

Cornerstone Church

May 7, 2017

Sermon Series: **Practicing Our Readiness Drills for Christ's Return - Seeking God's Guidance from 1st and 2nd Peter**

Today's Sermon: Instructions for Pastor/Shepherds on How to care for God's People

Today's Passage: 1 Peter 5:1-4

[1] So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: [2] shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; [3] not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. [4] And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. (ESV)

Introduction

Main Point: If the health of churches is ultra-instrumental in keeping its members from falling away during hard times, then the shepherds of those churches need to be men who humbly care for, protect and feed the members as a good shepherd would care for his sheep.

- Peter reminds is fellow shepherds of his own journey and how that journey equipped him to earn the right to be heard, respected and obeyed.
 - Just like the Holy Spirit, Peter comes alongside (paraclete) to warmly encourage and plead with his brother pastors to take their ministry super-seriously. - **So I exhort the elders among you**
 - This passion for the care of individual Christians has its roots in Peter's restoration to ministry. See John 21:15-19.

- God's plan for church leadership has always been and will always be, multiple eldership assisted by deacons. **Titus 1:5 [5] This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— (ESV)**
- The terms elder (presbuteros), pastor (shepherd or poimenas) and overseer (episkopos) are synonymous. **Acts 20: [17] Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. (ESV) And, Acts 20: [28] Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. (ESV)** The word "elder" refers to the office and the word "pastor" refers to his feeding responsibility while the term "overseer" refers to his/their oversight responsibility.

- That journey included a lesson in humility that permeated Peter's heart even when he was acting apostolic. He called himself - **a fellow elder**
- That journey included being an eyewitness to the sufferings of Christ. **and a witness of the sufferings of Christ** Since Jesus was willing to suffer for Peter and for all of us like he did, then serving him as an elder is not about self-aggrandizement but sacrifice.
- That journey included being present on the Mount of Transfiguration where Peter caught a glimpse of the "real" Jesus and his glory which will be ours as well by inheritance. **as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:** This future inheritance is so much more than any earthly idol that if a pastor fully

comprehended his reward, he would never chase after the baubles of earth.

- Peter's paraclete type of encouragement included the admonition to:

1. Pastor God's flock assigned to you. **shepherd the flock of God that is among you**, Notice:
 - It is God's flock, not the pastor's.
 - It is the flock assigned to him not anyone else's.
 - It is work requiring feeding them God's word so that they remain spiritually healthy **Hebrews 5:13-14 [13] for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. [14] But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (ESV) And, 1 Timothy 5:17 [17] Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. (ESV)**
 - It is work that will be evaluated and appraised. **Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (ESV)**
2. Provide oversight to the flock. - **exercising oversight**, **1 Timothy 3:4-5 [4] He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, [5] for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? (ESV)** So, how does a father manage his household?
 - He provides food (see previous section).
 - He disciplines when necessary.
 - He mentors and models.

- He directs his children's bent to insure their development into adults using their gifts.
- All of this requires a dad to intimately know his children. So,

- How can elders monitor the condition of their flock so as to spur each one on to further growth and maturity? Shouldn't he/they be allowed to ask questions like:
 - How are your personal devotions and Bible reading coming along?
 - How is the relationship between you and your wife?
 - How are you using your spiritual gift?
 - What areas of spiritual growth do you think you need in the year ahead?
 - How are you practicing hospitality in your home?
 - Is your love for Jesus growing or waning?
 - Which non-Christian friend do you want me to pray for?
- Peter's paraclete type of encouragement included the admonition to shepherd in such a way as to:
 - Do it with the right **ATTITUDE**. not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you;
 - Do it with the right **MOTIVE**. not for shameful gain, but eagerly;
 - Do it with the right **MANNER**. not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.
 - Do it for the right **REWARD**. - And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.