

## 1 Peter 5

### Week 8 - Life And Leadership

#### Learning Objectives

- Consider the roles of leaders and followers within the church
- Reflect on your adherence to Peter's instruction for leaders and followers

**Pray for your time together as a group.**

**?** If you could meet any famous historical leader, who would you choose and why?

#### Read Out Loud: 1 Peter 5 (NIV)

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

<sup>5</sup> In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

<sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

<sup>10</sup> And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

<sup>12</sup> With the help of Silas, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it. <sup>13</sup> She who is

#### Mystery Woman

Peter greets the Christian churches of Asia Minor on behalf of "she who is in Babylon." Some scholars speculate that Peter may have been referring to his wife. And yet, most agree this "she" is more likely another local church, probably the Christian church in Rome.

Why Rome? For one thing, it is unlikely there was any church in the historical city of Babylon at this time. And, it is very likely Peter was writing this letter from Rome. Also, Peter's Jewish readers would recognize "Babylon" as the traditional metaphor for those opposed to God's people. Rome, in that time, was the geographical and political source of that opposition. Peter may have been protecting the Christians in Rome by using Babylon as a stand-in.

Source:

[www.bibleref.com/1-Peter/5/1-Peter-5-13.html](http://www.bibleref.com/1-Peter/5/1-Peter-5-13.html)

in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you her greetings, and so does my son Mark. <sup>14</sup> Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ.

? How does Peter's role as an elder lend credibility to the instruction he gives?

*Possible Answers: First, Peter reminds readers that he is "a fellow elder," establishing empathy, as someone who understands the struggles and joys of leadership. In addition, as "a witness of Christ's sufferings," Peter also understands the cost of following Jesus, qualifying him to give guidance as a follower.*

? How does Peter define leadership in the church?

*Possible Answers: Peter defines leadership using the image of a shepherd. A good shepherd watches over his sheep with care. Peter goes a step further and talks about the heart motivation of the shepherd: he must be willing and selfless.*

? In verses 2-3, Peter shares a number of characteristics to expect from Christian leaders. Take a minute by yourself or in smaller groups to write down some ways the world views leadership and contrast them with the ways Christians should view leadership. Share your lists as a group, pointing out the similarities and differences.

*Leader's Note: We filled out the table below with some suggested answers, but feel free to let your group brainstorm together. The table on the handout is blank. The idea is to get the groups thinking about leadership and how Christian leadership stands in contrast to the world's view of leadership.*

*Possible Answers:*

How the world views leadership	How Christians should view leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership is not always out of willingness, but necessity or desire for success</li><li>• Leaders can be self-centered</li><li>• Leaders are in command</li><li>• Leaders inspire people to a unified vision</li><li>• Leaders can be ruthless as long as they are successful</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Leadership out of a willing heart</li><li>• Leaders are servants</li><li>• Leaders should not seek their own gain</li><li>• Leadership role should not be used to exploit or intimidate</li><li>• Leaders who do not seek to act in this way should not be considered successful Christian leaders</li></ul>

? Optional: Can you think of any leadership positions at Hope where individuals are called to lead as Peter suggests?

*Possible Answers: Elders, Deacons, Governance Team, Small Group Leaders, anyone who teaches a class, ministry leaders. For more information on elders in the church see 1 Timothy 3:1-13 and Titus 1:6-9.*

? In what ways does submission to leadership look different as a follower of Christ?

*Possible Answers: From the Christian perspective, submitting ourselves to the guidance of leaders and elders is, in a sense, submitting ourselves to Christ himself. Christ has equipped those in positions of leadership to act on his behalf, and if we refuse to humble ourselves and heed their teaching, we are rejecting Christ in lieu of our own independence of thought.*

? Share about a time when you submitted to leadership (in the church, at work, etc.). What made it ultimately a positive or negative experience?

*Possible Answer: Answers will vary. Leaders, consider having a story ready to share.*

? Are our elders and leaders beyond reproach? How can we test that their leadership lines up with God's desires?

*Possible Answers: God calls us to trust the wisdom and experience of those whom he has put in authority over us. In parallel, it is also healthy to test the teaching of those in leadership over us against God's word and Spirit.*

? Verses 5-14 are addressed to all believers – both leaders and followers. What does it mean to “clothe yourselves with humility toward one another?”

*Possible Answers: Leaders and followers alike need to conduct themselves with humility. Whether you're in a leadership role or not at a given time, we are all following Christ. Verse 6 says to “humble ourselves under God's mighty hand,” serving as a reminder that we are all on equal footing before a holy God.*

? How do verses 9 and 10 encourage you to be a better leader while also submitting to the leaders in your life?

*Possible Answers: Regardless of the role you play in the church or, more generally, in secular life/vocation, suffering happens. For all Christians, there is solidarity in the knowledge that other members of the Church are also pursuing righteousness in the face of suffering.*

### **For Discussion And Accountability**

? Within your different roles at Hope – whether you are in leadership or not – how are you fulfilling/adhering to Peter's commands? How has this passage challenged you to change your behavior?

? Looking back at the book as a whole, 1 Peter gives us a lot of instructions on how to live in contrast to our culture. How has 1 Peter challenged the way you interact with the world?