



A BETTER RESISTANCE | THE LEADERS WE NEED (15)

MAY 9, 2021

1 Peter 5:1-5

'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: ²shepherd 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; ³not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. ⁵Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

BACKGROUND

The most common term for church leaders in the New Testament is elders, which was the typical form of leadership in the churches. The word "Presbyterian" comes from the Greek word presbyteros, which refers to the form of church government that is led by elders. In this passage, Peter reminds the elders of responsibilities that have been entrusted to them, which include shepherding the flock and exercising oversight (v.2). He explains that Jesus himself is the Chief Shepherd who will reward those who faithfully serve him as leaders. To the younger members of the congregation, Peter encourages them to subject themselves to the elders and to relate with humility towards one another, reminding his readers that God is against the proud, but will lavish his favor upon those who are humble.

PURPOSE

To understand the heart of Christ in leadership

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who are some good leaders you have worked with? What made those people good leaders?
2. What attitudes does Peter say should be in the heart of an elder in the church?
3. How was Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, an example of humility and leadership that served the flock rather than domineered over them?

LEADER'S NOTES

Question 1: Give time for people to reflect on examples of good leaders that they have experienced. Often, the best leaders have some combination of integrity, accountability, empathy, humility, resilience, vision, influence, positivity and good listening and communication skills.

Question 2: Elders are to provide care and oversight to the members of the church with glad and willing hearts, in accord with God's will instead of doing it out of a sense of compulsion. In other words, the work of shepherding and leadership should be motivated by love for those entrusted to their care. (v.2) They are to do the work eagerly and not out of greed or selfish or dishonest gain. The work of ministry must not be self-serving. (v.3) They are to serve as examples to the congregation, and not use their place of leadership

as a means to be domineering. This means that they should not be authoritarian, arrogant, coercive, harsh or asserting their will over another in an arrogant way.

Elders should be motivated by a heart that takes joy and delights in the good of others as they minister Christ's words and actions.

Question 3: Jesus did not please himself (Romans 15:3). In humility, he counted the interests of others as more significant than his own (Philippians 2:3-4). He gave up his status and privilege as God and took the role of a servant even to the point of death (Philippians 2:5-8). "Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Philippians 2:3-11 gives us a beautiful image of Jesus' humble service and his sacrificial love.

³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.