



**Certificate
In a Box**

Introduction to Pastoral Care

An introduction to pastoral care of individuals within families, the local church, and the community.

The Youthworks College Certificate in a Box[®] is a resource that provides teaching materials for teaching theological and biblical study at Certificate level.

Teaching Guide

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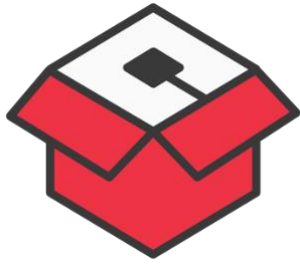
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SAMPLE



Certificate in a Box

Certificate in a Box is a resource from Youthworks College.

Youthworks College specialises in theological and biblical education for effective ministry to children, young people, and families.



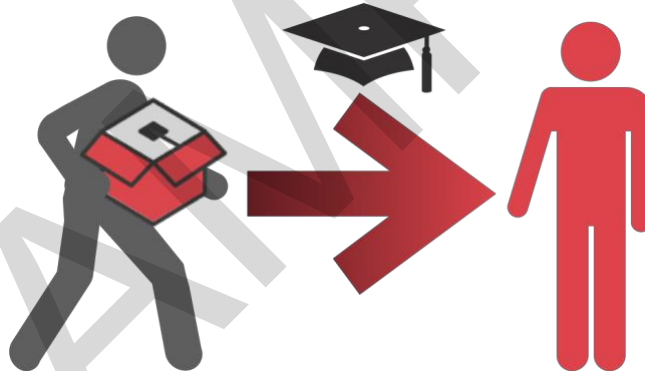
The Youthworks College “Certificate in Box” is a resource that provides teaching materials for Certificate level theological and biblical study. It is a resource for Christian schools, churches, and other institutions interested in teaching biblical, ministry, and theology units at Certificate level.

What does it include?

Each unit of study includes a **Teaching Guide** covering all the sub-topics in the unit of study. It provides an **Assessment Guide** with suggested assessments and marking rubrics, and **recommended text books** to accompany the unit of study.

How is it designed to be used?

The unit Teaching Guide provides all the information to teach the course. The information in this Teaching Guide is intended to be **distilled to the students by the teacher in classes**. This allows for the accommodation of the content to suit the timeframe and context in which it is being taught. The flexibility of the “Certificate in a Box” means teachers utilise their own teaching skills to teach



the content in the way that is most appropriate for their context. This allows for teachers to use their own Learning Management System (LMS) for distributing and receiving assessments with their students. The assessments provided in the Assessment Guide can be used as they are or adjusted to meet the teaching context.

Further Teaching Resources:

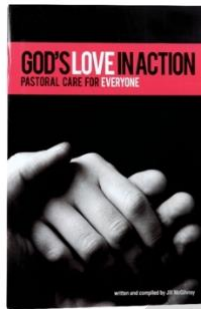
Further material in the Certificate in a Box “Teaching Resources” folder for this unit.

Recommended Text

It is suggested students not only learn the content of the teaching guide, but also read one of the recommended textbooks alongside the teaching they receive in class during this unit.

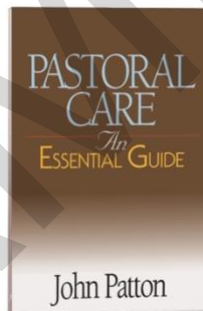
The recommended textbook to accompany this unit is:

McGilvray, Jill (2009) God's Love in Action. Acorn Press Ltd: Brunswick East **(80 pages)**



OR

Patton, J. (2005) Pastoral Care. An Essential Guide. Abingdon Press **(128 pages)**



Unit Overview

1 Aims

The aim of this unit is to give students an introduction to the biblical foundations for the provision of pastoral care and to consider the skills required to provide pastoral care in a range of situations with individuals, within families, the local church and the community.

2 Learning Outcomes

1. Explore the various patterns of the pastor's role described in the Bible
2. Define what pastoral care is and is not
3. Define the difference between pastoral care and counselling.
4. Explore what the Bible teaches about why we should care.
5. Explore what the Bible teaches about the pastoral role of the congregation.
6. Define the qualities and skills needed for effective pastoral care.
7. Discuss various models of pastoral care and their application to the process of providing pastoral care.
8. Discuss methods for developing skills in pastoral care including the use of teaching, encouragement, and recognition of gifts.
9. Explore the application of pastoral care within the church
10. Discuss a model of preventative care
11. Explore how pastoral care is practised in community settings.
12. Discuss the complexities of providing pastoral care in crisis situations

Topic 1 – Biblical Foundations for Pastoral Care

1 Topic goals

1. Explore the various patterns of the pastor's role described in the Bible
2. Define what pastoral care is and is not

2 Topic intro



The Bible doesn't specifically define pastoral care, but it does use images and descriptions that help us to build a definition based on biblical teaching. What are some of the images of pastoral care that are used in the Bible?

Using these images, build a definition of pastoral care. What is it? What is it not?

3 Patterns of the Pastor's Role

Pastoral care has been a part of the work of the people of God since their formation. It is a work God continues to do through his people. The Bible does not define pastoral care for us but does provide a number of powerful images to help us conceptualise it. The most significant image is that of a shepherd. In fact, the word 'pastor' comes from the Latin for 'shepherd'. Pastoral Carers are therefore shepherds.

In the bible 'shepherd' usually refers to the caring leader of the people of God. So, in a strict sense, pastoral care is a Christian leader's care for the people of God. It has also come to be used to describe a range of ways Christians care. The context of that care can therefore extend beyond the church to our hospitals, prisons, and schools. In fact, anywhere Christians are able to show love in the name of Jesus Christ is an opportunity to exercise pastoral care.

More recently, pastoral care has been employed by organisations outside of the Christian faith including schools, organisations, and health institutions to describe the holistic care of clients and employees alike. We will take a look at some definitions, key aspects and a framework for understanding the many forms of support pastoral care can include but in this first section will focus on the biblical foundations of the term.



Learning Activity

Read the following passages and write some brief notes about what it teaches us about how we are to care for those in our community.

	What does it say about how we are to care for others?
Psalm 23	
Ezekiel 34:7-11; 23-24	
John 10:14-16	
Acts 20: 28-32	
James 2: 14-26	
Matthew 25: 31-46	
Ephesians 4	

What would you add to your definition of pastoral care from reflecting on these passages?

3.1 The Shepherd Motif

Israel's leaders were often designated as the nations shepherds. Moses, a shepherd before becoming the leader of the Israelites, is seen as maintaining his shepherding role as the people of Israel are described "Like a flock by the hand of Moses & Aaron." (psalm 77:20) Joshua was to lead the 'sheep' of Israel "so that the LORD's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd" (Num 27:17).

The role of Shepherd was never institutionalised within the Israelite history. Israel was provided with Prophets, Priests & Kings to carry out this role. Prophets were the voice of authority for moral guidance while Priests were charged with the ordering of the cultus of Israel. The kings of Israel are not referred to as shepherds although it was common for neighbouring nations to describe their kings this way. David is the exception (2 Sam 5:2). David is the shepherd par excellence whom God took .. "to be the shepherd of Jacob his people" who tended the Israelites "with upright heart...and guided them with skilful hand." (Ps 78) Prophets are described as shepherds (Amos 7:15) as are Judges (2 Sam 7:7).

Leaders who are not fulfilling their obligations to care for the flock of God are described as bad shepherds. Ezekiel (Ezek 34) & Jeremiah (10,50) makes it clear in what ways these leaders have failed to carry out their duties. The carers of God's flock were therefore charged with caring for the sheep, strengthening the weak, healing the sick, bringing back the strays & searching for the lost. Their failure means that God will hold them responsible, remove them from such a position to be replaced by one who will come from the line of David who will genuinely care for the people (Ezek 34:23), shepherds of God's choosing (Jer 3:15; 23:1-3).

The conditions under which shepherds worked provided a good comparison to the task of overseeing God's people. Different from modern practices sheep were not fenced in & could not be left alone. The shepherd would remain with his sheep & move them as needed in search of better grazing. The sheep were totally dependent on the shepherd for protection, water & healing of any injuries. Sheep would not survive long without a shepherd & were not known for their intelligence or their ability to work together. Unable to care for themselves in such an environment, the principal role of the shepherd was therefore the care of the sheep.

A number of other common practices of the shepherd will also help us to see the suitability of the motif to the role of Pastoral carer. The shepherd would lead sheep from their place of nighttime protection to fields for grazing & watering. Sheep will typically lie down in the afternoon for rest from the sun (song 1:7), returning at night to the sheepfold. Here the shepherd would attend to any wounds of the sheep. The shepherd carried 2 pieces of equipment - the rod & staff & the crook. The rod & staff was a club-like weapon used for protection & the crook was used to rescue and count the sheep.

- **A typical day in the life of the Shepherd – Psalm 23**

Psalm 23 depicts for us a day in the life of God the shepherd to one of his sheep David. God is addressed as *my* shepherd. We are not to focus so much on the green pastures & pleasant life but rather the care & protection provided by the shepherd & the closeness of the relationship.

So, the shepherd was the protector, provider, companion, guide & leader to the sheep. The shepherd became so well acquainted with the sheep that they would know his voice & follow wherever he went. So, the sheep of 2 or more shepherds could be easily divided simply by each shepherd calling their sheep. God holds a rod over the sheep as they go into the sheep pen (hold) to ensure all are safely present (Ezek 20:37). The individual attention that God is said to bestow brings an added level of intimacy. So, God carries the lambs and seeks the lost & strayed, crippled & weak.

- **Pastoral Carers as Under-Shepherds**

The work of the shepherd could also be shared with sons, daughters or hired help but it was the shepherd who was responsible to the owner for the wellbeing of the sheep. Shepherds are servants of the owner of the sheep. The position of shepherd was not one of status & prestige within the community, as necessary & vital as the role was. Likewise, the overseer in the pages of the New Testament is to see himself as nothing more than a servant. His role is one of dependent service on & for God. Banks notes Paul's dissolution of traditional religious distinctions within the early church communities. Rather than thinking of terms such as elder & overseer with all their ecclesiastical connotations we should rather see them as pastoral terms.

- **The work of the Shepherd is solitary, constant & occasionally dangerous**

In literature, the shepherd is often an idealised figure of simple virtue & spiritual leadership. He is also frequently a lover & poet (song of songs). We have hints of this in Abel, the keeper of the sheep, (Gen 4:2- 4) & the shepherds to whom the nativity was first announced (Luk 2:8). Eugene Peterson notes that Pastors are also to be modern-day poets. Not simply teachers, our message should stir & challenge the hearts of our hearers & not just inform minds.

When we come to the New Testament, shepherds did not enjoy the earlier idealised portraits that had been painted of them. Viewed with suspicion they were not permitted to hold judicial office or give evidence in court. But still, the motif is used in a positive way to speak of the task of Pastoral carer. Upon restoring Peter, Jesus uses the imagery of feeding & tending a flock. Elders also are encouraged to be overseers of God's flock (Acts 20:28).

- **Isaiah 40-66 – God as Pastoral Carer par Excellence**

It is a highly poetic and image-laden section of the Bible but it provides a very rich picture of God as pastoral carer (Shepherd) to his people. Despite being prone to going astray God will continue to draw his people back to Himself providing protection, comfort and healing. God looks forward to the time when the remnant will be gathered to a place of safety and provision (Mic 2:12-13). Here God will keep careful watch over his people.

3.2 Jesus the Good Shepherd

We also see in this section the way God will ultimately ensure care for his people through the provision of the Messiah. The Bible will develop this picture of the coming Messiah as shepherd. Jesus will fulfil this role & speak of himself as the good shepherd. He is the shepherd who will gather the people of God & John 10 introduces us to the Shepherd laying down his life for the sheep & the existence of other flocks. As the one who lays down his life for the sheep, he is both a sacrificial lamb & shepherd of the people (Rev 7:17).

Jesus as the good shepherd seeks the lost, leaving the 99 he goes looking for the one lost sheep (Mt 18:12-24). Upon finding the one the shepherd rejoices in the discovery.

It is a nice incidental fact that the word 'sheep' in English denominates both the singular & the plural. For the focus of the shepherd is clearly on the sheep, both meanings are intended. Jesus not only calls his sheep, but he calls them by name. Jesus knows each one of the flock, laying down his life for them in order that they may gain eternal life.

Tidball argues that a major theme of the gospel of John is that of the good shepherd guiding his flock through the desert. The desert is a place of scant resources, so the sheep rely more closely on the shepherd. It is the place of miraculous provision & constant protection. Jesus as the new Moses will bring the people of God into the promised land. This shepherding role continues until every one of the flock is safely home. The good shepherd provides the Holy Spirit to remain with the flock when he returns to heaven charging the flock to care for one another & providing overseers.

- **The Epistles**

Paul was a tentmaker by trade but chose to use the shepherd motif when giving his charge to the elders of the church in Ephesus, 'be shepherds of the church of God..... keeping watch over yourselves and the flock.' Paul knew that false teachers would come like savage wolves and would not spare the flock. Ephesus was a modern city, yet Paul still uses an agricultural motif. Likewise, Jesus persists with the shepherding imagery when restoring Peter. A man who had spent his life mending nets & casting them on the sea of Galilee, rather than caring for sheep. As Jesus draws out Peter's confession of love, he directs him to the caring & feeding of his sheep.

*"Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."
(John 20:16)*

Peter will himself take up this idea of shepherding as he writes to elders of the church of God.

*"Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care."
(1 Peter 5:2)*

- **The Leader as Shepherd**

The bible provides many examples & images of the biblical leader, yet it is possibly the picture of the leader as Shepherd that dominates (1 Peter 5:1-9). Jesus calls himself the good shepherd who has compassion on the people who are like "sheep without a shepherd". Jesus mandate to Peter is that he cares for the flock, the sheep of His pasture. Yet the image of Shepherd is not a weak one. The tasks performed and character required portray an abiding strength. Israel's leaders were often designated as the nations' shepherds. Moses, a shepherd before becoming the leader of the Israelites, is seen as maintaining his shepherding role as the people of Israel are described "Like a flock by the hand of Moses & Aaron." (psalm 77:20) Joshua was to lead the 'sheep' of Israel "so that the LORD's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd" (Num 27:17).

Leader's failures throughout the bible are well known, from Abraham & Moses to David & Peter and should not surprise us. So, it is important that leaders understand themselves, their vulnerabilities and establish structures that take this into consideration. A mentor, accountability group, a spouse or peers will be a great help in this regard.

Campbell would like us to restore the courageous character of the Shepherd that he feels has been neglected in modern pastoral roles. Campbell points out the clearly visible character of courage in the shepherd metaphor throughout the pages of scripture. A courage that risked one's own life. David uses his experience as a shepherd to demonstrate to King Saul that he doesn't lack the courage for the task of facing Goliath (1Sam17:34-37).

Jesus in the New Testament faces the cross as he lays down his life for his sheep. So, we see a mixture of both tenderness & toughness in the biblical shepherd, portrayed more like a cowboy of the wild west than the more conservative lifestyle of the sedentary farmer.

So, while we note the centrality of the shepherd motif to Pastoral theology we need to deny it's exclusivity. We will take a brief look at two other paradigms of the pastoral carer. The pastoral carer as builder and as parent.

3.3 Builder

God is the one who builds the communal life of his people. God is building us up together into the spiritual edifice that is the church. God's work is both to build us up together and to make us more like His Son. There is therefore a role in us building one another up in accordance with God's good plan for us.

- Christians are portrayed as God's building (1 Cor 3:9) rooted & built up in Christ (Col 2:7, Eph 2:20- 22). Jesus promised to build his church on the rock of Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.

- The root word for edify or edification names the act of building. (Rom 15:2; 1 Cor 14:5; Eph 4:29)
- The builder of all things is God (Heb 3:4). With the ultimate act of building being the heavenly city of God with foundations whose builder & maker is God (Heb 11:10; Rev 21:11)

3.4 Parent

Paul to the Galatians will use the analogy of childbirth & speak of his desire to see Christ formed in them (Gal 4:19), not simply on an individual basis, but also as a community.

Paul will readily confess that we have but one Father, our Father in heaven (Matt 23:9) but this doesn't stop him describing his ministry to the Corinthians & Thessalonians like that of a father and a mother. As a father Paul is able to exercise authority over his children when required, but more consistently with our growing understanding of the fatherly role, it is a relationship of tender affection & love. Paul is willing to pour out his life for them & to work night & day so that he would not be a financial burden to them. His desire as a father is to provide for them everything they need to mature. Paul regularly uses household or family terminology to describe the community of believers. His role as parent is not to infant children but rather to grown adult children who are able to discern matters for themselves. Paul's desire is not to impose a fatherly position on them but rather to see them grow into an interdependent community under the headship of Christ. Taking corporate responsibility for matters such as each other's welfare, discipline & growth.

4 For discussion

- Which of the patterns of the pastor's role do you resonate with? Why?
- Which of the patterns of the pastor's role would you find difficult to apply in your own practice of pastoral care? Why?
- How did your definition of pastoral care change after considering the various patterns or motifs of pastoral care provided in the Bible?