

***EXTENDING THE SHEPHERD'S  
REACH:*** Spiritual Care in the Congregation

Elder Training

Presenters: Rev. Dr. Gary Beck & Rev. Dr. Robert Kasper

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Coloma, MI



# Opening Devotion and Prayer

- Invocation
- Reading: Titus 1:1-9
- Devotion/Reflection and Prayer



# Titus 1:1-9

**1** Paul, a servant<sup>[a]</sup> of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, **2** in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began<sup>[b]</sup> **3** and at the proper time manifested in his word<sup>[c]</sup> through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;

**4** To Titus, my true child in a common faith:

Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.



# Titus 1:1-9

## *Qualifications for Elders*

<sup>5</sup> This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— <sup>6</sup> if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,<sup>[d]</sup> and his children are believers<sup>[e]</sup> and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. <sup>7</sup> For an overseer,<sup>[f]</sup> as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain,



# Titus 1:1-9

## *Qualifications for Elders cont.*

<sup>8</sup> but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. <sup>9</sup> He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound<sup>[g]</sup> doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.



# The Role of “Elder” in the local congregation

## Variety of applications and tasks....

- Board of Lay Ministry
  - Board of Deacons (Ministers/Servants)
  - Ushers
  - Spiritual Life Committee
  - Worship Assistants
  - ????
- But always “Spiritual-Care” and “Nurture” of God’s people (Our focus today)



# Session One: Spiritual Care for the Pastor and his family. Or...

*How to help your pastor to serve long and well*

- Pray:
  - FOR him, not ABOUT him!
  - Eph. 6:18-19 (spiritual warfare)
- Provide:
  - Appropriate compensation
  - Continuing Education and growth opportunities
  - Feedback: Affirmation, Evaluation, Encouragement
  - Support



# Session One: Spiritual Care for the Pastor and his family. Or...

*How to help your pastor to serve long and well*

- Protect:
  - From himself (Over/under-work)
  - Self- deception
  - Need for holistic personal stewardship (R.E.D.)
- Partner:
  - Caring for the 99...
  - Seeking the 1





# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

*How to make home bound and hospital calls*

## **Things that go without saying, but need to be said:**

- Discuss with your pastor the care-receiver's situation
- Review notes from a previous visit (if applicable)
- Pray ahead of time about the visit



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

*Also, for home visits*

**Things that go without saying, but need to be said:**

- Make an appointment and be on time
- What about animals? Allergic to them?



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

*Also, for hospital visits*

## **Things that go without saying, but need to be said:**

- Check to see if the patient is still in the hospital and what the visitation hours are.
- If the patient's door is closed, check at the nurses' station to see if it is okay to enter.
- If you need to wear a gown or mask, do so.
- If the patient is not in the room and won't be for some time, leave a brief written message.



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

## *Guidelines for the Visit*

- Introduce yourself if the person doesn't know you
- Connect meaningfully: Say something like, "It's good to see you!"
- Let your conversation flow naturally



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

## *Guidelines for the Visit*

- Get an update
- Do more listening than talking (Don't dominate the conversation)
- Follow the other person's lead
- Focus on the person, not yourself.



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

## *Guidelines for the Visit*

- Listen and look for something you can use as a bridge to a spiritual conversation
- Devotion and prayer: Relate both to their lives
- What about serving the Lord's Supper?
- What if family members are present?
- In the hospital be aware of the other patient in the room (if there is one)



## Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

**In the hospital, what should you do when nurses and/or doctors enter the room?**

- Allow them to do what they need to do.
- Be an extra set of ears for the patient.
- Ask needed questions that the patient and family are not asking.



# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

## What's best *not* to say:

- “I know how you feel”
- “God doesn’t give you any more than you can handle”
- “At least . . .”
- “Well, you know she’s in a better place”
- “It must be God’s will”





# Session Two: Spiritual Care for the Flock with the Pastor

Concluding the visit



# Session Three: Spiritual Care for the Spiritually Distant

## *Things that go without saying, but need to be said:*

- Get names and information from your pastor
- As an elder, you are an extension of the pastor, as well as God's representative
- Know *why* you are making the contact



# Session Three: Spiritual Care for the Spiritually Distant

***Things that go without saying, but need to be said:***

- Pray . . . and then pray some more
- Phone or in person?
- Keep in mind 1 Corinthians 3:6



# Session Three: Spiritual Care for the Spiritually Distant

## *Visiting the Inactive Member*

- The approach you take is determined in large part on your relationship with the person
- Call to schedule the visit
- Introduce yourself (if needed)
- Connect meaningfully
- Be as natural as you can



# Session Three: Spiritual Care for the Spiritually Distant

## *Visiting the Inactive Member*

- Lead with care - by your presence, your demeanor, and by what you say show that you care
- Listen, don't lecture
- Follow the other person's lead



# Session Three: Spiritual Care for the Spiritually Distant

## *Visiting the Inactive Member*

- Don't become defensive
- Don't ask, "Why haven't you been in church?"
- If appropriate and if needed, you may want to ask, "What can the church do for you?"
- After the visit, take notes on what you need to report back to your pastor and what you need to remember for the next visit.
- Don't contact just once. It usually takes multiple times.



# Session Four: Equipped for the tasks of Spiritual Care

## *How to prepare a devotion for use in visitation:*

### General considerations:

- The devotion is based on the holy Scriptures.
- You are regularly reading/listening to God's Word for yourself
- You have been listening intently to the person(s) you are visiting
- Brief



# Session Four: Equipped for the tasks of Spiritual Care

Have a point

- Just one point
- Let it be Biblical!
- Let it be “need” Filling
- Let it highlight the Gospel

Avoid “moralizing”





# Session Four: Equipped for the tasks of Spiritual Care

## Selecting a Scripture for your devotion

- Church year seasonal Psalms or other familiar Scriptures?
- Text and personal reflection on last week's sermon?



# Session Four: Equipped for the tasks of Spiritual Care

Ask great questions of the text of God's Word:

- What does it say? What's going on in the text?
- To what is God directing me to turn away from?
- To what aspect of God's character am I being invited to trust more fully?
- How has the "Christ event" addressed my failure?
- How has the Holy Spirit provided the way for a renewed relationship with God through faith?



# How to Pray...ex-corde for the needs of others “on the spot”

**A**

**Adoration**

**C**

**Confession**

**T**

**Thanksgiving**

**S**

**Supplication**



# How to Pray...ex-corde for the needs of others “on the spot”

**P**

**Praise**

**R**

**Repent**

**A**

**Ask**

**Y**

**Yield**



## Closing Devotion II Timothy 1:16-18

<sup>16</sup> May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains, <sup>17</sup> but when he arrived in Rome he searched for me earnestly and found me—  
<sup>18</sup> may the Lord grant him to find mercy from the Lord on that day!—and you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

