



SHEPHERDING LIKE JESUS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

1. How do you define the modern-day “successful” American pastor? How does the church typically define him? How does Jesus define him?
2. Why is it important to be the type of pastor that Jesus defines in the beatitudes?
3. Discuss how a lack of personal character has impacted the American church. Give a few examples. How do pastors’ adopting the character of Christ impact the American church?

CHAPTER ONE

1. Why do you think pastors are particularly susceptible to the five dangers outlined—fame, infidelity, fighting, finances, and fatigue?
 2. For those who feel comfortable sharing, discuss how Satan uses these temptations to derail you.
 3. How does living according to the character of Christ help pastors fight and overcome these and other temptations?
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CHAPTER TWO

1. What are some major themes Jesus offers in the Sermon on the Mount? How does the entire sermon display Christ's character?
2. Using the author's explanation of the chiasmic structure of the Sermon the Mount, discuss how understanding the beatitudes relates to understanding the whole message of the sermon.
3. Give several reasons why the Sermon on the Mount should be important to pastors.

CHAPTER THREE

1. In your own words, define "poor in spirit." Why is it important that we recognize and acknowledge our spiritual poverty?
2. How do you relate to the idea that you don't have what it takes for ministry? Are you encouraged or offended by the statement? Explain.
3. What is the relationship between being spiritually impoverished and seeking Jesus? Is spiritual poverty a prerequisite to coming to Christ? Explain your answer.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. What does mourning over one's sin look like? Give a few examples. Why is it hard for us to grieve our sin and admit our brokenness?
2. What is the aim of brokenness over personal and corporate sin?
3. Why is it important that pastors address their own sin before calling out the sin in others?

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Read aloud Philippians 2:5-8. Identify words or phrases that speak of Christ's humility. Why is it important to note that Jesus came to earth as a servant?
2. Give a few examples of how "our hubris can be masked so easily in seemingly righteous pursuits" (see page 85). Why are we so tempted by hubris?
3. What are the implications of our participating in God's glory, meaning that we have "fame with God, approval ... by God"?

CHAPTER SIX

1. Describe what having a hunger for righteousness is and how we are to obtain the righteousness we need. What does it look like to actively pursue this righteousness?
 2. How does your spiritual appetite define you? What do your cravings say about your relationship with the Lord?
 3. What does it look like to cultivate a life of righteousness as a pastor? Give some examples of how you commit to the spiritual rhythms of word and prayer in your life.
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CHAPTER SEVEN

1. What is at least one requirement to be a minister of mercy?
2. What is the connection between:
 - a. receiving and giving mercy?
 - b. mercy and compassion?
 - c. mercy and forgiveness?
3. How does considering the role of a shepherd help you formulate a ministry of mercy for the way you administer pastoral care to those in your church?

CHAPTER EIGHT

1. What is the only way to be pure in God's sight and therefore welcomed into his presence?
2. Why is it important that your motives be pure in ministry?
3. What are some practical ideas for ways to avoid temptation and sin and to become pure in action?

CHAPTER NINE

1. In your own words, describe what being a peacemaking pastor looks like.
2. How does the Levitical priesthood offer a model for pastoral peacemaking? Give several examples.
3. What are the most challenging aspects of being a peacemaking pastor for you? How will embracing a Christ-like spirit help you be a more effective peacemaker?

CHAPTER TEN

1. How does Jesus describe persecution in Matthew 5:11? When have you been persecuted in this manner?
2. How does Paul's example of endurance in ministry encourage you?
3. Why should those who are persecuted be glad and rejoice? Does considering this encourage you, challenge you, or frustrate you? Explain your answer.

CONCLUSION

1. How do you define being "blessed"?
 2. Discuss how the Sermon on the Mount is seen both as a kind of "law" and grace. How are both of these present in the Scripture?
 3. How is ministry a burden and a blessing for you? What truths compel you to persevere as a pastor?
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