

LECTURE 1: Mapping Pastoral Care 4, 11, 18, 25 May 2023, 730-930pm

Class Description

Today, pastoral care is commonly talked about, expected and offered - not only in churches but also in schools in Singapore. Many churches aspire to strengthen their 'pastoral care' to serve the needs of their congregations. Staffs and members are sent for training to be equipped with pastoral care skills. This class aims to take a step back and ask a fundamental question: What is exactly 'pastoral care'? Most importantly, what does God think about pastoral care? How does God want us to do pastoral care?

Learning Goals

By the end of this session, you will be able to:

- Think biblically about pastoral care by making connections from the Bible to pastoral care, gaining better clarity on how pastoral care fits into God's grand plan and purposes for the world.
- Gain better understanding of how historically pastoral care, influenced by secular psychology, has evolved and drifted away from the gospel of Christ.
- Develop a ministry framework that locates the different forms of pastoral care within the life and ministry of the local church.
- Reflect and assess the pastoral care approach of your local church.

Required Pre-Reading

- PURVES, Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition, p1-5.

Further Reading

On Shepherding:

- WITMER, The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church
- PIERRE & REJU, The Pastor & Counselling: The Basics of Shepherding Members in Need
- LANIAK, Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible

On Word Ministry:

- LEEMAN, Word-Centred Church: How Scripture Brings Life and Growth to God's People
- DEVER, 9 Marks of a Healthy Church

On History of Pastoral Care:

- PURVES, Pastoral Theology in the Classical Tradition.
- HOLIFIELD, A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization.
- THAM&D'ROZARIO, Pastoral Care in Singapore Schools: Its Concept & Practice.

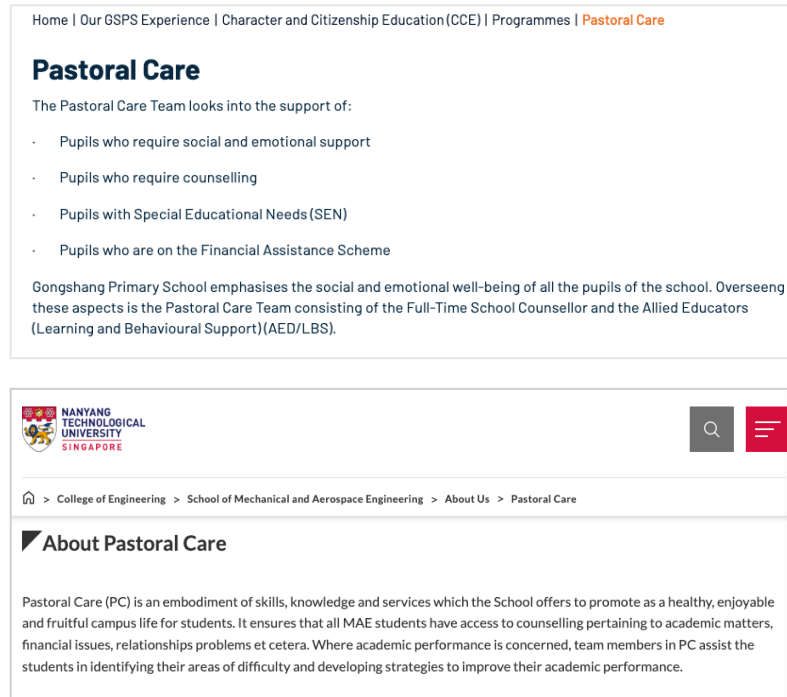
Homework

Based on what you have learnt from the class about biblical pastoral ministry (and its subset pastoral care), reflect and assess your local church's current ministry approach to pastoral ministry. In which areas is the church doing well, and where could the church do better?

LECTURE 1: Mapping Pastoral Care
5, 15, 22, 28 May 2025, 730-930pm

1. Pastoral Care' Today & In Church History

2023 'Pastoral Care' in Gongshang Primary School & NTU



How did we get here?

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 358AD | Gregory of Nazianzus: 'Physician of Souls' |
| 590AD | Gregory the Great: 'Consideratio' & Spiritual Perspective |
| 1541 | Martin Bucer: 'On the True Pastoral Care' |
| 1700s | Revivalism ⁱ |
| 1859 | Darwin's <i>Origin of Species</i> ⁱⁱ |
| Late 1800s | Psychology Evolution with Wundt & Freud ⁱⁱⁱ |
| WW1&2 | Wartime clergy ^{iv} |
| Mid 1900s | Carl Rogers' Person-centred Approach ^v |
| | <i>Carl's theory involves a self-concept, which subsumes three components: self-worth, self-image and ideal self. Rogers developed an approach of client-centred therapy to help people self-actualize, or reach their full and unique potential.</i> |
| 1930s | Boisen & Clinical Pastoral Education ^{vi} |
| 1980s | Pastoral Care in schools concerns the promotion of health and wellbeing, resilience, academic care and social capital. ^{vii} |
| 1987 | Total excellence in schools ^{viii} |
| 2023 | 'Pastoral Care' in schools, hospitals, churches. |

'Pastoral Care' Today

'Pastoral Care and Guidance seek to help students realise their potential and work towards actualizing it...It must be noted that the term does not have any spiritual connotation... not only intellectual but social and emotional' (7th APECA, 1987). Is 'pastoral care' today removed from its biblical roots? What does God say in His word about pastoral care?

2. 'Pastoral Care' in the Bible

a) Pastoring = Shepherding

pastor (n.)

late 14c. (mid-13c. as a surname), "shepherd, one who has care of a flock or herd" (a sense now obsolete), also figurative, "spiritual guide, shepherd of souls, a Christian minister or clergyman," from Old French *pastor*, *pastur* "herdsman, shepherd" (12c.) and directly from Latin *pastor* "shepherd," from *pastus*, past participle of *pascere* "to lead to pasture, set to grazing, cause to eat," from PIE root ***pa-** "to feed; tend, guard, protect." Compare **pasture**.

b) God as Shepherd of Israel

(Psalm 77:20 Ezekiel 34:11-16, Psalm 23:1-6)

c) Israel's King as Shepherd

(2Samuel 5:2)

d) Israel's Leaders as failed Shepherds

(Ezekiel 34:1-10, Jeremiah 23:1)

e) The Messiah as Shepherd

(Ezekiel 34:23-24, Jeremiah 3:15)

f) Jesus as Good Shepherd

(John 10:14-16, Luke 15:3-7)

g) Elders as Shepherd of God's Flock

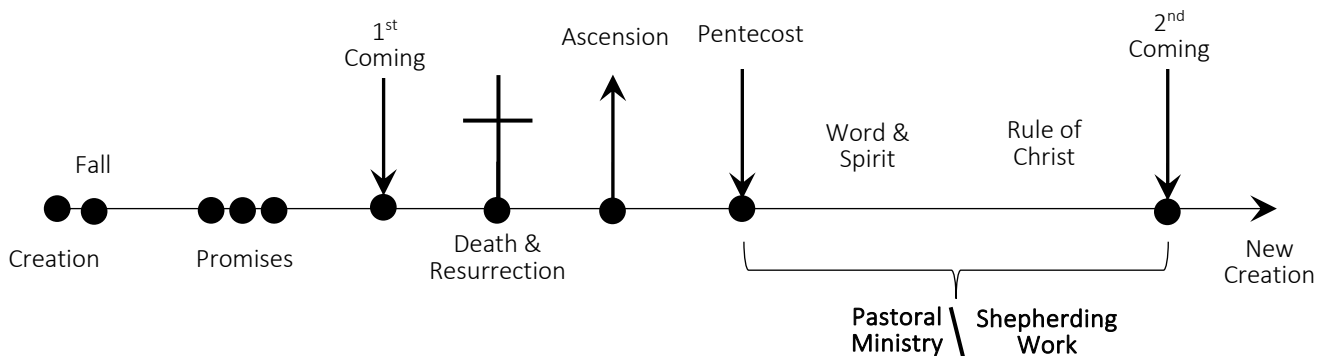
(Acts 20:28-29, 1Peter 5:1-11)

Shepherding/Pastoring in the Bible

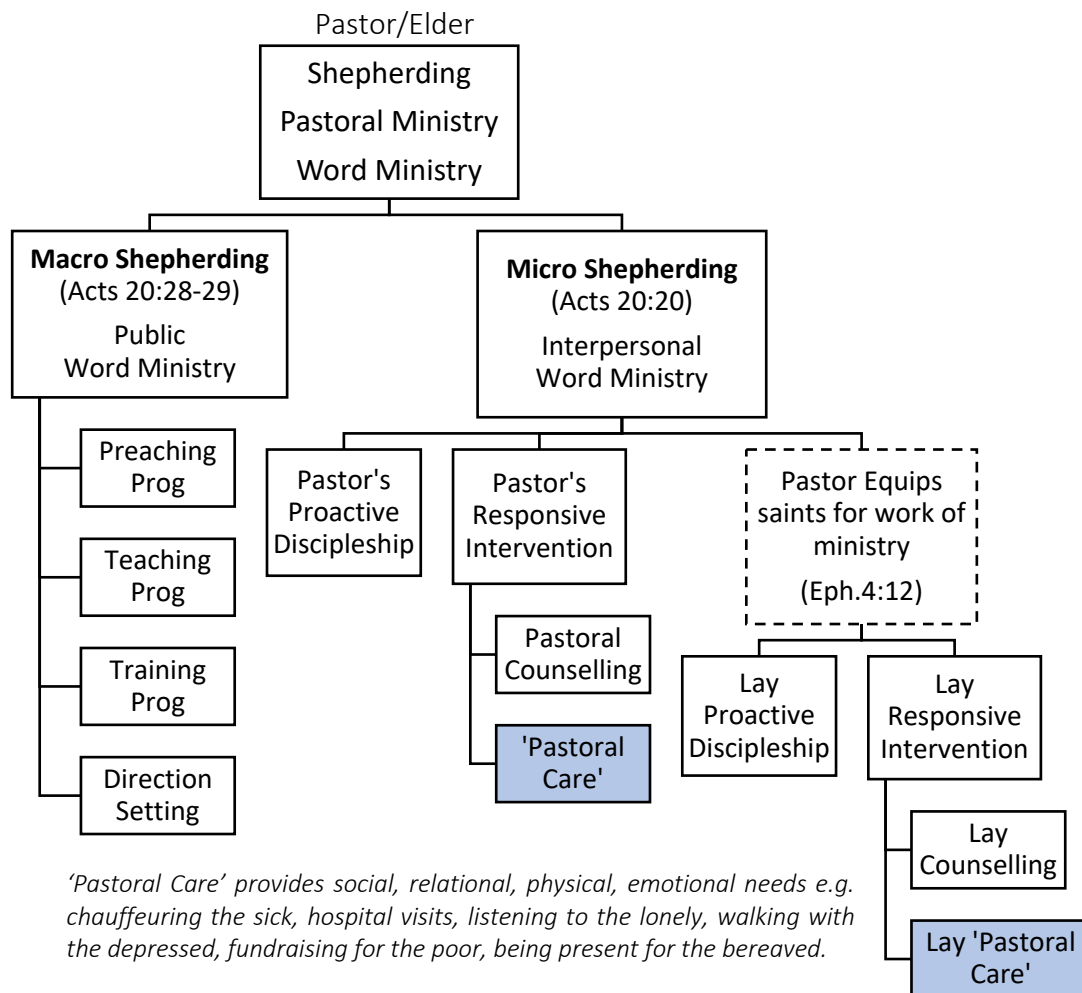
1. **God** is the ultimate Shepherd of His people who leads His people into eternity with Him.
2. **Jesus Christ** is God's chosen Chief Shepherd who laid his life as the sacrificial Lamb to rescue God's people, and through whom God now rules over and cares for His people.
3. **Elders** are God's gifted shepherds (pastors) through whom Jesus rules and cares for God's people through His Word by His Spirit.
4. **Shepherding** concerns the sacrificial, authoritative and compassionate leading of God's people under God, by His Word, into Eternity with God – which involves protecting, providing and guiding the people.

3. 'Pastoral Care' in Pastoral Ministry

a) Pastoral Ministry / Shepherding Work in God's Plan & Purposes



b) 'Pastoral Care' in Pastoral Ministry



c) 'Pastoral Care': A Working Definition

'Pastoral Care' is part of Shepherding which is the sacrificial, authoritative and compassionate leading of God's people under God, by His Word, into Eternity with God. It involves providing social, relational, physical, emotional needs to create a context where sufferers are cared for wholistically with the goal to shepherd them into eternity.

4. 'Pastoral Care in a Local Church

Life Issues

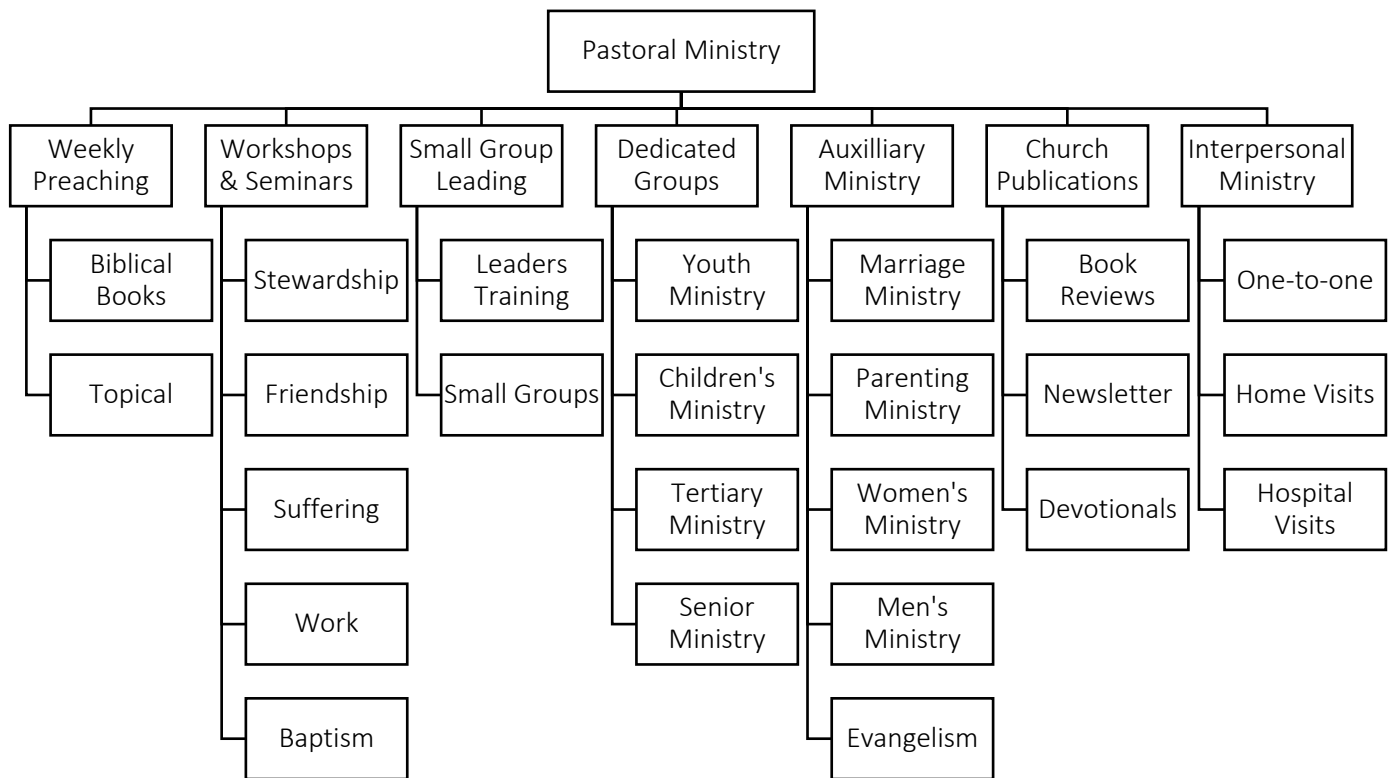
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|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Marital Abuse | Marital Conflict | Premarital Sex | Miscarriage | Infertility |
| Dating Unbeliever | Porn Addiction | Alcoholic | Gambling Addiction | Gaming Addiction |
| Same-sex Attraction | Eating Disorder | Discontentment & Jealousy | Workaholic | Anger |
| Adultery | Dementia | Down Syndrome | Work Stress | Suicidal Ideation |
| Chronic Pain | Terminal Illness | First Child | Loneliness | Caregiver Fatigue |
| Unemployment | Postnatal Depression | Insomnia | Conflict | Financial Stress |

Spectrum of Issues



| Easy | Mild | Moderate | Severe | Crisis |
|------|------|----------|--------|--------|
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Typical Local Church Ministries



Exercise

Pick a few life issues. For each: 1) Reflect on how you perceive the issue, where on the spectrum would you typically place the issue? 2) Where in the ministry of the local church has pastoral care on this issue be given, and the lay equipped to offer care?

5. Case Scenarios

Based on what you have learnt from the class about biblical pastoral ministry (and its subset pastoral care), what would pastoral care for this individuals involved in a given week?

a) Grieving Grace

Grace recently lost her mom to cancer. Soon after retirement, the seemingly healthy and active Christian lady was unexpectedly diagnosed with stage four lung cancer. After few months of chemo treatment, she died last week – less than a year after diagnosis. She is survived her husband and her only child, Grace. While Grace finds comfort in mom being a believer, she is grieving by the sudden loss - she was very close to her mom.

b) Depressed Danny

Danny relocated recently from Auckland to Singapore for work. This is the first time is away from his family and church. For 6 months, he finds it hard adjusting to the new work culture, and struggles with making new friends in a big church. His diet and sleep routine hasn't been great. He has started seeing a psychiatrist and a counsellor, was diagnosed with depression and put on anti-depressants. Though difficult, he can still function at work and move around.

c) Hospitalised Horace

Horace's wife is pregnant and expecting to deliver any time soon. One Sunday afternoon after church, Horace ruptured his Achilles tendon in basketball game. Horace is admitted to prepare for surgery the next day. He has to stay a night for observation post-surgery and will be on crutches for at least the next 6-8 weeks.

d) Marriage-Conflicted Maggie

Maggie shared recently that her marriage to Colin hasn't been in a good place for a while. At the beginning they still raised their resentment and issues to each other, even though there was hardly resolution. But now they have both 'given up' and not fight anymore. They busy themselves with work and hardly talk to each other, except for logistical arrangements around family affairs. There is no emotional connection, and she is considering divorce.

e) Same-sex Attracted Sam

f) Addicted Andy

Andy shared privately with you that he has been struggling with porn addiction since high school, when he accessed internet porn regularly. There were porn-free periods, especially after he became a Christian in university. In fact, he remained porn-free many years into his marriage. However, last year when he experienced great work pressure, felt disconnected with his wife, frustrated with parenting – he turned to porn, and it has been unabating since.

ⁱ Revivalism concerns with drawing crowd, preaching to masses, have conversion as the goal, focus on instantaneous change. This Christian culture consumed with revivalism for many decades led to a weakening in their ability to reflect deeply on pastoral care.

ⁱⁱ With the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*, the church was in crisis as it undercut the confidence of Christians in the authority of the Bible. Christians focused on mounting a biblical defense. This preoccupation led to a vacuum in the pastoral care realm which allowed modernists to penetrate it with secular ideas.

ⁱⁱⁱ While the church was in hiatus, the psychology evolution happened. Wundt advocated psychology in secular scientific terms, and Freud removed 'soul care' from the church by introducing psychotherapy. Secular psychologists gained ascendancy employing scientific method to understand people in their relationships with others.

^{iv} Psychology was introduced to the military during the wars for enlistment and treatment of 'shell shock' on the battlefield. Chaplains or wartime clergy were deployed, and they felt unqualified to help battle-torn soldiers to deal with complex problems they faced, 'They lacked the skills appropriate to cure souls'.

^vAs Christian reflection on these matters decreased, secular reflection and practice was on the rise. The work of Sigmund Freud led the work of dozens of others until, by the middle of the twentieth century, most Christians who take seriously the responsibility to care for people's problems in living had adopted the person-centred approach to counselling of Carl Rogers. Christian thinking had given way to secular thinking in the ministry to persons. p35.

^{vi} Boisen focused on the study of people in distress rather than the biblical text. Biblical categories immediately gave way to pastoral counselling theory. Lack of Scripture and dominance of psychology marked pastoral care literature since.

^{vii} Pastoral Care is 'no longer been one of leading people to their salvation in the next world, but rather of ensuring it in this world'

^{viii} In February 1987, Singapore's Minister for Education, Dr Tony Tan and twelve school principals visited acknowledged good schools in the United Kingdom and United States and commended their efforts in ensuring not only their students' academic development but a total development of the individual in the personal, social and vocational aspects of their maturation. In a report which followed called, Towards Excellence in Schools (1987), strong recommendations were made to introduce pastoral care into Singapore schools. This paper highlights some concepts of pastoral care, how it is being developed and practised in Singapore as well as how teachers are being prepared to assume their role as caregivers.