

Officer Training Shepherdology and Church Discipline Lesson 12

Introduction: a matter of _____ and _____ ...

Our situation ... the effect of our culture and natural tendencies ...

1. The pastor functions like a CEO who “markets the vision” ...
2. The ruling elders are the BOARD OF DIRECTORS and ...
3. The deacons together become the CFO ...
4. Together these two “boards” ...
 - ◆ Develop the “marketing plan” for church growth,
 - ◆ Hold the CEO accountable for implementing the plan,
 - ◆ Oversee professionally run fund raising programs for building and operations, and ...
 - ◆ Delegate any and all pastoral duties to the professionals trained to handle them. ¹

Key passages Acts 20:17-38; 1 Peter 5:1-4 ...

Emphasis is **NOT** primarily on _____ ...

Application of resources to reach carefully articulated goals.

An activity of the **MIND** ...

The emphasis is on _____ ... an activity of the **HEART** ...

Q. Do you love the people of God in this church? The loveable and the unloveable alike? Pray for the ability to love “sheep who bite”.

1 Thessalonians 2:6b-12 “As apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to you, but we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us. Surely you remember, brothers, our toil and hardship; we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you. You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. For you know that we dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.”

Shepherding feels like the kind of love you would experience from the most intimate and healthy of family relationships.

There are tasks, assignments, goals, measurable benchmarks of impact in shepherding, but it is first and foremost a relationship ...

¹ John Sittema, *With a Shepherd's Heart, Reclaiming the Pastoral Office of Elder*, Grandville, MI: Reformed Fellowship, Inc., 1996, p.7.

The people experience being known and loved.

The _____: your love ... The _____: your life ...

John 10:11, 14-15 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep ... I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep.”

In some way(s) servant leadership / shepherding ...
always leads to _____ (Philippians 2:6-8).

Effective shepherding is not mainly about _____ but about _____ ...
loss, pain, being run over, being unappreciated, being used up.

Officers tend to focus on “running the church” rather than “shepherding the flock” because running things doesn’t confront our self-serving agendas as much as something like caring for a family with a difficult marriage that exposes our own family defects.

Only a deep embracing of our “safety in God through the Gospel” will lay a foundation for deep spiritual community.

Peter Scazzero: “God has given us the Gospel to create a safe environment to look beneath the surface. I don’t have to prove that I’m lovable or valuable. I don’t have to be right all the time. I can be vulnerable and be myself even if others don’t accept me. I can even take risks and fail. Why? Because God sees the 90 percent of the iceberg hidden below the surface, and he utterly, totally loves me in Christ ... ‘you can be yourself because there is nothing left to prove.’”²

When we have this heart what does the shepherding work look like?³

1. _____

Acts 20:28-31 “Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.”

Expect attacks from the _____ ... “savage wolves” ...
from the _____ ... “from your own number” ...

² Peter Scazzero, *The Emotionally Healthy Church*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, p. 83.

³ The outline and some of the specifics of this section taken from John Sittema, *With a Shepherd’s Heart, Reclaiming the Pastoral Office of Elder*, Grandville, MI: Reformed Fellowship, Inc., 1996, pp. 12-20.

Doctrinal attacks, attacks against sound living (practice), attacks on health of relationships in the body, attacks on the leadership, attacks on the marriages of the church, on the children and youth, etc.

2. _____

Right before the passage in Matthew 18 about the process of reconciliation with our brothers ... is the parable of the lost sheep (12-14).

The connection is obvious ... caring for the sheep involves preserving and promoting reconciliation in the body.

One of main ways the sheep “stray” is in relationships with one another.

And this reconciliation is with God ... not just one another ... often the horizontal conflict is evidence of a deeper disconnection with God.

3. _____

John 21:15-17 “When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?”

“Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?”

He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.”

Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

Though Peter had denied the Lord 3 times ...

Jesus is not only restoring him to fellowship but also to service ...

Acts 9:15-16 “But the Lord said to Ananias, ‘Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.’”

Paul is not only **pardoned** for his crimes against the Lord & his church ...
picked for great responsibility to the Lord & his church.

Philemon 11 “Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.”

Paul urges Philemon to not only forgive Onesimus, but to restore him to his place of service ... even elevate him ...

Philemon 15-17 “Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back for good—**no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother**. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a man and as a brother in the Lord. So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me.”

This loving restoration and compassion does not preclude rebuke ...

2 Timothy 3:16; 4:2 “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.”

4. _____

Ephesians 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.”

People need to be _____ for ministry ... this is part of shepherding.

5. _____

Ephesians 4:12b “ ... so that the body of Christ may be built up.”

The building of an edifice ... application of the metaphor of temple ...

_____:

Ephesians 4:13 “ ... 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.”

6. _____

None of this works without deep relationships ... in one another’s lives ...

Honest sharing happens only when there is _____ ...

It takes time to built a relational culture of _____ ...

Larry Crabb: “When spiritual community is unsafe, it really isn’t spiritual.”⁴

He goes on to actually define “community” as a place where people can own and reveal their brokenness.”

⁴ Larry Crabb, *The Safest Place on Earth*, Nashville: Word Publishing, 1999, p. XV.

Example: Celebrate Recovery = **HONESTY ABOUT STRUGGLES BUILT ON RADICAL COMMITMENT TO CONFIDENTIALITY / ANONYMITY ...**

Aside: the importance of confidentiality among the officers

Shepherding requires establishing / modeling this sort of corporate culture.

_____ ... in homes, hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

Matthew 25:36 “I was without clothes, and you gave me something to wear. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.” (NCV)

Jeremiah 23:2 “Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not **visited** them: behold, I will **visit** upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.” (KJV)

The word translated “visit” here is translated in the Greek Old Testament with the same root word as _____ in the N. T. ... this makes visitation almost equivalent to “eldering” / “shepherding” ...

James 1:27 “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after (literally, bishop) orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.”

Connecting this with those who are sick ...

James 5:14-15 “Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven.”

Discussion Question: What are the essential ingredients of a good visit of the sick in home or in the hospital?

Hint of one aspect: **David Augsburger** said, “Being heard is so close to being loved that for the average person, they are almost indistinguishable.”⁵

⁵ David Augsburger, *Caring Enough to Hear and Be Heard: How to Hear and How to Be Heard in Equal Communication*, Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald, 1982, p. 12.

DISCIPLINE

The _____ Christ has given the Church:

Matthew 16:19 "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 18:15-18 "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. 16 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.' 17 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.

18 "I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

John 20:23 "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." Acts 5:1-11 is an example of this.

Titus 3:10 "Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him."

This power is _____, not creative. Outward publication on earth of sentences already having occurred in heaven ... according to God's Word.

Two senses of discipline ... _____ ...

BCO 27-1 Discipline is the exercise of authority given the Church by the Lord Jesus Christ to instruct and guide its members and to promote its purity and welfare.

The term has two senses:

- a. the one referring to the whole government, inspection, training, guardianship and control which the church maintains over its members, its officers and its courts;
- b. the other a restricted and technical sense, signifying judicial process.

THE _____ OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE:

27-3 The exercise of discipline is highly important and necessary. In its proper usage discipline maintains:

- a. the glory of God,
- b. the purity of His Church,
- c. the keeping and reclaiming of disobedient sinners. Discipline is for the purpose of godliness (1 Timothy 4:7); therefore, it demands a self-examination under Scripture.

Its ends, so far as it involves judicial action, are the rebuke of offenses, the removal of scandal, the vindication of the honor of Christ, the promotion of the purity and general edification of the Church, and the spiritual good of offenders themselves.

27-4 The power which Christ has given the Church is for building up, and not for destruction. It is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath. As in the preaching of the Word the wicked are doctrinally separated from the good, so by discipline the Church authoritatively separates between the holy and the profane. In this it acts the part of a tender mother, correcting her children for their good, that every one of them may be presented faultless in the day of the Lord Jesus. Discipline is systematic training under the authority of God's Scripture. No communing or noncommuning member of the Church should be allowed to stray from the Scripture's discipline. Therefore, teaching elders must:

- a. instruct the officers in discipline,
- b. instruct the congregation in discipline,
- c. jointly practice it in the context of the congregation and church courts.

Concerning the priority of "maintaining the name and honor of Christ" ... Calvin said discipline must be done, " ... that they who lead a filthy and infamous life may not be called Christians to the dishonor of God, as if his holy church (Ephesians 5:25-26) were a conspiracy of wicked and abandoned men. For since the church itself is the Body of Christ, it cannot be corrupted by such foul and decaying members without some disgrace falling upon its Head." ⁶

27-3, a. above ... maintaining God's glory is a means to maintaining the church's purity which is a means to keeping and reclaiming sinners.

Discipline can bring some disquiet to the church in order to promote a deeper peace ... you cannot promote peace without pursuing purity.

Discipline is also designed to promote purity in the sense that it can _____ in the church ...

1 Corinthians 5:6,11,13 "Your boasting is not good. Don't you know that a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough? 11 But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.

13 God will judge those outside. "Expel the wicked man from among you."

However ... purpose of discipline is not _____ but _____ ...

1 Corinthians 5:5 " ... hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.

⁶ Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, p. 1232.

2 Thessalonians 3:14,15 “If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.”

This is why even formal acts of discipline are not called _____
but _____ ...

Procedure (Matthew 18:15-17)

1. Private Admonition
2. Admonition with Witnesses
3. Brought before the Church (Session)

BCO, Chapter 30.

Church Censures

30-1. The censures which may be inflicted by church courts are admonition, suspension from the Sacraments, excommunication, suspension from office, and deposition from office. The censures of admonition or definite suspension from office shall be administered to an accused who, upon conviction, satisfies the court as to his repentance and makes such restitution as is appropriate. Such censure concludes the judicial process. The censures of indefinite suspension or excommunication shall be administered to an accused who, upon conviction, remains impenitent.

30-2. Admonition is the formal reproof of an offender by a church court, warning him of his guilt and danger, and exhorting him to be more circumspect and watchful in the future.

30-3. Suspension from Sacraments is the temporary exclusion from those ordinances, and is indefinite as to its duration. There is no definite suspension from the Sacraments.

Suspension from office is the exclusion of a church officer from his office. This may be definite or indefinite as to its duration. With respect to church officers, suspension from Sacraments shall always be accompanied by suspension from office. But suspension from office is not always necessarily accompanied with suspension from Sacraments.

Definite suspension from office is administered when the credit of religion, the honor of Christ, and the good of the delinquent demand it, even though the delinquent has given satisfaction to the court.

Indefinite suspension is administered to the impenitent offender until he exhibits signs of repentance, or until by his conduct, the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest. In the case of indefinite suspension from office imposed due to scandalous conduct, the procedure outlined in *BCO* 34-8 shall be followed.

30-4. Excommunication is the excision of an offender from the communion of the Church. This censure is to be inflicted only on account of gross crime or heresy and when the offender shows himself incorrigible and contumacious. The design of this censure is to operate on the offender as a means of reclaiming him, to deliver the church from the scandal of his offense, and to inspire all with fear by the example of his discipline.

30-5. Deposition is the degradation of an officer from his office, and may or may not be accompanied with the infliction of other censures.