

1. To Shepherd in the Greek is the word “Poimano” which means to lead, guide, help or take care of.
 1. The role of pastors and leaders in the church is to shepherd the flock that has been entrusted to them
 1. Pastors teach the word, set an example, and counsel
 2. The church is meant to care for people as well
 1. Paul, in Ephesians 4:12, exhorts the pastors to equip the saints for the work of ministry

2. So the idea of shepherding is important for both pastors and for the church as a whole

3. Definition of shepherding - ***Shepherding is spiritual care carried out by the church in hopes of bringing about spiritual growth, restoration or protection in a fellow believer.***
 1. *The church = the body of Christ (individually, life group, etc.)*
 1. Spiritual growth - Sanctification, growing up spiritually, understanding of the word, application of Word to life, serving, missional living
 2. Protection - Helping guard against sin in the life of a believer, accountability
 3. Restoration - Helping someone get spiritually healthy again, moral failure

4. Why is this important?
 1. This is part of what the body of Christ does
 1. Primarily, this happens in life groups at Riverview

5. The challenge of shepherding?
 1. No one size fits all model
 1. Situations are very unique
 2. We tend to Under-shepherd people or over-shepherd people
 1. What this means is we tend to provide too little or too much spiritual care in times when it’s needed

6. **How to shepherd well**
 1. ***Gauge spiritual maturity (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)***
 1. As you shepherd, you have to first discover if this person is a follower of Jesus or not

1. That will change how you use your time with them
2. The Scriptures help us understanding the difference between godly grief and worldly grief

1. Look at what the Apostle Paul said to the Corinthians:

1. 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 - For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

2. You can gauge what type of grief someone has by how they talk about it
3. Worldly - They embarrassed themselves, their pride was hurt, their reputation is tarnished,
 1. Primary concern - Self
4. Godly - Their thoughts and actions are grieving God, they are misrepresenting Jesus in their life
 1. Primary concern - Sin, affront to God
3. If they tell you they are a believer, have them prove it
 1. Have them share the Gospel with you
 2. “So you are a Christian? Tell me about that.”
4. If it is pretty obvious that they are not a Christian, take time to share the Gospel with them
 1. Make much of Jesus in that conversation

2. Clear understanding of what is happening (James 5:16)

1. We have a tendency to say ambiguous things to talk about sin without calling it sin (Christianese)
2. We all know the phrases
 1. Struggling in my marriage
 2. Dealing with purity stuff
 3. My life is just difficult right now
 1. Too often we just let those linger and give people some Scripture to meditate on

2. Wait, what?
3. We do people a disservice by not drilling down deep with them and providing them with a safe place to confess sin
4. James 5:16 say this:
 1. James 5:16 - Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.
5. The hope is that we move away from the generalities and into what is really going on
 1. They say, "I am struggling in my marriage"
 1. What they need to say is "I find myself extremely impatient with my spouse and often times I need to leave the house to let my anger subside. This anger is often unloaded on my kids. I don't know how we can work through this".
 2. They say, "I am dealing with purity stuff."
 1. What they need to say is "I am enslaved to lust and pornography and I feel dirty and ashamed every time I look at it. It is the only thing in my life right now that makes me happy, and I know that that's not ok."
 3. They say, "My life is just difficult right now."
 1. What they need to say is "I am so upset with God because my Father has cancer and I have no idea if he is going to be ok. How can God be good and let something like this happen? What did we ever do to deserve this?"
6. Once we have a clear understanding of what is going on, we can provide clear counsel from the Scripture.

3. Your words rooted in God's word (2 Timothy 3:16)

1. The text must be what directs our care to individuals
 1. Remember how we should view the Scripture:
 1. 2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness

2. First, affirm who they are in Christ from the text
 1. Scriptures like
 1. Romans 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 2. 2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.
 3. Ephesians 2:4-7 - But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
 3. After you have reminded them of who they are...that they are in Christ...then you can share practical wisdom from Scripture
 1. Wisdom regarding how to live in light of who they are in Christ

4. Pray with and for them (James 5:16)

1. Remember James 5:16?
 1. James 5:16 - Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.
 2. Pray with them during your time with them
 3. Commit to praying for them on a regular basis

5. Confirm time to follow-up

1. Phone call or meeting, depending on the situation
2. Possible reference to church ministry/local resources that can serve them well

7. Questions/Answers