



1 Peter 5:1-5 Godly Church Leadership

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¹Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, ² shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.⁵ You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. ~ *1 Peter 5:1-5 (NASB)*

Discussion Questions: Who has authority in the church? How should this authority be exercised and received?

(1) **Shepherding the Flock**

- a. **Elders**
 - i. An office of teaching, of adjudicating questions of right & wrong, and of providing pastoral oversight. (New Bible Dictionary - IVP)
 - ii. Pastor, overseer (elder) & bishop are the same role in scripture
- b. **Peter's place** – fellow elder, witness, partaker
 - i. Peter does not place himself over the elders but exhorts in light of judgment (1 Pt. 4:17), Christ's sufferings and glory yet to come.
- c. **Instruction for shepherds**
 - i. Voluntary service
 - 1. The sheep belong to God in the first place, so the elders must be careful to follow God's desire for willing shepherds.
 - 2. Church leaders should enter their roles with a desire to serve. Too often a role is assigned out of urgent need instead of willing service.
 - ii. Beware of greed

1. “sordid gain” : morally ignoble, base; *ESV* – “shameful gain”, *NIV* – “not greedy for money”

iii. An example to imitate

1. Elders should not use authority to coerce or manipulate believers. This would follow the model of politics and military power.
2. Elders addressed elsewhere: Titus 1:6-9 & 1 Timothy 3:1-7

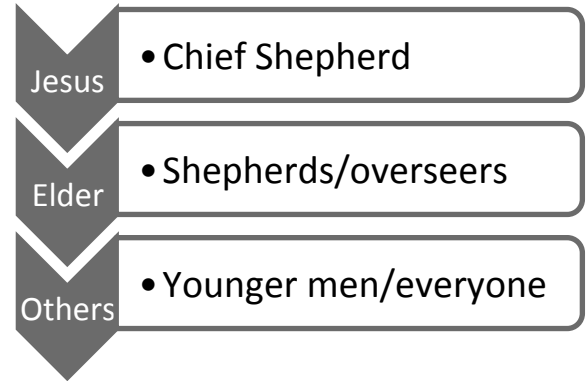
(2) Reward for Service

a. **Reminder of the hierarchy**

- i. The elders should remember that they too are under the authority of Jesus Christ.

b. **Unfading crown**

- i. A crown of garlands was given to victors of athletic contests, benefactors or other heroes. (*The IVP Bible Background Commentary – New Testament*)
- ii. The elders should not seek gain in this life but they can look forward to an eternal reward.



(3) Message for the Flock

a. **Submission**

- i. Echo of the discussion of submission in chapters 2 & 3
- ii. The “young” are mentioned because they are probably most likely to rebel against the authority of the church elders.

b. **Clothed with Humility**

- i. “He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble.” ~ *Proverbs 3:34 (NIV)*
- ii. Applies to “all” – leaders and flock must humble themselves before God.

Summary: Church leaders should be aware of the importance of caring for God’s flock. A leader’s life should be exemplary – characterized by a willingness to serve, the absence of greed and the rejection of abusive power.

Discussion Questions:

How do we cultivate a healthy perspective of authority, submission and humility?

What is one character trait mentioned in which you desire to grow?

How do we live in ways that are worthy of imitation?