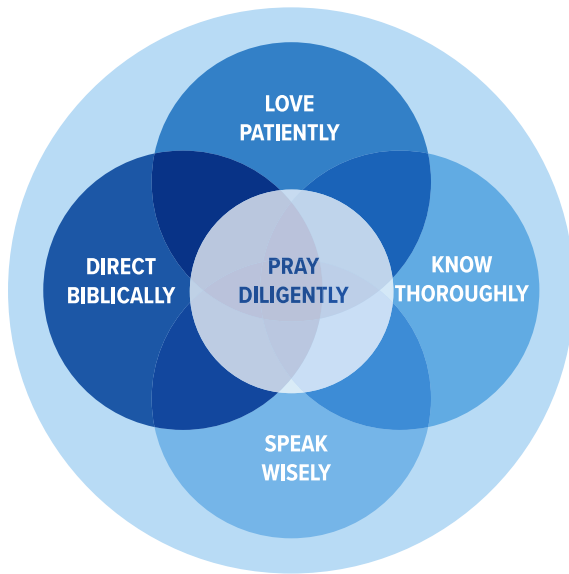


## Shepherding Values Overview



Five guiding principles for discipleship at Grace are: **Pray Diligently, Love Patiently, Know Thoroughly, Speak Wisely, and Direct Biblically.** We have to lead ourselves well before we can lead others.

- Be humble.
- Be slow to speak.
- Be aware of my limitations.
- Guard my assumptions.
- Be approachable.
- Make personal accommodations for others so that they feel comfortable.

### Keep In Mind:

- You won't be great at all of these shepherding values—but you will have strengths in certain areas.
- You are not expected to be an expert. None of us are.
- Each description can be a helpful self-diagnostic to identify areas where you need to grow.
- This is not a linear process. Each value needs to be applied continuously and simultaneously.
- In crisis situations, you may need to move quickly to protect the vulnerable. Decisive action and direction may come first.
- Know your limitations and be willing to bring someone else in to help you. None of us function alone. Plurality brings clarity. Inviting others to help you takes humility.
- Consider that a shepherding situation may be a result of wounds or weakness before speaking into willfulness.
- Shepherding takes time—this is not a race.
- We cannot want spiritual growth and life change more than they want it. We must be patient.
- You can't give to others what you don't possess personally. How are you cultivating your own spiritual health?

### Pray Diligently

#### Key idea

We must pray throughout the shepherding process and rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us. We cannot rely on our worldly talents and gifts to shepherd those whom God has entrusted to us.

#### Biblical support

- **1 Corinthians 2:13** When we tell you these things, we do not use words that come from human wisdom. Instead, we speak words given to us by the Spirit, using the Spirit's words to explain spiritual truths.
- **1 Chronicles 16:11** Search for the Lord and for his strength; continually seek him.



- **Psalms 145:18** The Lord is close to all who call on him, yes, to all who call on him in truth.

#### Pray Diligently means:

- **Humble:** You are fully aware that you are a sinful shepherd and that without God’s grace and wisdom, you will fail.
- **Dependent:** You recognize that any life change that occurs in others is solely the result of God’s grace—you are simply an instrument that God is using to reach others.
- **Vulnerable:** You recognize that you will make mistakes throughout the shepherding process, but this is not an excuse to remain passive and not take action. When your mistakes are recognized, you are willing to admit your fault, apologize, and move forward.
- **Patient:** Although it may prolong the shepherding process, you take the time to pray for the right timing and words rather than saying the first thing that comes to mind in the moment.
- **Obedient:** You recognize that prayer is a biblical mandate, not an optional exercise. By praying diligently, you are showing your dependence on God and obeying His will.

#### Love Patiently

##### Key idea

Relationships are the place where God’s lifelong process for change takes place.

##### Biblical support

- **I Thessalonians 2:8-12** We loved you so much that we shared with you not only God’s Good News but our own lives, too.
- **Colossians 3:12-14** Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.
- **I Timothy 1:13-15** Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

#### Love Patiently means:

- **Relational:** Engaging people to pull them into a trusting relationship where life change can take place—this begins the moment you meet someone, not when an issue arises.
- **Accessible:** People are comfortable talking with you. You are emotionally available to them.
- **Empathetic:** You are able to put yourselves in their shoes. You can identify with and communicate that you understand their suffering.
- **Attentive:** You serve people by paying attention to their lives. Sometimes this requires you to show up; other times it requires you to be patient and stay engaged.
- **Perceptive:** You are learning to interpret verbal and nonverbal cues and respond appropriately. You recognize both what someone is saying, or not saying, and you are willing to pursue them.
- **Intentional:** You move conversations from the news to faith.



- **Vulnerable:** Sharing your story and how God has shown up in it gives them courage to share more of themselves. Being vulnerable builds connection and demonstrates that you are with them on this journey.
- **Aware of your bias:** Your own self-righteousness, assumptions, and critical spirit may keep you from being compassionate and showing empathy.

## Know Thoroughly

### Key idea

Our ability to speak truth and offer direction and support is tied to how well we know and understand someone in their wounds, weakness, or willfulness. Be patient. This takes time.

### Biblical support

- **John 18:7** Who are you looking for? Luke 8:25 Where is your faith? Mark 4:40 Why are you afraid? Matt 14:31 Why did you doubt?
- **Hebrews 4:15-16** This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God.
- **Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)** To answer before listening—that is folly and shame.
- **James 1:19** Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.

### Know Thoroughly means:

- **Listen First, Speak Later:** Do not underestimate the value of listening. You cannot shepherd well until you listen. Listening well builds relational credibility and lays the foundation for you to speak into difficult situations later.
- **Aim at the Heart:** Our goal is to gather enough key information that we can help identify what drives and motivates their behavior and their beliefs (what do they feel, think, believe about the situation, themselves, and God) This is the level at which true life change begins. You can't just know the situation—you have to know the person as well.
- **Inquisitive:** Asking the right questions is more fruitful than giving the right answers. Skill is needed, but reliance on the Spirit is primary. Rely on him to lead you.

### Good questions

- Help you understand the person and identify where change is needed.
- Expose blindspots and where truth is needed
- Help them see themselves clearly and understand God's work in their lives.
- Help you fill in any gaps in your understanding or knowledge.

### Types of Questions

- **Open-ended:** "Why did you do or think that?" "Tell me more about . . ." "What did you mean by that?"
- **Yes/No and then follow up:** "Would you do that again? Why?" "Has this ever happened before?"



- **Progressive:** Question A leads to Question B. Think of it as peeling an onion. Each answer helps you know what question to ask next.
- **Heart questions:** What do they think, believe, and feel about what they are experiencing? Where do they feel stuck? What keeps you up at night? Is there anything you're afraid to tell anyone because you don't know how to address it? Where is God's Spirit at work in your life?
- **Restraint:** Control your desire to fix the problem. Often we need to let them live in the tension created by their situation because this is where God's redemptive work will be done.
- **Discernment:** Consider whether the issue is a result of wounds, weakness, or willfulness, or how they are integrated.
  - » Wounds—harms to me, harms by me, harms I am associated with
  - » Weakness—physical, spiritual, emotional, mental
  - » Willfulness—knowing the truth and refusing to obey

Assume that wounds and/or weakness are at play from the beginning. This is important because it influences how you will speak and give direction.

## Speak Wisely

### Key idea

We must be aware of the work God is doing in the person's life and align our words to match the truth they need to hear. The goal is to have enough information and relational credibility to offer them what they need.

### Biblical support

- **1 Corinthians 3:2-3** I had to feed you with milk, not with solid food, because you weren't ready for anything stronger. And you still aren't ready.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:14** We urge you to warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak.
- **Ephesians 4:29 (NASB)** Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

### Speak Wisely means:

- **Humility:** Don't hesitate to reach out to get input and wisdom before having a personal and honest conversation.
- **Secure:** You can't be everyone's best friend. This is not the goal. Your identity in Christ must be strong enough to absorb someone's disregard of you for their long-term spiritual good.
- **Movement:** Speaking perfectly is not the goal. The goal is incremental steps of obedience leading to life change. Embrace the awkwardness.
- **Bring Truth:** Based on what you have identified as the core issue, the state of their heart, and the gaps in their understanding, offer the appropriate truth that they need to hear.



## Direct Biblically

### Key idea

Use the information you have gathered to create an ongoing shepherding plan—with believable next steps that help bring their life up under the authority of God’s word.

### Biblical support

- **Psalm 119:14-18** I have rejoiced in your laws as much as in riches. I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways. I will delight in your decrees and not forget your word. Be good to your servant, that I may live and obey your word. Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions.
- **2 Corinthians 10:5** We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.
- **Colossians 3:16-17** Let the message about Christ, in all its richness, fill your lives. Teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom he gives. Sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs to God with thankful hearts. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.
- **Matthew 28:20** Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.
- **Romans 12:2** Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.

### Direct Biblically means:

- **Think Long-Term:** You think in terms of long-term life change, not simply removing the “heat” or fixing current circumstances.
- **Understand Repentance:** The goal is to help someone become spiritually self-aware. Recognizing the process of repentance looks like:
  - » **Change of Mind:** Awareness of sin and agreement with God—aligning my mind with God’s will.
  - » **Change of Direction:** Believable next steps necessary action—aligning my body with God’s will.
  - » **Change of Heart:** Occurs over time as my desires align with God’s heart.
  - » **Changed Life:** Occurs over time as fruit of repentance is produced.
- **Offer Grace and Truth:** You have clarity to offer both gospel comfort (grace) and challenge (truth). Recognize what they need to believe about God in order to obey and know what to lead with. We have to offer what people need, not just what we are comfortable giving them.
- **Concrete Steps:** Provide direction and accountability. This plan should address both inward change (what they need to believe, confess) and outward change/behavior (how they need to repent, obey) and outline a clear process.
- **Recognize Limits:** You are self-aware enough to know the limitations for care that you can provide and how to provide additional resources.

