

Weird Leadership and Weird Membership

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[0:00] Bibles, please go to 1 Peter, or 1 Peter, chapter 5, if you're visiting with us.

The black Bible in the chair in front of you, you can pull that out and go towards the back and find page 182, 182. 1 Peter 5.

We have two more weeks in 1 Peter, and then I started studying the book of Exodus last night.

Wow, this is going to be fun. I was just going through that.

I was like, wow, this is going to be really fun. The different themes in Exodus. So I'm excited about that. Hopefully you will be too as we dive in back into the Old Testament.

I enjoy doing that. Two more weeks in 1 Peter. Today, 1 Peter 5. 1 Peter, 1 Peter, chapter 5.

[0:59] We'll do the first five verses, okay? I'll read, then we'll do our study. Peter writes, Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to God.

And not for sordid gain, but with eagerness. Nor yet as lording and over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another.

For God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. After the inauguration of now President Trump, as he was leaving, he was going down that hallway.

The camera was following him as he exited, and he had to go up some steps. And maybe some of you might know who these two people are, but when he was about to go up the steps, he walked past what looked like two soldiers.

[2:19] And as he was coming past them, they slowly just saluted him like this, as he was going up the steps. Okay, now, who are they?

I don't know, maybe some of you know. And really, who cares? And probably they don't care that nobody cares, do they? They're just doing what they know they should be doing.

They're just standing guard saluting. There's no close-up of them. There's no interview of them. Nothing. And you think about it, amid all the pomp and the extravagance, you know, and the elites coming in, you've got these two soldiers just standing and saluting, just doing what they're supposed to do.

We read this earlier. Jesus said, whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all. By God's grace, be wise when some weirdos in this wicked world.

[3:37] That's the theme of Peter's letter, his first letter. And today, we're going to see weird leadership and weird membership. I mean, in this passage, Peter presents leaders and members in a local church in a way that the world thinks, okay, now, you people are such nutcases.

You're crazy. You don't act like this. I mean, we've got power. We've got power. Not so.

As far as Peter's concerned. Peter took to heart what Jesus said, what we read, from Mark's gospel. They're really going to think you're weird.

Another way to put humble leaders, humble youth, humble members. That's how you can describe this passage. Or, leaders, shepherd, youth, submit, all are humble.

Leaders are humble. Young people are humble. Everyone's humble. Leaders, shepherd, youth, submit, all are humble. Or in a statement, wise, winsome Christian weirdos are people who clothe themselves with humility, having leaders who humbly shepherd them, and youth who humbly submit to that leadership.

[5:24] And the rest of the part that we read, Jesus says, for the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve. God came to serve us.

Get that. God didn't come for us to serve Him. God came, Jesus took on flesh, to serve us, to serve humans.

That's, that's a startling, shocking statement. But Paul said, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Jesus is the epitome of what humility is, of what true leadership is all about, of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Elders, or pastors, or shepherds, or overseers, that's one person, or persons, different terms used. They serve God's people being equipped, enthusiastic, and exemplary.

[6:35] Young people submit to their leaders, and all Christians in a local body, clothe themselves with gracious, loving, compassionate humility. The role of pastors, or elders, or overseers, includes leadership, pastoral supervision, discipline, formal discipline, and corrective discipline, and even at times, financial responsibilities.

They make decisions, they give encouragement, they keep the sheep on the path of God's Word. Shepherds are called, to give spiritual care, to a local body, by preaching, and teaching God's Word.

They're to guard the purity of the truth, warning God's people of false doctrine. They should set the example of godliness, in their own lives. It's about character, moral character.

Leaders should have this in general, that may be lacking, in the White House at this time. When tensions and conflict rises, and stress comes, elders or pastors, need to have these qualities, at the forefront.

And yet there's sinners, who need grace too. And then young people, who can question authority, they're called to submit, but all Christians, should display humility.

[8:02] I'm telling you the passage, in different ways. These are different ways, to sum up, what Peter says here, in these first five verses, of chapter five. And I'll tell you, if we as a church, take this on, people will think, we're weird.

And yet it's winsome. It's attractive. Because when you have, a local church, a bunch of people, who have so many different things, in common, but the one common denominator, they have, is Christ, and that drives, the unity amongst him, and shows humility.

I mean, that stands out, to this world. A world that's divided. A nation that is divided, over policies. Not so with us. We're united in Christ, in the gospel.

humble. So let's look through this. First, he spends most of the time, with humble leaders. Verses one through four.

Notice the first word, therefore. What's the therefore? Therefore. Get it? He looks back, to what he spoke about, in reference to the purging, of God's people. We looked at that, chapter four.

[9:14] 12 through 19. God will start, with the leaders. The elders, or pastors, or shepherds, or overseers. The purging process, will start with the leaders.

Because like priests, like people. People follow their leaders. So that's like, that's where Peter starts. He says, in chapter four, verse 17, it's a time for judgment, to begin with, the house of God. With us first. And then he moves into, therefore, elders. This is how, I want you to be. This is how God, wants you to be.

I exhort. Notice he says, I exhort the elders, among you. Peter, Peter strongly encourages, these elders, or pastors, to these specific commands.

Notice he provides, three justifications, for his exhortation, to them. He says, a fellow elder, I'm a witness, of the sufferings, of Christ.

[10:23] And I'm a partaker, also of the glory, that is to be revealed. He's encouraging them. And he gives, his credentials, so to speak. He's a fellow elder.

He's a witness. He's a sharer. His credentials. So, based upon this, I'm going to exhort you. So first, a fellow elder, Peter himself, had a pastoral role, in God's church.

And when he says this, it expresses unity, collegiality, with these elders, in the different churches. He's empathetic, to the elders, in their task, to shepherd God's people.

He's a witness, he says. It's good to know, he was a witness, to Jesus' suffering, his crucifixion. More likely, Peter testified, to Jesus' suffering, having observed, some of it, but definitely, the resurrection of Jesus.

But even more than that, Peter shared, in the sufferings of Christ, and that he suffered, because he followed Christ. In the same way, elders must be ready, to share in Christ's sufferings.

[11:34] It's not easy, to be an under-shepherd. It's not easy, to be elders, for God's people, for Christ's sheep.

And he's a partaker. He, along with these elders, will partake of the glory, that is to be revealed, when Jesus returns. Jesus is coming back. All Christians, will share in this glory, yes.

So, Peter's saying, look, I know better than you guys. I'm in the status as you. I'm in the same place as you. God has called me to do this, God's called you to do this.

We're together in this. So, verse two, shepherd, flock of God among you. shepherd, or ten, the sheep of God, or God's sheep.

This is an image taken from the Old Testament. Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing. Isaiah chapter 40, Jeremiah 23, Ezekiel 34.

[12:51] And this image in the Old Testament, the thought process was, the elders of Israel, they were regarded as those who oversaw the people. Israel had a plowity of men, that acted as elders.

They were the under shepherds of God's people. And what happened was, Jesus picked up this theme in the Gospel of John, and he calls himself, I am the good shepherd.

I lay down my life for the sheep. So now, each local congregation has shepherds, under shepherds, with Christ as the senior pastor, the chief shepherd, the senior pastor, the senior shepherd.

Elders are called to fulfill this same function, shepherd or care for God's people. They are under your care, Peter says.

What would shepherds do? I mean, for us, you usually don't see shepherds in Cottonwood, or the Verde Valley. I mean, you may be, but, they're kind of few and far between.

[14:03] Shepherds in the first century, they would keep the sheep from wandering in their stupidity. Sheep were stupid. The shepherd would protect them from wild animals and thieves.

The shepherd would feed them, direct them to good grass. That's good grass over there. The shepherd would seek them out. The shepherd would maintain unity amongst the sheep.

And it's these functions, elders are called to do with God's people. They must be ready to do these, even if it is a personal risk to them.

Shepherd, the sheep of God among you. Notice he says, exercising oversight. I believe this is supposed to be in the text. This is where you get the word bishop.

Overseer is where you get the word bishop. So elders, pastor, pastor is where you get the word shepherd. So elders, pastor, overseeing.

[15:11] It's the same thing. There's no like bishop over these elders, who are over these pastor. That's not how it works. An elder is a shepherd who oversees.

It's one and the same, friends. It's one title. So elders are called to shepherd or pastor and exercise oversight.

Peter used this term overseer in chapter 2 verse 25. But now you've returned to the shepherd and guardian or overseer of your soul.

He puts it in a noun form. The same word, just in a noun form. So that's what elders do. That's what pastors do.

They oversee. They're bishoping, so to speak. Well, how do they do this? How can pastors or elders or overseers, bishops, how do they shepherd?

[16:18] How do they exercise oversight? He does three contrasts. Not like this, but like this. Nah. Yeah, but like this.

That's what he does. Three contrasts, negative and positive. Notice the first negative. Not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to God.

So they gladly volunteer for this work of God's service. Not being lazy. But they willingly serve Jesus Christ by serving and shepherding the sheep.

They willingly do this. And he says it's according to God. According to God's specific will.

How are you going to know God's will? From his word. That's what God speaks. He speaks from his word. So not from the pastor's own will, but from the will of God.

[17:21] From God's word. So, first, the negative. Not under compulsion. Positive. Willingly.

Second, notice the motive. Not for greed, he says. Or not for sordid gain. Or a desire for financial gain.

Elders most likely would be paid. 1 Timothy 5, 17 and 18. But they should not seek. What did I put? Oh, they should not seek to benefit in a major way from the ministry.

Not for what you will get out of it, the New Living Translation says. That's a good way to put it. Don't turn it into a business. In other words.

Now instead, leaders serve with zeal, energy, enthusiasm for God and his people. They're driven to please Jesus in this work of service. Not the people.

[18:21] That's why he says, but with eagerness. So not for greed. So not under compulsion, but willingly.

Not for greed. See what you can get out of it. But with zeal and energy. Notice the next one is the attitude.

Attitude. Not lording it over or dominating those allotted to them. A congregation has been assigned or allotted to elders.

That's why he says, those allotted to your charge. It's their sphere of responsibility. So the attitude should be of servants.

Not overbearing bosses. Ministers of grace. Not dictatorial, unreasonable executives. Not forcefully ruling over or subduing with harsh or excessive use of that authority.

[19:34] Authority they have, yes. But they hold it gently with grace and compassion. Not arrogance. Not done in anger.

Certainly not done in anger. Or in some type of restrictive legalistic rule. So the attitude, not lording it over as those allotted to your charge.

But notice the positive. But proving to be examples to the flock. But becoming an example for the flock or for the sheep.

Instead elders should exemplify by their lives godly living. A model to follow after. Notice you see Peter's contrasting hierarchical authority versus a demonstration by the example of one's life.

Yes, they have authority. But they must not abuse that authority. They're Christ's delegates. Now it's difficult because elders or pastors are called to be leaders and give leadership but they cannot abuse that authority.

[20:55] But we need to be careful because abuse can be subjective. Right? One person may feel abused. Another would say no way.

What does a pastor do? This person says I'm being abused. This person says no, I don't see that. So how do you know if you're abusing your authority or not?

What can a pastor do? What can elders do? How are they able to determine amidst the subjectivity the objective truth of if they're really lorded it over or not?

There's a few ways. They must do what they can do to make sure they come across as gracious as possible. It's important to have a plurality as a way to keep each other in check.

That's why it's elders. The congregation as a whole helps too. The congregation speaks as a whole. And personally I put in here I must make sure I give you as God's people the proper respect and honor.

[22:05] That's what I have to do. Those are different ways how to determine that subjectivity in the midst of that subjectivity what's really objectively true.

Am I lording it over? So the negative and the positive here's these three contrasts that he's giving. That's how elders pastors shepherds overseers that's how they shepherd God's sheep. It's hard because elders or pastors have to tell people how to live and not to live.

At times I have to exercise discipline maybe even rebuke. I may need to correct you but it must be done in a gracious kind manner.

interesting too about the ancient shepherds in Israel they didn't drive their sheep they walked in front of their sheep and they called them to follow him in the same way elders are ministers to God's sheep and they stand out and the sheep follow.

[23:24] And it's not about academic excellence or success it's not about having these great administrative skills it's not about having some type of quality wow he's really a go-getter those are nice things it's good but that's not that's not what Peter's talking about here.

The major part of this is character right? And displaying that character and how you interact with people. And notice really the driving force and motive for elders or pastors verse 4 and when the chief shepherd appears you receive the unfading crown of glory.

In ancient times victorious athletes valiant soldiers even distinguished citizens they would receive a crown made from amaranth flower which supposedly never withered or faded it would revive when moistened with water and it symbolized perpetuity symbolized eternity so when Jesus the senior pastor of his church comes in all his glory these elders or pastors will receive a crown which is glory a reward dependent upon their manner of shepherding Christ people Christ sheep Christ will pay them with something more than gold glory elders are delegated by God to oversee but they will have to give an account for their actions as Christ under shepherds

Hebrews 13 17 pastors like to quote the first part obey your leaders and submit to them but the next part says as those who have to give an account leaders have to give an account I will be held accountable to how I've shepherded you are elders or pastors a target yeah they are but Jesus will honor elders in the eternal state which is well worth working and laboring so the chief pastor will bestow glory upon the faithful elders or pastors as a visible display of honor before all for their devotion to God's sheep shepherding caring serving loving helping it's their attitude because remember he says shepherd the flock of God this is

God's church it's not my church it's not my body this is Christ's body Jesus died for his people now there's Jews and Gentiles they're one Jesus gave himself on behalf of the sheep they're mine they're his this is the place where I serve humble leaders verses one through four and then notice humble youth verse five the first part he says you younger men likewise going on the same subject in other words be subject to your elders now I think he's truly talking about young men not some other category of people usually not always usually elders were older men regardless he's saying younger men should show proper respect for this authority they should subject themselves to the leaders of the church now why would

[27 : 30] Peter say something like this why would he why would he say this was there something happening in the churches as to why he would say this we're not really told that let me give you a thought we live in a day when all authority is questioned especially among the youth and the same cultural norm as today that was in the first century too and if youth who have more of a tendency to question authority are called to submit how much more for all of you to submit to your leaders I mean we live in a day when authorities question I mean I understand the upset that people have for instance for example against President Trump I understand that but to say he's not my president what kind of a ridiculous statement is that see people have no thought about respect for authority and if youth if the young people oh and it's no offense to all you college students but you know it's the college they think they got it all together we got it all figured out right they do well at least they think they do but if these young people are called to submit and young people could be from 50 on down in the first century if these young people are called to submit how much more so for all of us called to submit to leadership and it's this submission that can cause tension can't it it can cause tension especially for some of you

I'm in a younger age bracket than for some of you look I'm called by God I'm delegated by you as the church to shepherd you you don't think I'm doing a good job shepherding you then get rid of me if you don't think I'm preaching to you the gospel get rid of me you should humble leaders humble youth humble members because he says in verse 5 and all of you clothe yourselves with humility toward one another humble leaders humble youth humble members all of you clothe yourselves with humility all within the believing community should show such humility all of God's sheep should show this kind of attitude chapter 3 verse 8 of 1st

Peter he said let all be harmonious sympathetic brotherly kind hearted and humble in spirit this is the second time he's saying this and he relates it to tying a garment around the body clothe yourself like a slave who would tie an apron and fasten it like a knot humility the picture maybe would come to the mind of his readers and maybe this came to Peter's mind as he was watching Jesus John chapter 13 talks about this he's watching Jesus they're sitting there the disciples blah blah blah blah and here's Jesus he gets up he ties an apron around himself and he starts washing the disciples feet there's there's an example vivid example of humility is not Jesus the epitome of humility Jesus is the epitome of humility taking on human flesh so that he may die on behalf of sinners obedient to the father's plan he did this to show that

God is gracious and kind God should condemn us as sinners and yet he shows compassion to us in Jesus Christ if you're here and you're not a follower of Jesus see that God is arms wide open come repent trust in Christ he'll save you even though you deserve his judgment he'll save you Jesus is the epitome of humility so wrap humility around yourself like a garment you don't go around naked

please don't go around naked call the police on you bless you brother or sister you're going to jail go put some clothes on but think of it this way as you put on your clothes put on humility that's what Peter's saying I as a leader should not dominate but you as the congregation are not given the right to undermine or make wrong accusations

I'm called to be humble you're called to be humble we're all called to be humble notice the reason for God is opposed to the proud but gives grace to the humble God opposes those who are proud he quotes here from Proverbs chapter 3 verse 34 but God gives grace to those who are humble the humble will receive God's favor the proud will find themselves in opposition to God members of local churches should be graciously humble because God God opposes those who are proud and arrogant but he gives his grace his undeserved favor to those who humble themselves notice in that short statement that Peter gives profound statement it has gospel overtones all over the place [33:51] God opposes those who are self sufficient those who balk at his total help those who believe they have no need of him I don't need to believe in God him and me and God were fine the proud seek their own glory proud trust in their own ability James thought it was so important he quotes it James chapter four verse six in opposition to that God loves to be trusted loves for his people to humbly submit to him to them he gives forgiving and enabling grace they recognize how much they need him and others to help them see the real them they humbly cry out to God in desperation on a daily basis friends when we humble ourselves before

God he uses us in ways where we minister and serve each other submitting to those who are in authority over us and those under our care we graciously want to minister to each other that's the whole mentality that's what happens when humility overtakes you God will continue to pour out his forgiving and enabling grace upon us as a church as we clothe ourselves with humility with leaders who humbly shepherd and youth who humbly submit to that leadership leadership should be exercised in the spirit of helping others and for the good of God's people can a church exist without leadership oh yes but it won't be very healthy leadership is good for the members it's needed for the church of

God it's needed for the church from God a church cannot exist very long without humble leaders but certainly won't survive with people who are arrogant and prideful will it we need to have humble leaders and we need to be submitting humble members God help us God help us to have humble members to be humble members to be humble youth and to have a humble pastor at a time when people are anything but humble when the world balks at that that's what we need and I must say to you as a church

I thank you I thank you as a church you've been so gracious to me I think when I confess to you there's been times where I've lorded it over you I've sinned against you for that I'm sorry and I ask for your forgiveness and I thank you that you're gracious to me thank you Travis thank you Michael you've been very gracious to me Daniel you guys have been very gracious to me pointing out my sin and it's been shown in my anger I'm just so you know I've really come to the point where I need to deal with my anger I've actually been meeting with Wayne Neiman every other week basis been reading through a book by David Jones uprooting anger I want to deal with this in my own life I'm like about to be a certified biblical counselor and I'm like I'm going to help people with their anger and I got a problem with anger right it's like how stupid is that sorry I should say stupid how lame is that it's just brought that out in my own life so this is a great passage for me just in terms of my own life my own application and I hope it's encouraging to you father thank you for your forgiving grace thank you for your enabling grace just a statement that's been ringing in my head for the past week couple weeks thank you that you forgive us in Christ as we repent and keep trusting Jesus and thank you that you enable us by your grace as we humble ourselves you enable us to instead of anger there's mercy instead of lust there's love and shepherding thank you that you transform us by your grace

[39:22] God we pray we pray you transform us as a church we be a people who are humble we pray that you would raise up more men to be pastors or elders in your church who can fulfill that role and yet in the meantime we do pray for me help me to graciously pastor your people under compulsion not exercising in ways that are for my own benefit lording it over them but willingly eagerly as an example may all of us be a people who are humble especially in a day where people are anything but humble take some time between you and the

Lord and ponder what we've seen in God's word this morning maybe some of you members want to pray for us as a church that we would be a church that's humble and gracious but take a few

moments if you would and ponder what we've seen in God's word and after a few moments of silence we'll worship in our giving we'll worship in singing two more songs together in our closing prayer prayer Thank you.