

THE SHEPHERD

Gifted to Restore

WATCH THE SHEPHERD VIDEO

Found online at centralwesleyan.org/groupmaterials

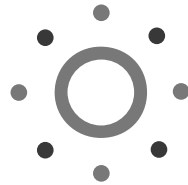
INTRODUCTION

Jesus is the ultimate Shepherd. He is focused on protecting His sheep from their own bad choices and external threats. He leads wandering sheep back home and feeds them. In the Bible, people like Tabitha (Acts 9), who always did good deeds for the poor, and Stephen (Acts 7), who was providing food for marginalized widows, fit the role of shepherd.

One of a Shepherd's core values is inclusion; they fight to make sure people who feel isolated find a way into the community. Another key characteristic is compassion. Shepherds come alongside wounded people and help them put the pieces back together. Finally, Shepherds are usually masterful encouragers. They identify people who have stumbled and help them get back up on their feet.

WEEK 5

THIS WEEK WE LOOK AT THE ROLE OF SHEPHERD



A Shepherd is one who thrives in developing and deepening relationships. Shepherds are responsible for maintaining and enriching a healthy community. They also nurture spiritual maturity, maintain communal health in the body of Christ, defend the community against breakdown, and engender loving community among the redeemed family of God.

As a Shepherd, Jesus worked to include the previously excluded people into the covenant community, and in doing so, created a new family, open to all who love Jesus. Everything about Him radiated concern for people and for the establishment of true human community and relationships. His healings and His miracles demonstrated God's grace, mercy, and concern. *He is the perfect expression of the Shepherd, the Lover of His people.*

Callings of a Shepherd might include caregiver, defender, peacemaker, helper, servant, healer. Characteristics of a Shepherd could be that they are empathetic, relational, familial, sociable, seekers of the common good, event-oriented, engaging, personal, affectionate and protective. You will find Shepherds functioning in the fields of medicine, family, psychology, community development, law enforcement, and defense. Examples of Shepherds in real life may include: Jesus, St. Francis, Eugene Peterson, Nelson Mandela, Colin Powell, Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale, J.R.R. Tolkien.

WEEK 5

ROLE CALL

We are glad to have you join us this week as we discuss the role of Shepherd. Let's start by answering either of the following questions:

- Has a shepherd impacted your life? If so, how?
- How would life look differently if you and your family did not have someone in the role of shepherd in it?

ROLE PLAY

Just A Note

Materials needed: business cards, pens

- Each person receives a blank business card. Write your name on the top of the card and pass it to the person on your left.
- Using your growing knowledge of APEST and rapport with your group, write a word or phrase to encourage them in their APEST role. Don't be shy about taking some time to listen to God about what to write.
- Keep passing the cards to the left every 30 seconds or so, until each person has written on everyone's card.
- Leaders collect all the cards at the end and read them aloud to the group.
- Each person should then receive their own card to keep.

ROLE OUT

There is no pressure to answer every question.

1. What stands out to you the most from this week's sermon?
2. Read John 10:1-18. How does Jesus live out the role of Shepherd in these verses? How has Jesus lived out the role of Shepherd in your life?
3. Read Acts 20:25-31. Jesus repeatedly uses the image of Shepherd as an example of compassion and care. How was Jesus specifically instructing Paul and the Ephesian elders to conduct themselves?
4. Read 1 Peter 5:1-4. What appeal is made to the elders?
5. Since Jesus is the only One who can ultimately "restore" us, what is the Shepherd's function in relation to this? Why does our church need people in the role of Shepherd?
6. Take a moment to consider how you might encourage someone who actively lives out the role of Shepherd in your life. Take time this week to encourage them.

WEEK 5

ROLE ON

- Divide into groups of 2-3.
- Pass your business card one person to the left.
- Pray for that person out loud, using the information on the card.

Example: Thank you God that Joe is kind, resourceful, and fun. Please be with him as he serves others as a teacher and shepherd. Give him wisdom... Amen!

- Return cards to their owners before you go your separate ways.