

The Gospel Shepherding Toolbox

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Much like a carpenter has a box of tools available to aid him in his work, the gospel shepherd has tools available to care for others.

- 1) **Questions** – Jesus was a master at asking questions to provoke conviction or bring understanding. Questions are perhaps the most powerful way to move people toward a right understanding of their heart, their need, and the truth.
 - Learning to ask good questions is probably the best gospel shepherding skill to master
 - Utilize two types of questions: extensive (broad, gathers information) and intensive (pointed, leading toward an end)
- 2) **Stories & Anecdotes** – Jesus rarely told the truth to people in plain, boring terms. He almost always illustrated the truth to them through stories and parables because he knew this was a much more effective way of communicating truth (Nathan confronting David in 2 Samuel 12 is another great example of this).
- 3) **Scripture** – Jesus had a solid working knowledge of Scripture and how it applied to every situation. He brought Scripture into his encountering situations with people as it applied. You cannot biblically counsel people without actively using Scripture. Continue knowing and memorizing Scripture, and show people the truth you are speaking to them in the Word!
- 4) **Discernment** – Jesus was so in tune with the Father he was able to discern what people needed, what they were after, and what their hearts were like. He knew what they needed to hear, when they needed to be challenged, and when they weren't yet ready to receive total truth. Through the Spirit we too can have discernment in gospel shepherding. This requires that we are actively listening to Him as we counsel.
- 5) **Love** – Jesus had genuine love and compassion for those he talked with, even when they were entrenched in sin and blind to it. Love shaped the way he encountered people. Love shapes the way we encounter people, too.
- 6) **Time** – Jesus knew that genuine change takes time. He didn't ask people for an immediate response. He didn't force them to make decisions on a set timeline. Look at the patience he had with his disciples.