

1 **A Command for Elders**

1 PETER 5:1-4

2 **1 Peter 5:1-3**

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

3 **1 Peter 5:4-5**

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

4 **Peter**

- ▶ Refers to himself as a *fellow presbyter (elder)*
- ▶ Elder
 - ▶ Older person
 - ▶ Given responsibility for the spiritual care and teaching of those in the church

5 **Peter's qualifications**

- ▶ Peter's apostolic authority came from Christ
- ▶ A witness of Christ (*martyr*)
- ▶ One who would share in the glory to be revealed
 - ▶ *"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy."* (1 Peter 4:13)
 - ▶ *"And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go."* (Acts 5:40)

6 **1. Be a shepherd**

- ▶ *"He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep."* (John 21:16, KJV 1900)

7 **Duties of a shepherd**

- ▶ The word *poimnate* means "to tend." Besides feeding, it includes:
 - ▶ Caring
 - ▶ Leading
 - ▶ Guiding
 - ▶ Protecting

8 **2. Feed the flock OF GOD**

- ▶ John 21:16
- ▶ *"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."* (1 Peter 5:2-3, KJV 1900)

- ▶ It is GOD'S FLOCK – not the pastor's!
- ▶ "Shepherd my sheep"

9 **Priority is teaching God's Word**

- ▶ In [Acts 8:1](#) we read, "*At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*"
- ▶ A little bit later in the text we read these words: "*Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word*" ([Acts 8:4](#)). It is NOT the apostles, but the laity of the first century church who preached the Word as they moved, often fleeing persecution.
- ▶ One of the functions of elders is to equip the laity so that the ministry of the Gospel could be effected through their labors.

10 **How do you feed a flock?**

- ▶ Take them into prepared pastures
 - ▶ Remove poisonous weeds / plants
 - ▶ Protect from false doctrines and teachers
 - ▶ Confront harmful attitudes
 - ▶ Make sure nutrition is available
 - ▶ Give God's truth at the appropriate level
 - ▶ Make sure water is available
 - ▶ Give encouragement for repentance
 - ▶ Give the Word that cleanses

11 **Getting sheep to rest**

12 **How do you get sheep to lie down in green pastures?**

- ▶ Almost impossible for sheep to be made to lie down unless four requirements are met.
 - ▶ Must be free of fear
 - ▶ Must be free from friction with others of their kind.
 - ▶ Must be free of parasites and pests
 - ▶ Must be free from hunger.
- ▶ "*A flock that is restless, discontented, always agitated and disturbed never does well. And the same is true of people.*" (A shepherd looks at Psalm 23)

13 **A. Must be free from fear.**

- ▶ "Generally it is the 'unknown,' the 'unexpected,' that produces the greatest panic. It is in the grip of fear that most of us are unable to cope with the cruel circumstances and harsh complexities of life. We feel they are foes which endanger our tranquility. Often our first impulse is simply to get up and run from them.

14 **Must be free from fear (2)**

- ▶ "Then in the midst of our misfortunes there suddenly comes the awareness that He, the Christ, the Good Shepherd is there. It makes all the difference. His presence in the picture throws a different light on the whole scene. Suddenly things are not half so black nor nearly so terrifying. The outlook changes and there is hope. I find myself delivered from fear. Rest

returns and I can relax.

15 **Must be free from fear (3)**

- ▶ "This has come to me again and again as I grow older. It is the knowledge that my Master, my Friend, my Owner has things under control even when they may appear calamitous. This gives me great consolation, repose, and rest. " I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." (Psalm 4:8)
- ▶ "It is the special office work of God's gracious Spirit to convey this sense of the Christ to our fearful hearts. He comes quietly to reassure us that Christ Himself is aware of our dilemma and deeply involved in it with us. And it is in fact in this assurance that we rest and relax." – Philip Keller

16 **B. Must be free from friction**

- ▶ Continuous conflict and jealousy within the flock can be a most detrimental thing. The sheep become edgy, tense, discontented and restless. They lose weight and become irritable.
- ▶ In any business firm, any office, any family, any community, any church, any human organization or group, be it large or small, the struggle for self-assertion and self-recognition goes on. Most of us fight to be 'top sheep.' We butt and quarrel and compete to 'get ahead.' And in the process people are hurt.

17 **C. Must be free from pests**

- ▶ Sheep, especially in the summer, can be driven to absolute distraction by nasal flies, bot flies, warble flies and ticks. When tormented by these pests it is literally impossible for them to lie down and rest.
- ▶ A good shepherd will apply various types of insect repellents to his sheep. He will see that they are dipped to clear their fleeces of ticks.
- ▶ In modern terminology we refer to these upsetting circumstance or people as 'being bugged.'

18 **The need for contentment**

- ▶ "In any business firm, any office, any family, any community, any church, any human organization or group, be it large or small, the struggle for self-assertion and self-recognition goes on. Most of us fight to be 'top sheep.' We butt and quarrel and compete to 'get ahead.' And in the process people are hurt.
- ▶ In contrast to this, the picture in the Psalm shows us God's people lying down in quiet contentment. One of the outstanding marks of a Christian should be a serene sense of gentle contentment. *Now godliness with contentment is great gain.*" (1Timothy 6:6)

19 **The need for contentment (2)**

- ▶ Paul said: "*Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. "Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."* (Philippians 4:11-13)
- ▶ "I would much rather have the affection of the Good Shepherd than occupy a place of prominence in society [or the church]." – Philip Keller

20 **D. Must be free from hunger**

- ▶ "Finally, to produce the conditions necessary for a sheep to lie down there must be freedom from the fear of hunger. This of course is clearly implied in the statement, 'He makes me to lie down in green pastures.'
- ▶ "As we feed on the Word of God we grow in Him: "...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) We need to meditate on the Word of God day and night. The sheep would lie down and chew their cud. This is like meditating on the Word of God.

21 **Must be free from hunger (2)**

- ▶ "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success." (Joshua 1:8)
- ▶ Encourage meditation on Scripture

22 **Must be free from hunger (3)**

- ▶ "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper." (Psalm 1:1-3)
- ▶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." (Mathew 5:6)
- ▶ [Foster a hunger for God's Word.]

23 **Roles of an elder**

- ▶ Put people at ease; help them overcome their fears. *Perfect love casteth out fear.*
- ▶ Be a peacemaker; prevent friction when possible.
- ▶ Work to remove whatever distracts people from the Gospel or irritates the flock.
- ▶ Give God's people spiritual truths appropriate to their maturity level.

24 **The shepherds point to the Great Shepherd**

- ▶ "Then in the midst of our misfortunes there suddenly comes the awareness that He, the Christ, the Good Shepherd is there. It makes all the difference. His presence in the picture throws a different light on the whole scene. Suddenly things are not half so black nor nearly so terrifying. The outlook changes and there is hope. I find myself delivered from fear. Rest returns and I can relax." – Philip Keller

25 **The shepherds point to the Great Shepherd (2)**

- ▶ "This has come to me again and again as I grow older. It is the knowledge that my Master, my Friend, my Owner has things under control even when they may appear calamitous. This gives me great consolation, repose, and rest. " I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." (Psalm 4:8) – Philip Keller

26 **1 Peter 2.25**

- ▶ "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." (1 Peter 2:25, KJV 1900)

27 **Qualifications of an elder**

28 **Qualifications for an elder**

▶ *"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;*

29 **Qualifications for an elder (2)**

▶ *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." (1 Timothy 3:1-7, KJV 1900)*

30 **Serving as an overseer**

- ▶ "While serving as an overseer"
 - ▶ Spiritual care
 - ▶ Physical care
 - ▶ Administrative care

31 **How is an elder to serve?**

32 **The 3 great vices of elders**

- Sloth
- Desire for gain
- Lust for power

Peter addresses all 3 in verses 1-4

33 **Serving voluntarily**

- ▶ Not because of social or financial pressures
- ▶ Are you truly God-called to be an elder?
 - ▶ It is not something you do because some friends or family told you that you would be good at it
 - ▶ It is not something you do because you need the money and it does not require a college degree

34 **Serving voluntarily (2)**

- ▶ A similar thought is found in 1 Tim 3:1, where the desire to be an overseer is commended
- ▶ We must balance this truth with the instruction from James, who reminds us that teachers have a great responsibility and face a stricter judgment (Jas 3:1).
- ▶ Those who serve only because they feel they must will lose their joy, and the church will suffer as a consequence.

35 **Serving voluntarily (3)**

- ▶ Elders might work long or inconvenient hours
- ▶ Likely to be the first targets of persecution
- ▶ Likely to be unappreciated

- ▶ Likely to be discouraged by problems in the flock
- ▶ All of these things can quench their desire to continue.

36 **Serving without greed**

- ▶ *"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;"* (Titus 1:7, KJV 1900)
 - ▶ This is also a qualification for a deacon
 - ▶ *"Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;"* (1 Timothy 3:8, KJV 1900)

37 **1 Timothy 6:5-10**

- ▶ *"constant wrangling by people of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who consider godliness to be a means of gain. But godliness with contentment is a great means of gain. For we have brought nothing into the world, so that neither can we bring anything out. But if we have food and clothing, with these things we will be content. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and a trap and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge those people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all evil, by which some, because they desire it, have gone astray from the faith and have pierced themselves with many pains."* (1 Timothy 6:5–10, LEB)

38 **Ezekiel 34:2-3**

- "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock."* (Ezekiel 34:2–3, KJV 1900)
 - ▶ Those who serve with false motives care only for themselves and devour the flock.

39 **A fellow servant, not a master**

- ▶ Elders are not to be domineering and harsh
 - ▶ *"But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them."* (Matthew 20:25, KJV 1900)
 - ▶ *"But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them."* (Mark 10:42, KJV 1900)

40 **Authoritative, not authoritarian**

- ▶ Authoritative leadership comes from:
 - ▶ The Word of God (*sola Scriptura*)
 - ▶ Living an example of God's Word in action
 - ▶ Loving others; serving them
- ▶ They are not authoritarian
 - ▶ "My way or the highway"
 - ▶ "I'm in charge; do what I say"
- ▶ Authoritative leaders earn respect; authoritarian leaders demand it.
- ▶

41 **Ezekiel 34:4-5**

"The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered." (Ezekiel 34:4-5, KJV 1900)

42 **Be an example to the flock**

- ▶ *Typoi* – A type or pattern
- ▶ Serve as a model for people to follow
- ▶ You cannot DRIVE the flock. You must LEAD them. And you must do that by becoming a living example that points them to Christ.

43 **Remember the Chief Shepherd is returning!**

- ▶ *"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."* (1 Peter 5:4, KJV 1900)
 - ▶ Chief Shepherd (*archipoimenos*)
 - ▶ True Shepherd (Ezek. 34:11-16)
 - ▶ Good Shepherd (John 10:11, 14)
 - ▶ Great Shepherd (Heb. 13:20). When Christ returns, His faithful undershepherds will share in His glory (1 Peter 5:1) and receive unfading crowns (cf. 1:4).