

Shepherding the Flock  
1 Peter 5:1-4

### Introduction

Please turn to 1 Peter 5 as we begin our study of this last chapter of this letter from the apostle to Christians in Asia Minor that were beginning to experience the suffering that is part of persecution of the righteous by the unrighteous. Because Jewish people had been persecuted for many centuries because they are God's chosen nation, most Jews were not surprised when it came. However, the Gentile believers to whom Peter was writing were surprised at suffering for the sake of righteousness. Though it is unusual for people that you treat kindly to treat you badly, that is a response that can be expected from the ungodly when your righteous character exposes their sinfulness. Jesus warned His followers about this in the Sermon on the Mount and explained that you were blessed if that happened for your reward in heaven is great and that is the way the prophets were treated before you. Paul was very direct in 2 Timothy 3:12 that *"all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted"*

Peter spends the first four chapters of this letter preparing his readers for such persecution and that is what I have been preaching on for the last eight months since the indications in our own society are that we can expect the same in our own time. Peter begins chapter 5 with the term "therefore" which points back to all he has taught so far. The instructions which he now gives to the church leaders are based on the reality of the suffering that had already come upon the church and would face in the future. The Elders of the church would be responsible for leading and teaching the congregation how to properly prepare and respond as well as being examples in their own lives.

Follow along as I read 1 Peter 5:1-4 which is the first section of this chapter. <sup>1</sup> *Therefore, 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,* <sup>2</sup> *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;* <sup>3</sup> *nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.* <sup>4</sup> *And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

Now before you check out thinking this has little to do with you because you are not an elder, let me assure you that you need to pay attention because what Peter writes here has a direct effect on you. You cannot know if you are under and following a godly leader if you do not know what the responsibilities, work and character of such a leader are supposed to be. If you do know God's standards, then you can properly assess how well someone meets them. This should result in praying for God to be accomplishing such work through your current church leaders as well as personally encouraging them to those ends. It should also result in being cautious about who would be elevated in the church to be such a leader, and it should make you cautious about becoming involved in a church unless the leaders are striving to be and do what Peter writes here. I can tell you plenty of tragic stories of people that did not do that resulting in a lot unnecessary grief and sorrow caused by unqualified church leaders.

### Elders, Overseers & Shepherds - 1 Peter 5:1

Peter begins with an exhortation of the elders among those to whom he was writing. To exhort (παρακαλέω / parakaleō) is to request, appeal, urge, beg, plead, implore someone to do something, which in this paragraph is to shepherd the flock of God entrusted to them by exercising oversight over them in a proper manner. The three main word groups related to church leaders are used in these first two verses. Elders shepherd by exercising oversight. Understanding these three word groups enable you to understand the position, responsibility and work of those who are church leaders. Tragically, the

meanings of these words changed over time as they were applied to church government structures that do not match the Biblical usages and definitions.

**Elder** is πρεσβύτερος / presbuteros. We get our English words Presbyter and Presbyterian from it. The word elder can refer to either someone who is older in age as in being elderly (1 Tim. 5:2) or in comparison with those who are younger in age (Luke 15:25), or it can refer to a position of leadership within a religious or civic group (Acts 14:23; Matt. 16:21). It was common in both Gentile and Jewish societies that there would be a group of older men that were leaders of a city (Judges 8:16), region (2 Kings 23:1) or nation (Exodus 3:16; Numbers 22:4). Most often those who had a position of being an elder were also those who were older in age. Elders were usually also older because wisdom is gained with age. The word came to be used in the church of as a title for its leaders in the position of highest authority due to this same common usage within Judaism, but which was also common in Gentile societies.

**Overseer**, ἐπίσκοπος / episkopos is the noun form of the verb oversee, ἐπισκοπέω / episkopeō, which is used here in 1 Peter 5:2. Our word Episcopalian comes from this term. It is also translated as Bishop. The root meaning of the word group is to *“look upon, to consider, to have regard to, something or someone.”* From this developed the idea of *“to care for, to watch over.”* New Testament usage in the church traces back to religious use of the word group in Greek paganism of the god’s watching over the people in its territory. The Septuagint used this word group to describe God’s looking down to care for the land and people of Israel (Deut. 11:12), which could include correction as well (Exodus 32:34). New Testament usage in regards to the church continues this same idea of oversight for the welfare of the church including visitation to correct. An overseer, a bishop, is someone who oversees, has oversight over the welfare of the congregation including correction.

**Shepherd**, ποιμήν / poimiān, also translated as Pastor, is the noun form of the verb shepherd, ποιμαίνω / poimainō, which is used in 1 Peter 5:2. A shepherd of sheep takes care of them by going before them, leading them to pastures and water, protecting them, healing them, and calling back strays. Shepherd became a common Biblical metaphor for God’s care of His people and for those God put in positions of religious leadership which includes those in the church with such responsibilities. Church shepherds shepherd the congregation to lead and feed them theologically, protect them from the wolves of false teachers, and guide them in the practical matters of living the Christian life.

**Equivalence.** It is important at this point to note here that Peter ties all of these terms together. Elders refer to the position or office of a church leader. Bishop or Overseer generally refers to the responsibility of that office, and Shepherd generally refers to the work of that office, though the emphasis can be reversed in the later two as it is here - shepherd by exercising oversight. In Acts 20:17-35 the Holy Spirit has made the Ephesian Elders overseers of the flock which they are to guard and shepherd.

All three word groups when used in reference to church leaders are referring to the same people. Elder, Overseer and Shepherd refer to one office of church leadership with particular responsibilities and work to be accomplished. In Titus 1 the men appointed to be elders in verse 5 are defined as overseers in verse 8. In Ephesians 11 the gifted men given to lead and teach the church are pastors / shepherds. Churches that have used these terms to refer to different positions within a church denominational structure have done so contrary to New Testament usage. That is tied to historical development in which elders, pastors in certain churches gained influence over and then authority over elders, pastors in other local churches and so started using the term Bishop as a title for their claimed greater authority. That has continued to this day in some religious denominations, but again, that is not the Biblical pattern. Presbyters / Elders, and Bishops / Overseers and Pastors / Shepherds all refer the same church leaders.

**Plurality.** I also need to quickly point out that Peter uses the plural form, “the elders,” and not a singular form such as “each elder.” That is not because he is speaking to numerous local churches scattered throughout the regions of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. It is because the normal practice in the early church was to have multiple elders with responsibility of oversight that would shepherd the people in each church as men were qualified to do so. Many New Testament passages refer to multiple such leaders of a single church. Here are some examples. The church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:50); each city in Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Anitoch had one church with multiple elders appointed to each one (Acts 14:23); the church in Ephesus (Acts 20:17; 1 Timothy 3:17; 5:17-25); the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:1); the individual churches on the island of Crete (Titus 1:5); and here in 1 Peter 1:1; 5:1, the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. James 5:14 also indicates multiple elders in one church in its instructions to saints who might be sick to call for the elders - plural - of the church to come pray. There is no New Testament passage in which it is advocated that an elder give oversight to a church by himself. Only four times does the term appear in the singular. John uses it twice to reference himself (*The elder to . . .*). Peter calls himself a “*fellow elder*” here in 1 Peter 5:1, and 1 Timothy 5:19 simply instructs “*Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.*”

Why is this important? First, there are the obvious benefits of having a shared work load such as Jethro recommended to Moses in Exodus 18. There is also wisdom of having multiple counselors as recommended in Proverbs 11:14; 15:22). But more importantly, this is the pattern God has set for how He wants His people to be lead. There are many churches that continue to advocate and operate according to a tradition that claims in each church there is to be only one Elder, usually called the Pastor. However, as just noted, that is not the Biblical pattern. I grew up in such churches, so I can tell you from experience that when you do not follow the Biblical pattern and instead vest such leadership responsibilities in a single person, you only increase the problems a church faces both from without and from within.

Some have asked, and rightly so, why I am still the only Elder at Grace Bible Church. First, understand that is by default, not purpose. This church is structured to operate by a plurality of Elders, but in the absence of such a plurality, then men from among our Deacons and church officers who have already proven their godly character, form an advisory council which then leads the church. I do not lead the church by myself. GBC is lead by a team of godly men. Be very wary of anyone that wants to be the single source of authority or thinks he can carry out the responsibilities and work of an Elder by himself.

The key issue in church leadership and structure is not in having every office title filled, but rather in having qualified people in those offices and having the most godly and mature people directing the church. There were no elders in any of the churches Paul started until they were mature enough for him to have qualified men appointed. Paul appointed elders in the early churches in Asia Minor listed in Acts 14 on his return trip through them, and each was started from out of a local synagogue. Men from those synagogues that had been elders in them and who had become Christians would already have had the required character qualities. I find it interesting that though the church in Ephesus had elders within a couple of years after it was planted (Acts 20), a decade or more later, Paul directs Timothy about the qualifications needed for those who would serve as Elders in Ephesus (1 Timothy 3:1-7). The churches in Crete had been established perhaps 15 years prior to Paul writing Titus, yet in that letter Paul directs Titus to “*set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed*” after which he listed out their qualifications (Titus 1:5-9). Elders were added only as men met the qualifications. (See: <https://www.gracebible.org/biblical-qualifications-for-church-leaders-1-timothy-3-1-7-titus-1-5-9>)

There is no one in this church that desires a plurality of Elders more than myself, but for those that are concerned about it, the best thing you can do is first, thank God for the godly men who continue to serve on the Advisory Council until there is a plurality of at least three Elders. Second, pray for and

encourage men to rise up to meet the Biblical qualifications which starts with the desire to serve in that ministry role (1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Peter 5:1-2).

### **Peter's Position** - 1 Peter 5:1

#### **Fellow Elder** - 1 Peter 5:1

As we turn attention back to 1 Peter 5, the next thing we notice is Peter's humility in describing his own position in exhorting them and commanding them what they were to do. Peter begins the letter stating that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, and he could have easily restated that here as the basis of authority of commanding them what to do. Instead, he identifies with them as an equal, "*as your fellow elder.*" Peter is a humble man. The command he gives in verse 6 to "*humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time*" was something true he was living out in his own life. He was being the example to them that he was calling on them to be to their own flock. This also tells us that Peter's ministry, though he was an apostle, was still that of an elder, overseer, shepherd. His exhortation to them is coming from this common office responsibility and work. He is neither pontificating or speaking as an ivory tower intellectual about philosophical or theoretical ideas he wants them to carry out. He is exhorting and commanding them based on knowing what he is talking about because he has same office, responsibilities and work. He is personally living it out in his own life.

#### **Witness** - 1 Peter 5:1

Peter also points out that he is a "*witness of the sufferings of Christ.*" A witness is simple someone who tells what he has seen. The term used here, μαρτυρῶς / martus, martyr gained the meaning in later centuries of someone that is killed for their religious beliefs because so many Christians had been killed because of their testimony of being followers of Jesus Christ. Peter did tell others what he saw and experienced in his years with Jesus including Jesus' sufferings. Some of that is recorded in his letters and in the gospel of Mark which Mark wrote based on Peter's accounts. While Peter was not present as Jesus' crucifixion or burial, he was a witness for years to Jesus' suffering at the hands of the Jewish religious leaders including Jesus' arrest and illegal trial which included Peter's own denial of knowing Jesus. Luke records that after Peter's third denial, a rooster crowed and Jesus turned and looked at Peter which caused him to remember Jesus said Peter would deny Him. Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Peter could exhort and command these other elders to help their churches face and respond properly to suffering because he had seen how Jesus responded to suffering. He had mentioned that several times in the previous chapters and very pointedly as the example to follow in 2:21-24; 3:15-18 & 4:1, 13.

#### **Partaker** - 1 Peter 5:1

Peter was also "*a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed.*" Partaker, κοινωνός / koinōnos, is someone that participates in something with someone else. The word can also be translated as partner, companion, associate or sharer. What had Peter shared in? "*The glory that is to be revealed.*" Some have suggested this is a reference to Jesus transfiguration recorded in Mark 9 in which Peter, James & John beheld Jesus transfigured before them to become glorious with His garments radiant and exceedingly white and then Elijah and Moses appearing and talking with Jesus. That is a significant event that shows the nature of Jesus' true glory and foretaste of what is to come. However, though Peter was there and witness of it, and though referring to it would put Peter in a greater position of prestige to strengthen his authority for what he is commanding, that would be the opposite of Peter's humility in identifying himself as a fellow elder, and he speaks here of a future glory, not a past one.

Some suggest this is a reference to John 3:36 that Peter "*shall follow later*" in dying and going to heaven where Jesus would be. However, such a specific reference is doubtful since the gospel of John had not yet been written and only it records that conversation. It is better to see this in keeping with a reoccurring theme Peter has in this letter. Jesus is coming back, and when He does, it will be glorious and Christians will receive their inheritance - 1:4, 7, 11; 2:12; 3:15; 4:7, 13; 5:10.

## **Shepherding The Flock - 1 Peter 5:2-3**

### **The Flock - 1 Peter 5:2**

The exhortation is for the elders to “*shepherd, the flock of God among you.*” Shepherd and sheep is a common metaphor used throughout both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures for God and His people and for God’s appointed leaders and His people. Flock of God then is simply the people of God and specifically in this context are true Christians described in chapter 1 as those caused by God “*to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of the Jesus Christ from the dead (1:3).*” They have not seen Jesus, but love Him, and they do not see Him now, but believe in Him (1:8).

### **The Work - 1 Peter 5:2**

The work to be done by the elders is two-fold. Shepherd and exercise oversight. Shepherd is a command and exercising oversight is a participle which explains the means of carrying out the command. The two concepts blend together. I have already pointed out that to shepherd the congregation is to lead and feed them theologically, protect them from the wolves (false teachers), and guide them in the practical matters of living the Christian life. To exercise oversight is to look out for the welfare of the congregation which includes correction. It carries an idea of personal involvement.

The work of oversight and shepherding is given some more detailed explanation in several passages. I already mentioned Acts 20 and protecting the flock from wolves. Paul did that by preaching the kingdom, declaring the whole counsel of God and admonishing them with tears. You have to be confident in what the Scriptures teach to do that because it may require opposing someone who should know better. Galatians 2:11 records that Paul even had to oppose Cephas (Peter) in Antioch because Peter had allowed the Judaizers to influence him. In Ephesians 4:11-16 the shepherd’s work includes “*equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.*” By training the rest of the body then the whole church body is enabled to become mature and minister to one another. Paul’s exhortation in 2 Timothy 4:2 is to “*preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction,*” and in 1 Timothy 5:18 Paul points out that elders are to lead and labor in preaching and teaching. Those that do that well are worthy of double honor.

### **The Desire - 1 Peter 5:2**

Peter continues on with a contrast that explains the proper desires of the Elder, Shepherd, overseer - “*not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God.*” Compulsion, ἀναγκαστῶς / anagkastōs, is something done due to outside pressure or obligation. Other people expect it of you, or it has become your job, the means by which you make your living. In John 10:12-13 Jesus called such people hirelings and not shepherds because they did not care about the sheep. I will add that church leaders who are hirelings do not care about God either. This is not a reference to the internal conviction by God which Paul speaks of in 1 Corinthians 9:16 saying “*woe to me if I do not preach the gospel,*” or to what Jeremiah 20:9 describes as “*a burning fire shut up in his bones*” if he did not remember or speak anymore in the name of Yahweh.

The contrast is that the proper desire is to do the work of a shepherd voluntarily, ἐκούσιος / ekousios. It is the opposite of being externally forced. It is done because you freely choose to do so. This is why in 1 Timothy 3:1 Paul lists out that the first requirement of an overseer is that it is a fine work he desires to do. The word in that verse is actually ἐπιθυμέω / epithumeō, a strong desire, also translated as lust.

### **The Motive - 1 Peter 5:2**

Peter also points out the motive with a contrast - “*and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.*” The negative here, sordid gain, αἰσχροκερδῶς / aischrokerdōs, pertains to being shamefully greedy for material gain or profit. Such materialism is the opposite of godliness and is one of the characteristics of

false teachers. 2 Peter 2:3 warns about them, *“and in their greed they will exploit you with false words”* adding in verse 15 that this was *“the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness”* (Numbers 22). This was a problem in Crete so Paul warned Titus about those that upset whole families teaching things they should not for the sake of sordid gain and directed him that the elders he was appointing must not be fond of sordid gain (Titus 1:7, 11).

The contrast to this is a proper motive of eagerness, *πρόθυμος* / *prothumos*. It is a willing readiness, alacrity. The motive for the work of shepherding is done out of love for the Lord. In 2 Corinthians 5:14 Paul cites the love of Christ as his motivation for ministry. Paul was so careful about this that he would often work at tent-making in order to earn his own living so that there could be no accusations that he was doing it for the money as was common among the pagan prophets (Acts 20:34; 1 Cor. 4:12; 2 Thess. 3:7-9).

At this point I need to clarify that there is a balance to this. Some churches seem to believe that they should keep the pastor poor materially so that he might be rich spiritually. That is wrong. I have known plenty of men who had such situations. They were more than willing to wear shabby clothes, drive old cars and live in marginal housing in order to minister the word of God. But many had to finally find another ministry that would pay them more so that they could feed their children properly. I already pointed out from 2 Timothy 5:17 that elders that rule, preach or teach well are worthy of double honor which in the context does mean material wages. Paul points out in 2 Thess. 3:9 that he had a right to be paid materially for his spiritual labor among them, but he chose not to exercise it.

And without going to the extreme of those false teachers that are out to fleece their flock, there are those pastors that will not join in a ministry unless they are paid at least a certain amount. That is also wrong. Church leaders are to be the example of trusting God to provide as they seek first Christ's kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:33). To use myself as an example, I believed this is where God wanted me, so I did not ask about my pay when I was hired. There was a place to live and the church leaders promised they would keep me fed and clothed. That was enough for me. It was twelve years before the church was able to pay me enough to meet my actual expenses, yet I never went into debt - which I would not do because that would violate the very Scriptural principles I was seeking to model to the congregation. God always met the needs of my family through other means. Be careful of those that seek first to make sure their own nest is feathered well for they are poor examples at best, and may turn out to be hirelings.

### **The Manner - 1 Peter 5:3**

In verse 3 Peter speaks to the manner in which elders carry out their responsibilities in shepherding and exercising oversight - <sup>3</sup> *“nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.”* Peter paid attention to the lessons the Lord taught him, and this one came from John 13 during the last Supper when Jesus washed all of the disciples' feet to reinforce the lesson He had taught them earlier that they were not to be like the Gentiles whose rulers lorded it over those under them. Instead, the greatest in Christ's kingdom would be the slave of all (Mark 10:42-44). *“Lording it over,”* *κατακυριεύω* / *katakuriēuō*, is to exercise dominion over someone else, to subdue them, to be tyrannical. It is treat others as if they were your slaves whose value was directly related to what they do for you.

Certainly the shepherd has authority, but it is exercised for the good of the sheep and not for self. The full command in Hebrews 13:17 is *“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”* The tyrannical church leader demands to be obeyed because of their position. The godly church leader loves the sheep and seeks the welfare of the sheep at his own sacrifice. He is an example to the flock of godliness demonstrating wisdom that comes from a thorough knowledge of the word of God and being lead by the Holy Spirit. That was the example of Jesus as the

Good Shepherd (John 10). The sheep that want to be godly will desire to obey and submit to such godly leadership and wisdom.

Let me quickly add here that in this context this includes the Elders showing the congregation by their own example how to properly respond to suffering as Peter has described in chapters 1-4, and not just telling others what to do.

Beware of church leaders by whatever title they have - pastor, elder, deacon, minister - that demand obedience simply because of their position. Flee from those that are autocratic. Encourage those who are humble and have a godly example. They are striving to watch out for your soul. Let them do that with joy and not grief.

### **Reward - 1 Peter 5:4**

Peter concludes this section with an encouraging word about the reward that is given to the elders that do these things. They shepherd the flock that God has entrusted to them exercising their oversight voluntarily with eagerness as examples of godliness to the flock instead of the opposite. <sup>4</sup> *“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”* The Chief Shepherd is of course Christ Jesus. Peter referred to Jesus as the Shepherd and Guardian of your soul back in 2:25. Elders are under-shepherds. The sheep belong to Jesus, the good shepherd (John 10:11) who is the great Shepherd of the sheep (Hebrews 13:20). Elders are only stewards of that part of His flock He has entrusted to them for care for the few years of their lives. They will give an account to Him, which would be a scary thought and a reason to flee the position and responsibility if our Lord was not merciful and forgiving. But much beyond that, because our Chief Shepherd is good, gracious, kind and generous, Elders can look forward to a wonderful reward if they are faithful in their service to Him.

Peter describes this reward as an unfading crown of glory. This was a contrast to the rewards commonly given to the winners of sporting events or as a public honor given to someone for their public service. It was usually a wreath of some kind given as a reward that would be placed on the person's head encircling the top or “crown” of the head and hence it is also translated as crown. The Roman's victor's crown was originally made of grass and may have had flowers or leaves wove in. Different flowers and leaves would signify the nature and purpose of the reward. What all those crowns had in common was that they would become dry, wilt and fade away. Peter describes this crown as unfading, ἀμαράντινος / amparantinos, a word derived from the amaranth flower which is unusually long lived. Paul speaks of this same wreath in 1 Corinthians 9:25 in describing part of his motivation in ministry was to receive this imperishable wreath. Unfading here is a cognate of the word used in 1 Peter 1:4 of the Christian's inheritance reserved in heaven which is imperishable, undefiled and will not fade away way. This crown never loses its wonderful, pristine character. It retains its glory, its symbolism of honor and respect, forever.

### **Conclusions**

Those who take on the office of an elder also take on a lot of responsibility and work in then seeking to shepherd and give oversight to the congregation of a church. Beware of those that seek such a position out of wrong desires and motives for the manner in which they perform their responsibilities will be detrimental to you. Pray for, encourage and support those have godly desires, motives which will be demonstrated in their godly example. The responsibilities can seem intimidating, but if God calls you to it, He enables you to do it. It becomes a life of sacrifice, but its rewards are great in this life as you see God working through you to increase the godliness in the lives of others, and its final reward is a glory that is beyond this world.

Sermon Notes - April 16, 2023  
Shepherding the Flock - 1 Peter 5:1-4

## Introduction

1 Peter 5:1-4 are directions to \_\_\_\_\_ on their role in helping the congregation respond properly to suffering  
You can't know what an Elder is to be like if you don't know what \_\_\_\_\_ says about it

## Elders, Overseers & Shepherds - 1 Peter 5:1-4

To exhort is to request, appeal, urge, beg, plead, implore someone - here it is to \_\_\_\_\_ the flock

**Elder**, πρεσβύτερος / presbuteros = those older in age or those holding a religious or civic \_\_\_\_\_ position

**Overseer (Bishop)**, ἐπίσκοπος / episkopos = responsible to care for, \_\_\_\_\_ the welfare of others

**Shepherd (Pastor)**, ποιμήν / poimiān = a person who leads, \_\_\_\_\_, waters, protects, heals, finds lost sheep

**Equivalence** - Elder, Overseer and Shepherd all refer to the \_\_\_\_\_ person - office, responsibility & work

Acts 20:17- 35 - Elders are overseers of the flock which they are to guard and \_\_\_\_\_

The men appointed to be Elders in Titus 1:5 are defined as \_\_\_\_\_ in Titus 1:8

**Plurality** - Peter uses the \_\_\_\_\_ form, "the elders" instead of a singular form such as "each elder"

Specific churches with \_\_\_\_\_ elders: Jerusalem (Acts 11:50), Derbe, Lystra, Iconium & Anitoch (Acts 14:23)

Ephesus (Acts 20:17, 1 Tim. 3:17, 5:17-25), Philippi (Phil. 1:1), the churches in Crete (Titus 1:5). See James 5:14

**Importance** - Benefits include \_\_\_\_\_ work load (Exodus 18) & multiplicity of counselors (Prov. 11:14; 15:22)

It is the \_\_\_\_\_ pattern - and not following the Biblical pattern only increases the problems a church will face

The key issue is having \_\_\_\_\_ Elders, not having every office title filled. Elders are added as men are qualified

## Peter's Position - 1 Peter 5:1

**Fellow Elder** - Peter is an apostle but uses a \_\_\_\_\_ designation by which he identifies with those he is writing

Peter's ministry was that of an \_\_\_\_\_, so his exhortation & command is based on his doing this in his own life

**Witness** - someone who tells what he has seen

Peter was a witness of \_\_\_\_\_ and His sufferings through the time of His arrest and trial

Peter's exhortation & command is based on Jesus' \_\_\_\_\_ which he pointed out in 2:21-24; 3:15-18 & 4:1, 13

**Partaker** - someone who \_\_\_\_\_ in something with someone else - a partner, companion, associate or sharer

Peter was at the transfiguration which revealed Christ's glory, but that was in the \_\_\_\_\_ and not something future

The hope of Peter & all Christians is Jesus' future glorious \_\_\_\_\_ - 1 Peter 1:4, 7, 11; 2:12; 3:15; 4:7, 13; 5:10

## Shepherding The Flock - 1 Peter 5:2-3

**The Flock** - 1 Peter 5:2 - true Christians, those caused by God to be \_\_\_\_\_ - 1 Peter 1:3, 8

**The Work** - 1 Peter 5:2 - *shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight*

\_\_\_\_\_ & feed theologically, protect from false teachers, guide in practical matters of living the Christian life

Paul preached the kingdom, declared the \_\_\_\_\_ counsel of God, opposed error even among leaders

\_\_\_\_\_ the saints for ministry; preached the word & reprove, rebuke, exhort, instruct people with patience

**The Desire** - 1 Peter 5:2 - *not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God*

Compulsion - done out of \_\_\_\_\_ pressure or obligation. The \_\_\_\_\_ of John 10:12-13

This is not a reference to \_\_\_\_\_ conviction by God - 1 Corinthians 9:16; Jeremiah 20:9

Voluntarily is the opposite of external force, it is to \_\_\_\_\_ choose to do it - a first requirement in 1 Tim. 3:1

**The Motive** - 1 Peter 5:2 - *not for sordid gain, but with eagerness.*

Not for sordid gain, being shamefully \_\_\_\_\_ for material gain or profit. A mark of a false teacher - 1 Peter 2:3

With eagerness - a \_\_\_\_\_ readiness, alacrity. Out of love for the Lord - 2 Cor. 5:14

It is wrong for churches to purposely keep their pastor(s) \_\_\_\_\_, faithful pastors are worthy of double honor

It is wrong for pastor(s) to \_\_\_\_\_ a certain amount for they are to model trust in Christ to provide (Matt. 6:33)

Beware of those who \_\_\_\_\_ and those that want to feather their own nest - they are poor examples & hirelings

**The Manner** - 1 Peter 5:3 - *not lording it over . . . but proving to be examples to the flock*

Christian leaders are not to be like the \_\_\_\_\_ exercising dominion, subduing, treating others like slaves

The shepherd has authority - Hebrews 13:17 - but as those who sacrifice for the sheep, not \_\_\_\_\_

Elders are to lead by their \_\_\_\_\_ of godliness leading and by knowledge of the Word and wisdom

Beware of church leaders that demand obedience because of their \_\_\_\_\_ and flee tyrants

\_\_\_\_\_ godly church leaders who are watching over your soul - let them do that with joy, not grief

**Reward** - 1 Peter 5:4

The \_\_\_\_\_ Shepherd is the Lord Jesus Christ - the Shepherd and Guardian of your soul (2:25).

Elders are under-shepherds with great responsibilities, but can look forward to reward because of \_\_\_\_\_ character

The unfading crown of glory was a contrast to the \_\_\_\_\_ wreaths given to honor sports winners & civic leaders

## **Conclusions**

Beware of those that have \_\_\_\_\_ desires & motives for church leadership positions they are detrimental to you

Pray for & encourage church leaders who have \_\_\_\_\_ desires & motives and lead you by godly example

The responsibilities of Elders can be intimidating, but if God calls you to it, He will \_\_\_\_\_ you to do it

Church leadership is a life of \_\_\_\_\_ but its present reward is seeing God act, & its future reward is eternal glory

## **KIDS KORNER**

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help.

**Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the words "Elder," "Shepherd" or "Overseer" are used. 2) Discuss with your parents the importance of having godly, qualified church leaders

## **THINK ABOUT IT!**

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. How does 1 Peter 5:1-4 connect to the earlier chapters? What does Peter exhort the elders to do? What is the Biblical relationship between Elder, Overseer / Bishop and Shepherd / Pastor? What is the work of an Elder? What is the problem with making each of these different offices instead of different aspects of the same position / responsibility / work? Why is the Biblical pattern for a plurality of elders in the church important? Why is the key issue having men that are Biblically qualified and not just filling positions so that there is a plurality? Why does Peter call himself a "fellow elder" instead of repeating that he is an apostle? How was Peter a witness of Christ's sufferings? How was he a partaker of the glory that is to be revealed? What are some of the practical ways that elders are to shepherd / oversee the flock? What are the proper desires and motives for being an elder? By what manner should elders lead? What kind of church leaders should you flee? What reward is given to an elder that serves properly? How can the fear of the responsibilities of an elder be overcome