

WHY DO WE NEED SHEPHERDING?

June 25, 2007

WORD OF GRACE BIBLE INSTITUTE

SLAVIC BIBLE CHURCH

Only by God's grace and His continued work with the next generation of the Russian-speaking church leaders, we are inspired to briefly introduce to you the blessings of our new course called *Effective Shepherding*.

Hold on! Let's preview..... Slavic Bible Church is privileged to serve as a base of the Word of Grace Bible Institute (WGBI), which is specifically designed to supply spiritual leaders of Russian churches with quality training in the area of Biblical theology, demonstrated by real-life ministry. One of the merits of this institute is that the program has been elaborated by the ministers who firmly believe in the power and sufficiency of Bible and, at the same time, well-acquainted with the nature of Russian mentality. It developed an effective model in equipping Russian-speaking Christian leaders.

For the past 5 years, besides founding institutes overseas, WGBI offered different courses to leaders of Slavic Bible Church, which is located in Battle Ground, Washington. Such courses include monthly sessions of *Word of Grace School*, twice a month sessions of *School of Spiritual Leadership*, and weekly sessions of *First Steps of Faith* course. It has been a great blessing to witness the transformation of souls and mindset of current and future leaders attending these courses; however, as our ministry continues to expand, we realize



as our ministry continues to expand, we realize the importance of providing more specific training in shepherding. Shepherding is one of the most important elements of every ministry, which should be aimed on "...equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." – Ephesians 4:12. Therefore, within the program of the *School of Spiritual Leadership*, WGBI initiated a new course called *Effective Shepherding*.

The Bible is clear that shepherding is not men's idea. This ministry is defined by God. God determined its meaning, its reason and its practical ways. So, designing the *Effective Shepherding* course was not an attempt to invent something new and original. It is just a next step in the proc-



ess of gaining more intimate knowledge of God and being obedient to Him. It is a great blessing to have 93 men who signed up for this course. Each of them has given his life to Jesus once already. Now, because of their love for God, they are practically giving their minds, their strength, their giftedness, and their time to learn how to serve Him. This involves not just engagement in the process of learning in class, but also involvement in a lot of reading and individual research work, as well as participation in practical shepherding under the mentoring of more experienced pastors.

The course concentrates on the key issues in shepherding. It presents detailed Biblical answers to questions such as: "Why do we need shepherd-

ing?" "What do shepherds do?" and "Biblical methods of shepherding." Special parts of the *Effective Shepherding* course are concentrated on the character of shepherd and biblical instruments of shepherding. It is amazing to see, what God already is doing through this course. We would like to share with you one response we received from the seventeen-year-old youth leader, after he read "Reformed Pastor" by Richard Baxter:



I am blessed by grace to understand a portion of what Baxter wrote in his book regarding the labor of the caretaking of souls. Article four of Chapter three called Application was one most striking perspective that Baxter conveyed. He said that our view on life and death must be now as it would be on our death beds; only then we will be adequate ministers of souls. It is difficult to care for anyone when you do not understand the weighty sin that plagues them.

Therefore, through careful examination of my own soul, I must first learn to see the heaviness of sin in my life in light of God's holiness and how deeply it has offended the purity of God and I must submit to His mercy in the tears of my repentance. Only then I will know the terror that occupies the souls of men. This knowledge will wrench my heart to pity the lost sheep and it will hasten my heart and hands to labor for the ransomed.

I am afraid that if this be not the case, I would be completely indifferent toward the precious children of God and all of my work as a minister would be rooted in hypocrisy. I share this as a testimony of the reformation of my heart. I now know that before I help others see and get rid of the vile God-offending sin in their lives, I must see the sin of mine and, through diligent prayer, get rid of it.

To God give thanks, the keeper and reveler of secrets unknown to the carnal man.

This course is special for one more reason. During the last several years, WGBI received several requests to provide leadership training for Russian-speaking churches in many different parts of the world. While it is impossible to be in many places at the same time, modern technology allows us to do that in some sense. WGBI offers this course free of charge for anyone who has access to Internet and who has the urge to study Biblical view of shepherding. Every lesson is broadcasted live via Internet from our website (www.slovo.org). Besides that, each student can download printable version of each lesson and study together with those who are physically present in class.



Our desire and prayer is that this course will help each leader gain personal knowledge of

God and help them learn that, in order to become a true shepherd of the His church, they need to, first of all, personally know the supreme voice of the Shepherd and to be obedient to Him. This is an uneasy process because it requires constant mortification of self being and habits, as well as attaining new habits to reflect the character of Jesus Christ. Without that, true shepherding is impossible. Only by personal worship before God they are able to lead men to Him.



Please pray that *Effective Shepherding* becomes a real instrument for the growth of each leader.

**SLAVIC BIBLE CHURCH
WORD OF GRACE BIBLE INSTITUTE**

Address:
1317 NW 12th Avenue
Battle Ground, WA 98604

Phone: 360-687-3962
Fax: 360-687-3964
E-mail: church@slovo.org

Truth that transforms lives

www.slovo.org