

A Word to Elders of the Church

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 March 2023

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Take your Bibles and turn to 1 Peter chapter 5. The back of your Bibles, just after James, 1 Peter chapter 5.

I'll read the first five verses. To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings, and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers, not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be.

Not greedy for money, but eager to serve. Not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. Young men, in the same way, be submissive to those who are older.

[1 : 21] Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Let's hear God's word. Amen. Please keep your Bibles open to 1 Peter chapter 5.

We're coming to the end of our series of studies on the topic of submission. We began with James 4, 7, where we were told, submit yourselves then to God.

And we saw that as God's creatures, he has the right to command us. Therefore, we are to submit to his word, to everything that he says.

We're to put ourselves under it and believe what he says just because he says it. We're to obey what he says because he says it. And we are to submit to his providences as well in our lives.

[2 : 21] Those difficult things that he has traced upon our dial by the son of love. But then we started to see that the Bible also speaks not only of this direct submission to God and his word, but that God has established human authorities in our lives that he calls us to submit to.

So wives submit to your husbands, children to your parents. Slaves to masters, which we saw applied to employees to employers.

And in each case, that submission is to be done as to the Lord, who's the one who established that authority over us. Well, that's a little harder, submitting to human authorities that God has established.

But he has grace for that to give to us. Last week, we transitioned from submission in our homes to submission in the family of God.

The church of Jesus Christ. And we found the same principle of authority and submission established in Christ's church. That here, the chief shepherd Jesus has given, has delegated his own authority to those holding the office of spiritual leadership in each local church.

[3 : 46] Sometimes they're called leaders. Other times they're called elders. Other times they're called overseers. Sometimes shepherds or pastors. And he's called on them.

Those are all the one and same office of spiritual leadership in the church. And Christ is called on the members of each local church to submit to them as to the Lord who sends them.

So last week we were in Hebrews 13, 17. And we saw God's word to the members of the church. Obey your leaders and submit to their authority, for they keep watch over you as men who must give an account.

Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. So that verse sets forth your duties to your elders.

Now, to be fair, I'm going to take this week's sermon to address the duty of elders to the members of the church. You say, why would you do that?

[4 : 54] Why would you preach to us a word that is sent to elders? Wouldn't that fit a pastor's conference better where pastors gather together?

And yes, we do study such passages when pastors gather together. But this is something that we see in the scriptures themselves, a pattern that we notice.

Remember Paul in Ephesians 5 and 6, when he addressed wives to submit to husbands, he had an answering word for the husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it.

When he called children to submit to parents, he had a balancing word for parents and especially fathers, not to exasperate and provoke your children to wrath. And when he spoke to the slaves to submit to the master, he had an answering word to the master to not forget, you too have a master in heaven over you.

So be careful how you treat those under your authority. And so I say that's just following the pattern that there is a balancing word to be given to the one in authority.

[6 : 08] I gave you the word for those in submission to authority, and I only think it fair to balance it with the word to the elder. Peter does that here in our passage.

He actually starts with the elders and then in verse 5 speaks to the younger men, especially in the church who maybe were a bit resistant to submitting to the elders of the church and calls them to submit.

But it's a word to elders. And this is not a private letter just sent to elders. This is a general letter sent to the saints, the elect saints scattered throughout Asia Minor in those churches.

And it's in that general letter that Peter is addressing. We'll see. He's going to address slaves. He's going to address wives. He's going to address husbands and masters and government leaders and citizens and so on.

And here he's addressing pastors, elders, overseers, as they're variously called. So, in other words, the Holy Spirit who inspired Scripture wants you to hear this as well.

[7 : 20] Not just elders. He wants you to know the duties of elders. Why would that be? Well, to know what to look for in an elder.

To know the qualifications that must be met. To know what you should expect from your elders. And supremely, to know how to pray for them.

If you're visiting, you may not realize, although the announcement was given, that we are searching for another elder to serve full time here in the ministry.

And I think that's another reason why we ought to take this week to focus on the work of the elder.

That we might know even better what to ask the Lord to give us. And to make this man to be to us.

If he's to be a blessing to us. We're asking God for a man that we can all gladly obey and submit to his authority. And that includes me.

[8 : 26] Because you see, I'm not only a shepherd. I'm also a sheep. Who needs shepherding. Who needs someone watching over me.

And that's the beauty of what we see in Scriptures. That when Paul and Barnabas went out and planted different local churches. The Bible is very clear in telling us that they ordained elders. Plural. In each church. And when Paul writes to the elders of the church at Ephesus. To leave with them some parting words.

It's elders plural. And when he writes a letter to the Philippians. It's addressed to the elders. Plural. And the deacons that were there. So we see this pattern.

That it is the mind of Christ. The head of the church. That there be a plurality of spiritual leaders in each local church. Now not every local church will always have a plurality of elders.

[9 : 35] At present we don't. But this should ever be the model. The prayer. The aim of the local church. To have a plurality of leaders.

An elder without anyone overseeing him. Is more likely to abuse his authority in the local church. So plurality of elders is a safeguard to the flock.

So I with you am concerned that Jesus give us a man that I too can submit to. Well with that rather long introduction. Let's dig in to 1 Peter chapter 5.

And we'll look at the first four verses as we have time. I want you to notice as Peter begins how he identifies himself. How does he think of himself as he's writing to elders? Well he says verse 1.

To the elders among you I appeal as a fellow elder. A witness of Christ's sufferings. And one who will also share in the glory to be revealed.

[10 : 35] So his first identity is a fellow elder. Peter. So Peter was an elder in the local church at Jerusalem.

Now to be sure he was more than an elder. He was an apostle. As he says in chapter 1 verse 1. Peter an apostle of Jesus Christ. So he was one of the 12.

And that were chosen and trained by Jesus. And to whom Jesus gave his teachings. That they might be the foundation of the local church.

On which following pastors and elders are to build the church. It's on Christ the chief cornerstone. And the apostles teaching as the foundation. Ephesians 2 to 20 through 22.

So he gave to the apostles this unique authority. So Peter not only had authority in the church at Jerusalem as an elder.

[11 : 32] But as an apostle he had authority over all the churches. Everywhere. As one who has been authorized and sent by Jesus Christ.

That's what apostle means. The sent one. That's why we're reading his letter this morning in public worship. This is the word of Christ through his apostle.

His sent one Peter. So he's an apostle. But he identifies himself here as a fellow elder.

Isn't that interesting? When he's speaking to elders. He bases his appeal. Not on his authority as an apostle.

But rather as a fellow elder. And I say the work of Christ is amazing to see in the life of individuals.

[12 : 32] This Peter. Is one of those 12 apostles who were earlier found arguing with each other.

About which of them was the greatest. Jockeying for positions. But now he's not flaunting his authority. Is he?

He's learned Christ-like humility. To come down to their level. And to speak to them as one elder to fellow elders. And this shared position.

Of elder to elder. Would have opened their ears and their hearts. More readily to receive the word.

That he has to give them. He's one of us.

They would say. He knows what we're up against. The challenges that we face as elders. So that's how he identifies himself to them. As a fellow elder.

[13 : 29] But secondly. As a witness of Christ's sufferings. Now to be sure. Jesus saw. Or Peter saw the sufferings of Jesus Christ. Christ. But this probably means more than that.

As you know. The whole letter of 1 Peter. Is about suffering. And Peter himself. Has seen and shared. In Christ's sufferings. In his own life.

And therefore. He is one who. Is also looking forward. To sharing. As he tells us. In the glory. To be revealed. And this again. Is remarkable.

Coming from Peter. Remember. He used to. Refuse to believe. That Messiah. Could ever suffer. He can't die. He must reign forever. And so he rebukes Jesus.

When Jesus says. He's going to suffer. And die. Oh but now. His eyes have been. Open. This is after the crucifixion. After the resurrection. And he now sees.

[14 : 26] That suffering. Comes before glory. Not only for Christ. But for all of his people. And yes. Even his apostles.

And his elders. It is. Suffering. Followed. By glory. And Peter himself. Has shared in the sufferings. And is looking forward. To sharing in the glory.

To be revealed. So that's his identity. Fellow elder. Witness of Christ's sufferings. And share in the glory. To come. Come. And then Peter's word.

To his fellow elders. Has two large points. First. Their duty described. And secondly. The manner in which. Their duty is to be performed. Their duty is playing.

You see it there. In verse. Two. Be shepherds. Of God's flock. That is under your care. Serving as overseers. Now we spent.

[15 : 23] Much time last week. Touching upon. This. Duty of. The elder. Last week. So. I'm not going to be long. With it today.

Be shepherds. You know the Lord Jesus. Was very fond. Of this metaphor. Of shepherds. When. Speaking. About. Leaders.

In his churches. Because it really. Pictures. The various duties. That spiritual leaders. Have in a church. He says. Do for the congregation.

What shepherds. Do for their woolly sheep. Feeding. Leading. Protecting. Healing. Seeking. Caring. And we saw last week. That this is done. Primarily in two ways. By preaching God's word. Feeding you. Warning you. Pointing out your duties.

[16:18] The way that you're to walk. In fellowship with God. And then secondly. By. Watching over you. Exercising. Oversight. To know. What are your needs.

Indeed. For each individual sheep. Under our care. Notice here though. That elders are told. First of all. They're reminded. That it's God's flock. That they care for.

Be shepherds of God's flock. They're his precious sheep. And that comes with weight. To any sensitive elder. Jesus said in John 10.

That the hired hand. Cares not. For the sheep. So when the. The wolf comes. He's out of here. He doesn't care about them. Now.

Now a shepherd would care far more. If they were his own sheep. But there's an even higher notch. Than that. And that is that we elders. Are caring. Not for our own sheep.

[17:16] But for God's sheep. Do you see how high. Of a duty it is. That the elder has. It is to care.

And to shepherd. God's sheep. His flock. You remember what Jesus said to Peter. After the resurrection. In John chapter 21.

Peter's denied his Lord three times. Jesus has had a private meeting with Peter. But now he's meeting with. The rest of the apostles. And he's going to reinstate him.

In his commission. And work. Of the gospel. In front of them. So that they know. Hey everything's square with Peter and Jesus. He's one of us. We're going forward.

With the gospel to the world. You remember how Jesus asked him. Peter do you love me? And Peter says. Well. Yes I love you.

[18:11] And Jesus says. Feed my lambs. And he asked him again. Do you truly love me? Lord. Yes. I do love you. Well then.

Tend. My sheep. Do you really love me Peter? And the third time. His heart was smitten. Because it reminded him.

That three times. He had denied. His love for his Lord. Even that he even knew him. And so he says. Lord. You know all things. You know that I love you. And Jesus says.

Then feed my sheep. Isn't that interesting? They're my lambs. They're my sheep. And if you love me.

Then take care. Of them. My sheep are only safe. In the care of shepherds. Who love me. Jesus is saying. Because those who love me.

[19:07] Will love them. For my sake. It's the love for Christ himself. That will keep a shepherd. Tenderly caring for Christ's sheep. And not using his authority.

Abusively. But the moment we forget. Whose sheep they are. We're in danger. Of exercising our authority. In an abusive way. Like Diotrephes. And third John.

Who loved the preeminence. And loved being first. And used his authority. To excommunicate people. Who were just showing kindness. To the missionaries. That came through. Abusive.

Oh remember. Elders. To shepherd. God's flock. But notice. The elders. Charge. Is not to shepherd.

All sheep. That belong to God. You see it. They're not to be meddling. In the flock. Under someone else's care. It's. It's shepherd.

[20:04] Be shepherds. Of God's flock. That is under your care. That's a very selective part. Of God's entire flock. In the world. So an elder.

Needs to know. Who are the sheep. Under my care. Who are the sheep. Not everyone. But only those. Who have joined. This local church.

And have voluntarily. Placed themselves. Under the oversight. Of its leaders. And that's why. Church membership. Is critical. Because it precisely.

Defines. The flock. That is under. Our care. The sheep. That I must stand. Before. Jesus. The chief shepherd. One day. And give an account.

For. Who are they? Well they are the. Members of this church. Who have voluntarily. Placed themselves. Under the oversight. Of this church. And its leadership.

[20:58] That's why. When. People became disciples. Of Jesus. In Acts chapter 2. They were baptized. And added to their number. Added to the number. Of that local church.

In Jerusalem. You could count them. It was a very definitive. Clearly understood. These are members. If you can count them. It is a clearly. Definable.

Membership. And that sets the parameters. Then. For the duty. Of elders. These are the ones. I'm responsible. To take care of. So. That's the duty.

Of elders. Shepherd God's flock. That is under your care. And. Serve them. As overseers. No. We come then. Lastly. To the manner. In which we are to shepherd. God's flock. The second part. Of Peter's words. And that receives. The emphasis.

[21 : 52] And the larger portion. Of Peter's words. He spends more time. On the way. We are to shepherd. Than in describing. The work. Of shepherding. It's the kind.

Of spirit. And attitudes. That are to reign. In our hearts. Yes. So. What we learn. From this. Is that. How we shepherd. The flock. Is just as important.

As the what. Of shepherding. And so. What follows. Are three. Contrasting couplets. Each with a. Negative.

And a positive. How. How. Are we to. Shepherd God's flock. Under our care. Not like that. But like this. That's how he answers.

And sets it forth. Plainly. So the first couplet. He says. In verse two. Not because you must. But because you are willing. As God wants you to be.

[22 : 50] Now here. Peter's drilling down. Into the. Heart motivation. Of the shepherd. Shepherd. God's flock. Not because you have to.

But because you want to. Do. With a willing heart. You say. Well what difference. Does that make? Oh. All the difference. In the world. And parents. You know.

What's the difference. Of your child. Doing a task. And. They're doing it. Because they have to. And then. And another thing. They're doing. Because they want to. Well it's.

It's night and day. If their heart's not in it. They've got to be. Drug along. In it. Don't they? They'll do the bare minimum. The least they can do. To get by.

But. Oh. If they want to do it. Well. They. They run. To their task. They're glad to do it. They're motivated from within. With a willing heart. And so it is.

[23 : 47] To be with pastors. Not because they have to. But because they want to. Lenski. The commentator. Says. It's the difference between. Drafted soldiers. And volunteers.

I think we have something. Of an illustration. Of that presently. In the news. Think of the Russian. Young men. Being reluctantly. Drafted into their army. Forced to fight.

A war. They don't want to fight. Not like that. Elders. But rather. Like. Ukrainians.

Willingly. Volunteering. To defend their homeland. Does it affect. The outcome. Of their service. The way that they serve. Oh my. There's no comparison. And so.

Elders. Are not to serve. Like Jonah. God's reluctant. Preacher. To Nineveh. Reluctant service. Is totally unfitting. For men.

[24 : 41] In the service. Of the chief shepherd. You know. He didn't come on. His hardest mission. Of all. Against his will. But said. Here am I. Send me. And none.

Serve more willingly. With his heart. Fully in it. Going voluntarily. To the hellish cross. For his sheep. He tells us. In John 10. That the good shepherd. Lays down his life.

No one takes it from it. I lay it down. Willingly. Of myself. And it is that. Willingness. Of the chief shepherd. That makes his. Under shepherds.

Willing. Volunteers. In his service. In his service. You know. Paul has a list. Of qualifications. For elders. And pastors.

In 1st Timothy. Chapter 3. In verse 1. This is how. That list begins. And listen. For the heart. That is being required. Here. Not because you have to.

[25 : 38] But because you want to. Paul tells Timothy. Here's a trustworthy saying. If anyone. Sets his heart. On being an overseer. He desires.

A noble task. You see. His heart is in it. He willingly desires it. That's first base. But if his heart is not in it.

Don't let him do it. Don't. Don't. Put the flock. Under such a man. Spare the. The flock. From such an elder. No.

It must not be service. Because. They have to. But rather. Because they want to. As God wants them. To be. So the second couplet. Not greedy.

For money. But eager. To serve. Verse three. Now in life. There are givers. And takers. And elders.

[26 : 33] Must be givers. Not takers. Not out for what they can get. From their people. Not in the ministry. For any kind of personal. Gain.

Whether it's financial. Or fame. Or whatever. Notoriety. To be in a place. Of leadership. I talked to a pastor. In town recently.

Whose church. Has been looking for a pastor. For many years now. I thought they'd already. Found one. It had been so long. Since I had heard. That I asked. Who he was. And. In a most dejected spirit.

He. He said. No. We. We don't. We've called five men. And none of them. Would come. Not enough money.

One was even requiring a car. To be provided as a perk. And he said to me. Sadly. It's a pastor's market. With so few available. For the churches.

[27 : 31] And they're not bashful. About making financial demands. Now. To be fair. I don't know the details of that. Okay. I didn't drill into the details.

And there is a legitimate concern. Of a pastor. To care for the needs. Of his family. Because if he doesn't. He's worse than an infidel. Even if he is a pastor. So there's a legitimate concern.

There. But. But the reason. This is in our Bibles. Is because it's very easy. To cross that line. Of caring for our family. Into being greedy. For money. Indeed.

These three things. That are mentioned. They're here. Because they're common faults. Of elders. Common faults. Of pastors. And. Sadly. What we find.

Of greed for money. In. The culture at large. Has not. Escaped the church. Either. It's found there. It's. It's. It's not been a rare problem.

[28 : 28] Down through church history. The apostle Paul. In the first century. Had to warn against false teachers. Who think that godliness. Is a means.

For financial gain. There were. And are plenty. Who use the ministry. As a money making venture. And so.

Peter says. Not greedy. For money. One of those. Necessary requirements. For an elder. In first.

Timothy 3. 3. Is not a lover. Of money. You see. Peter. And Paul. Had the same.

Holy Spirit. Teaching them. And so. The negative. Is clear. Not a lover. Of money. Not. Eager.

Greedy. For money. But now.

Let's look at the positive. What. What's the positive. Not this. But. But eager. To serve. You see.

The eagerness. Is not for money. And getting. But the eagerness.

[29 : 22] Is to serve. Is to give. In this. We see. Just how different. Is the true spirit. Of the chief shepherd.

For even the son of man. Did not come. To be served. To get. But he came. To serve. And to. Give his life.

As. A ransom. For many. He came to give. Not to take. And oh. How he gave. He gave. Till there was nothing.

Left to give. He gave himself. He gave his own life. That he might give us. Abundant. Eternal. Life. For you know.

The grace of our Lord. Jesus Christ. That though he was rich. Yet for your sakes. He became poor. So that you. Through his poverty. Might be made rich.

[30 : 16] That's his heart. Not out to get. But to enrich you. Not just in time. But for all eternity. And he came. And he came.

To enrich you. By the impoverishment. Of himself. Sacrificing. His own life. And something of that. Eagerness to give. In the service of others.

Must be found. In the under shepherds. Of Jesus Christ. They must be men. Who have learned.

From him. That it's more blessed. To give. Than it is to receive. Men like the apostle Paul.

Who can tell the church. In Corinth. That was. Such a problem to him. I will most. Get gladly.

Spend. And be spent. For you. He's not there to get. He's there to spend.

And to be spent. Not greedy for money. But eager. To serve. And so we come to the last. Of the three triplets. The three couplets.

[31 : 15] And it's not lording it. Over those entrusted to you. But being examples. To the flock. Verse three. The abuse of authority.

Has plagued every. God ordained. Authority structure. In the world. It's plagued the. Arena of the home. Husbands.

Abusive of their wives. Parents. Abusive of children. Masters. Abusive of slaves. Employers. Of employees. Governments.

Against their citizens. There's no. Arena. Of authority. That God has established. In the world. That has not been abused. By. Abusive authority. Authoritarianism. Authority.

Run wild. Gone to seed. And. Sadly. The church. Has not escaped that. Here it is. One of the top. Three problems. In elders. Is that they. Lorded over others.

[32 : 22] And Peter. Peter. Comes to address it. Head on. And he's borrowing. Language. That he heard from his savior.

The Lord Jesus. Who said this on at least. Two occasions. When the twelve apostles. Were arguing among themselves. About. Who was the greatest. And who was supposed to sit. On either side of Jesus.

At the. Coming of. His kingdom. You know. Pride. Pride. Is the gasoline. On the fire. Of abusive authority.

Pride. Is the gasoline. On the fire. Of abusive authority. In any relationship. Humility. Is the grace. Most needed. Both for submitting.

To authority. And to using that authority. In a non-abusive way. So here are these. Future leaders. Of the church. They have a foundation.

[33 : 16] Of the church. Their teachings. And they're proud. And so Jesus calls them together. And says. You know. That the rulers. Of the Gentiles. The pagans.

They lorded over them. And their high officials. Exercise authority over them. Not so. With you. How would you like. To be on the end. Of that finger.

From the savior. Not so. With you. I don't think. They forgot it. Peter's quoting it here. He didn't forget it. Not lording it over them.

You're not to exercise authority. Like the world does. They lord it over those under them. In a domineering. And oppressive way. Selfishly. Playing the tyrant.

Disrespectful. Like puffed up peacocks. Bullying and pushing themselves. Around. And stepping on others. As if they existed for them. Climbing on top of them.

[34 : 12] On the way to the top. Not so. With you. Jesus says. Not for my under shepherds.

Caring for my sheep. And Jesus said to them. Instead. Whoever wants to become great among you. Must be your servant. And whoever wants to be first. Must be your slave.

Just as the son of man. Did not come to be served. But to serve. And to give his life. As a ransom for many. So. The Lord Jesus. Has an entirely different. Model of leadership.

With an entirely different. Spirit behind it. It's called servant leadership. It is as far removed. From lording it over you. As it can be. Not throwing your weight around.

As pagan lords. You see. But rather. Stooping. To serve them. Just like the husbands. Are called to do. In their sphere of authority.

[35 : 14] Not lording it over the wife. But loving their wives. And giving themselves. Up for her. As Jesus did for his church. You see. So it's to be.

With the elders of the church. There are two other places. In scripture. Where this. Phrase lording it over them. Is contrasted. With the proper use of authority.

Let me just. Cite two of those. In second. Corinthians. One twenty four. Not that we lord it over your faith.

Paul writes to the Corinthians. We don't lord it over your faith. But we work with you. For your joy. Because it is by faith. That you stand. Firm. So. Authority is not to be used.

To step on people. And crush their joy. But to work with them. For their joy. They're to benefit. The joy of the people. They serve. What. What a contrary. Notion from lording it over.

[36 : 13] Where we seek. Our own joy. And then. The other passage. Is second Corinthians. Thirteen. Ten. Where. He speaks of not lording it over them.

But. He speaks of. The authority the Lord gave me. For building you up. Not tearing you down. So you see. In all these. These cases. The opposite of.

Of not lording it over them. Is. Is to serve the other. It's to. To work with them. For their joy. It's. It's. It's not for tearing them down. But building them up.

But we come back here. To what Peter. Says. So he said. Not this. Not lording it over. Those entrusted to your care. But rather. Being examples. To the flock.

Use your authority elders. To be an example. To the flock. Are you in front. Out front. Of them.

[37 : 11] As their leader. Then. Then leave a good example. Behind. For them to follow. Let your life. Be the best illustration. Of your sermons. Do yourself. Everything you. Require.

Them to do. And that stands behind. All the qualifications. In the list. That Paul gives. To Timothy. There must be no. Glaring omissions. Of any of these qualifications.

Why not? Because the elder. Is to be an example. To the flock. In all these areas. In their family life. In their personal life.

In their public life. In their church life. He's to lead them. In example. Teaching not only by precept. But by example. So they can see in your life.

What they hear. From your lips. So not lording it over. But leading. By example. A story comes to us.

[38 : 08] Out of. The lore. Of the American. Revolution. As the colonists. Were fighting. The Brits. They were moving. From one place. To another.

And one brigade. Was having to move. A cannon. And it was raining. And cold. And a tree. In the storm. Had fallen across. The muddy path.

And it stopped. Their progress. The lieutenant. On his high horse. Was swearing. And yelling. At the men. Telling them to move it. Out of the way. But with no success.

And then a man. On a horse. Rode up. None other than. General George. Washington.

Commander of. All the colonists. Forces. And he watched.

The disaster. Unfolding. Before him. And he got down. Off. Off of his horse. Down into the muddy path. Put his shoulder. Under the tree.

[39 : 04] And said. Okay men. On three. We're going to heave. Ho. And they. Heaved. And they. Hoed. And it wasn't long. Before that tree. Was gone. It was out of the way.

And they were able. To proceed. George. Washington. Got back up. On his horse. And rode off. Without another word. He didn't need. To say a word. His.

His example. Spoke volumes. Someone has said. That. A lecture. Can inform. But. But an example. Persuades. No wonder. He was a runaway.

Choice. For the first president. Of the United States. He had the respect. Of his men. Not just because. He knew what to say. But he showed it. In his leadership style.

By his example. Of doing. What he. Called upon. The troops. To do. Pastors. Lording it over others. Sitting on their high horses.

[39 : 58] Shouting commands. For the. The church to do. Which. They themselves. Will not do. Is the very kind. Of leadership. Peter is condemning. And so.

The chief shepherd. Is left elders. As an example. He is left. To his elders. His own example. That we elders. Should follow. In his steps.

He's the ultimate. Example. So. At the last supper. Just hours. Before. The cross. Jesus. Gets up. From the table. And takes off. His robes. And. Girds himself. With a towel. And takes a basin. And water. And goes around.

And washes. The dirty feet. Of his disciples. And then goes. And sits down. And says. Now that I. Your Lord and teacher. Have washed your feet.

[40 : 52] You also should wash. One another's feet. I have set you. An example. That you should do. As I have done. To you. Jesus was the master teacher.

He was the living embodiment. Of the truth. He is the truth. I am the way. The truth. And the life. Just watch me. And you'll see that truth. In action. And the following morning.

He would stoop even lower. To serve them. When he would stand. In their place. And take the infinite wrath. Of a holy God. For the sins of his people.

To be condemned. For them. And any elder.

Worth his salt. Is to have that blazoned. Upon his heart. That's what leadership. Looks like. That is the chief shepherd. There. Dying on the cross. For his sheep.

[41 : 51] Not lording it over them. But being examples. To the flock. So there are the three great dangers.

For elders. Laziness. Not doing any more than we have to. Because we don't. Want to. Greed. For selfish gain. Praise of men. Money.

And abuse of authority. Pushing ourselves. On to others. Telling them to do. What we wouldn't do ourselves. And. And. And the opposite. Serving.

Because we want to. Eager. Not for gain. But. To serve others. And then. Leaving an example.

For others to follow. And you know. In every single point. Who the best example was. It's our savior. So we must keep. Him. Front and center. Whether it's as an elder.

[42 : 48] Myself. Whether it's you. In your place. Where you're called. To lead others. They're serving. As the Lord. Has taught us to. You know.

David was a. A good shepherd. Of woolly sheep. Wasn't he? And when. A bear. Or a lion. Came. And. Took one of the. Sheep away. He wasn't a hireling. He was watching. His father's sheep. And so he went after. That lion and bear. And killed it. With his bare hands. And. Took the. The lamb out of its mouth. And brought it back. To the fold. And that greater. Son of David. Jesus Christ. Has done. Far. Better. Because our enemies. Were not. Bears and lions. Our enemies. Were. Were our own sins. That were. Strangling us. Our enemies. Were Satan. Who. Who held us. In bondage. And we didn't even know it. We thought we were doing. Our own thing. [43 : 47] And it was all his thing. Our enemies. Are God's wrath. Against sin. And our shepherd. Jesus.

Conquered. Every one of those foes. On our behalf. By laying his life. Down on Calvary. Do you know this good shepherd? Is he your good shepherd? Are you one of his sheep? Have you. Have you come in. And bowed under his authority. And said. Lord Jesus. I believe what you say. In the Bible. About me. I'm a sinner. I deserve to go to hell. But I've also read. That you're a merciful savior. And you turn away. None that come to you. Oh Lord Jesus. Save me. From my sins. I have no other trust. But you. And he will save you. And then you will know something. Of what we've spoken of this morning. The power. Of this example of Jesus. Over his disciples. [44 : 45] To serve. To live. As he's lived. Well let's sing of him. In number 135. 135. We're going to sing of our sure redeemer.

Our coming king. And our gentle shepherd. There's no gentleness like this. The chief shepherd. 135. Stand and sing it. As we. Give him the glory. Now may the God of peace. Who brought back from the dead. By the blood of the covenant. The Lord Jesus. That great shepherd of the sheep. Equip you with everything good for doing his will. And work in us. Work in us. What is pleasing. In his sight. Through Jesus Christ. To whom be all the glory. Forever and ever. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. [45 : 47] Amen. Amen. Amen.