

# PART TWO

## MINISTRY LEADER'S GUIDE

*Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.*

*And when the Chief Shepherd appears,  
you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

1 PETER 5:1-4





## WELCOME FROM PASTOR RON

Good day in the Lord, ministry leaders! Welcome to the Ministry Leader's Guide for *50 Steps with Jesus*. Marsha, Wendy, I, and most importantly—the creative leadership of the Holy Spirit—have developed *50 Steps With Jesus* to help nurture new believers. Please look through these pages providing tools for leaders and prayerfully consider how your ministry would benefit from this journey tool and to what scale you would like to have your ministry participate.



## WHAT IS *50 STEPS WITH JESUS* ABOUT?

*50 Steps With Jesus* is a simple ministry tool to feed new believers as they begin or start to expand their walk with the Lord. The results are profound as new believers grow and learn the simple things of the faith, the elementary things, the milk.

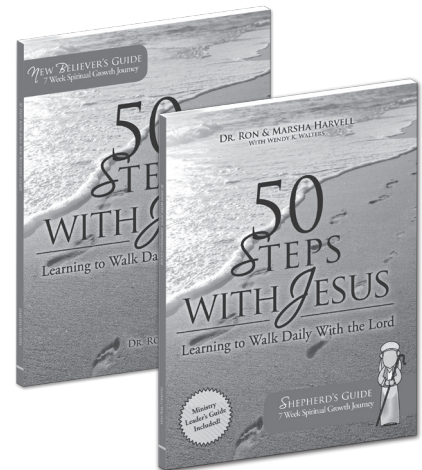
For example, they learn:

- that Jesus really does love them.
- that He truly forgave them.
- that He wants to talk with them.

New believers finish their *50 Steps With Jesus* with a solid foundation for the rest of their Christian journey. The journey begins as if the new believer is someone who has never prayed, opened a Bible, or been in a worship service. However, some students may have been believers for some time, but have never had the opportunity to develop these solid foundations in their walk with the Lord. The *New Believer's Guide* was developed for the purpose of fostering intentional growth in each student's relationship with the Lord—no matter where the “starting point” of their personal journey may be. Wherever they are beginning with the Lord, they will learn quickly from their guidebook and their experiences led by their shepherd. Their shepherd should take time to assess where they are, affirm what they already know, then fill in the missing gaps with each step.

The Lord's work through the shepherds is key to the success of this ministry. The shepherds lead new believers, or believers who want to grow in their faith, on the *50 Steps With Jesus* journey. With the help of the Holy Spirit and their shepherd, the students are taught how to walk with Jesus using prayer, the Word, and the church. The shepherd meets with their new believer face-to-face once a week and then makes daily contact every other day of the week.

New believers use the *New Believer's Guide*, and shepherds use the *Shepherd's Guide*.



# 50 STEPS

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Learning to Walk Daily With the Lord

I am very excited about the potential of this ministry in the the lives of your flock. I have led many congregations through the years with many coming to faith and being baptized. We had programs for new members and a wide array of effective discipleship training for those who were already walking with the Lord. Yet, as I look back on my job as the senior shepherd of those flocks, I realize that I failed to nurture and train the new believers in their faith. I knew I needed to, but I was not prepared to intersect their lives with someone to help them grow starting the day of their salvation.

In speaking with many other pastors and ministry leaders, they confess to the same failure to help nurture the new Christians in their charge effectively. They instantly see the need for feeding these new lambs and want to have a practical, strategic way to tend the new believers in their churches. Some ministries have new member's programs, but very few have a new believer's ministry. Does your program have a way to intersect the lives of new believers with shepherds who will help them grow in their faith every day. We wrote *50 Steps With Jesus* as a tool to help leaders care for new believers by preparing "lamb shepherds" who are ready to walk with new believers during the early days and weeks of their Christian life.



## WHAT IS THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR A NEW BELIEVER'S MINISTRY?

Jesus's final words are very important to the writers of the Gospels and Acts. Each of these books has a commission from Jesus for the church. In John's Gospel, the Great Commission is found in a conversation between Jesus and Peter. The setting is on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. It takes place after Peter denied Jesus three times before the crucifixion, after Jesus' resurrection, and a few weeks prior to the Lord's ascension into heaven.

Peter needed to be restored and given purpose. Jesus restores Peter with three questions about Peter's love for Him. Following each of Peter's responses are three different commands. They are a charge to Peter to carry on the Great Shepherd Jesus' ministry for the flock. In the dialogue, the words for "tend" and "shepherd" are different. The word, "tend," means to feed. The word "shepherd" means to watch over and care for.

### Jesus and Peter (John 21:15-17)

*<sup>15</sup>So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter,  
"Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"  
He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."*

*He said to him, "Tend My lambs."*

*<sup>16</sup>He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?”  
He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.”*

*He said to him, “**Shepherd My sheep.**”*

*<sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?”  
Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?”*

*And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.”*

*Jesus said to him, “**Tend My sheep.**”*

Jesus’ first command is to “Tend My lambs.” I do not think it is accidental that Jesus also distinguishes “Shepherd My sheep” and “Tend My sheep.” They are different. Jesus purposefully puts the lambs first. “Feed My lambs.” Why are new believers’ ministries not the most important ministries in the church?

Peter will later say in his letter to the church in 1 Peter 5:1-4:

*<sup>1</sup>Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, <sup>2</sup>shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; <sup>3</sup>nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

We, like Peter, are called to shepherd and feed the entire flock. This begins with caring for and feeding Jesus’ lambs. A few principles drive the way *50 Steps With Jesus* was developed. They are:

- Just like any newborn human or animal needs immediate and consistent nourishment, a new believer needs spiritual food the moment they are born into the faith. In the *50 Steps With Jesus* ministry, you will be feeding (tending) and caring for new believers.
- Just like for any new living being, that early nourishment needs to be daily. Therefore, the ministry of tending your lambs ought to be with daily food and encouragement.

Please look through the materials for new believers and for shepherds to see how this ministry works. While ideally designed for one-on-one shepherding, this ministry can also be used in groups or for an entire congregation. Note the materials in “Why Is Involving And Training Your Congregation A Good Idea?”

Next up are training ideas for shepherds.

# HOW DO I SELECT LAMB SHEPHERDS AND TRAIN THEM?

The selection and training of shepherds is important since they need to be ready and trustworthy. These ideas may seem to be commonsense, but we wrote them as a result of feedback from groups using *50 Steps* and from what we have seen work well. These are ideas for organizing and implementing *50 Steps With Jesus* into your ministries.

## Shepherd Selection

- Lamb shepherds are selected based on their faithfulness and the confidence of the church leadership in them.
- Lamb shepherds are matched to lambs appropriately:
  - Women with women
  - Men with men
  - Children with parent or guardian present
    - If possible, shepherds for children should have a background check. The safety and protection of children is paramount. If this is not available in your country, we strongly recommend that another adult is present in each face-to-face meeting between a shepherd and a child (or children).
- A church/ministry based tracking of lambs and their progress would help the shepherd be accountable and available, this could possibly be updated weekly.
- Develop a church/ministry based tracking of available lamb shepherds able to be updated as needed for best response to a new believer.

## Shepherd Training

There is a training outline provided for you at the end of this section. The ideal situation would be to train a team of lamb shepherds who are ready to immediately help nourish the new believer beginning the day they come to know the Great Shepherd. To prepare for this:

- Walk your shepherds through the *50 Steps With Jesus Shepherd's Guide*.
  - The *50 Steps* ministry is plug and play in regards to simplicity.
  - Once shepherds go through the *Shepherd's Guide* and understand how the ministry works, they could immediately start helping others grow.
  - Going through all *50 Steps* prior to being a shepherd is not required. We strongly recommend, however, that shepherds work through all *50 Steps* so that they know what the new believer is learning and what questions may arise.

- There are certain lessons on baptism, communion, and the ministries of the church where local input or doctrine can be provided to the shepherds as needed. The lessons are written broadly enough for the new believers to understand. Shepherds can teach the local church's doctrine and provide ministry opportunities as directed.
- The translation used in *50 Steps With Jesus* is the New American Standard Bible.
  - If your congregation or individual members use a different translation, you can encourage them to use their own Bible.
  - They can use their Bible translation for memorizing the memory verses in *50 Steps* if it differs from the NASB and is an acceptable translation for your church/ministry.
  - All of the exercises in *50 Steps* are accomplished using the Scriptures printed in the guides.

The people we have seen use *50 Steps With Jesus* understand the importance of this ministry. They catch how it works quickly. The shepherds are usually surprised at what they learn themselves and how much difference this makes in their life and the life of their lamb. We knew the daily contact was important, but we did not comprehend how powerful it was going to be in the new believer's life.



# TRAINING OUTLINE FOR SHEPHERDS

*This will require approximately 2 hours.*

## Session 1

As shepherds arrive, have a *Shepherd's Guide* and a *New Believer's Guide* available for each shepherd.

In order to be able to track progress and maintain accountability, have each shepherd sign in with their name, contact information, and preferred group to work with (children, male, female, youth, etc.).

1. Start with prayer for the training.
2. Have them take out their *Shepherd's Guide*. Let them know that this may appear complicated, but it is simple in practice.
3. Have someone read **"The Adventure Begins"** (page 14).
  - Ask the group to pray again silently for themselves.
4. Read **"The Purpose"** (page 14). Ask if it made sense and what their thoughts are on a new believer's ministry.
5. Teach **"The Great Shepherd's Command to You"** (page 15) and why it is important.
  - Ask, "How does our church accomplish this ministry?"
6. Watch the Shepherd's Video.
7. Walk through **"Being A Good Lamb Shepherd"** (page 17).
8. Allow shepherds to ask questions and offer ideas.
9. Take a break.

## Session 2

1. Explain to the shepherds again about Big Steps and Daily Steps.
2. Have them open **"Your Journey Map"** (page 7) to see how it is laid out on the contents page and on Steps 1 and 2.
3. Walk through **"Shepherd Preparation for Each Day"** (page 17).
4. Go over **"Principles for Meeting"** (page 18).
  - Using the *Shepherd's Guide*, show how there is a lesson overview and prompts given to them to help prepare for each step, and how answers are also provided for them in their guide.
5. Discuss **"Ideas for Big Steps Weekly Meetings"** (page 19).
6. Discuss **"Ideas for 50 Steps Daily Contact"** (page 20).
7. Discuss **"Getting Ready for Week 1—Big Step 1"** (page 21).
8. Allow shepherds to ask questions and offer ideas.
9. Close with prayer.

# WHY IS INVOLVING YOUR ENTIRE MINISTRY IN *50 STEPS* A GOOD IDEA?

## Congregational Growth

Ministry and congregation-wide participation gives members the opportunity to understand *50 Steps With Jesus* through personal experience. This creates a church-wide enthusiasm for *50 Steps* and increases the pool of members who desire to be shepherds.

On a greater level, there is a personal growth benefit for everyone in the community who participates. People will grow as they teach or learn things that improve their own walk with Christ.

As an illustration, the earliest group to test *50 Steps With Jesus* was a group of believers in Colorado Springs. The group's average age was 70 years old, and the average time of being a Christian was over 50 years. They were amazed at the things they did not know. They all reported that they wished they had been taught how to walk with Jesus earlier in their faith.

One man said sadly, "Had I known how much Jesus wanted a relationship with me when I was 18, I would not have wasted 20 years of my Christian life."

Other reasons that leading this program for an entire congregation could be beneficial:

- Participants see the value in developing new believers.
- The spiritual maturity level of the congregation grows in Christ.
- Groups develop a greater sense of community and belonging.

## Campaign

In order to create a congregation-wide or ministry campaign for your church, the following ideas and options can help supplement your plans in your unique environment:

- Have a season of prayer leading up to the launch.
- Prior to launch, preach or teach messages on the value of shepherding (Psalm 23; John 21:15-17; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
- Dedicate 8 weeks for doing *50 Steps With Jesus*; try to avoid competitive programs.
- Weekly sermons can be based on the Big Step themes discussed in steps 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 36, 43, and 50.



- Implement the Big Step themes in all of your ministry groups for the weekly curriculum:
  - Small groups
  - Sunday school
  - Spiritual formation programs
  - Specialty groups such as women, youth, seniors, etc.
- The members would do their Big Steps in a group and then do the daily lessons on their own and be in contact each day with another member.
  - If possible have members sign-up to be either “New Believers/Students” or “Shepherds.”
  - In some groups, people may want to practice being both.
  - In some small groups or families, three or four may be together contacting each other as shepherds and/or new believers/students.
- Have a celebration on the eighth week when you reach Big Step 50!
- Have participants who feel led to participate in ongoing shepherding sign up to become part of your lamb shepherd team.
  - If possible, have shepherds who will shepherd in specialties:
    - Children
    - Female youth
    - Female adult
    - Male youth
    - Male adult
    - Special needs
  - Develop a plan for usage that is common knowledge to the entire congregation so they know whom to contact for support of new believers.

## WHERE CAN YOU GO FOR MORE ANSWERS? (FAQS)

### Can we print this on our own?

You have permission in the front of these guidebooks to print as many as you need for your ministry, so long as they are not used for resale.

### Can we modify the materials to fit our specific needs?

You are welcome to modify or add to these materials to meet the needs of your congregation. If you do a new language rewrite or insert your preferred translation, please let us know. We might be able to put it out on our website for others to use.

### How do we contact you?

You can contact us at ***GodsGreaterGrace.com*** for the following:

- 50 Steps Training Videos
- Campaign Starter Video
- Ministry Updates
- A contact form to ask specific questions

### Final Thoughts

Marie was the first lamb, and my wife, Marsha, was the first shepherd. Marie was a sergeant in the United States Air Force. She was not churched, but knew spiritually that she needed something more in her life. At the particular Air Force Base where she lived and worked, a small worship service was starting to reach her isolated neighborhood. Marie came to the worship services faithfully with her daughter. She became a Christian and was baptized on Easter.

Marsha asked her to go through *50 Steps With Jesus* with her. They met weekly, and Marsha texted Marie daily, in between their face-to-face meetings. Marie did not know about the Bible or about belonging to a local church, but she learned very quickly. Her countenance was one of joy as she loved Jesus and learned to walk and talk with Him throughout each day. We are so thankful to God that He laid this idea on our hearts and then sent Marie into our lives.

I join co-authors, Marsha Harvell and Wendy K. Walters, in our prayers that the Lord will richly bless you and your ministries as you feed well the lambs that God has given you. Have an amazing Journey!

*Ron Harvell*

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Learning to Walk Daily With the Lord