



Shepherding a Small Group



4G Mentoring: Growing, Guiding, and
Guarding the Global Bride of Christ

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Foreword

This document has been designed for use with small groups using cell-phones, tablets, computers, TV connections, or projectors. This document is not designed as a printed book (though it may be printed) or large group presentation but rather an electronic discussion guide for small or medium sized multi-language groups. The graphics on each page are designed to ease cross-cultural communication issues when using a translator or with group members using a second language. We hope that this document helps facilitate discussions about the Gospel of Jesus Christ in both formal and informal discussion groups in homes, churches, and coffee shops around the world. The copyright on this document allows you to freely distribute and even modify the content to meet your needs.

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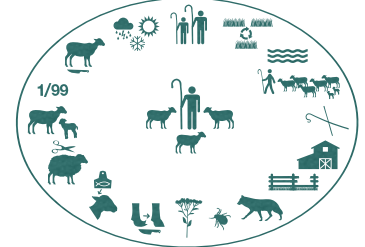


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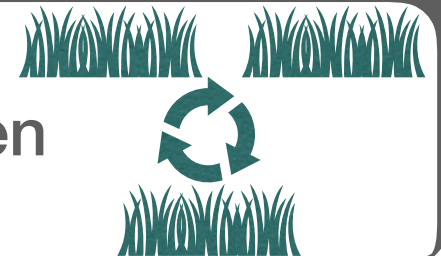
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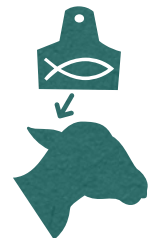
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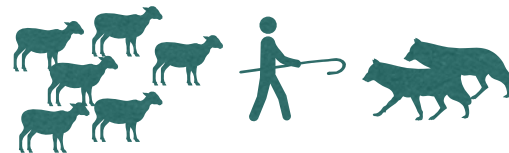
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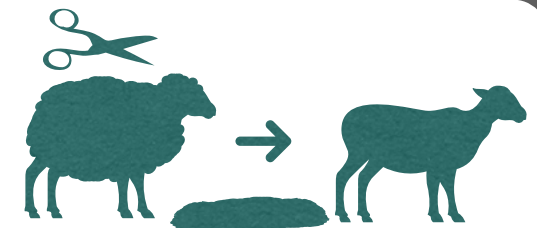
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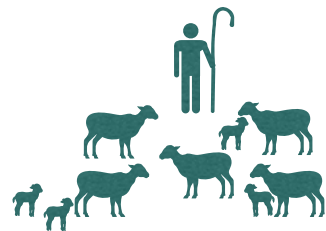




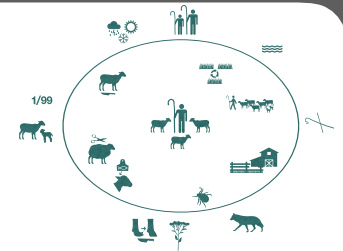
A black silhouette of a cow standing on the left, and a black silhouette of a knife pointing to the right on the bottom left.

Practical Advice:

Childcare During
The Meeting



Shepherding Self-
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You Are Not Alone



Case Studies



Be Strong
And Courageous



Well Done, my Good
And Faithful Servant



Exercises:

Introduction

Jesus Is the Model Shepherd



“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.” (John 10:11)

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” (Psalms 23:1-6)

Key Idea: Jesus is the Good Shepherd and our ultimate model.

Characteristics of Shepherds



Shepherds in ancient times were common, uneducated men who were given the humble, low-paying job of taking care of a flock of sheep.

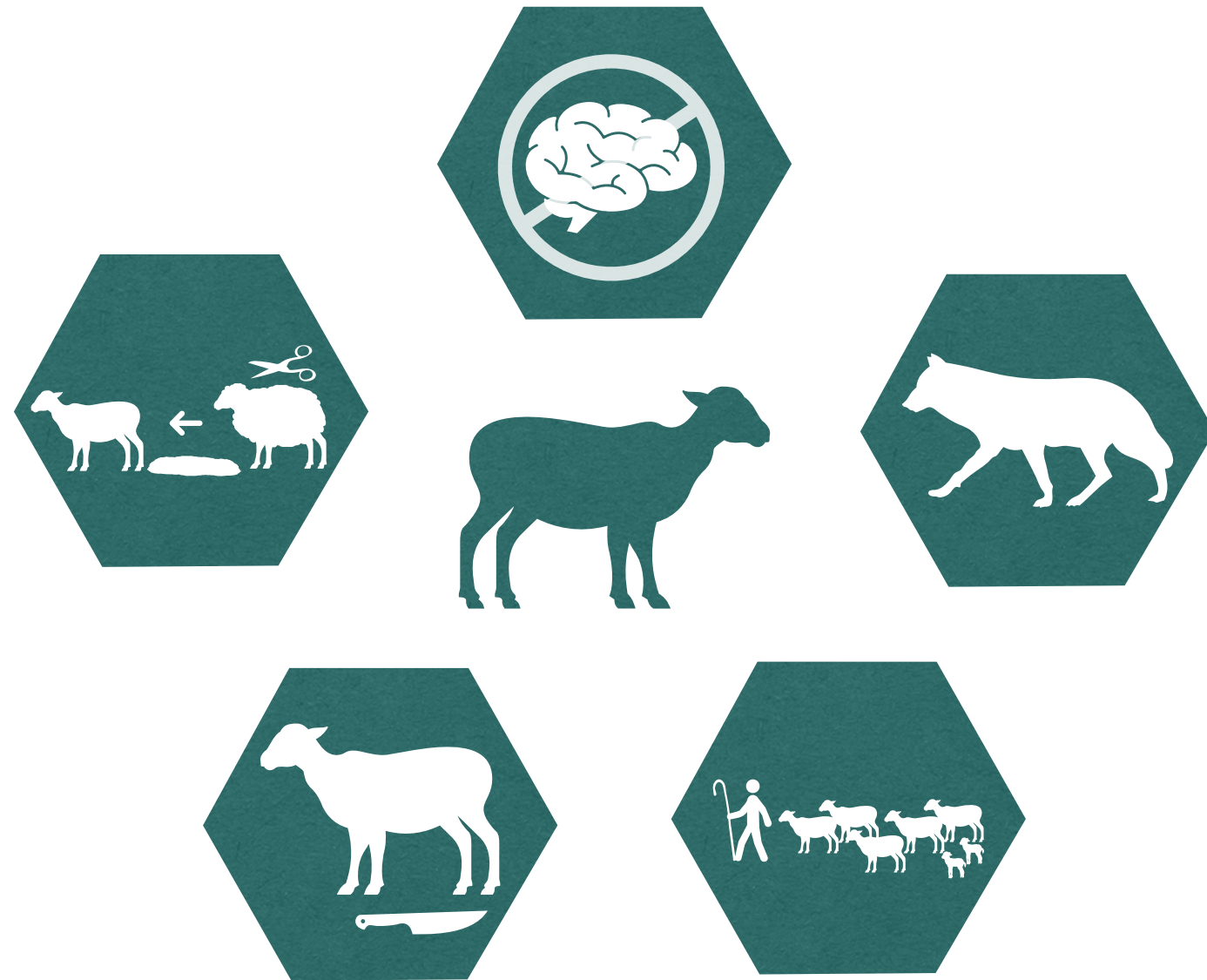
*“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that **they were uneducated, common men**, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13)*

*(Paul) “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, **educated at the feet of Gamaliel** according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.” (Acts 22:3)*

*** Also Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3:2-7**

Key Idea: Leaders of congregations in the New Testament were likewise often (but not always) common, uneducated men who were not highly paid. They were men of character who were able and willing to oversee a group of believers.

Characteristics of Sheep



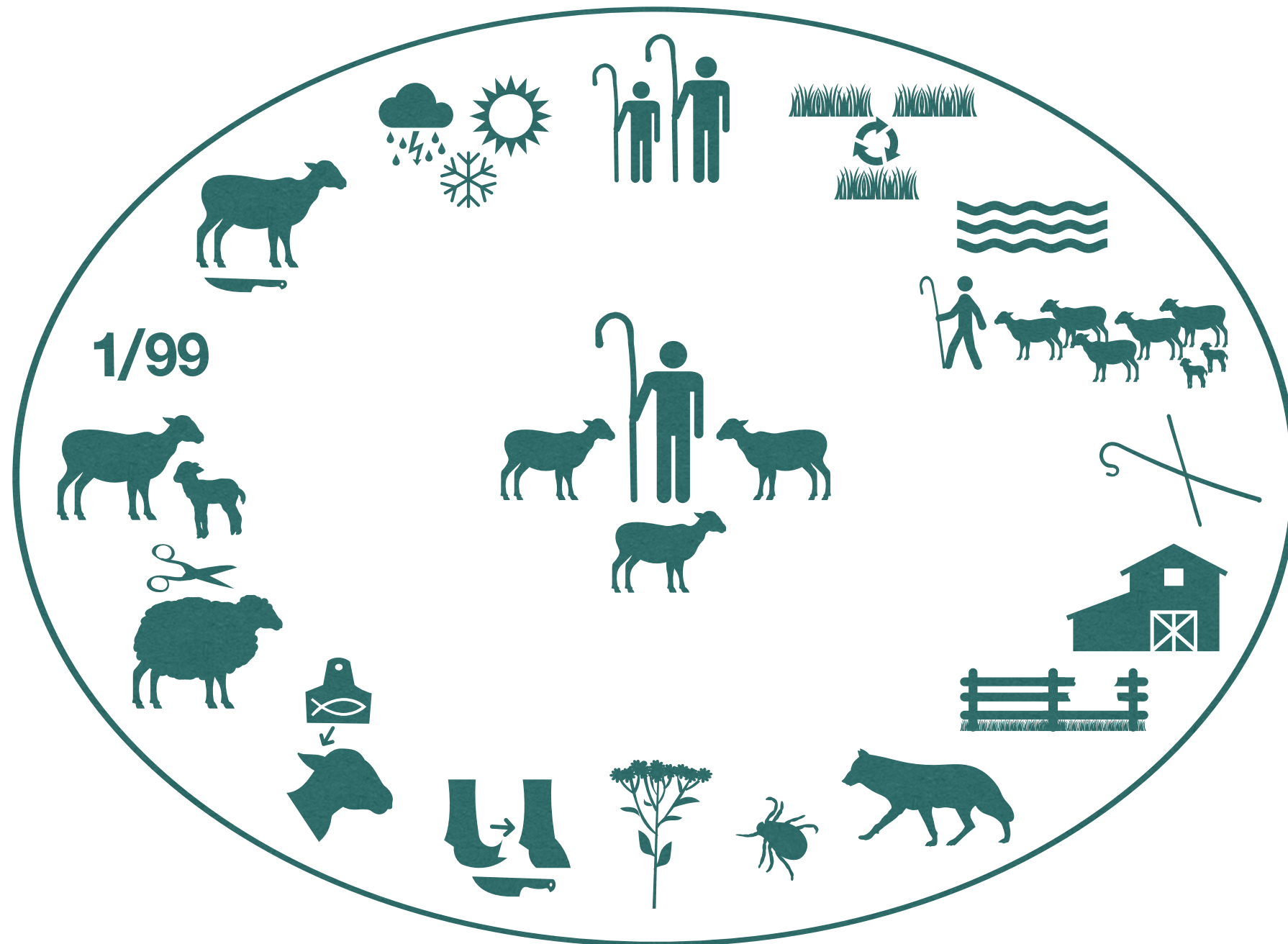
Sheep are not very smart, vulnerable to attack, need a lot of leadership and care from a shepherd to survive, but also provided valuable meat and wool.

*“Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; **we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**” (Psalms 100:3)*

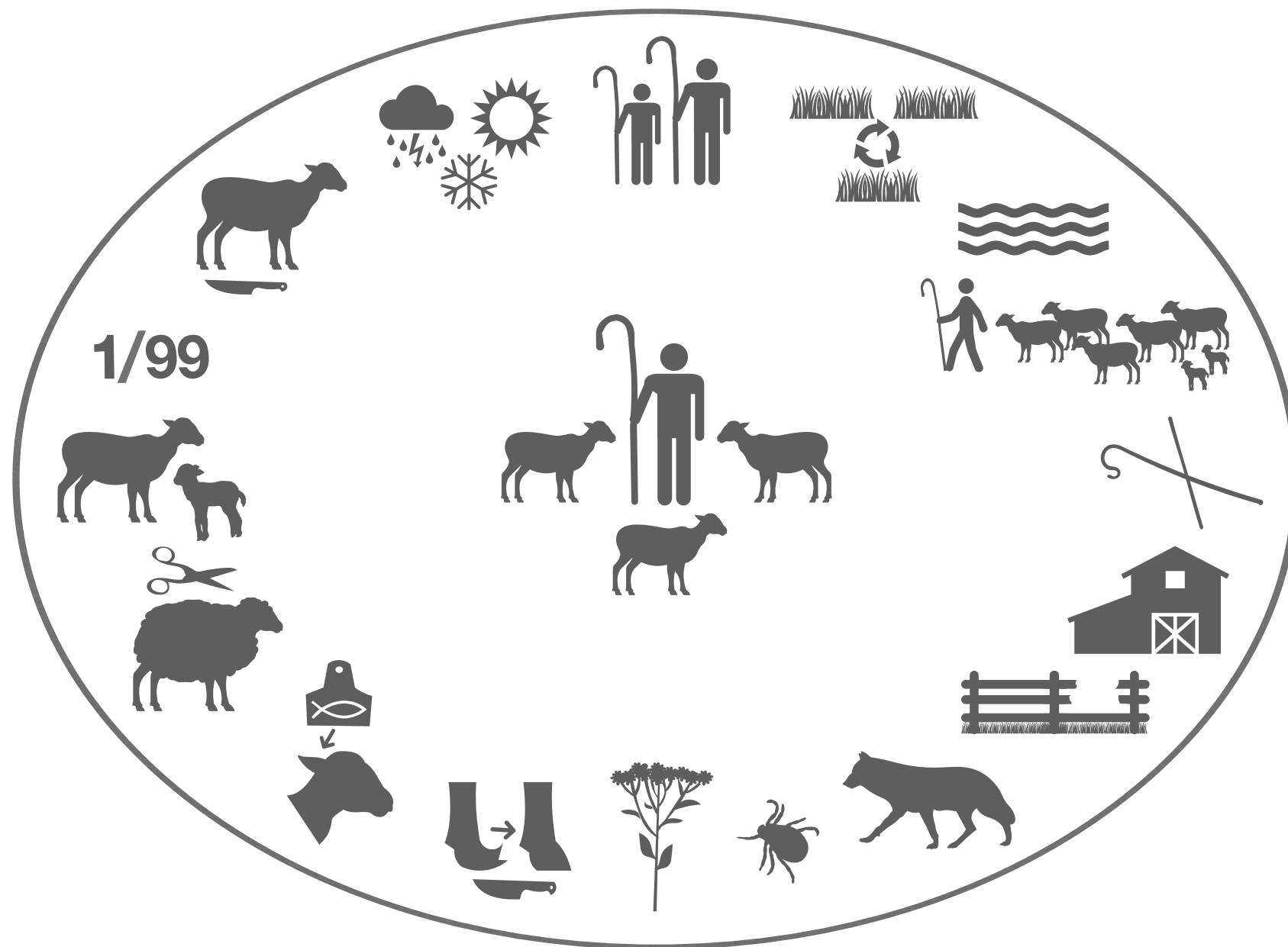
Key Idea: The Bible probably uses sheep as a symbol for us because we are often unwise, vulnerable to spiritual attack, and need a lot of care and leadership. But we are also portrayed as extremely valuable because we are made in God’s image.

Basic Shepherding

Basic Shepherding Skills



Key Idea: Shepherding a group is a learned skill. There are certain basic shepherding techniques and issues that are common to all groups and that can be learned.



- *Mentor young shepherds*
- *Rotate pastures often*
- *Lead sheep to still waters*
- *Help your sheep to know your voice*
- *Use both the rod and staff*
- *Provide a safe shelter*
- *Keep fences in repair*
- *Guard against wolves*
- *Get rid of parasites*
- *Pull up poisonous weeds*
- *Routinely clean and trim hooves*
- *Help sheep identify with the flock and Master*
- *Learn to shear sheep*
- *Grow by reproduction, not poaching*
- *Leave the 99, go after the 1*
- *Remove unmanageable sheep*
- *Know the seasons*

Mentor Younger Shepherds

(Learn to identify and develop the next generation of leaders)



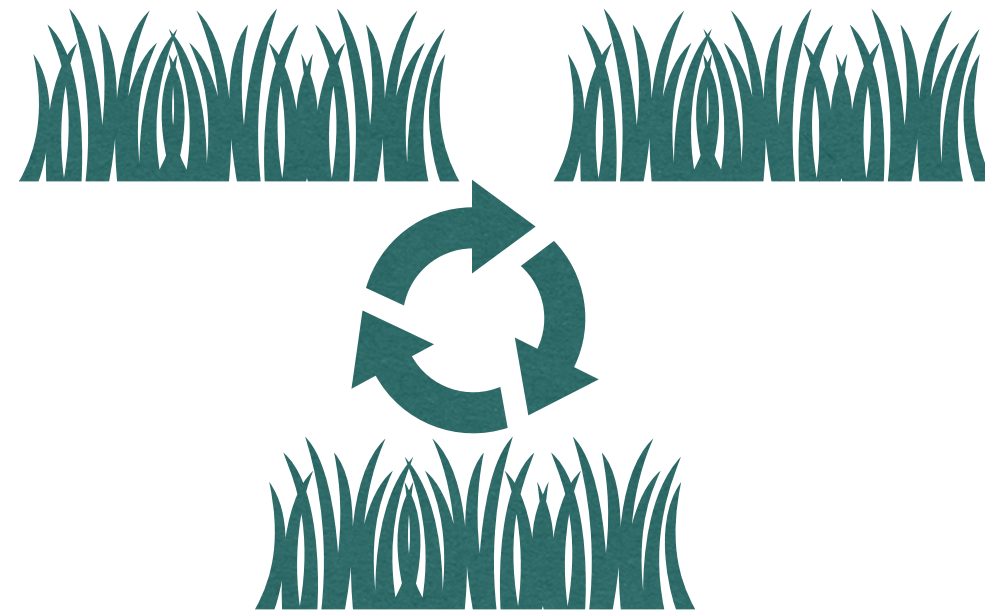
Shepherding is a learned skill and does not come naturally to most people. In ancient times, older siblings would teach younger siblings how to care for the sheep. Shepherds of small groups are best trained and mentored by other shepherds rather than from school or a book.

*“and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses **entrust to faithful men,** who will be able to teach others also.” (2 Timothy 2:2)*

Key Idea: Continually and intentionally help develop and equip new leaders by practical and intentional mentoring as leadership skills are best learned from other leaders rather than a formal class or book.

Rotate Pastures Often

(Teach all of Scripture)



Sheep will eat grass down to an unhealthy level and make a pasture unproductive if they are not rotated to new pastures frequently. This gives pastures time to recover before sheep return to graze there again.

*“He makes me lie down in green pastures.”
(Psalms 23:2a)*

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

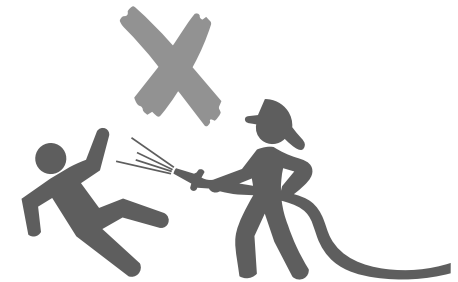
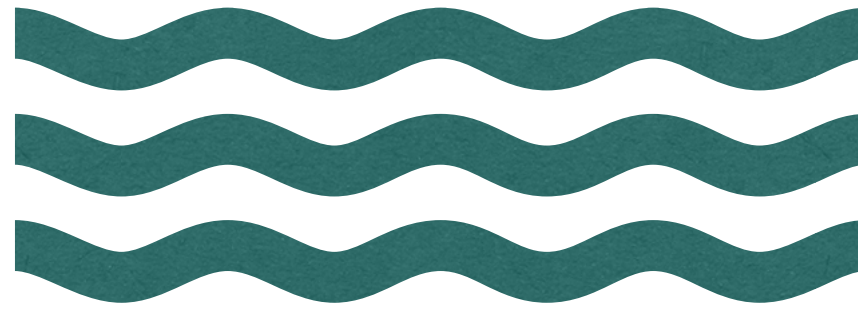
Key Idea: Believers need to be taught all of the Bible, from both Old and New Testament passages, in order to develop a healthy understanding of all of Scripture.

Focusing solely on New Testament passages leave members open to heresy and unproductive habits such as focusing on God’s love to the exclusion of his righteousness, holiness, and just punishment for sin.

Give group members a balanced view of all of Scripture in order to avoid heresy and unproductive habits and to help them become mature in Christ.

Lead Sheep to Quiet Water

(Teach in a way people can understand and obey)



Sheep do not like flowing water and will often refuse to drink from a river or stream. They prefer to drink from quiet and still water.

“He leads me beside still waters.” (Psalms 23:2b)

Key Idea: Don’t make people drink from a firehose. Avoid giving people more information than they can reasonably learn and obey at any given time so that people learn to hear and obey rather simply sit and listen.

Help Your Sheep Know Your Voice

(Provide effective and biblical leadership)



Sheep know the voice of their shepherd and will only follow his voice. They will ignore the voice of all other shepherds.

*"He restores my soul. **He leads me in paths of righteousness** for his name's sake."*

(Psalms 23:3)

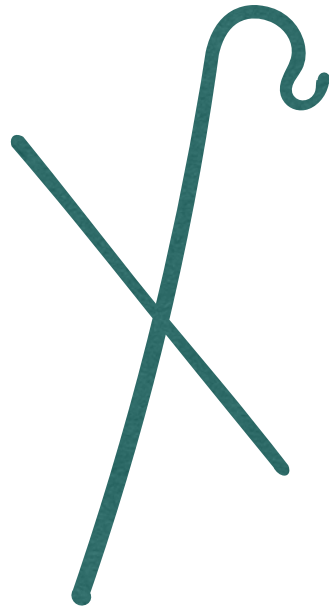
“The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. **A stranger they will not follow**, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” (John 10:3b-5)

“My sheep **hear my voice**, and I know them, and **they follow me**.” (John 10:27)

Key Idea: Spend time getting to know group members so that they know, trust, and follow your leadership. Lead by example and don't ask members to do something you are unwilling to do yourself. The members of our groups are really God's sheep. Our goal is to help them learn to hear and obey the voice of Jesus through the Word and the Holy Spirit.

Use Both the Rod and the Staff

(Provide effective biblical accountability and discipline)



The rod was used by the shepherd as an instrument of discipline. We all need accountability and discipline in our lives. The staff was used to guide and protect.

*“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; **your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**” (Psalms 23:3)*

*“Besides this, we have had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as it seemed best to them, but he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness. **For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.**” (Hebrews 12:9-11)*

Key Idea: Learn to effectively lead and protect (the staff) and provide accountability and church discipline (the rod) for group members by teaching them how to study and obey God’s Word in their daily lives.
Refusing to guide, protect, or discipline group members will be detrimental to the group.

Provide a Safe Shelter

(Develop trust)



Sheep need a clean, safe, warm place to spend the cold winter. This means more work for the shepherd as he has to provide food and water and clean the stable or barn.

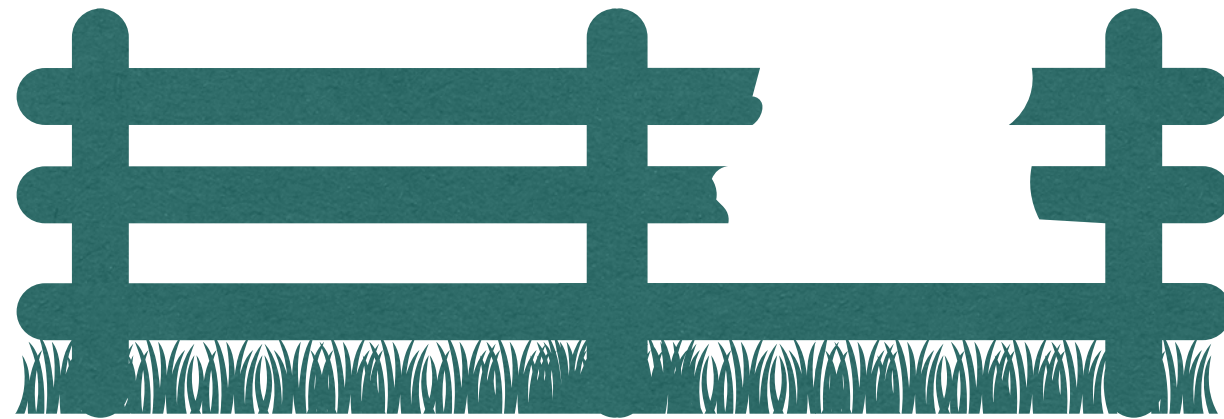
*“You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely **goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**” (Psalms 23:5-6)*

*“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, **and I will give you rest.** Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and **you will find rest for your souls.** For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)*

Key Idea: Make the group a safe and trusted place where people can share painful experiences and failures without fear of being rejected, belittled, or judged. Helping people through difficult times takes a lot of extra work.

Keep Fences in Repair

(Clearly and routinely define biblical faith and practice)



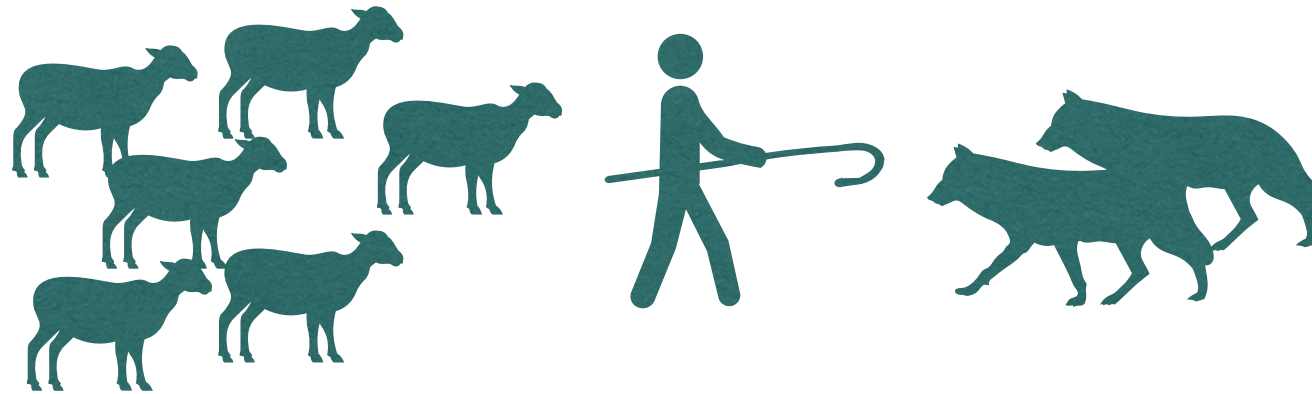
When fences are not routinely checked and repaired there is a risk of predators getting in or sheep getting out and getting lost, hurt, or eating someone else's crops.

“...preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions...” (2 Timothy 4:2-3)

Key Idea: Help group members know the biblical freedoms and boundaries of the Christian life. When group members do not know the freedoms and boundaries of the Christian life, they may easily fall into serious sin and may both harm themselves and others. Address theological misunderstandings, conflicts, and sin issues quickly and routinely to avoid losing members to false teachers and immorality.

Guard Against Wolves

(Confront false teaching and teachers)



*“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. I know that after my departure **fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.** ” (Acts 20:28-30)*

Key Idea: Guard group members against false teaching and false teachers by teaching them how to properly interpret the Word of God and how to recognize false teachers.

Get Rid of Parasites

(Learn to identify and deal with addictions)



If not treated, infestations of parasites can kill a sheep. An infected sheep will infect the rest of the herd if he is not quarantined and treated properly. It takes time to learn how to properly diagnose and treat parasites.

*“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age**, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,” (Titus 2:11-13)*

*“Or do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?** Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God. **‘All things are lawful for me,’ but not all things are helpful. ‘All things are lawful for me,’ but I will not be dominated by anything.**” (1 Corinthians 6:9-12)*

*“Do not be deceived: **‘Bad company ruins good morals.’**”
(1 Corinthians 15:33)*

“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.” (James 5:16)

Key Idea: Help group members get rid of old habits and addictions that drain the spiritual life blood out of believers. Some common addictions (parasites) that can drain the spiritual vitality of a believer are: sexual immorality, pornography, alcoholism, drug addiction, etc. Confession and accountability are the two best medicines for addictions.

Pull Up Poisonous Weeds

(Confront gossip)



Poisonous weeds can make sheep sick or even kill them. Shepherds need to always be on the lookout for poisonous weeds and pull them up before they infest the entire pasture.

*“A dishonest man **spreads strife**, and a whisperer **separates close friends.**” (Proverbs 16:28)*

*“If anyone thinks he is religious and **does not bridle his tongue** but deceives his heart, **this person's religion is worthless.**” (James 1:26)*

*“So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. **How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!**” (James 3:5)*

Key Idea: Address gossip quickly. Gossip, if left unchecked, is like a poisonous weed that poisons a group with distrust and will keep the group from growing in fellowship and maturity.

Clean and Trim Hooves Routinely

(Address common morality issues gently and routinely)



During the winter months sheep spend a lot of time indoors and hooves will naturally grow out in painful ways if not trimmed. Sheep in barns also track through manure and this increases the chance of infection. If left unattended, dirty and untrimmed hooves can cripple or even kill a sheep. This is dirty, smelly work that is absolutely necessary.

*“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to **wash the disciples' feet** and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.” (John 13:3-5)*

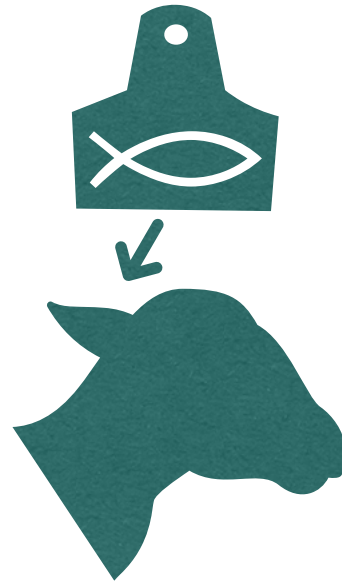


*“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should **restore him in a spirit of gentleness.** Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)*

Key Idea: Address common morality issues humbly, gently, and routinely within your group and quickly help those who fall into temptation to get back on their feet spiritually.

Help Sheep Identify With the Flock and Master

(Develop strong fellowship and community)



Shepherds use ear-tags so that both the shepherd and others can identify sheep from their flock.

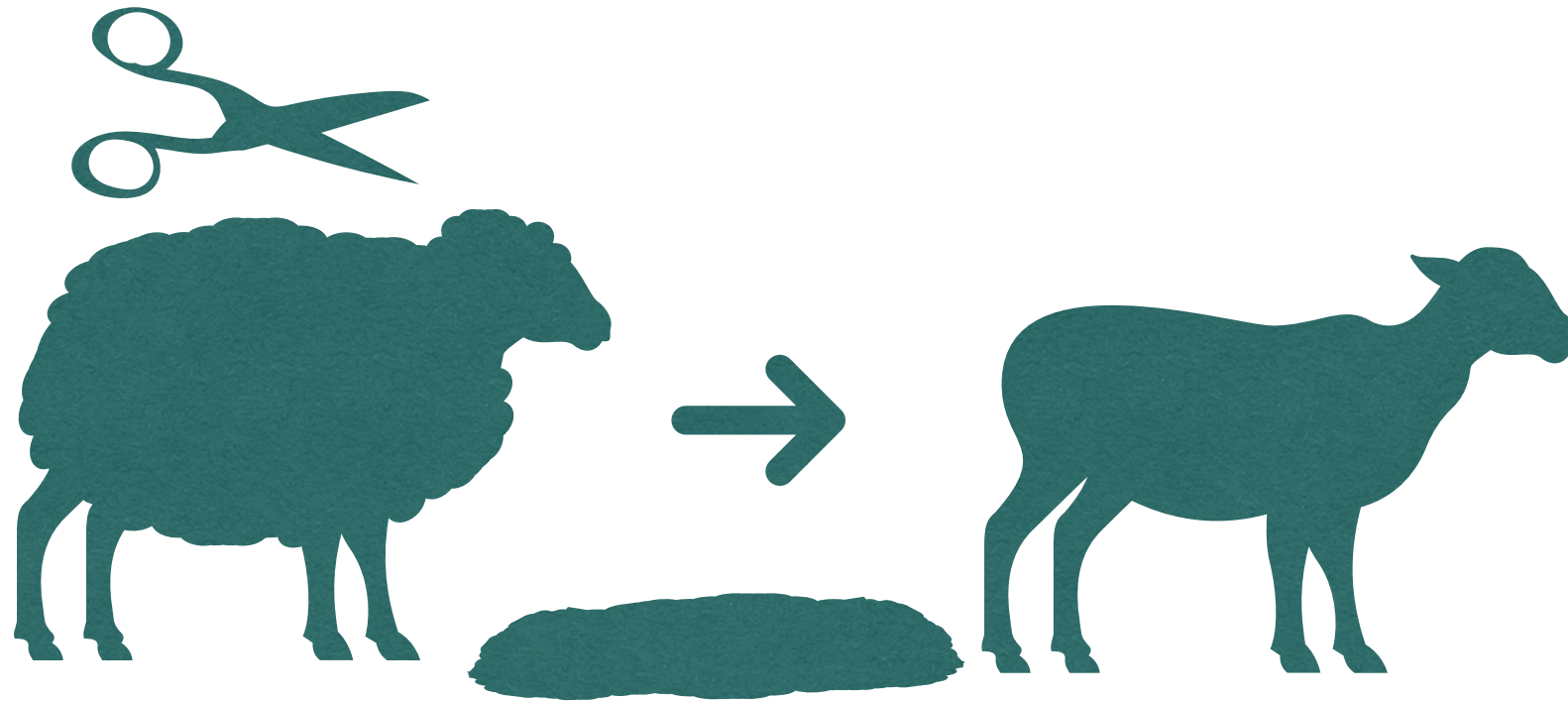
*“Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; **we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.** Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.” (Psalms 100:3-5)*

*“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **for you were bought with a price.** So glorify God in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)*

Key Idea: Build a strong group identity through fellowship to help group members identify with the flock (the Church) and with the Master who owns them (Jesus).

Learn To Shear Sheep

(Help members overcome and utilize difficult experiences)



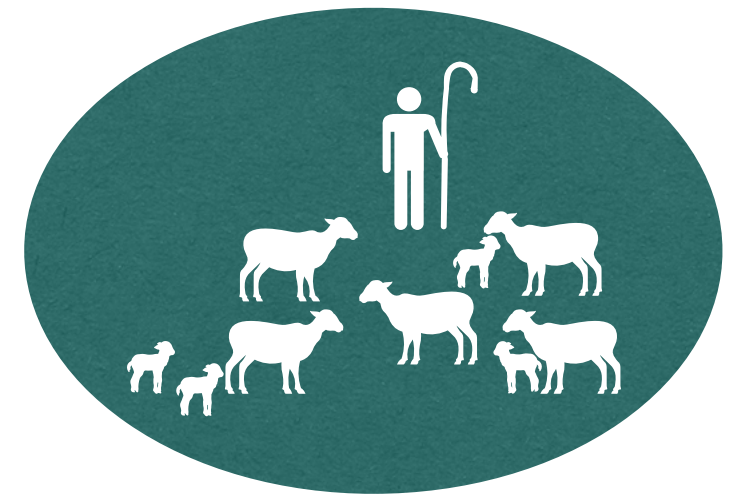
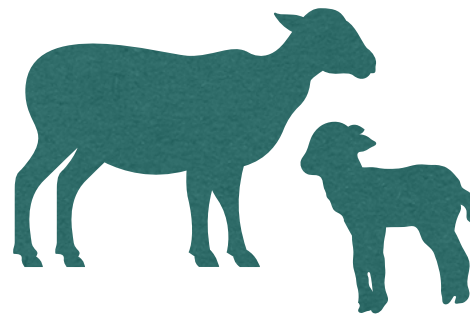
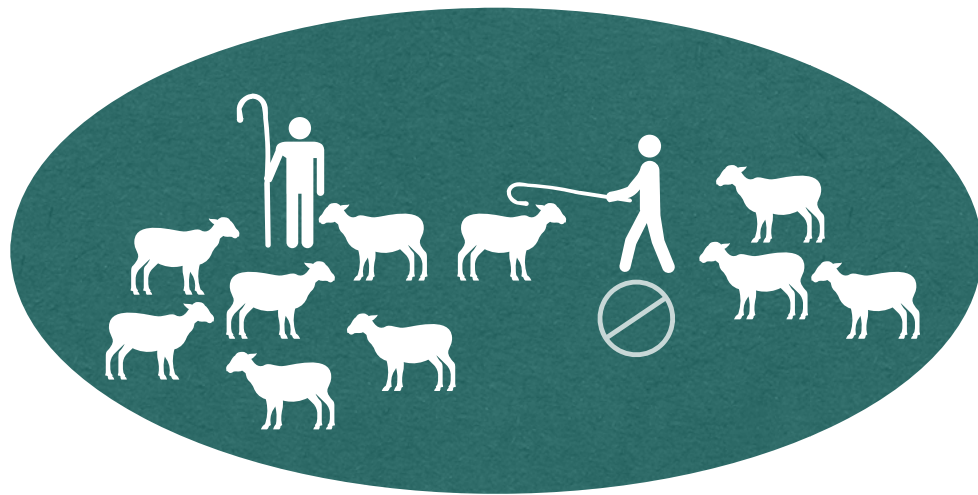
During the winter sheep grow heavy wool fleeces for warmth that need to be sheared by the shepherd during the hot summer months. This wool is a very valuable commodity used to make warm clothing.

*“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, **so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.**” (2 Corinthians 1:3-4)*

Key Idea: Help new believers learn to release heavy burdens from their past and to see how God can use those painful experiences to help others.

Grow by Reproduction, Not Poaching

(Grow through evangelism and discipleship rather than drawing members from other churches)



Grow your group by teaching everyone to do evangelism rather than recruiting members from other churches. Stealing members does not increase the number of local believers, creates distrust and discord, and often brings difficult to manage people into your group. When a believer from another church asks to join your group, talk to the other church and ask why they are leaving. If there is a church discipline issue, make sure to work with the other church to solve the issue.

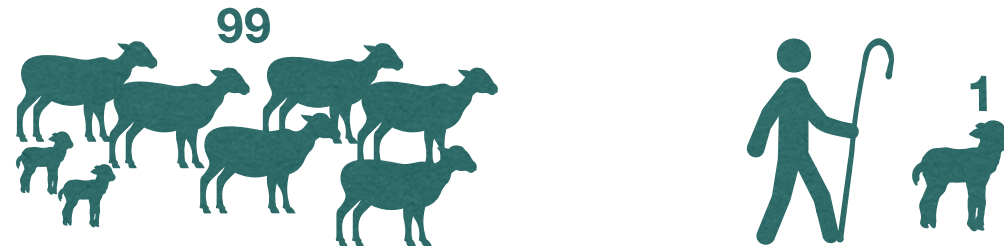
*“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **Go therefore and make disciples of all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” (Matthew 28:18-20)*

“and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else's foundation, but as it is written, ‘Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.’” (Romans 15:20-21)

Key Idea: Grow your group through evangelism and discipleship and not by stealing members from other groups or churches.

Leave the 99, Go After the 1

(Reach out to unbelievers and those who drop out of the group)

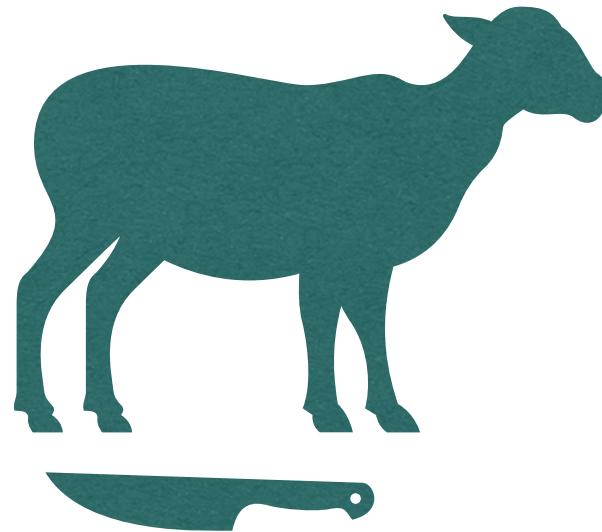


*“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not **leave the ninety-nine** in the open country, and **go after the one that is lost, until he finds it**? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.” (Luke 15:4-7)*

Key Idea: Continually reach out and share the gospel with sinful and lost people in dark places but also make an effort to go after those who have wandered away from your flock.

Remove Unmanageable Sheep

(Practice biblical church discipline)



At times, it is essential to cull or sell off unmanageable or infectious sheep from a herd for the health of the rest of the herd.

The Purpose of Church Discipline is to:

1. protect the name of Christ in the community,
2. bring the sinner to repentance and return to fellowship,
3. guard the congregation from infection.

*“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And **if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.**” (Matthew 18:15-17)*

*“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? **Let him who has done this be removed from among you.**” (1 Corinthians 5:1-2)*

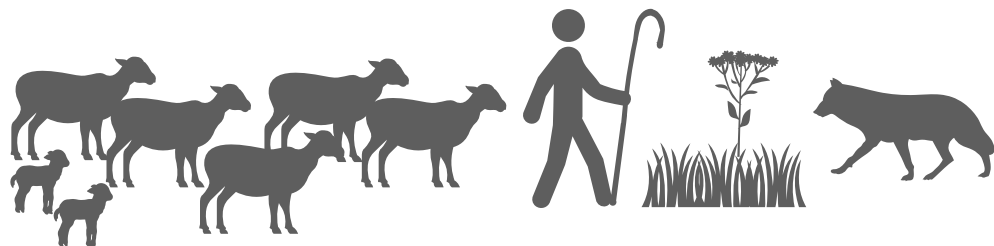
*“As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, **have nothing more to do with him**, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.” (Titus 3:10-11)*

Key Idea: Ask members who are willfully involved in persistent and serious sin to leave the group for the sake of the name of Christ in the community, for the unrepentant person's spiritual well being, and the health of the group.

Know the Seasons

(Learn to address the needs of different stages of spiritual growth)

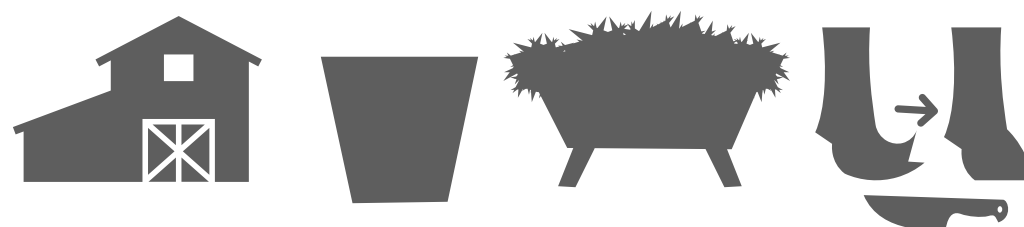
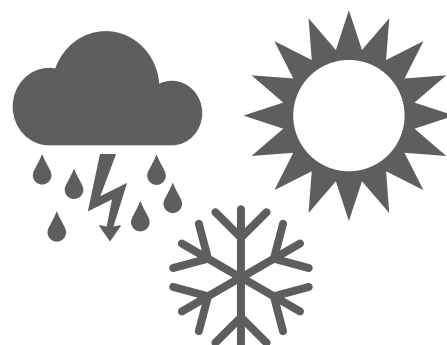




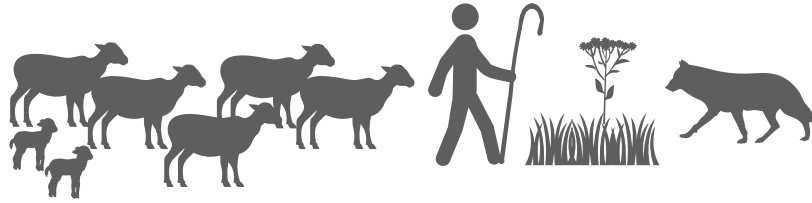
In spring you take the herd out to pasture, help with lambing, and guard against poisonous weeds and wolves.



In summer you shear wool, rotate pastures, lead sheep to quiet water, and pick off parasites.



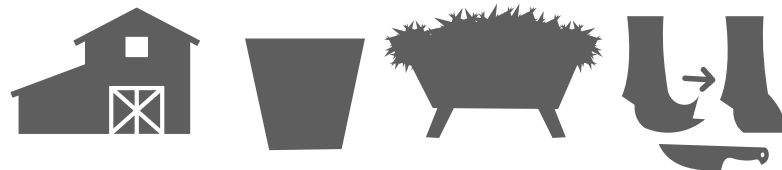
In winter you need a safe, warm, clean place to keep sheep. You need to bring water and food often. And you have to clean and trim hooves routinely.



New believers need to be taught how to integrate into the community of believers and how to identify and avoid things like gossip and false teachers.



During basic discipleship believers need a basic understanding of the Bible, balanced theology, and ways they can feed themselves from the Word. They also need help getting rid of burdens and help to avoid picking up bad habits that will suck spiritual life from them.



At times in a believer's life, they need more care than at other times. Sometimes they need a safe place where they get spiritual renewal, special training, and counseling.

Key Idea: Know the seasons so that you know what care the flock needs during different periods of their spiritual life.

Practical Advice

Know the Condition of Your Flock

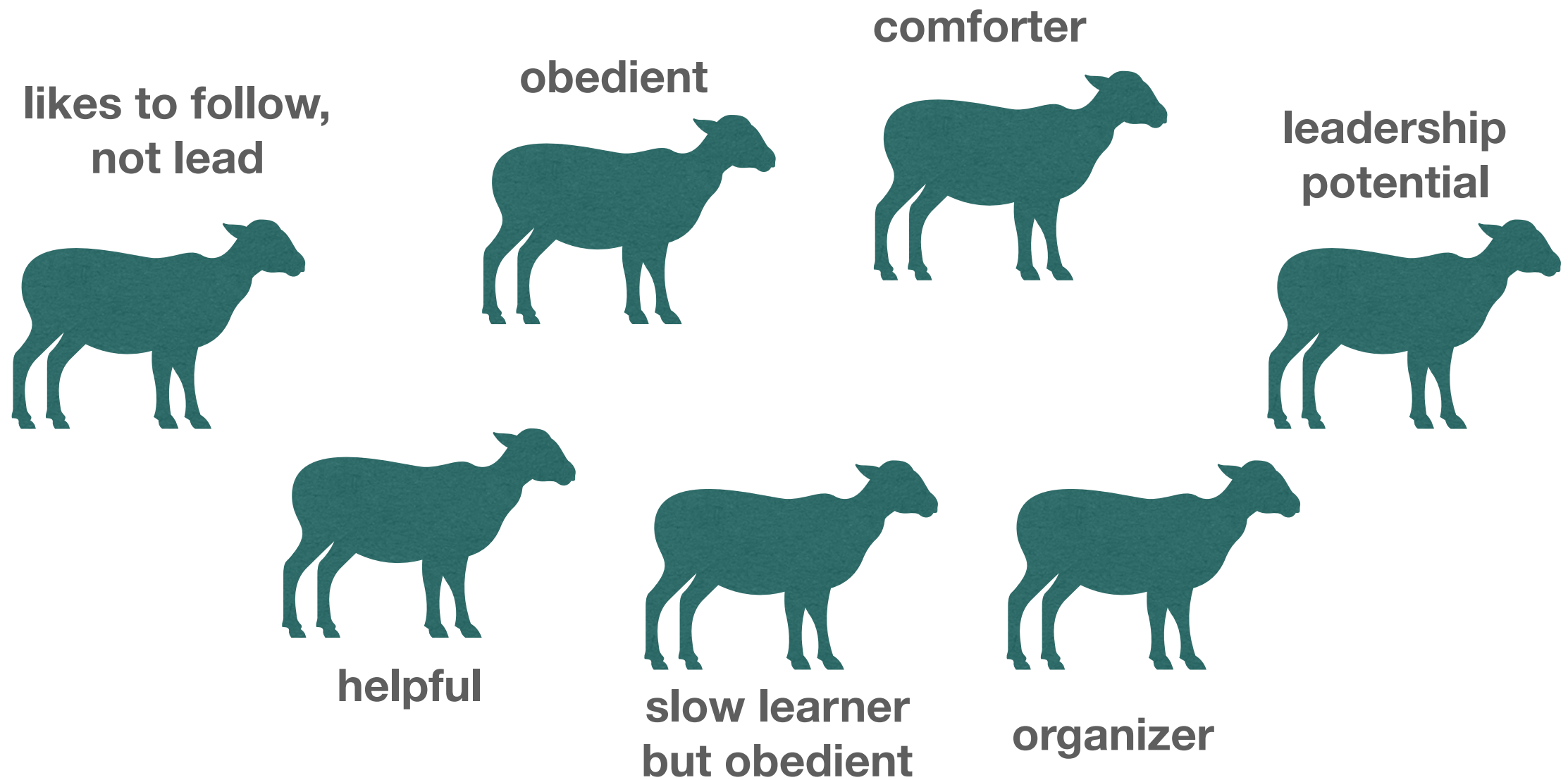


Shepherds need to spend time with sheep to know the problems they face. Is it lambing time? Are they facing wolves or parasites or needing their hooves trimmed? Are poisonous weeds in the pasture? Are the sheep needing to be sheared?

“Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

Key Idea: Spend time with group members outside of the group in order to know their spiritual condition so that you can gauge spiritual needs and danger signs.

Recognize and Utilize Individual Characteristics

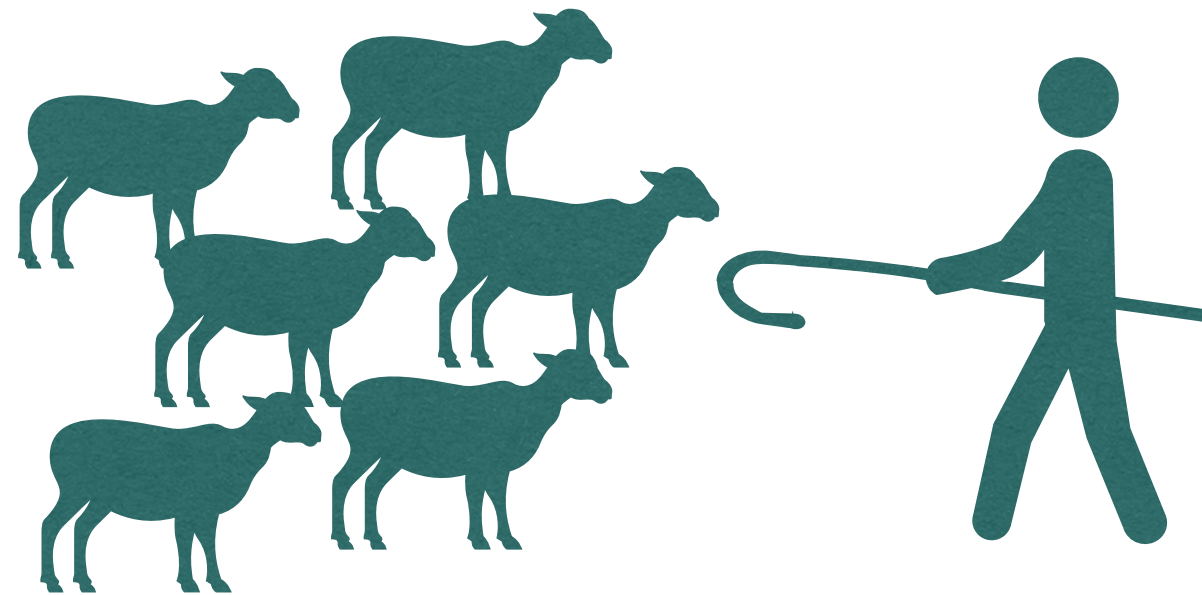


*“For just as **the body is one and has many members**, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be?” (1 Corinthians 12:12-19)*

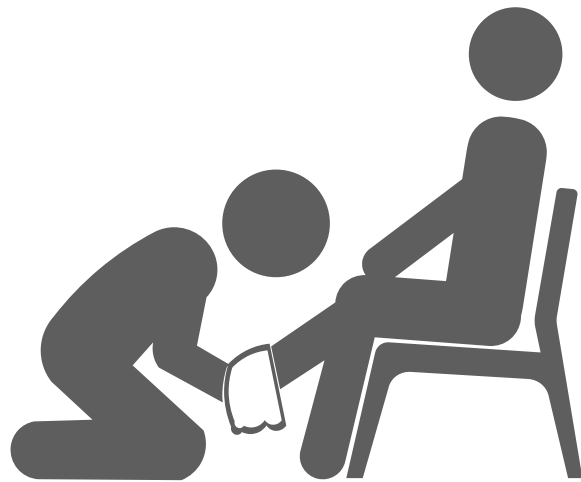
*“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to **equip the saints for the work of ministry**, for building up the body of Christ, **until we all** attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” (Ephesians 4:11-13)*

Key Idea: Learn to recognize and develop the different gifts within the group for the sake of building up the Body of Christ.

Don't Be Domineering



*“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; **not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.** And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” (1 Peter 5:4-1)*



Key Idea: Do not be domineering but lead the group with gentleness and humility - helping everyone to participate fully in the life of the group. Remember the example of how Jesus humbly served others in John 13:1-17 and commanded that we do the same.

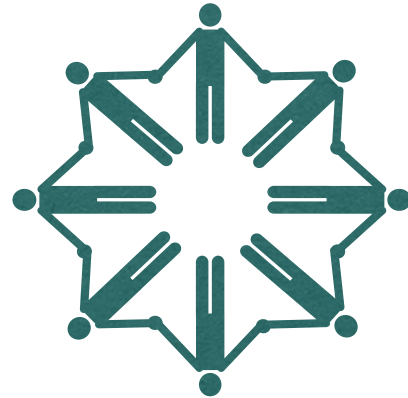
Minimum Shepherding Time Commitment

1 hour per week



weekly prep time

1 1/2 to 2 hours per week



weekly home group

2 hours once a month



monthly shepherd's training

1 hour twice a month



life-on-life shepherding

Prep time gets less over time as you become familiar with the material. Life-on-life shepherding may include such informal activities as getting a cup of coffee, a sports game, or eating a meal together.

Key Idea: At a minimum, commit to do weekly prep time, lead a weekly home group, attend a monthly shepherd's training class, and do life-on-life shepherding with at least two people or couples per month.

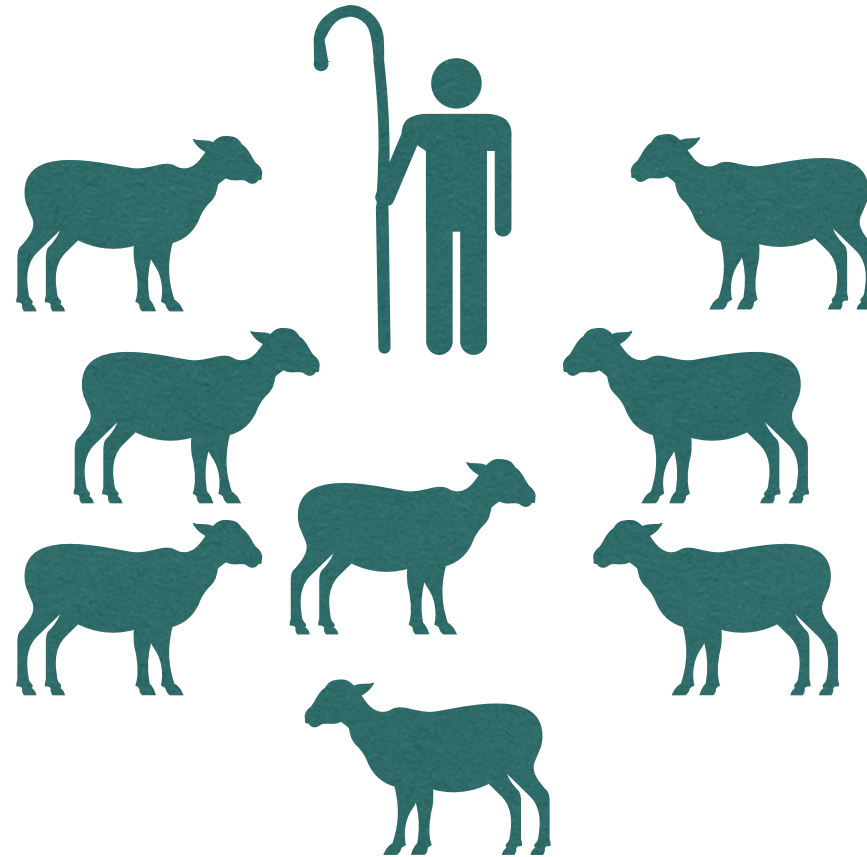
Do Life-on-Life Shepherding



Take time to informally meet up with group members outside of the weekly meeting and get to know them. You can meet up to have coffee, play a game, share a meal, etc. If they ask for help with serious issues in their life you don't have to have all of the answers. Be a listening ear and, if asked, seek to point them in the direction of the help they need. You may have to do some research to help them find what they need.

Key Idea: Informally meet up with group members outside of the weekly group meeting to get to know them.

Suggested Shepherd-To-Flock Ratio



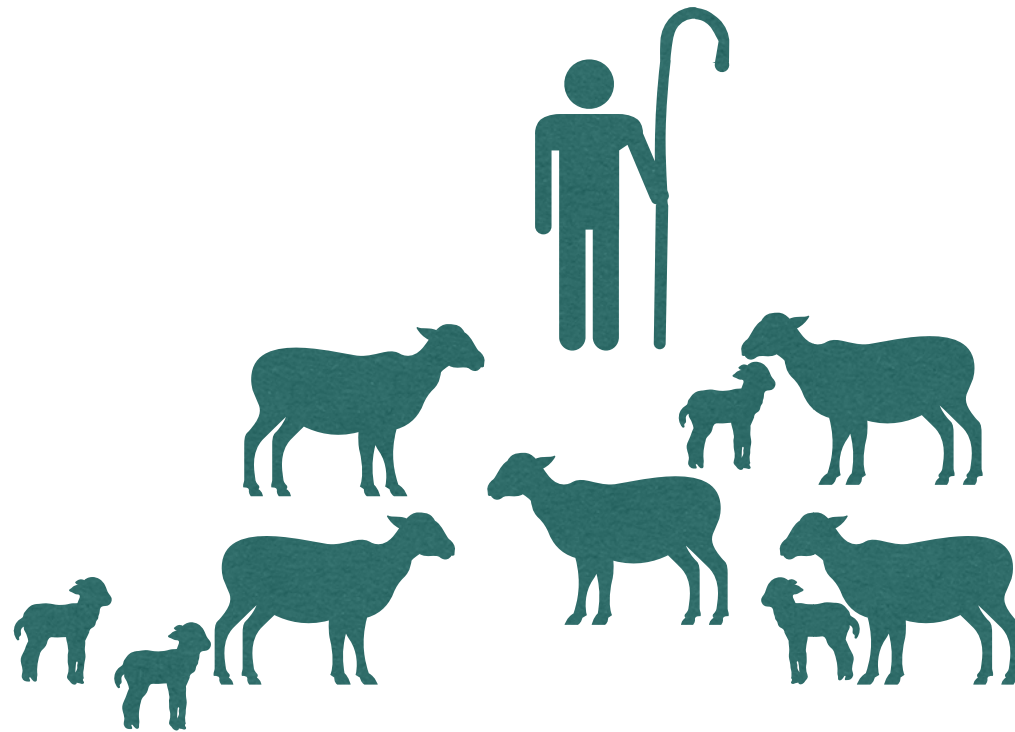
Build group multiplication into your group DNA from the beginning and start a new group when your group reaches 8 people. Jesus, the model shepherd, spent the majority of his time with only 12 men. Moses placed men over groups of 10 to lighten the burden of leading the Israelites. It may be possible to have multiple groups meeting at the same place but each with a leader or assistant leader to help manage relationships.

*“And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them **twelve**, whom he named apostles...” (Luke 6:13)*

*“Moses' father-in-law said to him, “What you are doing is not good. You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. Now obey my voice; I will give you advice, and God be with you! You shall represent the people before God and bring their cases to God, and you shall warn them about the statutes and the laws, and make them know the way in which they must walk and what they must do. Moreover, **look for able men from all the people**, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, **and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens.**” (Exodus 18:17-21)*

Key Idea: Keep group members to around 3-12 people in order to maintain an effective small group. Help start new groups when your group begins to reach 8 or more people.

Childcare During the Meeting



Managing a flock with newborn lambs takes extra time and care as lambs move slow, need attention from their mothers, and are vulnerable to attack from wolves.

*“Then children were brought to him that he might lay his hands on them and pray. **The disciples rebuked the people, but Jesus said, ‘Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.’** And he laid his hands on them and went away.” (Matthew 19:13-15)*

Key Idea: Be creative in finding a place for children to play and someone to watch over them so that parents can focus on the lesson. Young children can be distracting in a group meeting but involving the entire family in group activities helps build a sense of community and fellowship. Ask parents or members of another group to help you with childcare each week if possible (2 people at all times for safety). Consider having a short Bible story prepared that is appropriate for their age. As children get older, seek ways to help them integrate into the group meeting.

You Are Not Alone



It is important to have fellow co-workers who regularly pray for you, hold you accountable, provide a safe place to talk through difficult issues and get advice, keep you from feeling isolated and defeated during difficult times, and help you to identify and celebrate victories. Consider forming an informal (meet over coffee) or formal shepherding group that meets regularly to give one-another encouragement and possibly ongoing training.

“Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.” (Proverbs 15:22)

“Iron sharpens iron, and one man sharpens another.” (Proverbs 27:17)

Key Idea: Seek the fellowship and advice of fellow shepherds who can help advise and mentor you.

Be Strong and Courageous



The idea of shepherding a small group can be frightening and overwhelming. We should not enter this task relying on our own strength or skills. If this is a task that God has called us to do then we must courageously trust that he will provide what we need when we need it through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

*“Have I not commanded you? **Be strong and courageous.** Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” (Joshua 1:9)*

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Key Idea: If God has called you to the task then he will equip you for the task! We must move forward in faith trusting that God will provide what we need when we need it.

Well Done my Good and Faithful Servant



If you have been given the care of a flock, even a small flock, seek to manage that flock well for the sake of Jesus, the true owner of the sheep.

*“Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘**Well done, good and faithful servant.** You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’” (Matthew 25:19-21)*

“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.” (1 Timothy 5:17)

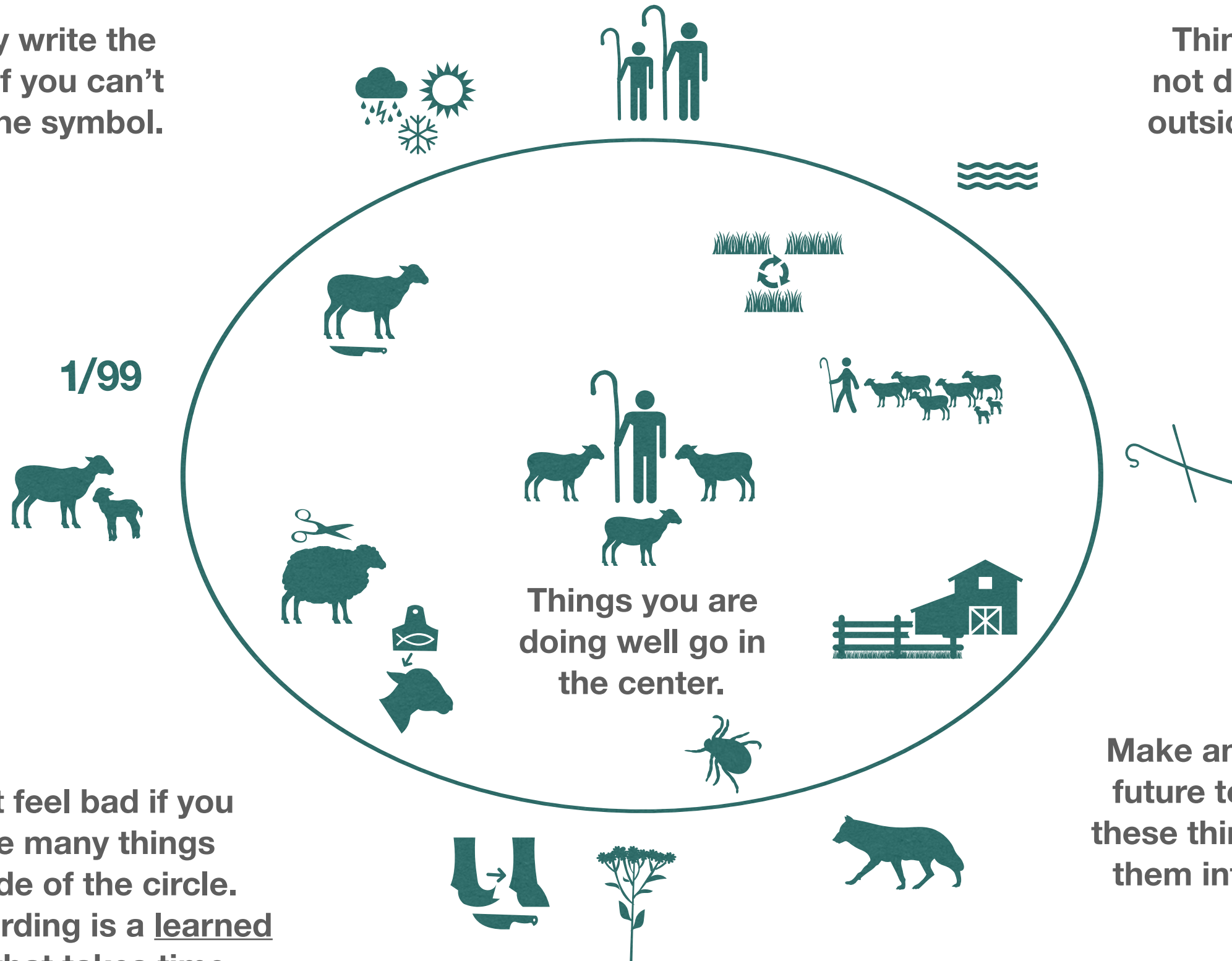
Key Idea: Strive to hear Jesus say, “Well done, my good and faithful servant.”

Exercises

Shepherding Self-Assessment Activity

Simply write the name if you can't draw the symbol.

**Things you are
not doing well go
outside the circle.**



**Don't feel bad if you
have many things
outside of the circle.
Shepherding is a learned
skill that takes time.**

Make an effort in the future to learn to do these things and move them into the circle.



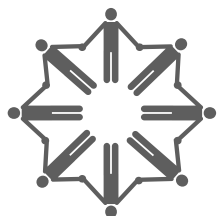
- *Mentor young shepherds*
- *Rotate pastures often*
- *Lead sheep to still waters*
- *Help your sheep to know your voice*
- *Use both the rod and staff*
- *Provide a safe shelter*
- *Keep fences in repair*
- *Guard against wolves*
- *Get rid of parasites*
- *Pull up poisonous weeds*
- *Routinely clean and trim hooves*
- *Help sheep identify with the flock and Master*
- *Learn to shear sheep*
- *Grow by reproduction, not poaching*
- *Leave the 99, go after the 1*
- *Remove unmanageable sheep*
- *Know the seasons*

Key Idea: Use this self assessment tool to gauge your current skills as a shepherd and work towards developing those skill that you currently do not possess.

Case Study 1



You have started a new small group with two couples and have been meeting in your apartment for the last three weeks. You first met these two couples at work several months ago but do not yet know them well. What can you do to get to know them better and to develop closer fellowship in your group?

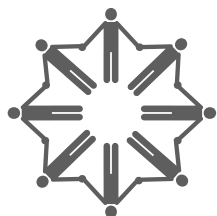


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 2



You have been leading a group for the last eight months and the group has grown to nine adults and five children. The group is meeting in a group member's home and the meeting space is getting crowded. What should you do next?

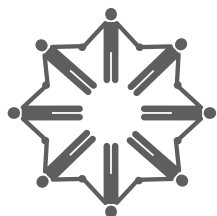


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 3



You are leading a group that starts at 6:30 p.m. on a weeknight. Several members come straight from work and arrive early at 6 p.m. One of the guys coming early is socially awkward and does not talk much and so this makes conversation difficult. What are some things you can do to use this time effectively and help build fellowship?

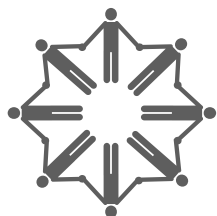


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 4



You are leading a small group that has good fellowship and is growing in Christ. A new person from a nearby church joins the group and immediately begins to sow dissension and to challenge the teaching and methods of the group. What should you do?

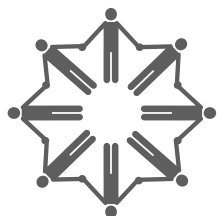


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 5



You are leading a group that has a young couple with marital problems. You learn that the wife is having an affair with another man. What should you do?

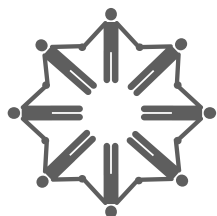


**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

Case Study 6



You are leading a group that has many young couples with small children. Some of the children are disruptive and make learning difficult. What are some things you can do to alleviate the distractions while still providing a enjoyable environment for both parents and the children?



**Break up into groups and discuss.
(suggested time - 10 minutes)**

