

Core Leader as the Shepherd Who Cultivates Caring

“...like a mother caring for her little children. We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.” ~1 Thessalonians 2:7-8

The only way to care for the people you are shepherding is to invest your time and emotional energy into their lives. This means getting involved and sharing yourself with them.

This can sometimes be difficult. We might be disappointed with someone who is screening calls or has difficulty completing the lesson. Or maybe they are sporadic in attendance. We could wonder why they resist our efforts to show caring. Why don't they want a relationship with us? Why don't they want a closer relationship with the Lord by fully committing to the study?

Be sympathetic and try to remember yourself when you were just beginning your commitment to Bible study. **Let your love and caring for them be a reflection of God's unconditional love for you.** Carefully encourage each core member as they journey to the Lord, whether that journey is a stroll or a sprint, your call/ effort to connect is to keep them focused and with the help of the Holy Spirit, headed in the right direction. You may never see the result of your efforts but you can be assured that you are making a difference in the lives of your core members.

Questions:

1. Think about the people who have made the biggest positive impact in your life? In what ways did they exhibit caring?
2. What are some ways to overcome your reluctance to “keep trying” as you care for your core members that might be uncooperative?
3. What is your first reaction when someone you are trying to shepherd pushes back and puts up barriers or is totally uncommitted to participating fully in the study? How can you become more like Christ in your response to them?