

WANTED: A GOOD SHEPHERD!

1 PETER 5:1-4

In John 10—Our Lord presents Himself as the Good Shepherd, who lays down His own life because He is seeking the good of the sheep.

Peter indicates that those who would function as leaders over God's flock, ought to serve as shepherds, after the model of the Good Shepherd.

Elders are to function as shepherds, caring for the needs of the sheep, just as Christ did.

In reality, that attitude was to be an example of the way in which all Christians ought to function in their relationships with one another. Each seeking the good of the other. Church leadership only is asked to be different than the rest of the flock in that we are to be an example to the rest.

The function of these elders is especially important because of the suffering that the church is going through at that time (4:19 => 5:1 "Therefore")

When the church is in pain because of their faith in Christ, they need the consistent example of godly, mature people who can lead them in the way they ought to go in the midst of persecution.

THE CORRECT ATTITUDE AND CONDUCT OF CHURCH LEADERS IN THE MIDST OF SUFFERING 5:1-4

Leaders among God's people are to be different from other kinds of leaders. They are to look different, and to aspire to different things, than the leaders of this world.

These instructions are particularly directed at the elders of a church.

They also describe the kind of people who ought to be sought for leadership.

As such they represent the ideal for all believers (cf. v. 3–"types" to the flock)

In order to provide the help that their people needed, those in positions of leadership would have to tend their flock before the attackers, just as a shepherd would his sheep before the vicious animals that would attack and devour them.

For elders 5:1-4

"Elder" –looks at the office–their position as respected, *mature* leaders

"Bishop"– "overseer"– refers to their responsibility–to oversee the work of God's

"Pastor"–derived from the verb for "to shepherd"–doing the work of a shepherd: protecting, feeding, guiding

The elders are to provide leadership with an attitude of service (servants)

PETER'S IDENTIFICATION WITH THEM 5:1

Three descriptions:

1. He is a "*fellow-elder*"

Peter is one in ministry with the other elders.

Notice the lessons that the years have taught him.

Matt. 26:31-35

He was the one who would be true, even if all others had forsaken the Lord.

He learned that lesson.

Now, rather than pull rank on these leaders, he identifies as one of them.

He is a "fellow-elder" with them.

He is not chief elder, head of the elders, head shepherd; that's only the Lord.

2. **He is a *witness* to the sufferings of Christ.**

One reason that he could be an elder in a suffering flock was because he had been a witness to the Lord's suffering.

He had seen firsthand how to deal with suffering because he saw the Lord go through it.

The gospels never indicate that Peter was actually present to see the death of Christ. It would seem to imply that some were either afar off, or not to be found. Peter, based on this passage, apparently did stick around, at least off in the distance, to see His death. We know he saw the arrest and trial.

His "hard" counsel to suffering believers was based on that example.

He is a *sharer* of the glory that is to be revealed.

He can tell us about the glory that is to come, because he was there to see the revelation of Christ's glory on the mount.

2 Pet. 1:15-18; Matt. 16:27-17:5

He expects to be a participant in the glory to be revealed, along with us.

He refers to himself as one who will share in the glory to be revealed. Those who suffer share in the glory (4:13). He has learned what he is preaching regarding suffering by personal experience also (Acts 5:40).

Now we are to be such an example so that our people will follow us down the same path as our Lord and Peter followed.

John 21:15-17

He gives them the same command that our Lord gave to Peter just before He commissioned the apostles for their work and departed from them:

"Feed my sheep!"

As a co-elder, Peter models what he asks them to do and be.

He has shepherded the flock of God.

He has had to watch out for his own attitudes.

Now he desires the same for them. ==>

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**THEIR RESPONSIBILITY: SHEPHERDING
GOD'S FLOCK 5:2-3**

BASIC JOB DESCRIPTION 5:2a

They are to function as shepherds, caring for the sheep in their time of need, providing all that they need.

This idea is common in both O.T. and N.T. > Ezek. 34;
Isa. 40:11; Jer. 23:1-4; Matt. 18:10-14; Jn. 21:15-17;
Acts 20:28-29.

A farmer pointed out to a friend his thriving crops and healthy livestock. His companion was especially impressed with the beautiful sheep in the pasture. He had seen the same breed before, but never such attractive animals. Curious, he asked the farmer how he had managed to raise such outstanding sheep. The answer was straightforward but profound: "My friend, I just take very good care of the lambs."

Sheep are prone to wander (They love to roam astray)– *"Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love."*

They follow without thinking.

Like people who do things for no other reason than that everybody else is doing it.

Sheep are defenseless

They are there to feed the sheep, not to boss them around.

Well-fed sheep have a tendency to remain healthy sheep.

They also tend to want more good, solid food.
*Our kids used to be satisfied with french fries.
Then they learned about steak!*

"THAT WILL FEED SOULS!"

The officer in charge of the royal pew in the chapel at Windsor, England, noted that King George frequently commented on the sermon as he left the church. If he had been blessed by it, he would say in a cheerful

voice, "That will do very well. That will feed souls!"
 When the preacher's delivery was cold and his words were lifeless and barren of Gospel teaching, he would shake his head sorrowfully as he left the pew and mutter under his breath, "That won't do. That just won't feed souls!" The king's criterion for determining the value of a sermon is scripturally sound. Ministry of all kinds, whether oral or written, may well be judged by the same standard-does it feed souls?

They are there to feed the sheep the food they need to grow strong.

They are there to protect the sheep from predators
 (Acts 20:28-29)

They are there to provide whatever the sheep need

They are there to lead the sheep to safe places of refuge and rest

They are there to seek after them when they go astray

They are there to find sores and wounds, and to care for those wounds.

It is no easy job to be a shepherd, responsible for caring for the needs of a large flock.

All of this careful attention involves a loving and caring relationship with the sheep.

He loves them.

That love motivates him to go on serving the sheep.

It's a "pastor's heart."

Without it, a leader in God's household isn't much good.

A shepherd is alone most of the time.

No one watches over him to see what he is doing.

He can slough off and fool around most of the time.

But sooner or later it will begin to show in the life of the sheep.

If they aren't being adequately fed, protected from predators, and cared for, the flock will begin to show it!

v.2 concludes with inserted "episkopountes" => ", serving as overseers"

Not included in NAS; included in NIV.

Acts 15:36–Paul and Barnabas were going to *visit* the churches in Asia Minor to see how they were doing. "Visit" is a derivative of the same root as *episkopos*. They were going to check up on them to see how they were doing. That's what elders are called to do—to take an interest in the flock and see how they are doing—then to help them by supplying what they need.

THREE QUALIFYING ATTITUDES 5:2b-3

1. WILLINGNESS

They ought not to serve because of obligation, but out of personal desire to serve God. NOT because someone puts you under pressure!

NOT by compulsion, under pressure, from necessity

BUT willingly, voluntarily, without compulsion

If your motivation for serving in leadership is a sense of "ought" – the obligation to do so, you will burn out quickly.

Cedar: "I have counseled with many pastors who are trapped by this syndrome. They feel they are imprisoned by their calling to ministry. They would prefer to be somewhere else, they are not enjoying their ministry, or they are in a difficult situation from which they would like to escape. To them, the ministry is drudgery."

I counseled with a couple some years ago who were going through this. They were not happy in the ministry but they had nowhere else to go. That was the only thing they knew how to do. They had to do that to eat.

That's a terrible place to be in! If you're not in the ministry because that's where you want to be, get out! There is nowhere else I would rather be. It is the most exciting place on the face of the earth to be – right where God has placed you.

[Bill Hull's two fears: have to go to Africa and marry a girl who is 6'7"]

The appropriate motive is to do so freely, in order to please God – to do His will – to do it His way
["according to God"]

2. ZEAL FOR GOD\EAGERNESS TO SERVE/not personal gain

They ought not to work for self-centered gain, but to assist those who need their help. cf. Ezek. 34:2-3

NOT in fondness for dishonest gain

(shame, shameful + gain)

could refer to a dishonest desire to use the office to gain funds illegitimately (= fraud or embezzlement)

or, it could be a shameful desire for personal gain (as opposed to "dishonest" gain) (cf. Christ's reference to "mammon")

Sometimes the word is used to describe a "tight wad"

Peter's idea: shame enters when money becomes motive

the exaggerated form is seen in the television "evangelist" hucksters

it is just as shameful when legitimate ministries get so caught up with the money that they must dedicate themselves to continual fund raising efforts. "Just send more money folks!" Some organizations use every gimmick imaginable to raise more—especially for their leader.

- \$5000/ mo. "missionary" in Mexico
- "Campaign in Guatemala"
– everything poured back into organizational coffers.

even when the gain is honest, the desire can be shameful and ought not to characterize Christian leadership
this would be true of those who seek to turn ministry into a business, for profit.
=not greedily

BUT willingly, freely, readily, good will(edly)

Peter Davids: "This term indicates zeal, energy, and enthusiasm for the job, . . . and such enthusiasm is the opposite of the calculating spirit that is concerned mainly with how to make money."

<= a deep-seated personal desire, motivated from the gut; NOT motivated from the pocketbook, or some other kind of personal gain.

Swindoll: "Always remember that the ministry is a sacred position—not a profession to practice, but a debt to discharge."

Contrast between serving for profit (for a salary) and serving out of zeal for God.

The leader's eager desire must be to give, not to get. Be greedy to serve, not greedy for money.

* Not for what you can get out of it, but out of an eager desire to serve.

*Do we have to be paid in order to get us to serve?
Are we only willing to serve if they pay us?
Or, are we anxious to serve, whether or not we are ever paid for it?*

Some people are willing to serve, in order to get to something else. He who would be first must be last. But they are only willing to be last, in order to get to be first. That wasn't our Lord's idea here. He is

given first place in the Lord's sight, because he has claimed last place, as servants to the rest, for himself.

3. **MEEKNESS** **(SWINDOLL)**/servicial/humility/example

They ought not to lead as rulers over their people, but as examples for the people to follow.

They are to serve, not by domineering, but by being an example to those they are leading. Mk. 10:42-45; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Cor. 11:1;

In the N.T., teaching or leading was primarily a matter of example, rather than lecture or command.

NOT to gain dominion, to master, lord (it) over, rule

kleron <= lot (< drawing of lots)

<= those who are your assigned lot, those assigned to you, your allotment

Swindoll: "to exercise authority in such a way as to extend dominion over them, to think of them as underlings and yourself as boss."

"Those seeking power want to control, to rule over others. they want to take charge and get their way. They manipulate and maneuver to be in a position of authority so they can hold others in check or force them to get in line."

"Power-mad leaders leave more battered sheep than we would ever believe. Ant the special tragedy of that is that battered sheep don't reproduce, and they seldom fully recover."

BUT "types" for the rest of the flock

type = (tupos < tupto = a blow => the effect of a
 blow = print, impress of a seal => a footprint
 type, model of a thing, an example, a pattern

They are not to lord it over the church, but are to be examples.

They are not to be dictators, but leaders by their way of life.

We are to use our influence, not as an authority, but as an example.

The sheep just follow whatever the shepherd does.
What kind of example are we to others around us?

Example of what? The Christian community was to be known for its mutual respect, submission, humility and love. The elders should show the people what these traits look like in daily living.

Have you ever seen a church that was led by a dictator (even a "benevolent dictator")? He thinks he has to run everything that goes on! That isn't God's pattern. Ultimately it will destroy the church, or the leader, or both!

LET'S KEEP FLYING!

Just before winter sets in, geese from northern Canada begin their journey south, migrating to the lakes and ponds of North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. Perhaps you have seen the majestic flight of those birds - whose wingspan can reach 5 to 6 1/2 feet - as they traverse the sky in their characteristic flight pattern. According to Lamar Dodd's Mark Trail, some authorities believe that "Canada geese fly in a

V-formation to take advantage of the air currents stirred up by the birds flying ahead. The lead goose does most of the hard work, overcoming air resistance." The trailing birds benefit from the ones in front.

All of us are indebted to godly men and women who have gone before us.

LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

Mark Twain. Church leaders were largely to blame for his becoming hostile to the Bible and Christianity. As he grew up, he knew elders and deacons who owned slaves and abused them. He heard men using foul language and saw them practice dishonesty during the week after speaking piously in church on Sunday. He listened to ministers use the Bible to justify slavery. Although he saw genuine love for the Lord Jesus in some people, including his mother and his wife, he was so disturbed by the bad teaching and poor example of church leaders that he became bitter toward the things of God.

THE CHIEF SHEPHERD'S REWARD 5:4

The above does not mean that there is no profit nor reward. There is; but it comes at Christ's appearing, not now. 1 Cor. 4:5

Not money
Not power
Not even appreciation

No sheep (in the natural realm) ever went to the trouble to express its appreciation to the shepherd who cared for it. They just aren't affectionate beings.

The shepherd who cares for his sheep with the expectation that they will express appreciation in return is destined for frustration.

He can expect, however, that he will receive an expression of appreciation from the owner of the flock.

We are too prone to look to the flock for our reward. In the divine economy, we can expect that the owner of the flock will reward the shepherd for his service.

When they are faithful in ministering in the way Peter has indicated above, they will receive an appropriate reward.

In this way their ministry will be effective and they will be appropriately rewarded.

v. 4 provides a word of encouragement for the elders.
They will receive a reward.
It will not come now, but it will come later.
There is a crown of glory which will be given to those who serve faithfully over the church as elders.

"Chief Shepherd"

Reminds us of:

"Good shepherd (Jn. 10:11)–who gave His life for the sheep

"Great shepherd (Heb. 13:20)–who is perfecting His sheep.

Peter had seen Jesus function as a good shepherd

One who gave Himself selflessly

One who went out seeking the lost sheep

One who wept when He saw the sheep wandering without a shepherd.

One who gave His own life for the sheep

This chief shepherd will come again to reward faithful undershepherds.

He asks the same of Peter Jn. 21

He looks for the same in us

komizo – to take care of, provide for => to carry off as a prize or booty

=> to get for oneself, receive in full, acquire = pay, reward, recompense, something promised

=> to get back for oneself, to recover

amarántinon = unfading, undecaying, imperishable

stephanon = lit., that which surrounds => crown, wreath, garland

made of palm branches

the wreath for the winner of an athletic contest

that which serves as someone's adornment or pride

[= "of boasting"; "of glory"]

Our crown of glory, which will never perish, decay, or fade away, will be given to us by the Chief Shepherd Himself. We will then be privileged to lay it at His feet and to give Him all the glory for whatever has been accomplished (Rev. 4:10; 1 Pet. 4:11).

WHAT LESSONS SHOULD WE LEARN FROM THIS EXHORTATION FOR LEADERS?

Watch your attitude!

1. ***We are to serve as leaders of the flock joyfully, with a willingness to serve, from the heart.***

Not under pressure, not for personal gain, not for more power

Throughout this description of elders, Peter reflects an attitude that is to be present.

2. **We are not to go into this with a self-centered attitude of what's in it for me.**

They aren't to be seeking prominence nor power.
They are sheep-tenders—there to seek the good of the sheep.

3. **We are to lead by example.**

"Sheep must be led, not driven."

Horatius Bonar wrote:

I was a wandering sheep— I did not love the fold; I did not love my shepherd's voice; I would not be controlled.	Jesus my Shepherd is Twas He that loved my soul Twas He that washed me in His blood Twas He that made me whole.
I was a wayward child I did not love my home I did not love my Father's voice I loved afar to roam.	Twas He that sought the lost That found the wandering sheep Twas He that brought me to the fold Tis He that still doth keep.
The Shepherd sought His sheep The Father sought His child He followed me o'er vale and hill O'er deserts waste and wild.	No more a wandering sheep I love to be controlled I love me tender Shepherd's voice I love the peaceful fold.
He found me, nigh to death Famished and faint, and low He bound me with the bands of love He saved the wandering one.	No more a wayward child I seek no more to roam I love my heavenly Father's voice I love, I love, His home.

Is that your testimony this morning?
Lost like a wandering sheep? But found by the Shepherd?

This is an apt description of the way in which the Good Shepherd functions.

How about us?

Are we faithful imitators and representatives of the Good Shepherd?