

SMI *From My Perspective...*

With advancements in technology and our industrial world, we have so transitioned from an agricultural society that we almost do not realize that it still exists. We go the grocery store to buy food, but we do not think about the agricultural process that brought it there. Many today would agree we simply cannot survive without the harvest. It is an essential foundation of our lives and is something we celebrate as a nation each fall, but because we are not an agricultural society, most people do not understand many agricultural analogies.

Once a common agricultural way of life, shepherding is an unfamiliar term in our modern society yet so rich with meaning and value. The biblical model of spiritual leadership is that of a shepherd, and it is just as true that we are still the sheep of God's pasture. It's a timeless truth to be regarded and practiced in the church even in this changing world in which we live. Without shepherding, we as sheep perish.

We need shepherds. Shepherds lovingly care for smelly, dirty sheep and with gentle voice lead them to sources of refuge and supply. Tending the flock, shepherds watch over each sheep carefully, intimately knowing them by name, tenderly listening or sensing needs, quietly moving among them to give guidance or direction, consistently available to serve or render aid, guarding or protecting to ensure their safety and happiness, diligently committed to do whatever it takes to provide for their nourishment and health. The well being of the flock is dependent on the quality of care given by the shepherd.

In SMI's program of facilitating paid ministry apprenticeships, students are required to be involved in ministry in a way that fosters individual interaction with people for the purpose of discipleship in some way that is both measurable and accountable. And it is expected that such interaction be the majority of the student's weekly time investment. This intentional investment in people is the foundational premise of ministry as portrayed in the Bible and displayed by Christ Himself. No matter the area of ministry to which we are called, it is the people whom we serve. It is our hope that through this ministry focus students will embrace this understanding and master the art of shepherding and ministering to God's people—proactively building it into their life of ministry no matter where God may lead them and putting their life on the line for the precious people they lead to draw them closer to Jesus. A passion for investing in people is essential for effective ministry. If people get lost in the shuffle of ministry, then what is the point of what may be called ministry? Irresponsible shepherds are forewarned of God's severe judgment. Shepherds who are responsible and trustworthy are assured of His blessings.

"To be a good shepherd, you have to smell like the sheep." May we not be afraid to get a little dirty in the mess of ministry. Jimmy R. West
Executive Director

MINISTRY FOCUS

"I made her happy."

Recently, I had an opportunity to visit with one of the elderly couples in our church, Margaret and Al. Margaret is essentially homebound, suffering through a severe case of rheumatoid arthritis. Her husband Al, reminding me of the wonderful example of both of my own grandfathers, lovingly cares for Margaret, attending to her needs. Al is a quiet man, but he doesn't have to speak. You can tell of his love for his wife by his actions and by the attention he pays her.

After a nice visit with Margaret and Al, I got up from my seat to leave. Margaret, with a sparkle in her eye, told me to take a look at her bouquet of flowers over by the door. I smiled and asked Margaret where she had gotten them. She pointed over to her husband and said, "Al gave me those." With a slight grin on his face, Al said, "I made her happy." I wanted to give him a high five, but didn't think that would be appropriate for someone who was dealing with the pain of arthritis himself. In the beauty of the moment, I simply replied, "Yes, you did."

I'm reminded of the Apostle Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 5:25: "Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Al loves his wife, unselfishly placing her needs above his. Now that is my idea of a role model.

James Dickson is pursuing a Master of Divinity at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina. Though he has an engineering and business background, he is now called to pastoral ministry. He is serving as a pastoral intern at Christ Community Church where he seeks to gain ministry experience and improve ministry skills.

CORE VALUE

SMI strongly emphasizes the importance
to cherish and respect people.

Having a passion for people is essential for effective ministry. High regard for investing in people is inherent with a ministry call and the shepherding process. At SMI, this begins with staff modeling such behavior in interacting with its students and ministry partners while requiring this same emphasis in its ministries performed by students. The hope is that this foundational premise will be embraced and practiced by student ministers throughout their life of ministry and extended in relationships with others.

recommended resources...

- A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23 by Phillip Keller
- They Smell Like Sheep by Dr. Lynn Anderson
- Spiritual Leadership for the 21st Century (Volume 1)
- Leading with the Heart of a Shepherd (Volume 2)

reading
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leading

• • • • • Avenues of Giving

Donors have several options when giving to SMI:

1. Mail check or money order.
2. Monthly contributions can be automatically deducted from your checking account. Automatic contribution (EFT) forms are available on the website or from students.
3. Credit card via our website.
4. Many companies will match contributions made to non-profit organizations through their employee matching gifts program. We have received matching gifts from companies such as Macys, Exxon, AXA Financial, etc. as a result of donors' efforts to access these resources. Maximize your gifts by checking with your company to see if they have a matching program.
5. Many companies are limited in supporting religious organizations; however, employees can re-direct gifts through United Way to SMI. Simply communicate with your company's United Way representative to initiate this process.
6. Stock Donations: Individuals can take advantage of a tax deduction for appreciated stock gifts. Contact the SMI office for details.



• • • • • Spread the Word!

If you know of someone who can benefit from the ministry of SMI, please tell them about our ministry. Remember, it's not just students who can benefit—churches as well as schools and individuals benefit also.

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Contractor Stats! (2008–2009)

School	Students	Contributions	School	Students	Contributions
Dallas	19	\$37,770	Haggard / Azusa*	1	\$650
Baptist Bible*	1	\$0	International Schools*	1	\$0
Baylor / Truett	1	\$1,065	Mennonite Brethren*	1	\$0
Bethel	3	\$13,320	Moody	1	\$3,670
Bethlehem Inst	2	\$9,990	Phoenix*	1	\$50
Biola / Talbot	5	\$8,775	Princeton	1	\$0
Calvary Theological*	1	\$0	Reformed Theological	6	\$14,675
Capital Bible	1	\$8,615	Regent Univ*	1	\$0
Columbia	2	\$2,225	The Master's	1	\$3,590
Covenant	6	\$17,865	Trinity Evangelical	6	\$17,604
Denver	2	\$7,670	Tyndale Theological	1	\$3,795
Fuller	3	\$7,700	Western	1	\$2475
Golden Gate	2	\$2,534	Western Theological*	1	\$180
Gordon Conwell	4	\$12,929	Wheaton	1	\$1,553

Over a half million in support of student ministries!

*Recently approved students

Our Vision

Our hope is that students will not only be blessed financially through SMI but they will be enriched spiritually and personally as well. During the time God has entrusted them to our care, our primary focus is to invest in this next generation of ministers. Our goal is to provide relevant resources to encourage and enhance their personal and professional growth. It is our desire that this investment in tomorrow's ministers will retain life-long effects with far-reaching rewards as they develop and equip those under their leadership and impact those who are involved in their ministries.

Investing in Tomorrow's Ministers Today

- *Personally*
- *Professionally*
- *Financially*

Our Mission

SMI empowers the next generation of ministers to maximize their opportunities today in order to increase their effectiveness tomorrow.

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*A higher standard.
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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