



## shepherding like the Good Shepherd

by Vic Black, National Prayer Director

To understand the role of shepherding, we must consider the person of the Good Shepherd. Phillip Keller explores why God chose this analogy of shepherd and sheep to illustrate His relationship with us in his book *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*.

David the shepherd opens the psalm with a proud: "The LORD is my shepherd!", a statement of ownership, identity, and submission. We have been bought with the priceless blood of Jesus, and he recognizes that he no longer belongs to himself. Do you live as though you belong to Jesus? Do you swell with pride as you declare, "The LORD is my shepherd"? As you awake each morning, consider a declaration such as, "LORD Jesus, today I am Yours. I look forward to following you and your agenda."

"I shall not want." David expresses complete trust in God as his provider. And the biggest provision is God Himself. David had no need of anything because God was all he needed. God invites all of us to, "Taste and see that the LORD is good." Feasting on God is not like feasting on physical food. After a big meal, we push away from the table and say, "No more! I'm full!" Just the opposite is true when we

**Do you swell with pride as you declare, "The LORD is my shepherd"?**

being, so committed that He will orchestrate our lives to insure rest. God walks ahead of us, leading us to waters of rest (the literal translation). Then comes the profound words, "He restores my soul." There is more that needs restoring than my body. God sees the inner workings of our lives and brings rest and restoration.

"He guides me in the paths of righteousness" The word "path" literally means track. Many tracks, many footprints, have been trod to form a path. In this case, this is the footprint of righteousness! These are the footprints of the Shepherd! As sheep we have the prerogative of walking as closely to His footprints as we desire. He leaves these footprints for us to follow, "for His name's sake."

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I 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 have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.

*Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*"

Notice the subject of activity: "The LORD... makes... leads... restores... guides... for His name's sake. You are with me... Your rod... Your staff... You prepare... You anoint. Your goodness and lovingkindness aggressively pursue me. I will dwell in Your house." We can rest securely in the initiative of The Shepherd on our behalf. May we personally experience His profound attention and take those we shepherd to The Good Shepherd.

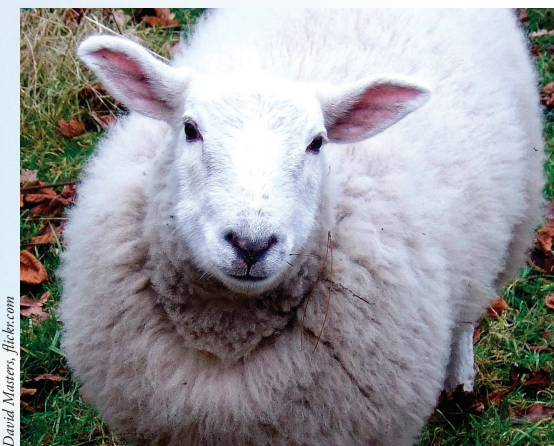
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## caring for the sheep

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Later that night, Sam realizes two things: the struggles of his life haven't changed much, yet he is strangely encouraged to believe the Father in a fresh way in the midst of them. He also recognizes that his job requires him to repeatedly take the initiative in relationships, even when people are cautious about responding to him and the commitment he represents. But here was a couple who moved toward him and his wife for the purpose of caring for them and shepherding their souls. He thanks God for them.

What has been described here is actually happening in many, but not all, of our Navigator ministries. The leadership chain has always been fairly clear in our organization. What may not be so clear is the opportunity/responsibility to care well for the sheep in our fold. As leaders who desire to care for those we lead, we can learn to ask good questions and to listen well. We can consult "the sheep" about what



David Masters, flickr.com

soul care might look like for them, and we can consider enlisting the help of skilled shepherds. Most of all, we can ask The Good Shepherd how to care for the sheep he has entrusted to us.

If you have any questions you can contact me or Steve Foley, who oversees The Navigators's Shepherds Network. Steve Draper (drapersw49@gmail.com) Steve Foley (steve.foley@navigators.org)

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**Virtually all of us are shepherds, responsible to God for the way we lead those in our care.**



Ryan McD, flickr.com

## caring for the sheep

by Steve Draper, Collegiate Mission

Sam (*not his real name*) shoulders a book bag filled with Bibles for an investigative study and walks the muddy path to the high-rise dorms from the farthest parking lot, banished to park there because the administration isn't excited about him being on campus. His downcast eyes match his heart as he wonders if anyone will show up for Bible study this week, if anyone cares, if any of this really matters at all. Sigh.

Those of us on staff know these emotions and, when objective, realize that they come from the enemy to discourage us. Most staff show their faith and heroism by continuing to take the initiative and move into people's lives. But what difference might it make to Sam if he got some help like this?

The home phone rings that night and Sam's regional shepherd is on the line. It turns out that the shepherd and his wife are on their regular trip through the region and coming through town later that week. They want to take Sam and Janet\* out for supper. Sam smiles as plans are made and times are set.

The day arrives and that afternoon there's a knock on the front door. The shepherd and his wife enter, offer hugs all around, and start playing with the kids as Janet briefs the babysitter. Soon all four are in the car headed for a nice restaurant, and Sam feels a looseness in his shoulders as he sighs deeply, able to relax because he is in a safe place among friends who understand him. Over the next two hours of laughter and good food, Sam and Janet respond to gentle questions about how they are doing physically, emotionally, and spiritually—on their team, in their family and with their funding. There is no demanding agenda thrust at them, and they are carefully listened to by people who don't try to fix them. Sam is reminded of the value of his ministry to the students, told that he is doing a great job, and encouraged to keep at this high calling.

As dinner ends and the coffee cups are taken away, the shepherd suggests that Sam accompany him as he pays the bill and gets the car warmed up for the ladies. During that brief time in the car, Sam is asked a few more questions. These are a little more uncomfortable, but rather than feeling judged, Sam is wooed to walk with God still more closely. They all get back to Sam and Janet's driveway and, after a time of prayer together and final farewells, the shepherd and his wife say good-bye and drive up the road to their next staff friend.



Steve & Sue Draper

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## God's design

Dave Legg  
People Resources Team Director

This issue of *UpFront* addresses the subject of shepherding. Proverbs 27:23 tells us that shepherds must *know* and *care*—know the condition of their flocks and



care for those they shepherd—by teaching, modeling, and providing soul care. Shepherding is our spiritual responsibility to one another,

something we both give and receive. All staff leaders are responsible to see that those they lead are adequately shepherded, whether they provide the shepherding or they utilize regional and national resources—regional shepherds, PRT, Staff Funding and Human Resources. We have over forty men and women in the Shepherding Network who are available to serve our field staff.

The PRT team desires that our staff may fully experience God's shepherding care, and is available to serve you with the tools God has given us for soul care and development.

### UPCOMING PRT SEMINARS IN COLORADO SPRINGS

**Personal Contribution  
Assessment**  
July 16-18  
September 16-18  
November 11-13

**Listening and Healing  
Prayer Retreat**  
November 6 & 7

**Sabbatical Orientation Workshop**  
October 6-9

*For more information call  
(719) 594-2555.*

## a shepherd's guide

Questions for a shepherd

**Margin**—Does this person have adequate margin in his/her life for rest, seeking God, and spending time with family and friends?

**Emotional Responses**—Do you notice any strong emotional reactions or responses which should be pursued in further dialog?

**Outlook**—What is the person feeling about:  
Life, relationship with God, ministry, family relationships and responsibilities?



**God**—Does he/she talk about what God is teaching them? Is there evidence of a growing relationship with God, and of the fruits of the Spirit? What can you do to encourage them in their walk with God?

**Purity**—Do you know their biblical convictions regarding sexual and moral purity? Does he/she have accountability with someone in these areas?

**Family**—Is a husband loving and enjoying his wife and children? Is a wife respecting and enjoying her husband and children? Can you identify an area in family relationships where they need help? As much as possible, do they have healthy relationships with extended family?

**Forgiveness**—Do they have relationships that need healing? People and hurts to forgive? Are they relating well within their team?

**Resources**—Is there a resource you could suggest that would be beneficial? Suggestions: funding development, PRT skills/tools/counseling, marriage counselor, local pastor, regional shepherd, local Bible study, Sunday School class, local church seminar, mission resources

**Friends**—Does this person have an intimate friendship with someone close at hand? Could you encourage them to pursue developing relationships with mentors and peers?

**Health**—Is there an area that would be helpful for them to pursue better physical health?

**Environment of Grace**—Are you a safe person for him/her to share these things with? What might you do to deepen trust between you?



## loving the sheep

by Cynthia Hagen, People Resources Team

What does it mean to shepherd someone—or a team of someones—and love them the way Jesus would? What can leaders do to maintain a strong staff team who encourage and model the love of Christ? In over twenty years of ministry I have seen a correlation between the success of new staff members and their first staff team experience. As I've grown in this area of caring for staff members, I have a deep conviction about the importance of shepherding people.

My first few years of ministry were spent on a team with a leader, Jim, who was not gifted as a shepherd, but who had strong biblical convictions about shepherding and community. Those of us on his team were a “rag tag” bunch of young staff who were driven to speak truth. Jim was coming off an experience with a previous staff team that he

to do the same for one another. Eventually we all shepherded each other. Our team, even though we ministered on the hardest campus in the area, was one of the healthiest and happiest teams in the region. As an impressionable new staff member, this positive experience formed the rest of my ministry career.

Eventually I had the opportunity to shepherd and train several young women. One September a new woman, Kim, reported to campus. Kim graduated from a southern school where ministry was so easy it was referred to as Disneyland. Kim's responsibility was to begin a new work in a dorm where we had no ministry. Almost daily I would find her hanging out in the dorm rooms of students already in the ministry. I did everything I knew to help her succeed, but it was to no avail. I began to resent

yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church which He purchased with His own blood.” God so convicted me that Kim was valuable whether she reproduced or not because of the price paid for her – the price of Christ's blood. I was, therefore, called to shepherd her well because of that. My attitude changed that day. I realized my responsibility was to shepherd those the Holy Spirit put in my charge. If I were to be a leader, a shepherd, I needed to take seriously His command to “shepherd the flock among you.” If God called Kim to be part of my team, He also called me to shepherd her.

I learned some life lessons under Jim's leadership and in my own experiences learning to shepherd. First, sacrificial love is required to shepherd people well.



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“drove.” For one year Jim had no team on his campus. During this time God worked into him convictions that made him one of the best shepherds. When I reported to his team in January of 1987, Jim began to lead out of his new convictions. He taught and, more importantly, modeled the love of Christ. He sacrificially loved each one of us, and we began

Kim. I “invested” countless hours in her and she would not reproduce. I did not ask for her to be assigned to my campus. I did not want her. She took time away from me that I could be spending with students.

One day during my quiet time, God whacked me upside the head. I was reading Acts 20:28 “Be on guard for

Second, if God entrusts one of His to me, I better take seriously this stewardship. Third, shepherding doesn't just happen, it takes conviction, thought, planning and time. Fourth, I am there to serve “the sheep,” not the other way around. I believe God will bless and multiply a ministry when we take care of what God entrusts to us.