

Pastoral Accountability
Lesson Plan
Mel Shetler

Lesson Purpose: To give a context and specific tools for healthy pastoral accountability

Lesson Overview: This lesson explores the benefits of pastoral accountability. The lesson also provides principles that will keep accountability forward-moving and helpful, as well as specific tools to support this.

Opening: The role of medicine has expanded to include prevention. A check up at most doctors' offices now includes teaching about practices that promote health, as well as diagnosis of problems already presenting themselves. Accountability can support the building of habits that bring spiritual health and healing when patterns have caused separation from God and people. Accountability in the church is a tool for people to help others see themselves more clearly.

Scripture Reading: I Corinthians 12:1-27

Mini Lecture: Watch the video *Pastoral Accountability*

Exercise 1: Hit-and-Run Critics Versus Life-Changing Critics

Think about a time you have been criticized either by a hit-and-run critic or a life-changing critic. On an index card, jot a few notes about how this experience impacted you. What made the criticism fall into either the hit-and-run category or the life-changing category? Share your reflections with the group.

Exercise 2: Sequence When Confronted

Think about what can go wrong if the order of steps in Sequence When Confronted would be changed. What would happen if you went to the closest to you first, before God? What could happen if you responded to the confronter right away—before going to God and to people close to you? Discuss your thoughts with the group.

Exercise 3: Police Versus Partners

Think about the differences in experiences when someone is approached by the “religious police” verses a “supporting partner.” As a group, complete the following chart.

What are the Differences?	Religious Police	Supporting Partner
Attitudes of the Approacher		
Tone of Comments		
Reactions of Hearer		
Outcomes		

Exercise 4: Accountability Questions

Review Shelter's three categories of accountability questions. Which questions in each category do you feel are especially important? What questions are missing from each category? What categories are missing? What is your analysis of Shelter's informal, flexible use of these questions? Discuss your reflections with the group.

Exercise 5: The Body of Christ

The mini-lecture concludes with recognition of the connections of Christians in the body of Christ. The scripture for this lesson reminds readers of the gifts spread across the body of Christ. How do the gifts impact accountability? Discuss your thoughts with the group.