

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Spiritual Leadership Study Guide

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 2: THE SHEPHERDING GIFTS

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module titled Spiritual Gifts. The module examines a broad range of spiritual gifts mentioned in Scripture, and how believers can use these gifts in serving God and His people. You will be given guidance in how to identify the spiritual gifts you and others around you possess. The focus of these lessons is unity in the Church while we actively love and serve one another. You will be encouraged to put your spiritual gifts into practice, in fulfillment of God's purposes, by serving each other and worshiping in spirit and in truth.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 2: THE SHEPHERDING GIFTS

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the spiritual gifts given to people who are shepherding the Church, so that it can minister effectively to one another and the world. These gifts include leadership, pastoring, teaching, and administration.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

It might cause confusion to talk about the spiritual gifts of pastoring, teaching, and leading when we humanly appoint offices, such as pastor or elder. The office of pastor is different than the gift. A pastor may or may not have the spiritual gift of *pastoring*, but instead have abilities such as evangelism, knowledge, prophecy, or prayer. Pastors often make use of a wide range of gifts. But no person possesses all of them! That is why the body of the church must serve one another. This lesson looks at a specific group of gifts. It is important to remember that every gift is only effective if used with love and empowered by the Spirit of God. This study and the ones that follow should help you identify your own gifts and the gifts of others, so that you can use them effectively to serve God.

GETTING STARTED

1. What is the role of a shepherd? How can a person be a spiritual shepherd to someone?

2. What are some of the leadership positions at your Church? These might be voluntary or paid. What skills are necessary for carrying out these roles?



STUDY

❖ **THE SHEPHERDING GIFTS:** The role of a shepherd is to guide, protect and care for his sheep. A spiritual shepherd cares for a group of believers; this includes teaching them, rescuing those who have strayed, spending time with those they lead, and humbly serving the group with love.

- What is the Biblical advice given to those who would shepherd their people in 1 Peter 5:1-5? List the qualities of a good spiritual shepherd.

- **Why it is Needed:** The shepherding gifts carry great weight. They are perhaps the most vital for the health of the Church, yet the most likely to be imitated by those who crave power. God knows we need leaders, guides, and teachers. Jesus Himself modelled shepherding for us.
 - o Without leadership, the church cannot accomplish its mission.
 - o Without teachers, knowledge of God's Word can be shallow.
 - o Without pastors, people can wander from the faith.
 - o God chooses individual men and women to receive these gifts, not to make them feel superior, but to serve the Church.
- **When Used Lovingly:** When shepherding gifts are used with love, leaders exhibit the character of Christ, and act as servants rather than harsh rulers. They will:
 - o have a humble spirit enabling them to invest their time and energy in leading people.
 - o love seeing the potential in others realized.
 - o have a genuine love for people and sharing the Gospel.
 - o be fulfilled in their work with people and see fruit for their labour.
 - o be fruitful in their ministry.
- **When Used Selfishly:** When a person with these gifts is not acting out of love and is not walking in the Spirit, their gifts are distorted and bear negative fruit. Unloving leaders are often rejected by others, and may attempt to regain their lost status through manipulation and control. This can result in:
 - o an attempt to wield power and control people for selfish purposes.
 - o carelessness in handling God's Word.
 - o a lack of personal integrity.
 - o distrust and disrespect from those they lead.
 - o lies, fear, and feeling threatened by the gifts and abilities of others.
 - o an overall unfruitful ministry.



What would it look like if a person was trying to shepherd or exercise leadership for selfish gain? What might they do or say? What would their motivations be? How could you tell?

❖ **DESCRIPTIONS OF SHEPHERDING GIFTS:** There are many ways that people are equipped to shepherd the people of God. The following chart lists a few that are named in Scripture. For each gift, read through the brief description and then look up the verses that follow. Write down what you learn about how this gift should be used, and what you learn from the Biblical example of someone using this gift.

THE GIFT OF LEADERSHIP	
What it is	This gift enables a person to set a vision for what God desires for a community, and lead or direct members to accomplish those purposes. This gift may be used to lead a church, a ministry, organization or even a school or business. People with this gift are good at giving direction to people, are energetic, and easily inspire people to follow them.
Core Motivation	<i>To See The People of God Move In Unity Toward a Common Goal</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I am not afraid to make difficult decisions or take risks when needed. When people don't know what to do, I feel urged to give them direction. People ask for my advice and follow my example.
Uses in the Church	Official roles such as Pastor, Elder, Deacon or Bishop, Director of a ministry or organization, committee or board member
Write Down What You Learn About Leadership and Leaders	
Romans 12:8	
Hebrews 13:7-17	
Matthew 20:25-28	



THE GIFT OF PASTORING	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to take spiritual responsibility for a group of believers over a period of time, helping them to grow closer to God and to fulfil God’s desires for their life. This gift may be used to guide, teach and care for the spiritual needs of people under their care in a church, small groups or other ministry settings (although it is not limited to those active in professional ministry).
Core Motivation	<i>To See God’s People Grow in their Faith</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I feel deeply concerned for people who are not following God. • I have an ability to give spiritual direction and help people grow in their faith. • In a position of authority, I am primarily concerned with people’s spiritual lives and growth, not tasks or goals.
Uses in the Church	Pastor, Elder, small group leader, Sunday School teacher, youth leader

Write Down What You Learn About Pastoring and Pastors	
1 Peter 5:2-3	
Acts 20:28	
The example of the Apostle Paul: 2 Corinthians 2:1-4, Philemon 1:1-25	

THE GIFT OF TEACHING	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to teach God’s Word with authority and effectiveness in order to see lives changed. This gift allows someone to understand and communicate God’s Word with great skill and accuracy. They want to see people develop a renewed love of God’s Word.
Core Motivation	<i>To See God’s People Know God’s Word</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I learn something new, I immediately think about how I could teach it. • People regularly comment on how much they have benefited from what I taught them. • I want people to not just know the facts of the Bible, but to really understand it and let it change their lives.
Uses in the Church	Teaching Pastor, small group teacher, Children’s Pastor, Sunday School teacher, classroom teacher, curriculum developer, writer, journalist

Write Down What You Learn About Teaching and Teachers	
Titus 2:7-9	



Ephesians 4:11-13	
James 3:1-2	

THE GIFT OF ADMINISTRATION

What it Is	This gift enables a person to organize and facilitate the use of all the gifts God has given the Church in the best possible way. This gift may be used to manage people, projects, finances, information and duties. They want to see plans carried out, goals accomplished, and order maintained.
Core Motivation	<i>To See the Gifts of God Managed with Good Stewardship</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am energized by organizing the details of a project or event. • I am able to organize people to complete a task joyfully. • I prefer to work behind the scenes making sure everything runs well.
Uses in the Church	Church Secretary , Administrator, Office Manager, Sunday School supervisor, project manager, committee work, church finance, organizing events, etc.

Write Down What You Learn About Administration and Administrators

1 Corinthians 12:28	
1 Corinthians 14:33,40	
Titus 1:4-5	
Luke 14:28	

❖ **ADVICE TO SHEPHERDS:** Those among us who would find themselves in the role of a shepherd (which is any position of leadership or authority) have been given a big task! But the Bible gives guidance in how to lead others. What do the following verses say about this important role in the family of God?

1 Timothy 3:1-7	
Philippians 2:3	
Mark 10:42-45	



- ❖ **CONCLUSION:** There are many gifts given to the Church, but the Shepherding gifts are of great importance because they give direction and instruction to the people of God. Those who feel they have these gifts will have them confirmed by others who will place them in positions of leadership. Shepherding gifts can be exercised in many places – leadership in your home, teaching your children, pastoring a small group or specific people, administration of details of a ministry. While these are wonderful gifts, they can make people vulnerable to feelings of pride, isolation, stress and criticism. Remember to pray for those who shepherd God’s people.

IN SUMMARY

- Shepherding gifts are given to leaders, teachers, pastors and administrators.
- A person who has the spiritual gift of pastoring might not be employed formally as a pastor, but will care about the spiritual well being of others.
- Those in shepherding positions have a responsibility to love and care for their followers.
- The Shepherding gifts include leadership, teaching, pastoring and administration.
- Those with these gifts are called to a high standard of living, and a sacrificial love for others.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. All spiritual gifts must be used with love. What would happen if a leader did not act lovingly with those he leads?

2. How can you support those who shepherd you? What specific things can you pray for regarding their ministry? How can you make their ministry easier?