How can a pastor seek guidance from other professionals to help a counselee, without violating confidentiality?*

### **8. The pastor tries to be an amateur psychoanalyst.**

Sometimes a little knowledge is more dangerous than no knowledge at all. Pastors who try to provide psychological treatment beyond their knowledge and training can often do much more harm than good for the counselee. Wise pastors recognize their limitations in expertise and are quick to make referrals when the need is beyond their skill level. Pastors ought to follow the physicians' oath *to first of all, do no harm*.

*Allow for response.*

*Are you aware of resources within your community that could be used for pastoral referral?*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Call on one student—for each—to name:

- one characteristic of Jesus as the model counselor
- one foundational principle for pastoral counseling
- one skill of an effective pastoral counselor
- one mistake in pastoral counseling

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be beginning the first of two sessions on short-term pastoral counseling.

## Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Write a 2-page paper on "The Most Important Principles for Counseling." Select two or three of the most important counseling principles from the class session and discuss why these are important to you in the pastoral context. You may use Scripture to support your reasons.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 7.

Write in your journal. Your entries should focus on the skills of effective counseling. Pray, meditate, and then write about each of these skills in your life. Reflect on which skill seems most natural to you right now. Which skill is most difficult or needs the most development in your life? Write about how God can help you have the Christlike spirit of concern to work in a counseling setting with hurting people.

## Punctuate the Finish

The Bible describes Jesus Christ as the Wonderful Counselor. He is the counselor's counselor—ever available to encourage, direct and give wisdom to human people-helpers. It bears repeating that the truly effective Christian counselor is basically a skilled and available instrument through whom the Holy Spirit works to change lives. When the counselor's work brings anxieties and confusion, these can be cast on God himself, who has promised to sustain and help.

Collins, Christian Counseling, 36.

## Lesson 8

# Short-term Counseling, Part 1

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 8-1
0:10	A Short-term Model	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 8-2
0:30	The First Session	Lecture/Role-playing	Resource 8-3
1:00	Role-playing the First Session	Role-playing	Resource 8-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Kollar, Charles Allen. *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Oliver, Gary J., Monte Hasz, Matthew Richburg. *Promoting Change through Brief Therapy in Christian Counseling*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1997.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 8.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two to three students to read his or her homework paper.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

*Refer to Resource 8-1 in the Student Guide.*

James Hamilton, retired professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, writes this about pastoral counseling:

The contemporary minister is afforded many opportunities for engaging in a wide range of counseling activities in his parish. . . . No minister can avoid counseling unless he locks himself in his study.

A pastor is not a psychologist, yet he is called upon for psychological counseling. He is not a vocational counselor, but he is sought for help in this area. He is not an educational counselor, but often you come to him with problems, concerning their courses of study. Neither is he a psychiatrist; nevertheless he is sometimes confronted with the deep-seated problems of persons needing psychiatric care and must, therefore, be aware of the manifestations of these problems in order to make intelligent referrals. However, he must above all else, know how to counsel persons with religious problems, and so should become as proficient in this area as possible.

*James D. Hamilton, The Ministry of Pastoral Counseling (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1972), 13-14.*

While the words of Dr. Hamilton are as true today as the day he wrote them, the world in which his seminary students went to serve has changed dramatically. More of a pastor's flock face problems stemming from broken or dysfunctional family backgrounds. There are the stresses of living in a high-pressure, hurried environment where change is challenging, even for healthy people. Add to that the higher congregational expectations that a pastor be proficient in areas such as finance, church growth, leadership, and administration, in addition to preaching, teaching, spiritual direction, and caring for



the flock. Where does the pastor find the time to personally work with everyone who needs counsel?

*How does a pastor cope with the pressing needs of individuals in the context of the time demands of the pastoral role?*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the advantages of a short-term model of counseling for pastors
- know the basis of the short-term model of counseling
- be aware of what takes place in the first session of counseling

## Lesson Body

### Lecture/Discussion: A Short-term Model

(20 minutes)

The short-term model is a very valid one for pastors today. For many reasons shorter counseling treatment has become the norm for professionals. While most seeking professional counseling help finish in six to eight sessions, a significant number see the counselor only once. Studies have shown that people who may come for a single session still leave feeling they have been helped.

In this module there will only be time to introduce the basic concepts of one short-term model. If you want to understand this approach better, read one of these books. The writer's preference for pastors is the Oliver book. These resources are in the bibliography.

*The students have a bibliography at the end of their syllabus in the Student Guide.*

Kollar, Charles Allen. *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Oliver, Gary J., Monte Hasz, Matthew Richburg. *Promoting Change through Brief Therapy in Christian Counseling*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1997.

### The Basis of the Short-term Model

The short-term pastoral counseling model is based on the following principles:

**A focus on a specific solution the counselee wants to see.**

Most people want to focus on the problem, which means looking at the negative side of the issue. While problems cannot be ignored, success is better if the major effort is aimed at the solution to the situation. The counselee is the one who selects the focus, or the preferable future. Counseling is about the counselee, not the counselor. This takes the pressure off the pastor to be the expert, or the one who must figure out what is best for someone else. The pastor's task is to work with the counselee in moving to a creative solution.

*Refer to Resource 8-2 in the Student Guide.*

*Allow for response.*

*Why do you think focusing on a solution rather than the problem is helpful in working with a counselee?*

### **A dependency on God's grace at work**

One of the most quoted verses in the Bible is Romans 8:28, "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." God is already at work within the situation graciously to bring good, even in difficult circumstances. The pastoral counselor should be seeking to understand what God seems to be doing, and seek to work in harmony with God's leading. This requires the pastor and the counselee—if a believer—to seek God's guidance through prayer and develop sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's working to bring about a good solution.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some ways we can recognize God's grace working in the person's life situation?*

### **A willingness to change**

The basis for helping people is anchored in the understanding that people do have the ability to change. Paul reminds us "that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil 1:6). Change is inevitable in people's lives. Only Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. "When we recognize that change is always occurring and that people are continuously changing, we are much more likely to look for change in our clients' lives. We also realize that people's problems are always changing."

*Oliver, Promoting Change, 104.*

It is easy to slip into the misconception that change always means a radical, 180-degree reversal. While repentance may require such a repudiation of sin, generally we don't make change in giant steps. In counseling, change is made in small, seemingly insignificant movements. Change is an action step. If a person takes even a tiny action of change, it means more change is possible.

*Allow for response.*

*Why is it so important that a counselee be willing to change?*

### **A limited time frame**

With the many time demands on a pastor's life, counseling must be kept in balance with other duties. Jesus asked the man lying near the pool of Bethesda, "Do you want to get well?" (Jn 5:6). Some people like

to talk about their problems but don't really want to change.

*Benner, Strategic Pastoral Counseling, 44.*

One of the hardest aspects of counseling for most pastors is setting the necessary limits on the relationship. Limits are a God-ordained part of life, not a mere concession to life in the fast lane . . . In the long run counseling is never helpful if limits are consistently ignored. Limit setting is, therefore, a part of all responsible counseling.

What is a reasonable limitation? While there are always exceptions, generally four to six sessions should be a reasonable time frame in dealing with a single, focused solution. If more time is needed, a pastor should consider referring the counselee to someone who may be more qualified.

### **A commitment to spiritual development**

*Ibid., 27-28.*

A person's spiritual life is not an appendage tacked on, like buying an option on a new car. Our spiritual life in Christ is related to all aspects of our human existence. "The master goal of pastoral counseling is the facilitation of spiritual growth. This involves helping people to understand their problems and their lives in the light of their relationship to God and then to live more fully in this relationship." Our primary calling is to a pastoral ministry that is sound biblically and theologically and concerned about the spiritual growth of the person. Part of our ability to help others arises out of our personal commitment to grow in our relationship with Christ.

*Allow for response.*

Give your personal response to Benner's statement about the master goal of counseling. *Why do you agree or disagree?*

## **Lecture/Role-playing: The First Session**

(30 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 8-3 in the Student Guide.*

### **The initial contact**

People make contact for a counseling session in any number of ways. The most common way is by calling the pastor by phone or asking for an appointment while at church. But a counseling appointment can develop through a hospital visit, a referral from another individual, and even by a chance encounter in the community. Sometimes a person simply stops by with the request to see the pastor about a concern. Often the person seeking help will identify the issue at the initial contact, but sometimes will wait until the initial session.

**1. Develop the relationship.**

If the counselee is well-known to you, this will not take a lot of time other than bringing the relationship up to the present moment. However, if the counselee is a stranger or is not well-known to you, you need to begin a relationship of trust. You may choose to share some of your own life as you ask about the counselee's family history. It may not be necessary to find out everything about the individual at once. At times a brief medical history will also help you understand the counselee better. Often more information will be revealed as the counseling progresses. Taking brief notes as the session begins will help you to keep information accurate. You can share with the counselee that your notes are to help you understand the counselee better and will not be shared with anyone without permission.

*Have the class divide into groups of twos by turning to a fellow student sitting close by. If there is an odd number, one group will have three, or the instructor can join in.*

*Have the person who's the oldest be the counselor. The counselor's responsibility is to establish rapport either by getting to know the counselee or updating the relationship. Gather family history information from the counselee.*

*Allow six minutes for the counselor to get to know the counselee. Then indicate to the groups to reverse the roles, giving the other person six minutes as well.*

*Refer to Resource 8-4 in the Student Guide.*

**2. Set the boundaries.**

Early in the session you should address the issue of confidentiality. The counselee needs to know anything said in the counseling sessions will be held in strictest confidence. The only exceptions to this pledge of confidentiality would be if there were a threat of physical harm to oneself or to others. If there is suspected abuse to one who is defenseless, such as a child or helpless adult, some governments require this to be reported. It is important that a pastor know the requirements of local and state laws regarding reporting abuse.

It would be helpful to let the counselee know the limitations of the counseling process, about six sessions. If you are unable to help the counselee within this time frame, or the issue would be better handled by someone else, you need to assure the counselee that you will refer him or her to a professional.

### **3. Establish the goal of the counseling.**

Rather than identifying the problem, it is good to help the counselee focus on the end result of the process. What solution is the counselee seeking? You can do this by asking questions such as:

- What goal would you like to see accomplished as a result of our working together?
- How would you know this goal has been reached?
- What types of things would need to happen for you to accomplish your goal?
- As you look ahead, how would you describe this preferable future?

### **4. Identify and clarify the solution.**

Focus on the solution, which brings hope, rather than focusing on the problem. For a person to change, there must be a good reason to move from the present to a better future. The future solution needs to be as clear as possible. Responses such as "want to feel better" or "all my problems will be in the past" do not define the future very well. The clearer the picture of the solution, the more focused the counseling sessions can be to achieve that solution.

Write the solution down. Clarify the wording so both you and the counselee are clear on this solution. Charles Kollar suggests a question such as, "If I had a video camera and could see you living without this problem, what would I see?"

*Kollar, Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling, 144.*

### **5. Examine the adjustments already made.**

With the decision to seek help, the counselee may already be taking steps to change the situation. People are often aware change starts within, and they begin the process before the first counseling session. Ask questions such as, "What have you done already to make the situation better?" Another approach might be, "Do you feel like you have already made some strides forward to where you would like to be?"

It is helpful for the pastor to know the attempts the person has already taken to move toward a solution. Talk to the counselee about what seems to be helpful and what has not. You need to give support and encouragement for even small positive changes.

### **6. Utilize spiritual resources.**

You, as a pastor, need to assess the spiritual state of the counselee. This is especially true if you have had little contact with the person prior to the session. Does this person have a personal relationship with Christ? What is this person's pattern of church attendance and involvement? Is there a consistent practice of prayer

and Bible reading? Does the person understand the concepts of grace, faith, and forgiveness? While these questions may be considered unimportant or even improper by secular counselors, they are a core concern for a pastor desiring to help an individual. You need to be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit to know when to approach an unsaved person with the gospel in the counseling process. If the person is a believer, you can draw upon the resources of prayer, Bible reading, worship, and small-group support, as well as Christian books and tapes.

### **7. Take the first small step now.**

There is no time like the present to begin to move toward a solution. In the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15, the son began to move toward a solution with the words of verse 17, "When he came to his senses, he said . . ." He decided he could find work as a servant at his father's house and stepped out of the pigpen.

The old saying is true: the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. The book *Promoting Change* makes the point:

Change should begin in the first session. This can occur in several forms. Change can begin when clients see situations from a different perspective and react to the situation differently. Change can even involve describing a problem in a new manner. Change can come in a wave, in a steady stream, or in spurts. But no matter what arena it begins in or how rapidly it comes, all change has one thing in common: It begins with one small step.

*Oliver, Promoting Change, 127.*

You can approach the issue by asking a question like, "What is something you could do right now that would help you to know that you are on your way?" If the issue were relationships, you could ask, "What would your spouse or friend notice that would help this person know that you are changing?" This is one way the counselee can begin to look at the situation as someone else might see it. Emphasize that although the change may be small, it indicates movement in a positive direction. Sometimes the person may suggest several small changes that will help. These steps need to be doable and not something that almost guarantees failure from the outset. Take advantage of the counselee's strengths or abilities to make this step effective.

### **8. Conclude the session.**

End the session on a positive, hopeful tone by reinforcing the person's strengths, courage, and the progress already made. Emphasize that you, as pastor, are there and will continue to work as a team member.

Assign homework to be done before the next session. It might be important for you to write out the homework, as a medical doctor would write out a prescription. The homework should include the first step the counselee is to take before the next session. Also, include any spiritual resources such as Bible reading and church attendance that would be helpful in leading to a successful solution.

You need to emphasize that continued counseling is contingent upon the person following through on homework assignments to make the solution possible. You can either set a date for the next session or have the counselee make an appointment when it is needed.

## **Role-playing: Role-playing the First Session**

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 8-5 in the Student Guide.*

*Have the groups of two—from the previous role-playing—gather together again for another role-playing exercise.*

This is a brief, role-playing exercise beginning with establishing the goal of the counseling and going as far as one can in 10 minutes. The counselee is to present the problem as he or she thinks it would be given in a counseling situation.

### **Scenario 1**

The counselee is 32 years old and works in a small factory, tightening the last bolt in an assembly line process. There is no break from the day-after-day, mindless job, and the counselee is really depressed by it all. It is affecting the relationship with the spouse. Maybe a new and different job would help, but jobs are hard to come by. There has to be more to life than spending eight hours a day tightening a bolt on an assembly line.

### **Scenario 2**

The counselee is a 32-year-old who has been married for eight years with little desire to be unfaithful. However, recently a very attractive, new employee has come to work in the department. The counselee is not sure the other person has any attraction to the counselee. However, the counselee has become almost obsessed with thinking about this person. The counselee is a Christian and does not want his or her own marriage to be destroyed, but thoughts of this fellow worker persist day and night. The counselee needs help getting past this.



## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

Call on several students to answer the question.

*What is one major idea that impacted you today in this lesson?*

### Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be continuing the second of two sessions on short-term pastoral counseling.

### Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

As soon as possible after the class, reflect on the two segments of role playing as a counselor in class. Write a 2-page paper reacting to those aspects where you felt comfortable and those where you either felt ill at ease or awkward as a counselor. What did you learn from the role-playing? What do you feel you yet need to learn to be more effective?

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce Petersen, chapter 8.

Write in your journal. Spend time reflecting on the way Jesus responded when people came to Him with needs. What are the aspects of counseling you find most difficult to deal with, from present experience or as you anticipate ministry in the future? Reflect on how God can help you in the areas you find most challenging. Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 and respond to what the scripture is saying to you about being a comfort to others through counseling.

### Punctuate the Finish

Pastoral counseling is much more than simply learning proper techniques. There are pastors who are excellent counselors even though they lack specific training. What they may lack in education is overshadowed by an intense concern for the person in need. They are good listeners who work with people to bring positive change. Good counseling is an integral part of good shepherding.

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## Lesson 9

# Short-term Counseling, Part 2

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Who Are the Counselees?	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 9-1
0:20	With an Eye on the Goal	Lecture	Resource 9-2
0:25	The Second Session and Beyond	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 9-3
0:55	The Second Session	Role-playing	Resource 9-4
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Kollar, Charles Allen. *Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1997.

Oliver, Gary J., Monte Hasz, Matthew Richburg. *Promoting Change through Brief Therapy in Christian Counseling*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1997.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 9.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share their homework papers.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

A pastor has just finished meeting with a married couple who came to the office with full intentions of separating and getting a divorce. After spending time with them looking at the future without each other, and the problems facing their children, they both agreed they wanted to be together. But something had to change. After agreeing on some initial steps to change, a time for the next session, and prayer from the pastor, they left the office. Now, exhausted from working with the couple, the pastor leans back in the chair and thinks, "Where do we go from here?"

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the different types of people who will come for counseling
- know the characteristics of a proper goal for the counseling sessions
- understand how to lead a counselee to make changes to reach the counseling goal

# Lesson Body

## Lecture/Discussion: Who Are the Counselees?

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 9-1 in the Student Guide.*

Counselees come to the pastor's study for many reasons. It sometimes helps to understand the motivation of the people coming for counsel.

### The Attention Seekers

Some come to the pastor simply because they want another individual to look and listen to them. These people may not have problems more serious than the desire to spend time with someone they consider important. Nothing would make them happier than being able to spend an hour or two with the pastor each week.

*Allow for response.*

*How can you deal with the attention seeker compassionately, without allowing that person to monopolize your time?*

### Those Who Love Problems

Jesus asked a question in John 5 to the invalid man by the Pool of Bethesda, "Do you want to get well?" (v. 5). Jesus was not being cruel or insensitive. Some people like their illnesses. This man had people carrying him around town. He didn't have to work. He didn't have to cook. Sometimes life is better if you have a problem, because if the problem were suddenly gone, all excuses for not changing would be gone as well. If a person is unwilling to change, the pastor cannot force change upon the person. For some, the cost of change is simply more than they are willing to pay.

*Allow for response.*

*How would you deal with a person who does not want to make the changes necessary to make life better for himself or herself or others? One example would be the person who is unwilling to stop smoking even though it has caused severe difficulty in breathing.*

### The Reluctant Participants

Some people do not want to be in your office but are forced or manipulated into being there by someone else. This could be a teenager dragged into a counseling session by a parent hoping the pastor can

straighten out their child. In marriage conflict it is not uncommon for one person to be reluctant or resistant to the counseling process. This person may actively stonewall the process or simply sit passively, unwilling to work for change.

*Allow for response.*

*What can a pastor do when confronted by a counselee who would rather not be there? For example, a juvenile judge requires a teen to have private counseling as a condition for a suspended sentence.*

### **The Not-Responsible Recipients**

These people come because of the problems of others that affect them personally. While they do not have the problem themselves, they want to solve the problem for the other person. A wife living with an ungodly husband who is unfeeling and verbally cruel may come to the pastor wanting the problem to be solved.

*Allow for response.*

*You might discuss the way this person responds to the spouse.*

*How can a pastor address an issue that is not the counselee's problem to solve?*

*What will happen if things do not change?*

*What has been done by the counselee to help the situation in the past?*

*What could be some hypothetical responses by the counselee that could help the situation?*

### **The Hurting Seekers**

Most people who come to the pastor for help desire to find a solution to the problem they face. They come because the problem has become important enough to do something about it. The key to helping people is their willingness to make the changes needed bring about the solution they seek.

## **Lecture: With an Eye on the Goal**

(5 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 9-2 in the Student Guide.*

The format of the second and any sessions following will be similar. The last session established that with a solution-focused approach, the final goal is of utmost importance. The book *Promoting Change Through Brief Therapy* says,

Goals are specific objectives that you and the client develop to define what the end product of treatment will look like. Clearly defined goals answer the question, 'How will we know when the

*Oliver, Promoting Change, 143.*

client is done with counseling?' Effective goals communicate what the client wants to change and sets up ways to recognize when the client has accomplished the goals.

## **Characteristics of a Good Goal**

### **Recognizable**

The goal should be something both the pastor and counselee should be able to recognize and identify.

- It may be qualitative—I will have a sense of confidence when I do my job.
- It may be quantitative—I will be able to pass my college class with a grade of at least a B.

### **Realistic**

The goal needs to be within the reach of the counselee. For an 18-year-old boy who is five foot six inches tall, it is unrealistic for him to have a goal of playing center in a professional basketball league. Lifelong goals that may be impossible dreams just don't work in a short-term counseling setting. A realistic goal gives hope.

### **Detailed**

When the goal is very detailed the counselee and the counselor will be able to recognize when it has been reached. If a child is lost, saying the child is four years old and has short hair is not nearly as helpful as having a colored photograph of the child. The details help us differentiate between people we see. It may help to write down the details so they will not be forgotten.

### **Optimistic**

The goal focuses on the solution, not the problem. What will life look like when the problem is overcome? Viktor Frankl, a Jewish psychiatrist imprisoned in a holocaust prison camp, was able to survive by having a meaningful goal. Those around him without a positive goal were dying. He pictured himself in a comfortable lecture hall lecturing on the psychology of the prison camp. He saw himself telling others what he would learn from the experience.

Because the goal or solution is central to the counseling process, you must keep it as the focus of each session. Progress means change as the counselee moves toward the goal.

## Lecture/Discussion: The Second Session and Beyond

(30 minutes)

Refer to Resource 9-3 in the Student Guide.

### **Begin with what change has taken place since the last session.**

Ask the counselee a question like: What progress have you made since we last met as you have worked toward your goal?

Your purpose is to find any positive change the counselee has made and applaud the gains. Work together to understand what brought about the change and why it seemed to be effective. Could this be done again? Is there something that would make it even more effective? A cook who creates an especially delicious dish will analyze what ingredient made the difference. A golfer who begins to hit the ball straighter will analyze what mental or physical change has brought success. Asking the counselee for details helps the person think through exactly what made the action effective.

### **Affirm and encourage any successes toward the goal.**

You want to encourage even a small success. Change is progress. Small changes can lead to larger changes.

*What are some ways we can give positive reinforcement to changes?*

*Why is it so important to give encouragement to any changes the counselee makes?*

Encouragement motivates the counselee to try even harder.

### **Maintain the gains.**

The old saying, "Old habits are hard to break" is true. The changes made prior to this session may have been very difficult. It may be easier to slip back into the old rut. When you are climbing a hill you don't want to slip and then slide all the way to the bottom. You want to save all the gains you have made climbing. You can ask the counselee, "What will help you to keep the progress already made? Is there any fine tuning needed to the steps you have already taken?"

What if there are no gains? The counselee may have had the mind-set that dramatic changes would happen

- Suggestions for discussion*
- *Words and sounds: Wow! Great! That took a lot of courage! You have done well!*
  - *Gestures: Smiles, nods, clapping, shaking hands, etc.*
  - *Emotions: Enthusiasm, joy, celebration*

*Help the students understand that focusing on change shows the counselee that positive change is progress toward the goal.*



immediately. Actually, there may have been several small changes from the previous session. The counselor should explore what has taken place and look for even small changes. Help the counselee to look hard to see if there is some positive movement. God is at work even if it may not be immediately evident. You as pastor need to encourage even the smallest movement toward the goal.

What if things are worse than the last session? You might ask how the person has managed to get by until now. If one positive movement is mentioned in the midst of four negative comments, capitalize on the encouraging information. Perhaps the plan of last session is not working and it is time to try a different approach. We need to understand that progress is not always steady and positive. It can seem like three steps forward and two steps back. Try to maintain a spirit of hope and encouragement if the counselee is trying to journey toward the goal.

*Allow for response.*

*Does the lack of progress or a momentary setback mean the counselee is not exerting real effort to reach the goal?*

*What words would you have for such a person to allay feelings of discouragement or defeat?*

### **Plan for the next step.**

You and the counselee should work together to develop a game plan for the next step. You could ask a question such as, "In addition to the changes you have already made, what would be another thing you could do to move you closer to the solution you seek?" This is a time to affirm again the strengths the person has shown and the positive gains. If the person is at a loss for the next step, you might suggest a couple of alternatives, giving the counselee the choice. Let the person feel he or she is in control of determining the future, not the counselor.

*Allow for response.*

*How will it help the counselee to be specific in what steps are planned before the next session?*

*Why does this person need to feel in charge of the steps that are taken?*

### **Provide resources.**

Some people find that having something tangible, physical, mental, or spiritual can give a sense of assurance in moving toward the goal. It can be a

picture of a goal or a person, a smooth stone in the pocket reminding the person that Jesus is the rock. For someone overcoming worry, you could give the person a card with Philippians 4: 4-7 printed on one side, to be carried in a pocket or purse. You might assign that these verses be memorized and quoted when feeling anxious.

Prayer is a very powerful tool. Rather than the pastor praying, ask the counselee to pray if it is appropriate. It can be very effective to pray for small changes rather than asking for miraculous intervention with no human involvement. The primary thrust of prayer can be focused on taking one step at a time. Encourage the person to find support through the worship services and small group or a Sunday School class. There may be someone in the church who could provide specific encouragement and resources to the person. You could help the counselee make the contact.

*Allow for response.*

*Can you think of any additional resources that would be helpful for counseling assignments?*

### **Give homework assignments.**

One effective assignment could be to read a scripture such as Psalm 1 each day and meditate for five minutes on what God is saying. You can ask the person to read a specific chapter of a Christian book, listen to a tape, or utilize some other resource. Always review the material yourself before assigning it to someone else. When you meet again, ask about how the assignment helped him or her make progress. If the counselee is unwilling to follow through on doing assignments, it can be an indication that the person is not serious about change.

It may be helpful for you to write out the assignment as a medical doctor would write out a prescription. Also, list the specific next steps the person will work on before you meet again. This can be a reminder and a point of reference after the counseling session is over.

### **Termination**

Regular counseling sessions can end whenever the goal of the counselee has been met or he or she has the resources that will bring about a successful solution in the future. If you feel the person is not making progress or the issue is beyond your expertise, you may need to refer the individual to another professional. Even after the sessions have ended, there may be a need to meet together periodically to evaluate progress and give encouragement. Let the

counselee know there is always an open invitation to review this goal or deal with another one in the future.

*Allow for response.*

*Encourage the students to read one of the books recommended in the suggested reading from last session.*

*This has been a very brief overview of the counseling process. Are there any questions on pastoral counseling?*

## **Role-playing: Role-playing the Second Session**

(30 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 9-4 in the Student Guide.*

*Have the class divide up in twos with someone other than the person they paired up with in the last class session.*

*The first pastoral counselor will be the person with the first letter of the last name closest to A.*

*Refer to Resource 9-4 in the Student Guide.*

The counselee will role-play the first scenario as a part of a second session. After 15 minutes, or half the time left, reverse roles with the new counselee taking the second scenario.

### **Scenario 1**

A man or woman, 45 years old, lost a spouse in a tragic car accident about six months ago. The counselee has been having trouble sleeping at night. Going to work has been difficult because the person has not been motivated to do anything. Every night after work the person goes to the cemetery and talks to the dead spouse for an hour or two. In the first session the counselee began focusing on the goal of trying to live with the reality that the spouse is really dead and moving on with life. Since the first session, the person has been able to sleep for six hours without waking up, which was progress over getting only about four hours of sleep a night.

### **Scenario 2**

A single parent of a 14-year-old son has come for help in dealing with the boy's truancy in school. The young man is in real danger of failing his classes because he is absent so often. Much of the situation seems to result from a combination of wanting to have more freedom and anger at his parents for getting a divorce. In the past the parent has tried to deal with the truancy by grounding the boy from all activities, including the youth program at church. This was totally ineffective. The parent is focusing on the goal of having the son attend all his school classes and earn a passing grade. There was very slight progress after the initial session.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

Call on three different students to respond to:

- Who are the counselees?
- Name the characteristics of a good goal.
- Give four steps of the second session.

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be discussing utilizing other resources in the community to help people.

## Assign Homework

Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.

Complete the assignment on Community Resources as described in the Syllabus and be prepared to share some of your findings in the next class session.

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 9.

Write in your journal. Read 2 Corinthians 1:8-11 and reflect on how a person has given you counsel when dealing with a difficulty. Although this counsel may have come in an informal setting, how did you see God at work through the words of this counseling friend? In what ways do you relate to Paul's experience of extreme pressure? How do you see these experiences of receiving counsel helpful in giving counsel to others?

## Punctuate the Finish

Two sessions of pastoral counseling certainly do not make you an expert on the subject. To be a good counselor you need to become a lifelong learner on the subject. It is important to read and study to become better acquainted with the techniques of counseling. But you can be an effective helper of people by being a good listener who is also sensitive to what is not being said. People are looking for a pastor with a heart of compassion for those who are hurting and in need. Don't back away from helping people because you may feel inadequate for a situation. Remember, you are the hands and voice of Jesus, sent to bring help. You can make a difference through your counsel.

## Lesson 10

# Community Resources and Referrals

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 10-1
0:10	When to Refer	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 10-2
0:25	Where to Refer	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 10-3
0:40	How to Refer	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 10-4
0:55	Problems with Referring	Lecture	Resource 10-5
1:00	Community Resources	Guided Sharing	Resource 10-6
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Oglesby, William B. *Referral in Pastoral Counseling*.  
Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1978.

Switzer, David K. *Pastoral Care Emergencies*.  
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Ask if there are any students who would like to share from their journaling on 2 Corinthians 1:9-11.*

*Return homework.*

## Orientation

Bruce Petersen tells of building a wooden deck on the back of his house. Because his dad had been a carpenter, Bruce knew some of the basic skills of woodworking. However, he didn't know that much about designing a structure that would be structurally safe. To get the help he needed he took his sketch of ideas to a lumberyard where a computer drew the blueprints in minutes. The drawings also told him the exact amount of materials he would need. When it came time to start constructing Bruce asked a friend in the construction business to help him get started. At the end of the day the framework had been built, square and solid. Bruce was able to put down the decking material himself. After staining, the deck had a professional look even though he had never built a deck before. The secret was knowing his limitations and asking for help at crucial points in the process. Along the way Bruce developed some new carpentry skills because he observed a professional doing the job. It took teamwork finally to see the desired end product.

*Allow for response.*

*How does this story relate to a pastor seeking help from others in the community to help a parishioner with a need?*

*Refer to Resource 10-1 in the Student Guide.*

Howard Clinebell says,

Skill in the art of referral is indispensable in a minister's caring and counseling . . . Properly conceived, referral is a means of using a team effort to help a troubled person. It is a broadening and sharing, not a total transfer of responsibility . . . Only by drawing on the specialized helping skills of others can ministers have time and energy to fulfill their unique pastoral function as spiritual growth enablers for an entire congregation.

*Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care, 310-11.*

*What are some of the significant words in Clinebell's quote and why are they important?*

## **Learner Objectives**

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand some of the reasons a pastor may refer counselees to others
- know how to find resources needed for referrals
- understand the process of making a referral
- be aware of some of the problems that can come as a result of referral

## Lesson Body

### Lecture/Discussion: When to Refer—Pastoral Limitations

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-2 in the Student Guide.*

A psychology professor made this observation when discussing the subject of the pastor working with parishioner needs. "Pastoral counseling is easy—refer, refer, refer." While he was jesting when he spoke, he was reflecting the perception that it is easier for the pastor to pass on problems to someone else. But, there are some pastoral limitations that may make a referral the wisest course of action.

#### **The limitation of competence**

The pastor is a generalist in that he or she is asked to be at least adequate in preaching, teaching, leading, administrating, comforting, and the list goes on and on. By gifting and training a pastor will be better at some tasks than others. Very few pastors have the opportunity to take enough graduate training to be considered competent to counsel at a professional level.

Medical doctors who are in general or family practice understand the importance of referral. This doctor may see one patient who needs eye surgery, another needing treatment for cancer, while a third is having a heart attack. There is no hesitancy on the subject of referral. It is in the best interest of the patient to be referred to a doctor who is specialized in the area of need. A doctor may know how to use a scalpel but could do serious harm cutting around in the unfamiliar areas of the brain. The deck builder in the opening story knew how to drive nails, but knew little about drawing plans or making sure the structure was square.

How do we assess our competence? At least three factors contribute. Let's use the analogy of playing the violin.

- *Training* is certainly a factor. Generally, those who play well have taken lessons to understand the techniques of fingering, bowing, and reading notes.
- *Experience* is also important. The old joke asks, how do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice. The more you work with a skill, the better



you get at it. If you have worked with a certain problem in the life of a person before, you will be better the next time you deal with it.

- *Giftedness* is the third ingredient. Some people can practice the violin 10 years and not be as good as a talented individual who has played the instrument for 4 years. Each of us is naturally better at some things than others.

*Allow for response.*

*Do you think referring a parishioner to someone else may be a reflection on our lack of good pastoring skills?*

### **The lack of rapport**

Counseling is based on a working relationship of trust between the counselor and counselee. There are some instances where you simply don't connect with the person. This may be a perception on your part because of personality differences. The counselee may demonstrate the lack of rapport by not showing up for counseling sessions or not doing the homework assignments between sessions. Neither party may be able to identify the problem but there is a sense that it just isn't working. In such cases it is better to refer the person to someone who is able to relate better to the counselee.

### **Lack of time**

Because of all the other responsibilities connected with the ministerial role, the pastor may not have time to give all the time needed to help the counselee to health. David Switzer says,

We usually don't have time for anything but intervention in situational crises, one or two problem-solving, decision-making conversations, helping people in a marriage or a family become aware of a need for clearer and more open communication, short hospital and home visits, or limited assignments such as following one person through a long hospitalization or one family through its period of grieving.

*David K. Switzer, Pastoral Care Emergencies (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 178.*

There are high-maintenance individuals who seem to be constantly in crisis and will take as much time as the pastor will allow. It may be helpful to prioritize your role as spiritual shepherd with such individuals while referring their other issues to professionals who can help more directly. Since pastoral counseling can eat up a lot of weekly time, it is prudent to do only the necessary counseling and refer the rest.

*Allow for response.*

*How does a pastor find a balance in time between counseling needs and other church needs?*

### **Threat of danger**

People living under stress often view life in an irrational manner. If you perceive the counselee poses a threat to other people, especially coworkers, family members, children, or the aged, you must seek additional help immediately. People's lives may depend on your quick action. A pastor needs to take any threat of suicide seriously. Any hint of taking one's life is a cry for help. It is better to find help than live with regret if the person succeeds in a suicide attempt.

*Allow for response.*

*Where would you refer a person who is a threat to others or himself or herself?*

### **Physical problems**

A pastor's secretary very suddenly began to show signs of depression and moodiness that were very uncharacteristic of her normal behavior. The pastor, out of concern, suggested the woman see a medical doctor for a checkup. The examination showed problems with the thyroid gland. Once she completed the treatment regimen she was back to feeling normal again. Pastors need to be careful not to make a medical diagnosis or recommend medication. However, you may recognize the possibility of a physical connection to the counselee's concern.

### **Personal issues**

In Luke 8 a woman with a bleeding problem reached out to touch Jesus for healing. Jesus knew she was healed by that touch because He said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me" (v. 46). Whenever we are involved in bringing healing to another person, it takes physical and emotional energy from us.

There are times when, because of the other demands of ministry, the pastor simply does not have the emotional strength needed to help. There are times when the counselee may present a problem that strikes a raw nerve in the pastor's life. A counselor who had an alcoholic parent or suffered sexual abuse as a child needs to learn to step away from counseling situations where it would be easy to lose objectivity. If a pastor finds himself or herself sexually attracted to a counselee of the opposite sex, looking forward to

sessions when they can be together, must refer this person to someone else. This issue will be addressed in greater detail in a later class session.

*Allow for response.*

*You might address the idea of not doing formal counseling with members of the pastor's immediate family.*

*What are some other personal issues that would make referral a wise choice?*

## **Lecture/Discussion: Where to Refer—Community Resources**

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-3 in the Student Guide.*

Most community resources fall under one of three general categories: private practice individuals, community agencies, and religious organizations.

### **Private Practice**

#### **Medical doctors**

The pastor may work more with physicians than any other professional helpers. Some contacts may be more informal in the context of visiting with people in the hospital. When a counselee is facing an issue that may have connections to the physical body, it is natural that a physician may be the first step to health.

Howard Clinebell says:

It is important for pastors to build working relationships with one or more physicians in their community. A counselee who has not had a physical checkup recently should be strongly encouraged to do so if the pastor has any suspicion that the person may need medical attention.

*Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care, 312.*

In recent years physicians and medical schools have come to recognize the importance of prayer and personal faith in a patient's recovery process. By making referrals to a physician, that doctor may feel more open to calling on the pastor when spiritual resources are needed.

#### **Psychologists and professional counselors**

Psychologists have earned a doctoral degree and have fulfilled the requirements to be licensed by the state to counsel. Counselors who are state licensed must have at least a master's degree along with many hours of supervised counseling experience. A pastor should find out as much as possible about the counselor's

philosophy and approach before making referrals. Some psychologists and counselors see religious experience as a source of personal problems. Others understand personal faith as foundational to good mental health.

One way to find out the counselor's philosophy and effectiveness is to check with other clergy in the city for references and recommendations. An even more effective approach would be to take the counselor to lunch and spend time getting acquainted. A pastor should have a list of two or three competent counselors handy for quick referral. Try to develop a team approach by getting feedback from the counselor to help the parishioner in reaching the goal.

### **Psychiatrists**

A psychiatrist has earned an M.D. with additional study in the function of the human brain and emotions. Psychiatrists are qualified to prescribe medications for emotional and psychological problems while psychologists cannot prescribe medicines. Generally, psychiatrists handle the serious psychological illnesses that may require hospitalization.

### **Community Agencies**

There are organizations in most large communities to address most of the major needs people face. Some of these are governmental agencies, supported by taxpayers. Some are private agencies that receive financial help from the community through such programs such as the United Way. Often the local agency is part of a larger, national or international organization that provides wonderful networking benefits. Other organizations are locally operated. Usually community agencies respond to any individual who needs help and is qualified to receive their services.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some examples of some agencies or organizations in your community?*

It is important to know how people qualify for help or aid. Are there fees for services? How often can an individual receive services? Are there any theological issues or concerns in dealing with this agency?

### **Religious Organizations**

One of the best-known religious service organizations

is the Salvation Army. They respond to disasters and crises, as well as the ongoing problems of hunger and poverty. Sometimes churches will band together to form a structure to respond to such needs as hunger, clothing, and shelter.

The Christian church has historically been at the forefront in responding to hurting people. Rescue missions preach the gospel and meet the physical needs of a unique group of people living at the edge of society. Crisis pregnancy centers offer hope and alternatives to abortion. In many large cities it is the body of Christ that reaches out to meet the needs of those from other cultures who feel alienated and abandoned in a new land and culture.

Many religious helping organizations receive little financial help from the community at large. It is up to the churches to provide the financing and staffing resources to keep these religious organizations in operation. When churches join together they can provide resources few churches could do individually.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some ways a local church can show support to community religious helping agencies?*

*Are there any agencies you would hesitate to support or make referrals?*

## Lecture/Discussion: How to Refer—Making the Connection

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-4 in the Student Guide.*

1. When you move to a community, develop a referral file or notebook with resources. This is the reason for your class assignment of the Community Notebook. It is very helpful to develop this resource before you need it. While you can gather some material from the phone book and other community resource guides, it is better to make personal contact with agencies you are most likely to have ongoing contact with.

*Allow for response.*

*What was your experience, positive or negative, in finding the resources for your Community Resource Notebook?*

*Do you think it would be beneficial for a pastor?*

2. When possible, make a referral to an individual rather than an agency. This is one reason for making personal contact before you need to make a referral. Having the phone number of Mr. Jones

or Mrs. Hernandez at an organization helps the counselee feel there is an individual who will give personal attention.

*Allow for response.*

*Why is it important to empower the counselee moving toward referral?*

3. It is important to help the counsees feel you are not abandoning them. It is easy for people under stress to feel you have shuffled them off to someone else because you don't want to bother with them anymore. Explain why this referral is necessary. Make the reason clear.

*Allow for response.*

*How would you respond if the reason you are referring the person is that you simply don't have time to work with the person?*

4. When possible, let the counselee make the appointment. This gives the person some ownership and control over what takes place in this next stage of the helping process. Sometimes you can give a list of resources and allow the person to make a choice of which agency to use. When counsees are given the power to choose, it is not so much the pastor's idea but their own idea.
5. Maintain contact with the counselee after the referral is made. David Switzer likes the term "transferal" rather than "referral."

In such instances, we're not merely making recommendations and seeking to elicit the others' cooperation in their taking the initiative to follow through on whatever action is appropriate. In transferal, we continue to work actively with and for a person with primary responsibility until she or he is in personal contact with the professional or agency or hospital that then assumes such responsibility.

*Switzer, Pastoral Care Emergencies, 178.*

Even after you make a referral you probably will continue to be this person's pastor. Show interest in the progress every time you see that person. Let him or her know you are there to give assistance.

6. Follow up with the referral agency on progress. Call or write the agency or individual to find out if the person you referred is making progress. Has this person attended sessions? Are there ways I can support this individual as the pastor? If there are issues of confidentiality, you can have the counselee sign a release of information form to be

sent to the referral agency. This gives permission for the agency to let you be aware of personal information and thus make you a continued part of the healing team. Many agencies exist through referrals and so it is in their best interest to cooperate with you for future contact.

*Allow for response.*

*What should you do if you feel the help the person is receiving is not the right help?*

## **Lecture: Problems with Referring**

(5 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-5 in the Student Guide.*

### **The lack of resources**

While large metropolitan areas will probably have the specific help you need for a parishioner, this is not always the case in rural areas. Sometimes people have to travel some distance to work with the person who will be the most help. If that is the only alternative, ask the person how much he or she wants help. Travel and time are worthwhile sacrifices when we can see a brighter future.

### **The lack of money**

Seeing a professional can cost money. In the United States most medical insurance plans pay a lower percentage of the cost of psychological help. This means the counselee must make up the difference. It may be helpful to ask the counselee how much he or she would be willing to pay if the problem was a heart that needed repair. Is it worth money to invest in repairing a marriage that is hurting? Sometimes it is simply an issue of realigning resources. But in other situations, the person is destitute. This may be a situation where the church or people in the church provide the resources. If that is not a possibility, professionals sometimes have a sliding fee schedule based on one's ability to pay. Your role may be to help find the resources to see this person receives help.

### **The counselee's refusal to go**

Some people do not want to leave the security of the pastor's office for the unknown of a referral agency. If you are simply not competent to help this person, you may need to admit you can't help the person, and then end the counseling. You may need to help the person to the extent you can. But ultimately, the person who has resources available and refuses to utilize them has made a personal choice. In that case, you cannot be held responsible for what someone else refuses to do.

## **Guided Sharing: Community Resources**

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 10-6 in the Student Guide.*

*Have the students share with the class where they found resources for the following problems assigned.*

*If the students are from different cities or localities, it is not necessary to share specific details (doctors' names, clinic locations).*

*If your class is small, do this assignment as a class. Write the problem on the board and then the categories or types of resources for each problem. If your class is large, divide into three groups with four or five problems per group.*

*Then have each group report on the resources they developed for each problem. Encourage students to write out the types of resources to look for in each category of need, since they may be doing ministry later in a community different from the one they researched for class.*

*If you desire, you can collect this homework assignment at this time.*



## Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

### Review

*Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?*

### Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be starting a new unit called Pastoral Presence. The first lesson will address the pastor's role in dealing with a crisis. This crisis may be between individuals or it might be a crisis that envelops the entire church. How does the pastor play the role of peacemaker?

### Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Read 1 Corinthians 3-6. Write a three-page paper noting the conflicts in the church in Corinth mentioned in these chapters. What do you see as some of the causes of these conflicts: Were the people in the church doing things that were adding fuel to the fires of conflict? How had the church attempted to solve the conflict so far? Would it have been easier for Paul to deal with these problems if he had been living in Corinth rather than having to write a letter? What would you have done if you were the pastor? Try to deal with as many of these questions as you can in three pages.

Write in your journal. Read 1 Corinthians 3:1-9. Reflect on teamwork in ministry from Paul's writing. Is Paul jealous about the work of Apollos, or is he trying to show how we need each other? What is God saying to you about cooperation and teamwork in your church? Are there things God wants you to change in your approach to working with others? What can you do or be to encourage others to develop their abilities and gifts?

### Punctuate the Finish

When you move to a new church to pastor, you make an assessment of the church's resources. Who are the people? What talents do they possess? What about the building resources? How can we utilize our facilities to provide ministry? As a family you look around to find a grocery store for your food needs. Are there good schools for your children? Will you be able to find a

doctor and dentist for your family? But as you assess your resources, don't forget to look to those resources of the community that can help you as you try to meet the needs of people. Remember, you can always accomplish more if you team with others than if you try to do it all by yourself.

## Lesson 11

# Pastoral Presence in Conflict

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide Resource 11-1
0:15	Persons in Conflict	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 11-2
0:35	Church in Conflict	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 11-3
0:50	Resolving Church Conflict	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 11-4
1:00	How Would You Handle This?	Small Groups	Resource 11-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Halverstadt, Hugh F. *Managing Church Conflict*.  
Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991.

Keith Huttenlocker. *Conflict and Caring: Preventing,  
Managing and Resolving Conflict in the Church*.  
Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*.  
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 10.

# Lesson Introduction

(15 minutes)

## Accountability

*Return homework.*

## Orientation

The man in the pastor's office was angry. It was written on his face and amplified in his voice. "Pastor, if you don't do something about the music in our church services our church is going to break apart at the seams. Until Bill took over leading worship, things were going great. I knew all the music because we had used the same songs for years. Now it seems like we have new music every week. And those drums and guitars . . . they are so loud you can't hear your own voice. If you don't get rid of Bill in the next month, pastor, we are going to leave this church we love and take our tithe with us."

This is just one example of conflict a pastor can face. Conflict is not new. It has been around from the time the church was in its infancy. Look at the church in Corinth.

*Refer to Resource 11-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide the class into groups of three or four. Have the group discuss what they discovered in their papers on 1 Corinthians 3-6.*

*Have them select two conflicts and answer the following questions for each conflict. Select one in the group to report their findings.*

*Allow eight minutes for group discussion and four minutes for summary statements.*

1. What was the nature of the conflict?
2. What were the causes of the conflict?
3. What had been done to resolve the conflict?
4. What was Paul's suggestion to resolve the conflict?

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the principles of Matthew 18 in working with conflict
- understand the causes of church conflict
- know some of the steps to take to resolve church conflict

## *Lesson Body*

### **Lecture/Discussion: Persons in Conflict**

(20 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 11-2 in the Student Guide.*

#### **Jesus' Model for Resolving Personal Conflict**

Even Jesus understood that conflicts will sometimes develop when you have a group of people together. Matthew records Christ's thoughts on dealing with conflict between two or more people within a local church. These were words Matthew's church needed to understand. We need to hear them today as well.

Matthew 18: 15-17:

If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that "every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses." If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

The fact Jesus uses the word "sins" in verse 15 would lead us to believe this was a pattern for addressing church discipline in the local church. However, in a situation of conflict one or more people may well feel they have been sinned against by the other party. There are four steps that should be followed in order that all parties will be treated with dignity and with a goal of quick resolution.

#### **Step 1. Personal Confrontation (v. 15)**

Too often when conflict develops the issue is never discussed between the two parties involved. A person will talk to the pastor or complain to other members of the church. Many conflicts begin as misunderstandings that could have been cleared up if the individuals involved would have discussed the problem.

People respond in ways that make sense to them, not necessarily to others. In private conversation each person has the opportunity to explain his or her actions. The love of God in the hearts of Christians can

*Have a student read these verses.*

be a powerful force to overcome misunderstanding and hurt. Paul describes this love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. A private conversation is a most natural setting for healing conflicts.

*Have another student read James 5:16.*

Bruce Petersen tells of a conflict with a colleague over a perceived failure of this other person to carry through on a task. Petersen e-mailed the university president with his complaint and simply sent a copy to the colleague.

"This man was hurt because I had failed to talk to him first, and he told me so," said Petersen. "When I realized I had acted in an insensitive manner to my brother, I e-mailed him back immediately and then saw him in person to apologize for my way of handling the complaint. I believe our relationship was restored and strengthened because I finally did what I should have done at first—talk to the person directly."

Jesus says that if he listens, you have won your brother over. The conflict can be resolved or at least you may agree to disagree.

Not all conflicts will be solved at the first stage. However, if the first step is skipped, the conflict will often escalate very quickly. As a pastor, when someone comes with a complaint, ask, "Have you talked to the other person directly about the situation?" Some people will find it hard to confront someone else who has hurt them. In the long run it can be much easier to deal with the situation quickly than hope that the conflict will simply go away.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some things pastors can do to encourage the congregation to take this first step when conflicts arise?*

## **Step 2. Small-Group Conversation (v. 16)**

If the conflict has not been settled, you should arrange for another meeting, this time with two or three people with you. You, as pastor, may want to arrange for such a meeting in your office or another neutral setting. It is very important that you remain neutral if possible. To side with one party will alienate you with the other person or group. The goal is to bring resolution to the conflict all the involved people can live with.

*Allow for response.*

*You need to bring out that the others can verify what is being said, guard against exaggeration*

*Why would it be good to have two or three people along for this meeting?*

*on both sides, and indicate the seriousness of the situation. The witnesses can attest later to what took place in the conference together. This avoids the “he said-she said” arguments where there are no witnesses.*

### **Step 3. Public Forum (v. 17a)**

While private conflicts should remain as private as possible, some serious issues involve a larger group of people or the church as a whole. The person in the opening story may have voiced his complaints about Bill's music leadership to enough people that the congregation has been taking sides.

When personal and small-group conferences have failed to bring a resolution, the next step may be to discuss this in a church board meeting. All board meetings are open to the public unless the board decides to be in executive session, which is limited to board members and others designated by the board.

Another alternative is to call a special public meeting—not a worship service—of the congregation to discuss the conflict. The pastor is the chairperson of such meetings. Again, the purpose of any public forum is to provide information, defuse rumors, and attempt to bring both sides to resolution.

If there is public sin known to the congregation as a part of the conflict, a public confession or acknowledgment of wrongdoing may be necessary to bring healing and forgiveness. This is the intent of James 5:16 that we read earlier. Generally, it is not helpful to coerce a person to confess who is unwilling to do so voluntarily.

The goal is healing and restoration. If a person confesses a serious sin, the church may have to place restrictions on the person's leadership participation for a time until restoration is complete. Private sin usually requires private confession to one or a small group of wronged individuals.

*Allow for response.*

*You may want to bring out issues such as the disruptive nature of such a forum. People may feel embarrassment and want to leave the congregation rather than accept the corrective discipline. Sometimes it is easier to hope the situation will go away than deal with sin that is hurting the church.*

*Are there reasons a public forum is seldom used in the life a congregation?*

#### **Step 4. Public Ruling (v. 17b)**

When all else fails, the church may have to take a stand in a conflict. Hopefully, it can be a win-win solution where all parties go away at least partially satisfied. However, there are times when the church must take drastic action in order to maintain integrity. Paul's instruction to the church in Corinth—1 Cor 5—was to remove the immoral brother who was living with his father's wife.

This radical step of removal was necessary to keep the church from becoming corrupted—verses 6-8—to show the seriousness of the transgression, and most important, to bring about the ultimate restoration of this sinful brother. A church simply cannot allow a pastor or board member living a sexually immoral life to continue in his or her role of leadership. Paul was always concerned about restoring those who had fallen. He writes in Gal 6: 1-2, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

*Allow for response.*

*What are some of the important cautions Paul gives to us about restoration?*

### **Lecture/Discussion: Church in Conflict**

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 11-3 in the Student Guide.*

#### **The Causes of Church Conflict**

While the specifics of conflict in the church vary with each situation, many can be consolidated into four general categories.

##### **Changing Cultural Stresses**

A church within one of the largest cities in the Midwestern United States looked back to a glorious past. Many had been saved through this church. They could look back at church leaders who claimed this as their church. But the neighborhood changed and the church members moved further and further away until they stopped driving back into the city to church.

Serious conflict arose over what the church should do. Sometimes churches can make the cultural shifts needed to welcome new ethnic groups to become a part of the congregation. Some churches try to relocate where its members live. Sadly, this church



closed its doors, selling the building to another denomination with members willing to minister to the community. It was the problem the church faced in Acts 6.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some ways a church can adjust to large cultural changes within the community?*

### **A Strong Power Structure**

It is not uncommon for a church to be controlled by a single individual or family, the so-called church boss or bosses. Sometimes these people hold positions of leadership in the church. They may also control the church behind the scenes. The power structure can be the pastor and a small group of leaders who run the church. You can usually tell who holds the power in a meeting by watching who the rest of the members look to when a decision needs to be made. The primary issue for a small power structure is control. Whenever the controllers sense there is a challenge to their authority, a crisis is likely to develop in the church. It is very difficult for new people or ideas to gain a hearing if they challenge the power of those in control.

*Allow for response.*

*What makes dealing with a church power structure so difficult?*

### **Financial Stresses**

No church can operate very long when expenses exceed income. When there is a serious dip in giving or an unexpected bill ruins the church budget, everyone looks for a way to get back into the black again. The crisis develops over priorities—what should be cut to balance the budget. Those entrusted with making difficult choices may be split over cutting programs or staff or the pastor's salary. People become defensive when the portion of the budget they value the highest is about to be slashed. The whole psychology of cutting back can create a negative atmosphere of defeat and disillusionment.

*Allow for response.*

*What are the possible choices a church faces when income does not meet expenses?*

### **Style and Image**

Churches develop an image of themselves. Ask any longterm member to describe what makes his or her church unique from other churches in the community and you will get a sense of the church's style. Style may be the kind of worship music, the people they

want to attract, the preaching style of the pastor, even the way the building looks to the community.

The person most responsible for maintaining this image for the congregation is the pastor. Members evaluate the pastor constantly to see if he or she fits this group of people. Is the pastor one of us, culturally? Is the pastor helping us to become the church we imagine ourselves to be?

When the style of the pastor does not fit with the perceived style of the church, conflict will erupt. Often pastors end up leaving a church because the style differences were so great neither side could make the changes necessary. On the other hand, pastors who stay long-term in a church have either accommodated their style to the church's or have attracted enough new people who fit the pastor's style.

*Allow for response.*

*Is it wrong for a church to have a certain style? After all, shouldn't a church be all things to all people?*

*Which factor do you feel is most significant to church conflict, and why?*

## **Lecture: Resolving Church Conflict**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 11-4 in the Student Guide.*

*Give personal examples if possible for each of the steps.*

It is impossible to deal with such a complex subject in one class session. However, there are some steps to take in trying to bring resolution to church conflicts.

### **Give accurate and helpful information on the subject.**

The people who receive the information must believe it is true and will be helpful to them in understanding the situation.

### **Encourage good communication from all concerned.**

People must be free to be able to speak freely on the issue so people can make a proper choice when the time comes for a decision. Help people to understand they should not jump to any premature decisions before all the facts are in.

### **Draw together feelings and information that show united concern.**

People who are members of a church do have many areas of mutual agreement. Otherwise they would

never have joined together in the first place. The issue of conflict may be one of methodology or approach, rather than theology or ethics. Emphasize those things that bind people together—the things they value and honor together. If possible, celebrate their unity, while not discounting differing viewpoints.

### **Negotiate a settlement on those points of disagreement.**

It helps to try to work out a win-win solution if possible. No one wants to go away feeling he or she has lost in the conflict. Begin with the points of agreement. Separate wants from needs. What are the things both sides must have? Then bargain with those things people would like but could live without. There may be some issues that cannot be negotiated, and in that case, some people may have to live with less than they wanted. It takes a mature attitude to believe you don't need to get your way every time.

### **Covenant to abide with the decision of the group.**

When a decision is finally reached, it is helpful to find some way of acknowledging the process back to unity. Sometimes a formal covenant should be written up with all parties signing it. Other times it is helpful to have a time of prayer, Communion, or a service of reconciliation where people can ask forgiveness of one another. You may want to provide an evaluation time later to assess the progress of living together within the new agreement.

## **Small Groups: How Would You Handle This?**

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 11-5 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide the class into three groups. If your class is five or fewer students, let the class choose one of the case studies to consider.*

*Each group will work on one case study. The leader should be the person whose birthday is closest to today. The scribe is the person sitting to the left of the leader. The group should discuss the issues of the conflict, both obvious and less obvious. How would the group work to bring about a resolution to the conflict?*

### **Case Study A**

A volunteer youth worker in your church has done a great job of building the youth group from 4 to 6 attendees to over 50 young people in a span of three years. There is a house next door to the church for sale and the youth leader is asking the church to buy it and turn it into a youth center. She and her supporters envision being able to reach as many as 150 neighborhood teens a week with this facility. A group of members opposes this purchase. These are primarily families with small children in the church. The nursery and children's classrooms are woefully inadequate. They believe if the money was spent on the children's department facilities, we would be able to reach more children and eventually that would help the teen department to grow as well. There is not enough

*Allow seven or eight minutes for the three groups to give a brief summary of their work.*

money to do both things, and each group feels their approach is the only right one. How would you handle this if you were the pastor?

### **Case Study B**

The church hired a part-time secretary several years ago thinking this woman would be a great help to the pastor and church programs. A new pastor came to the church and the secretary did not agree with the new direction of the church. She began to gossip and spread untrue stories about the new pastor. While not outwardly resistant, she slowed the work of the church office until some who utilized her services began to complain. The pastor finally decided to give the secretary a 30-day notice of termination. The husband of the secretary has been the most influential person in the power structure and she also has family in the church. The secretary's family and other supporters have quit paying tithe and resigned from many responsible positions in the church in protest. The pastor's supporters have felt this family has had far too much power in the church and the firing of the secretary is long overdue. The church is split down the middle on this issue. How would you handle this if you were the pastor?

### **Case Study C**

A 15-year-old young man named Jason has been helping out in the second grade children's class. He was asked to be a children's camp counselor, staying with four second grade boys in a cabin. After the camp was over one of the boys named Billy complained to his parents that Jason had fondled him sexually one night when everyone else was asleep. The pastor found out about it only after most of the church had heard the story. Jason absolutely denies anything of the sort took place. His family, and most of the teen group, stand solidly behind Jason's plea of innocence. Billy's parents are threatening legal action against Jason, the district that operates the camp, and the local church for allowing Jason to work alone with young boys. How would you handle this if you were the pastor?

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Call on a student to state what he or she learned about persons in conflict.*

*Call on another student to state what was learned about a church in conflict.*

*Call on another student to state what was learned about resolving church conflict.*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be considering the pastor's presence in a crisis.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Take one of the case studies you did not work on in your group. Write a two-page paper outlining the steps you would take as a pastor to resolve the issue. If another group covered the case study in class, share how you agree or disagree with their findings.

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 10.

Write in your journal. Read Psalm 27. Write your observations on David's crisis. What were his feelings? Then reflect on a crisis you have experienced. How did some of your emotions parallel David's? What were some things that helped you through the crisis? How did you sense God at work in your life and the lives of others?

## Punctuate the Finish

Conflict is often a normal part of the interaction between people with different backgrounds and different outlooks on life. While some differences are no more significant than whether to paint the walls blue or green, other differences go to the values and goals and theology people cherish. Add to that the emotions when we or our family members have been hurt because of conflict. Listen to Paul's words in Rom

12: 16, 18, "Live in harmony with one another . . . If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Make that the goal of your ministry to your church.

## Lesson 12

# Pastoral Presence in Crisis

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	What Is a Crisis	Guided Discussion	Resource 12-1
0:20	How Does a Crisis Develop?	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 12-2
0:40	Observations about a Crisis	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 12-3
0:50	What Do I Do in a Crisis?	Lecture	Resource 12-4
1:00	How Would You Handle This?	Small Groups	Resource 12-5
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Swilhart, Judson J., and Gerald C. Richardson. *Counseling in Times of Crisis*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1987.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 11.

Wright, H. Norman. *Crisis Counseling: What to Do During the First 72 Hours*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books/Gospel Light, 1993.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share their two-page papers with each other.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

A 56-year-old woman stops by the church to see you. Her husband died of cancer about eight months earlier. She tells you it has become increasingly difficult for her to leave her house. Her husband did not leave much in the way of financial security, and the woman really needs to work. At first working was an outlet. Now she does not want to be around people. She hasn't been to church for six weeks. She refuses to answer the phone when her church friends call. "Pastor," she says, "I feel I am turning into a recluse and I don't know what to do about it. I've even thought about how easy it would be to end my life so I wouldn't have to deal with things anymore. What's the matter with me, as a Christian, even to think those thoughts?"

It's late Saturday evening and you, as pastor, are finally ready for Sunday's services. Just as you are about to drift into that much-needed rest in preparation for tomorrow's activities, the phone rings. Three teenagers from your church were involved in a car accident. One boy escaped with only minor scratches and bruises. A second boy suffered a broken leg and a severe concussion. The third, a girl whose parents are leaders in your church, sustained very severe head and neck injuries and is in surgery right now. The doctors are not sure she will survive. The families of all three teens are going to the hospital. "Pastor, can you get to hospital as soon as possible to be with the families?" the voice on the phone pleads.

*How would you feel if you were called into one of these crises?*



## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- explain the types of crises
- understand how a crisis develops
- understand the dynamics of a crisis
- know what to do when dealing with a crisis

## Lesson Body

### Guided Discussion: What Is a Crisis?

(10 minutes)

Refer to Resource 12-1 in the Student Guide.

H. Norman Wright, Crisis Counseling: What to Do During the First 72 Hours (Ventura, CA: Regal Books/Gospel Light, 1993), 20.

Clinebell, Basic Types of Pastoral Care, 185.

#### What is a crisis?

The dictionary defines it as a crucial time, a turning point in a person's life. "The Chinese character for crisis is made up of two symbols: one is for despair and the other for opportunity."

Howard Clinebell says, "A crisis occurs within persons when their usual problem-solving activities are ineffective, allowing the stress of unmet need to rise unabated."

#### There are two types of crises.

1. Developmental—this is a crisis that comes out of the normal changes or growth in a person's life. Normal life changes include marriage, the birth of a child, puberty, occupational changes, a major illness, or aging issues. The example above of the 56-year-old woman facing life after her husband's death is one example.
2. Situational or Accidental—this comes from a sudden, unexpected event that has created a situation where the person will find it difficult to adjust or cope. The example of the teens involved in the car accident may create a crisis for the accident victims and their families. Accidental crises generally cannot be predicted in advance, but they usually require an immediate response.

Call on one of the students to read the passage.

Allow for response and discussion.

A case could be made for either answer.

\_\_\_\_\_, please read Acts 9: 1-9.

*Is this a developmental or situational crisis?*

*How did this crisis affect Saul/Paul?*

*What were some things Saul and others did to help him through this crisis?*

*Can crisis experiences be good as well as bad? In Paul's case, was the crisis bad or good?*

*Why do you think we refer to religious events such as salvation and entire sanctification as crisis experiences?*

## **Lecture/Discussion: How Does a Crisis Develop?**

(20 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-2 in the Student Guide.*

### **A Significant Event**

The event itself may be positive, but it creates change that poses a serious threat to the individual. Often the event is the threat because it is unexpected and upsets the person's equilibrium, such as an accident.

### **An Upsetting Reaction**

An event that would create a crisis for one person may not be the source of a crisis for another. A fire in a home may create great fear and apprehension for someone living in the house but would not elicit the same response from a firefighter who would be used to dealing with fires every day. In order for a significant event to become a crisis, the person would need to feel vulnerable and unsure and upset.

### **An Unsure Response**

A crisis usually is characterized by an inability to respond or cope in ways the person normally would do. It is not unusual for the person to feel anxiety, depression, and even panic in trying to find a way to respond. A person's mind can be filled with thoughts like: life will never be the same, this must all be my fault, I'm going to get even with the one who caused this, or, I don't feel I can deal with this.

*Allow for response.*

*How do you think the people involved might react and respond to the following crises:*

- The parents of the teen girl, in the accident in the second story of the opening today, who find out their daughter may never wake up from her coma
- A teenager loses two fingers with a saw in a woodshop class in school
- A woman has a miscarriage after trying to have a baby with her husband for eight years
- A 24-year-old young man learns he has cancer in the brain with little possibility of successful treatment

## **Lecture/Discussion: Observations about a Crisis**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-3 in the Student Guide.*

**Everyone has and will face many crises.** It is impossible for anyone to live to adulthood without having some stressful event that has altered the person's normal coping mechanisms.

**Crises and stresses are cumulative.** Often a person may deal with several crises in a short time. Then a seemingly insignificant event takes place and the person falls apart. It is like the proverbial "straw that broke the camel's back." Thomas Holmes and R. H. Rahe, professors of psychiatry from the University of Washington, have created *The Social Readjustment Rating Scale* in which they assigned a numerical value to various events or crises to determine the stress level in a person's life. They discovered people with high numerical stress levels had a significantly higher potential for illnesses, both physical and psychological.

*Allow for response.*

*Why would there be a correlation between past stress levels and future illnesses?*

**A crisis is not a sign of mental illness.** Stresses and crises are a part of normal existence for all humans. People from the Bible, such as Moses, Job, David, Peter, and even Jesus, faced crisis situations.

**People facing the same crisis situation will respond in very different ways.**

*Allow for response.*

*Factors may include other stresses, the emotional state of the person, events earlier in a person's life, experience and training in dealing with a specific crisis, even one's faith.*

*What would be some factors that would determine how a person would respond to a significant crisis event?*

**People with strong personal coping skills and a helpful support network will generally do better in handling a crisis.** We need to draw on the encouragement of others because there is a tendency to feel inadequate in ourselves. This is also a time to reflect on successful ways of handling crises in the past.

**Working through a crisis can make a person stronger or it can be a harmful process.** A businessman related how a trusted employee embezzled and mishandled company funds and destroyed the business. In the midst of this crisis the business owner at first felt bitterness and anger. These feelings were replaced by other emotions. The man said, "I don't understand why all this happened, but I am anticipating how God is going to work out my future." This man will be stronger as the result of facing this crisis

*Allow for response.*

*Why do you think some benefit while others are devastated by facing a crisis?*

**One's spiritual life can be greatly affected by a crisis.** Some people find strength for coping through prayer and Scripture. Other people can become bitter and angry toward God for what they believe is God's inability or unwillingness to intervene in the crisis. People can feel isolated and wonder if God exists, at least for them.

*Allow for response.*

*What can pastors do to help people who are struggling in their relationships with God in the midst of a crisis situation?*

## **Lecture: What Do I Do in a Crisis?**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-4 in the Student Guide.*

### **1. Respond immediately.**

The very nature of most crises requires a quick response if you are going to be of help to a person. A person threatening suicide is not going to wait for an appointment a week later. The family of the teenage girl, involved in the accident in the opening story, needs the pastor as soon as possible. There is often only a brief window of opportunity to minister in a crisis. It is difficult to jump in later. People will always remember you were there with them in their hour of need.

### **2. Assess the situation.**

You need to evaluate quickly if this really is a real crisis. There are people who love to make molehills into mountains. In Jesus' parables about the lost coin and sheep, the lost items were important but they didn't bring everyone from the community to search. A lost pair of glasses, while important, doesn't require pastoral intervention. However, a four-year-old child missing for several hours is a serious crisis needing your immediate attention. There may be times when you don't know if you should go now or wait until the end of the day. A good adage to operate by is this: If you are in doubt—go now rather than later.

### **3. Establish rapport.**

The person in crisis may be well known to you. However, crisis situations often involve several people and some may not know you. When you enter the crisis situation, introduce yourself and talk to all of the people involved. The fact that you are a pastor can be comforting and calming in a hospital emergency waiting room.

**4. Decide on any immediate actions that must be taken.**

Sometimes people in a crisis are stunned and incapable of making immediate decisions that need to be made. Does anyone need medical attention right away? Are there other people who need to be contacted? If someone is threatening suicide, what could be done to protect the person from doing bodily harm? It is better to let the person in crisis do those first steps, but sometimes you need to take those initial actions on behalf of the other person. You need to assess the person's strengths to decide what the person is capable of doing right now.

**5. Work with the person to set future goals.**

It is a good idea to review the crisis with the person. Gather as much information as you can about the problem. Then begin to explore with the person some possible goals. Sometimes it is helpful to consider several alternatives so the person feels empowered to make a choice. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the possible alternatives? Don't hesitate to ask questions that will help clarify the goal. When the person has settled on the goal that shows the best promise, move to the next step.

**6. Develop a plan of action.**

While it is possible to move toward the goal in one step, often there are intermediate steps along the way. Focus on the first action step. This is the time to brainstorm several ways to achieve the goal. From this, help the person decide on the best course of action. If the person is incapable of doing much, you may have to work directly with the person to take an action step. The person may be capable of acting alone and your role, in that case, is to facilitate and encourage the process to move ahead.

**7. Assess the support system and resources.**

Who are the people that will give the person the best chance of success in overcoming the crisis? The person's support system may include family, friends, church family, coworkers, and other professionals. A person with ongoing medical problems may need a home care nurse. The alcoholic may need to contact Alcoholics

Anonymous for support to overcome the addiction. A host of community resources could be used for specific needs. The support a person in crisis receives may be a major factor in reaching the goals set.

### **8. Generate a sense of hope and confidence.**

Everyone needs to find hope in the goals set. Proverbs 13:12, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life." Obviously, our hope is first in God. But people also need to have the feeling they can have an important role in solving their own problems. Sometimes you have to let people know you believe in them before they are willing to believe in themselves.

### **9. Commit to follow-up.**

You can be an important part of the person's support system. You might say you will follow up with phone calls or with visits to assess progress and provide accountability. Take time to review the process and refine the action steps as needed. There may be discouraging days ahead. Your willingness to stay in touch may provide the emotional support to keep the person on target toward the goal.

## **Small Groups: How Would You Handle This?**

(25 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 12-5 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide the class into three groups. Select the groups so groups will be somewhat different than the last lesson. If your class is five or fewer students, let the class choose one of the case studies to consider.*

*Each group will work on one case study. The leader should be the person who lives the greatest distance from the classroom. The groups should be prepared to share their thoughts with the rest of the class at the end of the class period.*

### **Case Study A**

A family has decided to move across the country because of a new job opportunity for the father. Their 16-year-old son, the only child still living at home, does not want to move. He is in the middle of his junior year in high school and is adamant about staying to finish school. He says, "I'm old enough to live on my own. If you make me move, I can just run away." The moving van is coming in just a few days and the intensity of the crisis is increasing. The family staying in their location is not an option. This family comes to you for help. What will you do?

### **Case Study B**

An 80-year-old woman who had enjoyed good health has suffered a massive stroke. The family is in shock because they expected this wife and mother to live on for a long time. The doctors have done two tests on her

brain to determine if there is any activity. There seems to be little or none. They tell the family she will probably be unable to breathe on her own if they turn off the machines. The family must make a decision. Should the hospital turn off the breathing machine to see if she can breathe on her own? The family is divided on this decision. The husband and one daughter are willing to turn off the machine and leave the results to God. The two sons feel their mother should be kept alive at all costs, in case God should choose to do a miracle and she would wake up. How would you try to help this family?

### **Case Study C**

A couple married 12 years has been active in your church. The husband calls to tell you he discovered a love note his wife wrote to a coworker. After confronting his wife with the evidence, she admits she had indeed had a brief affair, but she insists she doesn't love this man. The wronged husband is furious and isn't convinced when his wife says the affair is over. There are no children in this marriage, and the husband is thinking of just leaving the whole thing and starting over alone. The wife is pleading for him to give her another chance. Pastor, they have invited you over to their apartment tonight to see if you can save this marriage in crisis. What will you do?



# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Are there any questions or comments about this lesson?*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be considering the pastor's presence in celebration.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a two-page paper detailing ways the church you attend or pastor could better address crisis situations. You may want to make this a personal approach you would like to implement as pastor. Or you may want to suggest some ways the laity of the church could be mobilized and organized to help people in crisis.

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 11.

Write in your journal. Reflect on at least one personal crisis in your own life. How did you feel when the crisis came. How did you find help to deal with the crisis? In what ways did the Holy Spirit minister to you directly and through other people? What are some lessons you have learned through this crisis?

## Punctuate the Finish

As Jesus hung on the Cross, certainly a crisis moment in His own life, one of the two men on crosses of their own glanced over to Him. This man recognized Jesus' innocence even as he acknowledged his guilt. In an act of desperation the man called out, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus did not bother with peripheral matters in this man's hour of greatest need. As the Son of God was about to give His own life He expended His weakened breath with a word of encouragement, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise" (Lk 23:42-43). To the very end, Jesus reached out to people in crisis circumstances with a word of hope. As His servants, we should follow our master's example.

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## Lesson 13

# Pastoral Presence in Celebration

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Premarital Preparation	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 13-1 Resource 13-2
0:35	Developing Premarital Counseling	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 13-3
0:45	Premarital Counseling	Small Groups	Resource 13-4
1:00	The Rehearsal	Lecture	Resource 13-5
1:10	The Wedding Service	Lecture	Resource 13-6
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Parrott, Les, III, and Leslie Parrott. *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: Seven Questions to Ask Before (and After) You Marry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 12.

Wright, H. Norman. *The Premarital Counseling Handbook*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1992.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two to three students to read their homework papers.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

A couple approaches you after a service with a glow on their faces. "Pastor, we've decided we are going to get married. We would like for you to marry us, if you would be willing. What do we have to do now?" They may be looking at their future with "rose-colored glasses" while you know some of the challenges they will face. What can you and your church do to help them prepare for this very significant change in their lives?

There are many opportunities for celebration in the life of the church. We rejoice together at the birth of a child to a family, with its dedication or baptism ceremony. The moments when we participate in the church sacraments of baptism and Communion are certainly celebrations. However, because marriage preparation and celebration involves the largest time commitment in counseling and planning, it will be the focus of this class.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand why premarital counseling is necessary
- understand the goals of premarital counseling
- know how to develop a premarital counseling program
- conduct a wedding rehearsal
- preside over a wedding service

# Lesson Body

## Lecture/Discussion: Premarital Preparation

(25 minutes)

Marriage was ordained in the Garden of Eden when God pronounced Adam and Eve man and wife. It was always in the heart of the Creator that a human have the opportunity to establish a lifelong relationship with someone of the opposite sex. The physical and emotional ties between a married couple are deeper than any other relationships on earth. While you cannot guarantee marital success by doing premarital counseling, you do increase the chances for a quality marriage.

*Refer to Resource 13-1 in the Student Guide.*

### Why Is Premarital Counseling Necessary?

#### The high rate of divorce

Too many marriages today end in divorce, hurting marriage partners, children, the church, and society. Yet, there is a naive notion that if you find the right partner things will automatically work out OK. And if it doesn't work out, you just find someone else. "The attitude toward marriage today was revealed in the office of a marriage counselor when a young woman said, 'When I got married I was looking for an ideal, but I married an ordeal, and now I want a new deal!'"

*H. Norman Wright, The Premarital Counseling Handbook (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992), 8.*

#### A limited frame of reference

Most people's understanding of marriage is shaped primarily by the marriage they observed most closely—their own parents'. However, fewer people than ever before have a valid model. "Only 25 percent of the households are 'traditional' anymore—two parents with children. There are as many single-person households as there are traditional." People need counseling to be able to understand what a healthy marriage can be.

*Ibid., 8.*

*What are some other ways couples planning to marry can gain understanding about healthy marriages?*

*Allow for response.*

#### Preparation before can prevent problems later

The old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," is certainly true when it comes to

marriage. Often a couple cannot anticipate the issues of marriage beforehand. As a pastor, you can guide a couple through some of the major problems married people face.

### **Pastors have a sacred responsibility before God**

For us, a wedding is not simply a legal process that allows two people to live together. The vows two people pledge to each other are also spoken before God. The pastor stands as an agent of God, joining on earth what God has united in heaven. Jesus said, "Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate" (Mt 19:6).

*Allow for response.*

*Can you think of any other reasons premarital counseling is important?*

*Refer to Resource 13-2 in the Student Guide.*

### **The Goals of Premarital Counseling**

#### **Plan the wedding.**

A number of nuts-and-bolts issues should be discussed: checking the church calendar to clear the date, understanding church policies, asking who will participate, how many guests are expected, where the reception will be held, and many others. It is helpful for you to take notes on these details and keep them on file for reference until after the ceremony is over. Your goal here is to understand the expectations of the couple as they approach their wedding.

#### **Assess the chances of success in this marriage.**

People often approach marriage for the wrong reasons. Some are caught up in the emotions of being married, while not being in love with the person. There are worse things than being lonely; one is being in an unhappy marriage. Physical attraction may not be enough reason. Neither is pregnancy. Two wrong actions do not make a right one. Don't be a party to a wedding that has little chance of survival.

*Allow for response.*

*What would you do if you felt, after talking with this couple, they were getting married for the wrong reasons and their marriage probably would not survive?*

#### **Help the couple understand themselves and the other person.**

Although this couple may have known each other for a long time, there are things they do not know. One of

your tasks is to explore issues that may have a bearing on their future marriage. In this process each person will also need to examine his or her own thoughts, values, attitudes, and adaptability. You can facilitate good discussion by giving the couple assignments between sessions to talk and write about important issues in their lives.

**Develop realistic expectations of marital roles.**

What does this couple expect from daily life together? People are often disappointed when the high emotions of romance before marriage are replaced by tedium when the responsibilities of life become exhausting. People put forth their best self in a dating relationship. She may think he is the strong, silent type when he simply doesn't want to open up. He may feel she will do all the cooking and cleaning when she will expect him to help out.

*Allow for response.*

*What are some ways you can help a couple understand the other person's expectations in marriage?*

**Understand their relationship with parents and family.**

We does not marry only the other person but that person's parents, family, and heritage. Where will the couple spend holidays when both families will be expecting them? How will you deal with intrusions from the in-laws? Negotiating around family quirks requires sensitivity and a willingness to compromise. A couple needs to explore these issues before they get married.

**Encourage communication.**

Les and Leslie Parrott cite a poll where 97 percent of those who rated their communication with their spouse as excellent were happily married, and where only 56 percent of those who rated their communication as poor were happy in their marriage. They state, "Communication is the lifeblood of marriage. Having difficulties with communication does not bode well for marital satisfaction."

*Les Parrott, III and Leslie Parrott, Saving Your Marriage Before it Starts: Seven Questions to Ask Before (and After) You Marry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 73.*

*Allow for response.*

*Think of an assignment that would encourage a couple to communicate better.*

**Equip the couple to deal with conflict.**

Every couple needs to learn how to discuss differences within a marriage. It is not a question of whether conflicts will come, but when they will come. Two

people will not always view things the same way. It is possible to discuss differences without attacking the other person.

**Foster the spiritual development of both partners.**

This is a wonderful opportunity to address spiritual issues with the couple together and separately. If one or both people do not have a personal relationship with God, you can take the opportunity to talk about having Christ as the head of the household. People are often open to a gospel presentation when they are moving close to this major change in their lives.

## **Lecture/Discussion: Developing a Premarital Counseling Program**

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 13-3 in the Student Guide.*

**Establish a church policy for weddings.**

Work with the church board to develop a policy for all church weddings. Your policy should include the requirement that all couples seeking to be married must have at least four sessions of premarital counseling with the pastor or with someone else approved by the pastor. It is better to include a fee to cover printing expenses and books that will be used rather than expect the couple to purchase these on their own.

The wedding policy covers issues such as: who can use the facilities, terms and fees if applicable, who can officiate at weddings, what rooms and equipment can be used, restrictions on alcohol and tobacco, and the honorarium policy for those who help. Have the policy printed so you can go over the policy with anyone inquiring about a church wedding. An established wedding policy will help you when you are dealing with unreasonable requests.

**Understand the governmental and legal requirements for conducting weddings.**

You are responsible for making sure all the procedures are followed properly so the wedding is recognized by legal authorities. Since laws vary by local region or country, you need to know what is required. In many cases, the pastor fills out papers following the ceremony and returns them to a government office. If you fail to carry out your responsibility, the couple may not be legally married.



**Develop a plan for a premarital counseling program of four to six sessions.**

There are several excellent resources to guide you. Two of the best sources are:

Les Parrott III and Leslie Parrott, *Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts: Seven Questions to Ask Before (and After) You Marry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995). There are also workbooks available for both men and women to be used in conjunction with reading the book. The authors are members of the Church of the Nazarene. These resources provide a ready-made, effective, premarital counseling program any pastor could adapt.

H. Norman Wright, *The Premarital Counseling Handbook* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1992). Wright's approach is much more comprehensive, providing an outline for six sessions. He also has material on intercultural marriages and preparing couples for remarriage. This book also comes from an evangelical perspective.

**Reserve the right to refuse to marry those who do not cooperate in counseling or show little potential for success in marriage.**

You are not required by law to marry anyone. It is a ministry you provide to a couple on behalf of the church. This is something you should include in the church policy so a couple will know up front a pastor's prerogative to follow his or her principles.

**Plan to have a follow-up session after the wedding.**

Invite the couple to come back for a visit approximately six months after the ceremony. This can be an additional bonding time with the couple as they discuss their experiences of adjustment. Celebrate their progress as a married couple and deal with any issues that may have developed in the marriage. Most couples will appreciate the fact you are concerned enough to meet with them again. Because people get busy, you may want to make this appointment at the last premarital counseling session.

## Small Groups: Premarital Counseling

(15 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 13-4 in the Student Guide.*

*Have the class divide into groups of three or four for a discussion of premarital counseling. Allow about eight minutes to discuss the questions and four minutes to raise any unresolved issues with the class as a whole.*

In your group discuss the following questions.

What are the questions you have in offering to give premarital counseling to couples?

What are the advantages of offering premarital counseling over ignoring this need?

## Lecture: The Rehearsal

(10 minutes)

*You will need to adapt this lecture and the next to the wedding customs of the culture in which this module is being taught.*

*Refer to Resource 13-5 in the Student Guide.*

Unless the wedding is a small, private one, there is usually a rehearsal of the ceremony. In most cases the rehearsal is a day or two before the ceremony, unless several of participants cannot be present until the day of the ceremony.

### **Some churches have a wedding coordinator.**

This is usually a volunteer who works with the couple in planning some of the details of the ceremony. Often this person is at the back of the church to see that things go smoothly while the pastor is at the front. The coordinator should be at the rehearsal.

### **The pastor is in charge of the rehearsal.**

It is helpful to explain to the couple beforehand that you will direct the rehearsal. This is to protect the plans the wedding couple has made beforehand. If you open parts of the service up to question, there may be several who will offer opinions, putting the couple under undue stress to comply. You can let the couple know that if they want to change anything they can come to you so you know their intents. Your task is to see that the plans you have made with the couple are carried out in the service.

### **Set a spiritual tone for the rehearsal.**

Begin the rehearsal with prayer. You want everyone who participates to know this wedding ceremony will emphasize the couple's desire that God be the center of focus. If Communion will not be served during the wedding, some couples request that the Lord's Supper be served at the end of the rehearsal.

**Begin the rehearsal with participants standing in their positions at the front.**

It is helpful to sketch out beforehand the locations where everyone will stand when they arrive at the front of the church. Someone can mark the locations with something like a small piece of tape if it will be difficult to find later.

**Go through the service twice from beginning to end.**

Use the music for the wedding to help the participants become familiar with the music as they move to their positions. The first time through, cover more details of the ceremony: ushering, what will be said, where people will move, and the music that will be used. The second time can be a simple walk-through to fix all the elements of the service in the minds of those who will participate. It will help those who are nervous by reassuring them that practice makes perfect and the elements will come together in ceremony later. Your confidence is contagious.

**Outdoor weddings offer special challenges.**

Sometimes the weather can create problems. If possible, have an alternate location available inside if rain is threatening. Sound does not carry as well and guests may need to be closer to hear your words if they are unamplified. Try to duplicate the conditions of the wedding setting as much as possible during an outdoor rehearsal.

**The rehearsal dinner.**

Many couples plan a dinner in conjunction with the rehearsal for everyone who participates. Usually the pastor and spouse are invited to participate in this joyous celebration.

## **Lecture: The Wedding Service**

(15 minutes)

### **The Service**

The wedding marks one of the major events in a person's life. Jesus performed His first miracle at a wedding in the small village of Cana in Galilee (Jn 2). While He was not ready to begin His public ministry, Jesus responded to a wedding crisis that could have spelled ruin to this couple on the most important day

of their lives. You need to do all you can as the officiant to see that the wedding is a memorable occasion for everyone, especially the married couple.

*Refer to Resource 13-6 in the Student Guide.*

### **Start on time.**

You are the one with overall responsibility for making sure the service begins when it is announced. There are two schools of thought regarding what constitutes the beginning of the service. Some believe the prelude music marks the beginning of the service. This writer prefers the idea that the service begins when the first of the platform participants begins to move into position.

### **Photography.**

Have an understanding with the wedding couple about when photographs will be taken. Some prefer that most photographs should be taken long before the service begins. Others will take most pictures after the completion of the ceremony. You should make it clear to the photographer that any photos taken during the ceremony should not be intrusive or turn the attention from the service.

### **The homily.**

You can make the ceremony personal by a brief sermon or homily during the service. The homily should not be longer than five to seven minutes, focusing on the relationship of the text to the couple and all married people in the congregation.

### **The order of service.**

While each wedding service is unique, there is a basic structure that is usually followed. The order of the specific elements may vary at each wedding.

- Music prelude
- Candle lighting
- Seating of grandparents and parents
- The processional
- Greeting and betrothal (giving of the bride, questions to bride and groom, etc.)
- Music
- Homily
- Vows and exchange of rings.
- Prayer (followed by music and Communion, if used)
- Unity candle
- Pronouncement of husband and wife
- Benediction

Bridal kiss  
Presentation of couple  
Recessional  
Escorting parents and grandparents  
Dismissal of the congregation

## **Service Issues**

### **Wedding Service Ritual**

The *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene* contains the ritual for a wedding service. You can find other service ideas in wedding manuals and in other resources. Many couples like to have options in planning their wedding. Some like to write and memorize their vows to each other. While there are essential elements in the service, it is possible to combine the wording of sections of several services into a ceremony that is unique. Most engaged couples appreciate receiving a copy of your wedding ceremony at the first premarital counseling session.

### **Communion**

While some serve Communion only to the wedding couple, the wedding is a service of the Church and Communion should be properly served to the entire congregation. Another option is to serve Communion to the wedding party at the rehearsal or rehearsal dinner.

*Allow for response.*

*How would you handle the situation of a couple who are not believers but want Communion at the service?*

### **Music**

Since the wedding is a church service, you need to make sure the music is appropriate. Ask that the couple provide a copy of the lyrics to the music before the rehearsal to avoid the embarrassment of music unsuitable to be used in church.

*Allow for response.*

*Who would decide what music is inappropriate for a wedding?*

### **Unity Candle**

Many couples are choosing to have three candles at the front, the two outer candles representing the two people entering the marriage with the center candle symbolizing the blending of two lives into one. Sometimes the two mothers light the outer candles, indicating that life has come through them. After the couple lights the unity candle with the individual

candles, they may choose to blow out their individual candles or leave them lit.

### **Record keeping**

In some localities the pastor must fill out and mail back a portion of the wedding license to the local or state government indicating that the wedding has been performed and documented. You should also keep a record of all weddings for the local church. These records can be used in a court of law to document the legality of a wedding. It is up to you to keep a personal record as you document your ministry career.

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*In what part of the wedding rehearsal or ceremony do you anticipate having problems?*

*How can those problems be avoided?*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be considering the pastor's presence to comfort.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Develop a sample wedding service for a young couple from your church where you are the pastor. Plan every aspect of the service including all you and others will say and do. Indicate the location of the homily, although you will not need to write one for the assignment.

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 12.

Write in your journal. If you are married, reflect on the responsibilities and privileges you enjoy in the relationship with your spouse. Ask God to speak to you about ways you can make your marriage stronger. If you are not married, reflect on ways you as a pastor can minister to couples planning to be married.

## Punctuate the Finish

Bruce Petersen tells of participating in a special wedding on the campus of Mount Vernon Nazarene University. The bride was the daughter of the very first couple he married in his first pastorate. What a privilege to be able to share in the high moment of two generations of a family. As a pastor there are few moments more joyful than when you unite two people to form the beginning of a marriage, family, and home.

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## Lesson 14

# Pastoral Presence to Comfort

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Ministry to the Dying	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 14-1 Resource 14-2
0:30	Ministry to the Grieving	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 14-3 Resource 14-4
0:55	Ministry through the Funeral	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 14-5 Resource 14-6
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Switzer, David K. *Pastoral Care Emergencies*.  
Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*.  
Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapters 13  
& 14.

Wright, H. Norman. *Crisis Counseling: What to Do  
During the First 72 hours*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books,  
1993.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*In pairs have the students share their sample wedding service.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

You are sitting with a family in a hospital waiting room as the mother and wife is undergoing a routine surgery. The doctor enters the room and speaks very quietly to the family, "She was doing very well as the surgery progressed, and then, without warning, her heart stopped. We did all we could but we just could not revive her. I'm very sorry." What do you do, pastor, to help this family deal with the shock of this very unexpected death?

A middle-aged man with a wife and three children has been suffering recurring headaches and dizziness. The doctors go through a battery of tests. The results are not what he expected. There is a large, inoperable brain tumor. At best he has three to six months to live. How can you help this man and his family deal with the reality and process of dying?

This issue of death and dying is one of the most difficult a pastor must face. We are uncomfortable because we are confronted with our own mortality. Walking along with a dying person toward the grave takes a heavy emotional toll on our lives. This is especially true if we are close to the person who is walking toward the valley of the shadow of death.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- know the stages of dying
- understand the importance of ministry to the dying
- know the elements of the grieving process
- understand how to help people manage grief
- know how to prepare for a funeral
- know how to plan a funeral service

## Lesson Body

### Lecture/Discussion: Ministry to the Dying

(20 minutes)

#### Stages of the Dying Process

Dr. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, in her landmark book *On Death and Dying* (1969), categorized the dying process into five stages:

*Refer to Resource 14-1 in the Student Guide.*

##### 1. Denial—This can't be happening to me.

This is a very natural reaction to the shock of the news. People say things such as, "Maybe the lab tests got mixed up." "Maybe this doctor doesn't know what he's doing. I think I'll get a second opinion." The family also goes through the denial, trying to come to terms with the news. Usually at this stage no one wants to talk much about death. Don't get discouraged if the person is somewhat unresponsive to your desire to help the situation.

##### 2. Anger—Why me?

This anger is directed at family, doctors, and God. The person and the family are trying to deal with the unfairness of it all. If God is all-powerful, why has He allowed this to happen to me? This is especially true if the person has been a faithful Christian. Such anger is unpredictable but not necessarily sinful. Job expressed his anger this way, "Therefore I will not keep silent; I will speak out in the anguish of my spirit, I will complain in the bitterness of my soul" (Job 7:11).

*Allow for response.*

*Emphasize that the person needs you to be nonjudgmental and accepting as anger is vented.*

*How should you respond when a dying person expresses such anger to you?*

##### 3. Bargaining—It's me, but if you'll . . . then I'll . . .

The person may bargain with the doctors, the hospital, and most likely, God. People may pledge to live better, give generous gifts, or see projects through to completion before death. One lady facing death told her doctor she wanted to live until her daughter got married. After the wedding she bargained with her doctor again, "I have another daughter who is not yet married. I'd like to be here for her as well." Sometimes the dying person is moving close to acceptance but family members may be delaying the process by bargaining with God.

*How would you deal with someone who tries to bargain with you as a representative of God?*

*Allow for response.*

**4. Depression—I can't deny it, what's the use?**

The bargaining has not worked and probably nothing will work. Depression sets in. The person may worry about the cost of treatment. Who will take care of the spouse, the children? Depression may come because of the loss of physical attractiveness, hair loss, weight gain or loss. There is also the uncertainty of the future with the loss of relationships, or what will happen after death.

*Allow for response.*

*Perhaps the best thing to do at this stage is simply be a good listener. Don't argue.*

*What would be the best way to minister to a person in this stage of depression?*

**5. Acceptance—This is really happening.**

This is not necessarily a happy time. The person may have few emotions. This is coming to terms with the idea that death really is near. The person may begin to detach from the outside world. For some it is a time to say last words to family and friends.

Elizabeth Kubler-Ross ended her stages here. Someone else has added a sixth stage:

**6. Christian Hope—This is not the end—there's the resurrection.**

At the heart of the Christian faith is the hope of resurrection. The Apostle Paul told the Christians in Corinth that had Jesus not been raised from the grave, our faith would be totally futile (1 Cor 15:12-19). But on Easter, God did indeed raise Jesus from the grave (15:20). All Christian hope resides in the One who was once dead, but who now lives forevermore. The hope Christians have is that death, though a real enemy, will not have the last word. The resurrected Christ has the final word, and it is the word of eternal life. The Christian hope and promise is that this frail, failing, mortal life will, in the resurrection, take on immortality, through Jesus Christ our Lord (15:35-49).

For a Christian pastor truly to minister as a Christian, his or her ministry to the dying must be centered in the hope of the resurrection. To Christians who are dying, the hope of the resurrection is a word of comfort. To those who are not Christians, the hope of the resurrection is a word of invitation to repent of their sins and receive the Redeemer as their own.

For believers, we have the confidence in a future hope. Jesus promised, "I am going there to prepare a place

for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am." (John 14: 2-3) This is hope for the person ready to die and for those who are left behind.

Not everyone goes through every stage of dying. The stages are not always in the same order. You may notice a person may regress from time to time to an earlier stage. People must progress through the stages at their own pace. You can't force people to move on. Death may come sooner than expected, and the patient may not have time to come to a place of acceptance.

### **People Who Are Dying Have Special Needs**

*Refer to Resource 14-2 in the Student Guide.*

The most important need of a Christian confronting terminal illness is to hear again of the hope of resurrection. The meaning of Easter must be the center of ministry to the dying. A minister should be well versed in the New Testament scriptures that explain the meaning of Easter and address the Christian hope of resurrection. Ministry to the dying should be unmistakably Christian.

#### **They need someone who will listen.**

It is important to help them deal with unresolved issues and feelings that have bothered them. You can help the person try to heal broken relations. Accept their anger. Encourage them to reminisce about their past.

#### **They need a friend.**

It is not uncommon for family and helping professionals to begin to pull away as the person nears death. Sometimes the dying person may have few people nearby to stop in. Loneliness can be a serious problem, especially if the person feels too bad to read or watch television. In one sense, dying is something we must do by ourselves. Having a friend standing by can be very comforting. Don't be afraid to show your feelings to the dying person.

#### **They need to find meaning.**

Sometimes you can bring great comfort by showing the dying people the influence of their lives. People who are active can continue to do things that give meaning to the life they have left. Working on a project or helping the family can bring focus to days that could otherwise be meaningless. It's very helpful for a

person who can to maintain some sense of decision-making control, even if it is feeding himself or herself.

**They need a spiritual guide.**

You are in a unique position, as a pastor, to help people prepare for eternity. Take every opportunity to address the person's spiritual needs. Even if a person appears unconscious, the sense of hearing is the last sense to be lost. Don't hesitate to touch the person's hand and pray aloud with the possibility that the person can hear even if there seems to be no response.

*Allow for response.*

*What are the greatest concerns you have in working with people who are dying?*

## **Lecture/Discussion: Ministry to the Grieving**

(25 minutes)

People go through a profound sense of loss when a loved one dies. The process of grief usually takes at least two years when the person dies naturally. It takes much longer when the person died violently or by suicide. While the death of a spouse or sibling is hard, the loss of a child is devastating. Often parents find the grief of such a loss so long-lasting that the marriage may end in divorce. It will help you to understand the grief process.

*Refer to Resource 14-3 in the Student Guide.*

### **1. Shock**

When we lose a loved one, especially unexpectedly, there is a numbing, surreal denial of the fact. It may seem like a bad dream and we hope to awaken to find it really didn't happen. This may continue as a preoccupation with willing that person back to life.

### **2. Emotions**

Tears flow as our mind and emotions attempt to deal with the reality of this loss. When you are with someone confronted by the death of a loved one, don't try to stop the crying. Even Jesus wept at the grave of His friend Lazarus. The greatest comfort is your presence. Encourage the person to cry or talk it out.

### **3. Blaming**

People try to put responsibility either on themselves or others. "If I had only . . . encouraged her to go to the doctor earlier . . . kept him from taking the car. It has to be the doctor's fault . . . or the other driver's fault . . . or God's fault for this death." This is a normal reaction and people should not be shocked when they feel that way.

#### **4. Lack of focus**

Grieving people start projects without completing them. They lose interest in things that used to be important. They feel lonely but don't seem to have the energy to connect with people or activities. It's hard to return to activities you shared with the other person. There doesn't seem to be any future, no goal that motivates daily life.

#### **5. Gradual hope**

The dark clouds that obscure the sun begin to lighten. There are glimpses of the sun again. They begin to have periods where they don't think about their loss. The memories of the lost loved one can bring a smile instead of deep pain.

#### **6. Accepting reality**

The person looks to the future; not the same future as before the loss, but a new future with new goals and friends. Optimism has replaced pessimism. Life is again worth living and the person feels like his or her "old self" again.

*Wright, Crisis Counseling, 159.*

Norm Wright speaks to the recovery this way. "The three periods involved in surviving and rebuilding are (1) bridging the past; (2) living with the present; and (3) finding a path to the future."

*Refer to Resource 14-4 in the Student Guide.*

### **Managing Grief**

#### **Help the person face reality.**

This person is really gone and will not return. What are some of the things the person needs to do now? Some issues such as caring for children, planning the funeral, and other decisions must be made now. Others can wait until the person is better able to think clearly about the situation.

#### **Loosen some of the ties to the deceased.**

Many people want to build a shrine of a child's bedroom or a husband's workroom. Five years later things have not changed. It is as though the person should be returning. You can encourage the person to move toward acting more independently.

#### **Don't make life-changing decisions too quickly.**

Often after the death of a spouse, a person will want to sell the house and move to a new location. The home holds many memories and living with constant reminders can be initially painful. When the intense grief is past, the person who moves to a new environment may wish to be back in the old

surroundings. It is better to postpone such a decision until the mourning period is past.

**Find new interests for the remainder of life.**

Recovery from grief is a process of adjustment and growth. You can help people find ways to refocus and replenish themselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

**Help people with special times of remembrance.**

The process of grieving becomes a pattern of peaks and valleys. Even though the intensity may be less and less as months go by, as the anniversary of the loss approaches, feelings of grief can return with great force. As a pastor, it can be helpful to make a note to make contact with the grieving person on the first anniversary.

*Have the students discuss a time they experienced grief.*

*How did you feel?*

*How long did the grief last?*

*What was most helpful in overcoming the grief?*

*If students have not experienced grief personally, discuss what issues in dealing with grief make them most uneasy or uncomfortable.*

## **Lecture/Discussion: Ministry through the Funeral**

(30 minutes)

For those who have lost a loved one, the funeral service is an important part of the process of dealing with the reality of death. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the significance of the person for whom we grieve. We who attend are reminded again of our own mortality. We act out our deepest feelings in the supportive context of the family of God.

The funeral is an opportunity to express grief and find comfort as we acknowledge God's involvement in our lives. In this worship service we give testimony to the world that we trust God in the most significant moments of our lives. We confess with the Psalmist, "I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust'" (Ps 91:2). Even as we prepare to say farewell to our loved one, we state, "This is not the end! Life continues eternally with God."



## Preparing for the Funeral

*Refer to Resource 14-5 in the Student Guide.*

### **Go to the family as soon as possible.**

The family may still be at the hospital or a nursing home. This is one time when it is important to make contact with the family as soon as it is feasible.

### **Arrange for an all-family meeting.**

Usually it is best to plan this gathering for the next day. You need to begin gathering information for the funeral services, the music, scripture readings, and other material the family would like included in the service. Encourage the family to share their memories of the person who died. Be a good listener and take notes. Some stories may be effective in the funeral sermon. It is an honor to be invited into the family circle as they share their treasured remembrances.

*Allow for response.*

*Why do you think such a meeting is important in planning the funeral?*

### **Work with the funeral director.**

The funeral director may be able to give you additional insights into the family's interests and needs in the funeral service. This person often works with the family to arrange for the pallbearers and other participants in the service. If you are unfamiliar with the community, the funeral director can inform you of local customs that may be expected by the family or church.

### **Be with the family for the first viewing of the body.**

If it is customary to have viewing hours for the body, you need to be with the family when they first see the body. After you allow the family members time to be with the body you can support the family with a time of prayer.

*Refer to Resource 14-6 in the Student Guide.*

## Planning the Service

### **1. Plan the service and the sermon with a biblical view of life and death.**

There will likely be people attending the funeral with a limited knowledge of the Christian faith. The church can make positive statements of their belief through the words of a hymn centered on God's greatness or Christ's sacrifice for our sins. Hymns such as "How Great Thou Art" or "And Can It Be?" remind us of the essence of our faith. Scriptures can remind us again of God's faithfulness and grace.

**2. Write a sermon that can draw people to Jesus.**

There are three approaches you can use. You can create a sermon based on scripture with the illustrations for the sermon coming from the life of the person who has died. Your sermon can be a eulogy of the life of the deceased that reflects the life of Christ. A third approach can be to introduce the sermon with a eulogy on the life of the person, followed by an exposition on scripture. Use the person's name, first name or nickname, in the sermon to make it personal.

**3. For the funeral of an unbeliever, show Jesus as the hope for the living.**

You cannot preach one who is not a Christian into heaven. Don't compromise what you believe to be scripturally true when you conduct the funeral. Jesus does promise comfort and hope for those who put their faith in Him. You can invite people to turn to Jesus as the answer to life's needs. It is generally not appropriate to have an altar call or try for direct evangelism in the service. You can invite those who wish to know more to speak with you later.

**4. Assist the family in selecting the best location for the funeral service.**

For active members, the church may be the preferred location. The church building reminds us that we worship God even in our moments of grief. For those who were not a part of a church, the family may prefer the chapel of a funeral home.

**5. Plan the order of service to incorporate all the elements you have discussed with the family.**

Here is a sample order of service.

- Prelude
- Scriptural Call to Worship
- Invocation
- Hymn
- Obituary and/or Eulogy
- Scriptures
- Prayer
- Special Music
- Sermon/Homily
- Benediction

**6. Plan a committal service at the graveside appropriate for the conclusion of the funeral.**

This service in front of the casket and the open grave should be very brief, two to three minutes, especially when the weather conditions are bad. A committal service for a believer can emphasize the hope of the resurrection. When dealing with a committal service of

an unbeliever, you can place the deceased in the hands of a good God who does all things well.

### **7. Be aware of the local customs connected with funerals.**

Some regions have the casket open during the service while other areas prefer the casket closed. The pastor may stand at the head of the casket at the end of the service while the congregation passes by. At the cemetery the pastor may be expected to lead the funeral procession and stand by the head of the casket at the committal service. In many communities the church provides a funeral dinner for the family at the conclusion of the committal. The funeral is one time you cannot afford to make critical mistakes in the expected procedures of a community. The funeral director knows the customs and can give you good advice.

### **8. Visit the spouse and family soon after the funeral and then at appropriate intervals.**

Your responsibility as pastor does not end with the final amen of the service. The days ahead will be difficult for the family. People experience grief and aloneness for months and years.

### **9. Other funeral service issues.**

Some people prefer a private funeral for the family and close invited friends only. Some families prefer suffering alone, especially if there are unique circumstances surrounding the death.

In some areas cremations are becoming more common. Sometimes there is a funeral service with the body present, with the cremation following. Other times the cremation has already taken place and the church holds a memorial service. Usually there is a picture of the deceased person in the place of a casket. The service is similar to the funeral service with the exception of the committal service at the conclusion. While some object to cremation as destroying the temple of the Holy Spirit, others see it as speeding up the natural process of the body—ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

*Depending on the time left in the session you can talk about working with the family before the funeral, or if there is little time, planning the funeral itself. What would you want to say in the sermon?*

*How would you go about planning for the funeral of a three-year-old child of an unchurched family that accidentally drowned? They have called you because they don't have a church and their neighbor recommended you.*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Which aspect of today's lesson do you feel will be the most difficult for you?*

*What can you do to gain more strength in that area?*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be starting a new unit on Pastoral Practice. The subject of the class will be the pastor's conduct.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a brief, 3-page funeral sermon/homily for a 75-year-old woman who has been an example of godliness to the church. She suffered from cancer that finally took her life after several months of painful suffering. Choose a text, develop a sermon of encouragement and hope for her husband and children, and of course, her friends in the church. You can have some freedom to create an illustration or two about her life as a part of the sermon.

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapters 13 and 14.

Write in your journal. Meditate on 2 Cor 1:3-8. Reflect on the way God brought comfort to you in the past through another person. What is it like to receive comfort? How does it help us to have been recipients of God's comfort when it becomes our turn to comfort someone else? How do we share in the sufferings of Christ? What is the connection between suffering and comforting?

## Punctuate the Finish

The family had gathered at the hospital as the word spread that Grandpa's lung cancer was now draining his life from him. This man had attended church with his Christian wife but had never made a personal commitment. The pastor greeted the man in the bed warmly. After a few minutes of conversation he asked that the rest of the family leave the room so he could have some private moments with the man and his wife. With urgency and sensitivity the pastor spoke to

the man about his relationship with God. In just a few minutes this man prayed to receive Christ as his personal Savior while his wife wept for joy. A few days later the pastor was so happy to be able to tell the people at the funeral of this man's conversion. What a privilege to be able to lead this dying man to a decision that changed his eternal destiny.

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## Lesson 15

# The Pastor's Conduct

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	Ethical Dilemmas	Small Groups	Resource 15-1
0:20	Ethical Issues in Pastoral Care	Lecture/Discussion	Resource 15-2
1:25	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Arnold, William V. *Pastoral Responses to Sexual Issues*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993.

Noyce, Gaylord B. *Pastoral Ethics: Professional Responsibilities of the Clergy*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 15.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two students to read their funeral sermon/homily.*

*Return and collect homework.*

## Orientation

The Roman Catholic Church in the USA was rocked in the beginning days of the new millennium by an avalanche of accusations of clergy misconduct. Many of the charges have involved sexual misconduct with minors, some going back 20 to 30 years and more. As disturbing as anything to the Catholic faithful has been the failure of the church hierarchy to address and deal with the problem. Priests with known problems were simply shuffled off to other assignments rather than being held accountable for their actions. Now, clergy from parish priests to bishops and cardinals have been forced to resign.

The general public has not confined suspicions to the Roman Catholic Church alone. The image of clergy in general is at an all-time low in the United States. Suspicion ignited by the failures of the televangelists of the 1980s has spread to all pastors of local churches. People watch our every action and motive with increasing scrutiny. Joe E. Trull says in an article "Up to Code," "Pastors are finding it's time to dust off the code of ethics, and in light of recent social and technological developments, it's time to rewrite . . . A code of ethics by itself will not keep anybody from sinning. Nevertheless, a good code of ethics, rightly used, is an encourager to do the right thing."

*Leadership Journal 24 (Winter 2003), 43.*

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand the proper use of time
- understand the importance of confidentiality
- understand the need to be able to speak the truth with people who are dying
- know the importance of setting boundaries for counseling with people



- know how to deal with people of the opposite gender
- understand how to be accountable to others
- know how to help people facing ethical dilemmas in medicine

# Lesson Body

## Small Groups: Ethical Dilemmas

(10 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 15-1 in the Student Guide.*

*Divide your class into three equal sized groups and assign each a scenario.*

*Have each group decide on a course of action and then defend the reasoning of their decision.*

*Have each group select a spokesperson. Discuss the issue for five minutes. Then have each group report.*

### Scenario 1

Hannah, a 15-year-old from a prominent church family, comes into the youth pastor's office in tears. She finally comes to the point of her visit. She has been seeing a 17-year-old boy, Jason, from another active family in the church. Through her sobs she reveals that she and her boyfriend have been having sex for about five months. Then the girl takes a deep breath and reveals, "I found out today from the clinic that I'm two months pregnant. Jason and I have not decided what we're going to do yet. We love each other, but we're not ready to be married. We're considering an abortion. I understand that if you tell a minister something it has to be kept a secret. I want you to swear you will not tell either of our families about this, OK?" What does the youth pastor do?

### Scenario 2

Bill, a single man of 45, has been seeing several doctors because of severe bouts of depression. He has been unsatisfied with their help and has been coming to you, the pastor, for counsel. Bill has faced several serious emotional and physical problems lately. His elderly mother died and left him alone in the house. He has been diagnosed with the beginning stages of diabetes, and with his depression, it has beaten him down. Now, in the study he confides he has been having somewhat regular thoughts of ending his life. He could be with his mother in heaven and all the physical problems and depression would be a thing of the past. When you question him, he says he probably won't kill himself because he is too much of a coward. Still, you have grave concerns about him. What do you do, as a pastor?

### Scenario 3

George, an 83-year-old grandfather, is in the final stages of stomach cancer. The family and the doctor have decided it would be too hard on the man to know he may have only two months to live, so they are not telling him the truth. The family has specifically asked you, the pastor, not to say anything to the man either. You go to visit George in the hospital and he asks you the question straight out, "Pastor, my family and my doctor will not answer my question, but I need to

know—am I going to die real soon?” What would you do, and how do you answer George?

## Lecture/Discussion: Ethical Issues in Pastoral Care

(65 minutes)

*Refer to Resource 15-2 in the Student Guide.*

### 1. The Pastor's Time

Most pastors will admit they have more to do in a given week than they have hours to do them. A pastor must commit large blocks of time to properly study the Bible, pray, and prepare to preach up to three or four times a week. The church expects the pastor to be a good leader, administrator, and the list goes on. But, does the church also have the right to expect the pastor to be a shepherd to the sheep?

In developing a CEO mentality of ministry, have we sacrificed the principle of caring for the flock? This can create real tension for the pastor. How do you define the flock under the pastor's watchful care? It is possible for a minister to believe "the world is my parish" and feel responsible for everyone everywhere. Perhaps part of the answer is that the pastor is responsible to see that everyone in the church receives the care they need.

Obviously the pastor will provide some of the care, but the laity needs to become involved. The pastor should also refer those in the congregation who need advanced help to others with greater capabilities. There is an ethical responsibility, as a part of the pastoral role, to make good use of time to care so the flock is healthy and well fed. The church should be the one place where it is never said, "No one is concerned for me . . . no one cares for my life" (Ps 142:4).

*Allow for response.*

*What percentage of a pastor's weekly schedule should be devoted to caring for the flock?*

*What types of work fall under the heading of care?*

*How does the pastor keep from letting care take away from other responsibilities?*

### 2. The Pastor's Confidentiality

Throughout its history the church has placed great value on the secrecy of the confessional. Gaylord Noyce says, "Few strengths for ministry are more important than the ability to keep confidences. Parishioners deeply need the freedom to trust this ability in their clergy if they are constructively to probe

*Gaylord B. Noyce, Pastoral Ethics: Professional Responsibilities of the Clergy (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), 89.*

*Ibid.,, 92.*

*Allow for response.*

*Confidentiality should be broken only for safety concerns. A confession of an old murder or even the peace of mind of the family are not themselves reason to break confidentiality.*

with pastoral help their moral and spiritual doubts, to confess their sins, and to grow.”

It is important to understand that casual conversations in the church parking lot or in a committee meeting are not covered under legal confidentiality restrictions even though it may be prudent to keep such conversations private. Many states in the United States have tried to protect the minister's responsibility to keep certain conversations secret. “Usually such legislation reads in effect—and these laws are now on the books of most states—that the ordained minister ‘shall not be allowed or compelled’ to disclose a confession or confidence incurred in the line of professional work.” Legally, you may have broken confidentiality if you tell even your spouse without the person's permission.

Confidentiality can become an ethical dilemma for a pastor when people need to be protected for safety reasons. When a person threatens to kill himself or someone else, the pastor needs to take some action to protect the one who is in danger. The minister must intervene on behalf of those who are particularly vulnerable: the aged, the incompetent, and young children. Many states and local municipalities require the pastor to report even the suspicion of child abuse. Sometimes one must make the difficult choice between maintaining the good will of an abusive adult or rescuing someone who is incapable of self-protection. In those cases, you respond to the higher good.

*Would you try to get the counselee's permission to contact authorities or do it behind the person's back?*

*Would you feel obligated to reveal to authorities the confession of a person who committed a murder many years before but poses no threat to anyone today?*

*Would you reveal the facts if it could bring closure to a family's grief?*

*Can you think of any other reason for a pastor to break a confidence?*

### **3. The Pastor's Truth-telling**

In the third case study the family and the doctor tried to pull the pastor into a conspiracy of silence. A terminal hospital patient, who asks the direct question, “Pastor, am I going to die soon?” is looking for a straight answer. On one hand, it would be simple to let the person know the family and doctors are hiding the truth and you disagree with their deception. However,

in doing so you could undermine the patient's confidence in the doctor and jeopardize the professional working relationship you may enjoy. The family may feel betrayed.

The issue is further complicated by the fact that the doctor may not know with exactness how long a person has to live. Cancer patients sometimes go into remission for an indefinite period of time. New medicines and treatments may come along to give new optimism for the patient. It is dangerous for the pastor to play medical doctor, a realm in which he or she may have little knowledge. Often the best answer the pastor can give is to refer the medical issues back to the doctor in charge. The patient may have spiritual concerns that do relate to your professional arena.

As pastor, if you feel a person is nearing death, it is good to talk to the family about the issue first. It may be that family members are having a difficult time dealing with death themselves. The doctor may feel that if the patient knows, he or she will simply give up rather than maintain a sense of hope. Most of the time the patient knows deep down that death is near. Confirming the patient's sense of coming death may provide the time needed to tie up some of the loose ends before the end comes. The family is able to talk more freely. Knowing may also help the patient make better choices for medication and treatment. Your focus may be to help the family and the patient come to terms with the reality of death.

*Allow for response.*

*What would you do if, after talking to the family about revealing the truth, they still do not want the patient to be told?*

*Where do the rights of the patient to be informed fit with the family's desire to keep the person from knowing his or her own prognosis?*

#### **4. The Pastor's Boundary-setting**

Because you are the professional it is your responsibility to set the parameters or limits for care and counseling. It is good to decide on these boundaries before you begin counseling.

##### **Boundaries of Location**

Except for emergencies you should do counseling at the study of the church. The pastor's office is a safe setting where people can feel free to share openly. When you are counseling a person of the opposite sex, you should be sure someone else is in the church

building. Don't go to the person's home to counsel unless your spouse or someone else from the church can go along, waiting in another room if necessary. Restaurants can create a feeling of personal intimacy rather than a place to focus on issues. This can send the wrong message of warmth to someone of the other gender.

### **Boundaries of Touch**

A hug, a kiss on the cheek, or a touch of the hand can be interpreted in many different ways. In a time of deep emotional sharing what may be intended as an encouraging touch can quickly be interpreted as a passionate invitation. It is important to be careful about whom we touch and how or where we touch them. A pat on the hand may be preferable to a hug until we know the person better. Remember that interpretations of touch vary not only with personal preference but with cultural norms as well.

*William V. Arnold, Pastoral Responses to Sexual Issues (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 51-52.*

### **Boundaries of Emotion**

Sometimes a counselee of the opposite sex may begin to have romantic feelings for the counselor. This is called transference; the counselee is transferring feelings toward the counselor as a substitute. You may need to confront this emotion directly with the counselee at a later time. Always maintain a proper professional distance.

More serious is the issue of countertransference, where the counselor feels sexually attracted to the counselee. The pastor may look forward to sessions, extend the time together, fantasize between sessions, or find excuses to make extra contacts with the person. Gary Collins writes, "At times, all counselors see such tendencies in themselves. To recognize the dangers is a first step for avoiding entanglement and vulnerability." This is a good reason to do a referral.

*Collins, Christian Counseling, 30.*

*Allow for response.*

*How do you set and control the boundaries?*

*Should you write them down?*

*Do you let the counselee know?*

## **5. The Pastor's Respect for the Other Gender**

A pastor is either naive or foolish not to recognize the problems that can erupt in counseling a person of the opposite sex. Noyce goes as far as to say, "There is a sexual dimension to all cross-gender relationships. We

*Noyce, Pastoral Ethics, 100, 101.*

cannot chop up the human person by categories; there is no absolute line of demarcation between spiritual, intellectual and physical attraction in human relationships."

*Collins, Christian Counseling, 31.*

Counseling often involves sharing very personal and emotional details of life. Out of that comes a feeling of closeness and intimacy between people in the counseling setting. Gary Collins says the possibility of immoral behavior is much greater if "the counselee is attractive . . . is not having emotional and sexual needs met elsewhere . . . [and] the counseling involves detailed discussions of sexually arousing material."

Infidelity is damaging to you, your family, the counselee, the congregation, and the cause of Jesus Christ. Immoral sexual behavior is the leading reason for pastors being removed from a pastoral role and losing credentials. There are also legal ramifications. In many states a pastor can be liable for criminal prosecution if illicit sexual activities grow out of a counseling relationship. The government's position is that the pastor holds the position of power as a counselor and should not use this position to manipulate the counselee. Clergy have been convicted as felons for taking sexual advantage of parishioners.

We must learn to respect the counselee of opposite gender with proper dignity. Sometimes it helps to remember that this person is someone's child or spouse. Ask yourself, how would I want my child or spouse to be treated in a counseling situation? This person is also someone for whom Christ died and is my responsibility to help and not hinder personal spiritual development.

*Allow for response.*

*In the module Introduction to the Christian Ministry, William McCumber states, "The church suffers terribly when a counselor becomes romantically or sexually involved with a parishioner. The privacy and intimacy of counseling sessions lend force to that temptation, and the ruined lives of too many pastors attest the force such temptation develops. What began as a slight breeze may become a killer hurricane. One-on-one counseling with members of the opposite sex should be avoided. Have a trusted third party (another counselor or your spouse) involved in the counseling sessions."*

*What is the solution to this problem?*

*Do we simply not do counseling with anyone of the opposite sex?*

*Do we take a standoffish position that makes it appear we have no concern?*

*Is it possible to be compassionate in helping people of the opposite gender without yielding to temptation?*

## 6. The Pastor's Accountability

How do we resist temptation and maintain a proper relationship?

**Strengthen your own marriage.** Infidelity often begins with difficulties in the pastor's own marriage relationship. If there are problems at home, work to mend the personal issues before trying to help someone else.

**Maintain your spiritual life with God.** A spiritual coldness is part of a slide to moral disaster. If you maintain your practice of Scripture reading, prayer, and spiritual disciplines, you will find the spiritual resources to overcome temptation.

**Be honest with your feelings.** We can become expert at deceiving ourselves to justify wrong actions. If you admit your feelings to yourself, you are more likely to do something constructive to stop the process from doing damage.

**Consider the consequences.** What would your spouse or children say if they were to find out about this? Are you willing to throw away your ministry career for a few moments of pleasure? Imagine the disappointment of some church members you respect when they hear about this. Putting the situation in a longer-term perspective helps one to see this indiscretion will cost far more than it's worth.

**Develop a support system.** Find a group of people to whom you can be accountable. You need people who will not be afraid to ask you the hard questions about your activities. A group of clergy from different denominations can become a very effective accountability group where all the members work to support one another.

*Allow for response.*

*Can you think of any other suggestions to maintain high standards of personal conduct in counseling with those of the opposite sex?*

*What would be the advantages and disadvantages of developing an accountability group for the pastor with the local church?*

## 7. The Pastor and Medical Ethical Issues

The January 2003 issue of *Reader's Digest* contains an article by Geoffrey Douglas titled "Should This Baby Be



Geoffrey Douglas, "Should This Baby Be Saved?" Reader's Digest (Jan 2003), 116.

Saved?" A premature baby weighing 12 ounces was born on Christmas Day with a multitude of medical problems. The medical personnel performed initial surgery so the tiny boy could live. As the next days went by the infant would need at least six additional surgeries with little chance of success. The parents talked with the Office of Ethics to help them make the decision to "distinguish between sustaining life and prolonging death."

*Ibid.*, 118.

Against the advice of the surgeon, the parents allowed their little son to die because there was no hope for his survival. Christine Mitchell, director of the Office of Ethics at Children's Hospital in Boston, says, "Medical ethics isn't a hard science . . . You can read all the books in the world, you can look at a case from every angle there is—you're going to make the wrong judgment sometimes. This wasn't one of those times."

The advancement of medical technology has created some difficult moral dilemmas. A family facing hard medical choices may call on the pastor to help them through the ethical issues. Pastors should avoid giving medical advice, but they can help with the ethical issues. Here are some questions to help people make tough medical decisions.

**Will this enhance the patient's quality of life?**

Sometimes the side effects of a medicine or procedure may be worse than the benefits it will bring.

**Will this improve the mental, emotional, physical, or spiritual dimensions of this person's life?** In trying to deal with pain, overmedication may inhibit the person's ability to relate to family in the last days of life.

**Is this an issue of life at any cost?** Medical science can, in some cases, keep a body alive almost indefinitely. However, brain functions may be so diminished that the person is unconscious. Were it not for the machines, the patient would be able to die naturally.

**Is this decision for the family's benefit?** A patient may continue to suffer because the family simply can't let go. You may need to help the family face the fact that death is here and must be addressed.

**What are the patient's desires?** It is helpful for adults to put in writing beforehand what they desire in certain medical situations. This does help the medical personnel know how to proceed in many

circumstances. If the patient is competent, he or she should be consulted regarding their preference for certain treatments.

**Is this good stewardship of resources?** How will this decision affect the resources of the family? Will these procedures give lasting improvement to the patient?

Most hospitals have some type of ethics committee to help patients, families, and the medical community to make wise decisions. There are medical dilemmas that seem to have no clear answers. Your role may be to help the family wrestle with all sides of the issue and come to a course of action. The Holy Spirit will be there bringing wisdom and courage to make the best decision.

*Allow for response.*

*How should the pastor interact with medical personnel to help people deal with difficult medical decisions?*

# Lesson Close

(5 minutes)

## Review

*Do you have any questions about this lesson?*

## Look Ahead

In the next lesson we will be discussing the pastor's personal life.

## Assign Homework

*Direct students to the Homework Assignments in the Student Guide.*

Write a brief personal code of conduct that would guide you as you pastor. List the things you commit to do as a pastor and the things you will avoid. Limit this code of conduct to areas of pastoral care and counseling. This assignment should be no more than two to three pages in length.

Bring to class your journal that you have been working on for this module. The instructor will check to see that you have been faithful in your entries. The instructor will not be reading the entries but looking at the organization and regularity of entries.

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007.*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 15.

Write in your journal. Read and meditate upon 1 Timothy 3. What does this scripture say to you about your personal integrity? What changes do you sense the Holy Spirit wants you to make in your conduct? Pray earnestly that God will make you a person of integrity. Write about the things that will help you to be that person of integrity.

## Punctuate the Finish

The pastor's personal conduct should be above question to the congregation and the community. One pastor in a community borrowed money for himself and the church without bothering to pay it all back. A local banker commented he would never loan any more money to this pastor or church because they were too great a risk. The way you conduct yourself as a representative of your local church will be remembered long after you move away to a new assignment. What a wonderful legacy to hear your name associated with honesty and integrity.

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## Lesson 16

# The Pastor's Personal Life

## Lesson Overview

### Schedule

Start Time	Task or Topic	Learning Activity	Materials Needed
0:00	Introduction	Orient	Student Guide
0:10	The Pastor's Relationship to the Church	Lecture/Small Groups	Resource 16-1
0:28	The Pastor's Relationship to Self	Lecture/Small Groups	Resource 16-2
0:46	The Pastor's Relationship to Family and Spouse	Lecture/Small Groups	Resource 16-3
1:04	The Pastor's Relationship to the Call	Lecture/Small Groups	Resource 16-4
1:22	Lesson Close	Review, Assign	Student Guide

### Suggested Reading for Instructor

Cedar, Paul, Kent Hughes, Ben Patterson. *Mastering the Pastoral Role*. Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1991.

McBurney, Louis. *Counseling Christian Workers*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1986.

Petersen, Bruce L. *Foundations of Pastoral Care*. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. Chapter 16.

Spaite, Daniel, and Debbie Salter Goodwin. *Time Bomb in the Church: Defusing Pastoral Burnout*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1999.

# Lesson Introduction

(10 minutes)

## Accountability

*Call on two to three students to read their code of conduct.*

*Return and collect homework.*

*Make arrangements for returning the final homework assignment to the students.*

## Orientation

When the subject of the pastor as a person comes up, there are often two extreme opinions. Some dehumanize the pastor by erecting a 10-foot pedestal and planting the minister firmly atop. For them, the pastor has no personal feelings, interests, or desires, other than to be the slave or hireling of the local church. The pastor is "a holy person" who does not live on the same plane as the rest of the folk.

At the other end of the scale are the people who see pastors as scheming, greedy, manipulative controllers of their flocks. "The general public expects the pastor to be different, to be special, to have overcome the obstacles that trip up ordinary people. When pastors lapse, especially pastors who pretend to live up to the superhuman standard, the tendency is for skeptics to say, 'See, I told you so,' and for naïve believers to feel betrayed, deceived, or even to give up their commitment to Christ since their cherished models have crumbled to dust."

*Jay Kesler, Being Holy, Being Human: Dealing with the Expectations of Ministry (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1994), 18, 19.*

However the confusion is not limited to the laity. Pastors can become disillusioned as well. One man told of being in his first church in a small community after four years of college and three years of seminary. People didn't understand him, and he didn't understand them or himself. Pressure started to build because the congregation was dissatisfied. He didn't feel like he could measure up to their expectations. The whole thing was so different from what he expected that one day he just quit—his pastorate, his denomination, and even God, for a while.

In this last class session we will look at the humanness of the ministry by examining the four relationships that

most profoundly affect the pastor: the church, the self, his or her family, and God.

## Learner Objectives

*Instruct students to locate objectives in the Student Guide.*

*Restating the objectives for the learners serves as an advanced organizer for the lesson and alerts learners to key information and concepts.*

*The class time is divided into four equal 18-minute sections. Divide your class into groups of three to four people.*

*These groups will meet at the conclusion of each section. If your class is small, you can have the entire group discuss the questions together.*

*Have the groups discuss the questions with one person from each group reporting back to the class at the end.*

*Allow at least five minutes for reporting to the class. Utilize all the 18 minutes allotted before moving on to the next section.*

*Ask a different person from the group to report each time.*

At the end of this lesson, participants should

- understand how a pastor relates to the church he or she pastors
- understand how to deal with personal issues in ministry
- understand the pastor's responsibility to keep marriage and family healthy
- understand how to maintain a passion for the ministry

## *Lesson Body*

### **Lecture/Small Groups: The Pastor's Relationship to the Church**

(18 minutes)

Most ministers find much of their personal identity in their role as pastor. It is a calling from God and they have responded with obedience. There is great fulfillment in becoming personally involved in people's lives, and seeing them grow and mature in Christ. Pastoral work can have eternal consequence for the flock. You become close to people as you walk with them through crises and times of rejoicing. Life as a pastor is anything but dull. Yet the pastor must also deal with congregational pressures. Here are some:

*Refer to Resource 16-1 in the Student Guide.*

#### **1. Unrealistic expectations**

People can feel their problem or interest or project should be the pastor's primary focus. A pastor can sometimes feel like there are 50 or 100 bosses, depending on the number of people in the church, with each one trying to tell you what you ought to be doing. If all these expectations were listed, there would not be enough hours in the week for one person to do them all.

#### **2. Needing to be good at everything**

Although everyone, pastors included, have been given at least one spiritual gift, nobody has received all of them. The gifts we have been given allow us to feel very comfortable working in those areas related to our strengths. But what do we do about those tasks for which we are not gifted and have little interest? One pastor said he felt gifted to preach and teach. Administration, however, was his challenge. He often thought if he just got more organized and read a few more books, he would grow to like it. He finally came to the conclusion that he could be adequate, but never a great administrator.

#### **3. Wearing a target on your back**

When something goes wrong in the church, the pastor is usually the first to blame. Most pastors can own up to the problems they may have caused. It is difficult to feel the stinging arrows of criticism when pastors know they are not responsible or have little control over the situation. You will be misquoted, misinterpreted, and misunderstood by the members of the congregation.



Sometimes the attacks are direct and frontal. Other times they are indirect, subtle attacks of rumor and innuendo. All unjust attacks are painful.

#### **4. Job insecurity**

Pastors serve at the pleasure of those who are being served. Those who are your strongest supporters can turn against you over a hurt or difference of opinion. When conflicts develop in a local church it is usually easier for leadership to suggest getting a new pastor than to ask disgruntled church members to leave. Being forced out of a church leaves a blemish on your record that is difficult to live down. Even the threat of difficulty in a local church can create a sense of insecurity and anxiety in the pastor and family.

#### **5. Defection**

Few of us deal well with rejection. When a person or family leaves the church for a less than good reason, pastors tend to take it personally. Was it our failure to give them enough attention? Perhaps they didn't like the preaching. Maybe our programs just didn't meet their family's needs. It is hard to be objective when you have given your time and energy to minister to them. The truth is, people change churches for many reasons that have nothing to do with the pastor. You may have been the reason they stayed with your church as long as they did. Nevertheless, it can leave a pastor hurt and confused, especially if the family doesn't give a reason for the change.

*While the students work in their groups, check their journals. Remind them you will not be reading the entries.*

*Allow five minutes for reporting.*

#### **Small-Group Discussion**

*What can a pastor do to address each of these church pressures?*

*How would you deal personally with pressures that seem to be unjust or unfair?*

## **Lecture/Small Groups: The Pastor's Relationship to Self**

(18 minutes)

The old saying is true—if you don't take care of yourself, no one else will do it for you. There are things you can do to prepare yourself for the long haul in ministry.

*Refer to Resource 16-2 in the Student Guide.*

### **Let yourself be human.**

The church's expectations may not be nearly as high as your own expectations of yourself. "Common expectations we see in Christian workers are: 1. to be

*Louis McBurney, Counseling  
Christian Workers (Dallas: Word  
Publishing, 1986), 43.*

tireless; 2. to be above being hurt; 3. to be excellent at every task; 4. to be emotionally self-sufficient; 5. to be free from material needs; 6. to be spiritually perfect."

God sent one Messiah to earth, and you are not Him. Paul gives sound advice in Romans 12:3, "Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you." In the words of singer/songwriter Billy Joel, "You're only human."

### **Guard against burnout.**

Burnout comes by working too many hours, dealing with too many stresses, trying to meet too many expectations, resulting in physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual exhaustion. If burnout is not addressed, a pastor can develop serious physical problems and finally leave the ministry.

The prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 19 had defeated a total of 850 prophets of Baal and Asherah on Mount Carmel. He then prayed until God broke a nationwide drought before running down the mountain ahead of the coming storm. Queen Jezebel put out a contract on his life for the defeat of her false prophets. Elijah fled into the desert until he could run no farther, then asked God to take his life. God restored him by putting him to sleep, waking him for food, and then more sleep.

While the issues are more complex than we have time to address here, there are some things you can do to guard against burnout.

- **Pace yourself.**

In Genesis God created a Sabbath every seven days so humans could rejuvenate. Since Sundays are generally a pastor's most demanding day, it is important to find a Sabbath time on another day of the week. This is a day off, when you unload the burdens and do things that will refresh—exercise, laughter, rest, whatever re-creates you for the coming seven days.

Use all the vacation time allotted to you. You and your family need to be away from the pressures of the church. When you don't take vacations you cheat not only yourself from getting relaxation, but also your family from a change of pace, and your church who needs a rejuvenated pastor.

- **Learn to delegate.**

Moses had to learn from his father-in-law Jethro the importance of letting other people take on some of the responsibilities. Sometimes our own false personal expectations keep us from releasing others to minister.

- **Retreat with God.**

When Jesus had invested much energy in helping people He would often retreat away from even His disciples to spend time with the Father in prayer. Jesus returned to ministry refreshed. Many pastors are now taking a day every month to be away and pray. In addition, some churches have recognized the importance of granting a sabbatical to their pastor as a way to refresh spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

- **Find support.**

A group of fellow pastors can help you deal with the stresses and frustrations of ministry before they become overwhelming. An excellent resource for addressing burnout is Daniel Spaite and Debbie Salter Goodwin, *Time Bomb in the Church: Defusing Pastoral Burnout* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1999).

### **Small-Group Discussion**

*How can we identify some of the unrealistic expectations we place on ourselves?*

*What things are you doing, or do you plan to do, to protect yourself from ministry burnout?*

*Allow five minutes for reports.*

## **Lecture/Small Groups: The Pastor's Relationship to Family and Spouse**

(18 minutes)

Few people in the church will regularly check with you to see if you are spending time with your family. Unless you schedule your family into your weekly calendar, there are enough demands from the church to eat up all the time you have available. It is possible to find time for both family and ministry.

*Refer to Resource 16-3 in the Student Guide.*

### **Schedule significant blocks of time for the family.**

This becomes a challenge when the children are involved in school activities and the spouse has a job. Scheduling family and couple times has to be a high priority. Write those family times in your calendar before those times fill up with other demands. Then if someone wants an appointment at that time, you can simply say it has already been scheduled.

**Work on your marriage.**

A ministry couple can become so involved in making the church grow that their own marriage relationship can suffer. The vows of marriage can sometimes be in conflict with the vows of ordination, so the spouse can get the feeling you are married to the church. Ministry is ideally a team effort. There are opportunities to build your relationship by being together and working together. But marriage should be more than a ministerial tag team. Try to find some time when you can be with your spouse away from the children and the church, even if it means getting a baby-sitter.

**Make the children feel important.**

One of the advantages of the pastor's schedule is its flexibility. Because you are really in charge of putting together your own schedule you can plan ahead to attend those soccer games and piano recitals. Don't fall into the trap of claiming you give quality time even if it isn't much. Kids need quantity time as well. One way to do that is to leave your work in your office and don't take it home with you. Make sure meal times can really focus on the family without interruptions from the phone. You will look back later and realize your children were in your home such a short time. Don't be so caught up in the work of the church that you miss the opportunity to enjoy every part of your children's lives.

**Show the advantages of being a pastor's family.**

It's easy to dwell on the drawbacks of the pastorate and have your family develop a negative attitude toward the church. Why not accentuate the positive aspects of living in a pastor's home. Bruce Petersen tells of his daughter, as she was ready to leave for college, reflecting on living in a parsonage. She said, "We had a chance to eat with general superintendents, district superintendents, evangelists, missionaries, special speakers, and musicians. None of the other kids in the church ever had that opportunity."

The family is usually included when the church recognizes the pastor with Christmas gifts and on other occasions. They may have the opportunity to travel to meetings, camps, and speaking engagements with their parents. Whenever you take advantage of some perk of ministry, let your kids know this is another advantage of being part of the pastor's family. Let them see it as a privilege and not a penalty.

**Keep your children out of the criticism loop.**

Be careful how you and your spouse talk about church people and problems in front of the children. They

*Kent Hughes, "Helping Your Family Enjoy Ministry," in Mastering the Pastoral Role (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1991), 114.*

have a way of picking up on your attitudes and repeating your words at the wrong time. The way you deal with criticism can become a model for them to handle conflict. Kent Hughes says, "When children realize something is wrong (when people leave the church unhappily, for example), talk about it on a level they can understand and without rancor or bitterness. As our children matured, they were able to keep things in perspective."

### **Small-Group Discussion**

*What do you see as the leading causes of family stress in the ministry?*

*What roles do you think your family should take in the church? What do you envision your spouse doing with you in ministry? Should your spouse have to be an unpaid assistant? What if your spouse does not want to do anything in the church except attend?*

*Allow five minutes for reports.*

*What can you do to see that your children have a positive feeling toward the church?*

## **Lecture/Small Groups: The Pastor's Relationship to the Call**

(18 minutes)

Every pastor begins ministry with a high set of ideals. We picture in our minds a group of people who dearly love us and want to follow us as we lead them to be a holy people. We see people listen intently to our every word, and heed all of our advice. Our ideal congregation is united, motivated, and willing to work together to build the Kingdom. The job of pastor is filled with joy and fulfillment every day.

After being in pastoral ministry for a while, it is easy to become cynical and disillusioned. We have fallen short of our own personal standards for ministry. The church doesn't measure up either. Rather than being united they seem fragmented. Many are too busy with other things and the work of the church is left undone. Most disheartening, there are people who don't like us and are unwilling to follow our leadership. In this process, the pastor's heart can become calloused and insensitive. We can find ourselves like the character in the *Wizard of Oz*, a tin man without a heart. How do we keep from becoming simply hirelings who carry out responsibilities without caring or compassion?

Being in the ministry is a matter of heart, a deep compassion for people inside and outside the church. If

you don't like people, don't become a pastor. This business of having a pastor's heart is a costly one. Sometimes people will not respond to your overtures of concern. In opening your arms to others you become vulnerable to hurt yourself. Jesus knew that pain of rejection. From the Cross He prayed that those who crucified Him would be forgiven because they didn't know what they were doing.

*Have the students turn to 1 Thess 2: 7-12. Ask one student to read it aloud while the others follow in their Bibles.*

Paul gives us a beautiful picture of his own pastor's heart in his words to the church in Thessalonica.

Paul lets us know the heart of a pastor must have both feminine and masculine qualities.

*Refer to Resource 16-4 in the Student Guide.*

**The pastor's heart is like a mother.**

Paul shows the feminine quality in verses 7-9: a nursing mother who gives personally of herself for her child. Paul reminds the church that he and his colleagues gave of themselves selflessly for the good of the church body. Pastors need to be nurturing dispensers of God's grace. Preaching and teaching are just some of the ways a pastor feeds and nurtures the flock.

**The pastor's heart is like a father.**

In verses 10-12 he shows the masculine side referring to his ministry dealing with the church, "For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children" (v. 11). Paul sees this aspect of ministry as dispensing mercy through encouragement, affirmation, and instruction. Even though it's not always easy, a father works to help his children to grow up and mature into responsible adults. The heart of a pastor is always focused on the task, "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph 4: 12-13).

**The pastor's heart is filled with compassion.**

Like the shepherd in Luke 15, the pastor goes out searching out of a deep concern for the lost sheep. Compassion will allow us to be inconvenienced. It will sometimes force us to change our schedule to help someone who needs help now. We will weep when we see the havoc sin can bring to a person's life.

**The pastor's heart is filled with empathy.**

Empathy is trying to feel the pain or hurt of another. It's not pity. Rather, it means coming alongside another person, much as the Paraclete comes along-

side us, to give help, support, and understanding. It is incarnational ministry, becoming Jesus to the person who needs Him.

Keep your pastor's heart expanding and growing. Don't let it shrivel up or become calloused. We maintain our heart for ministry as we spend time with God before we spend time with people.

### **Small-Group Discussion**

*Why do you think it is so difficult at times to maintain a pastor's heart?*

*How do you keep a balance in ministry between the need for the solitude of personal devotions and sermon preparation on the one hand and the need to be with people and their needs on the other side?*

*Allow five minutes for reports.*

## *Lesson Close*

(8 minutes)

### **Review**

*Do you have any questions or comments concerning this lesson?*

### **Assign Homework**

*Petersen, Bruce L. Foundations of Pastoral Care. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2007. .*

Optional Reading: *Foundations of Pastoral Care* by Bruce L. Petersen, chapter 16.

### **Punctuate the Finish**

We come to the end of this discussion of Shepherding God's People. You should be aware of the fact that we barely scratched the surface of many issues in our classroom sessions. For you to be effective as a pastor you need to be committed to a lifetime of learning and sharpening your pastoral tools. You are not going to be fully aware of some of your needs until you begin to face them in the pastorate. Take classes, read books, talk to other pastors, do everything you can to be the effective pastor God wants you to be.

And now, let me pray for you as you continue your preparation for ministry.