

Shepherd the Flock of GOD

1 Peter 5:1-4

John 21:15-25

Acts 20:17-32



15 June 2025

A Letter to Saints (1 Peter 1:1-2)

A Call for Perseverance

- Suffering is a part of being a Christian. (1 Peter 4:12; Acts 14:22; Philippians 1:29; John 15:18-20; 2 Tim 3:12; 1 Thess 3:4-5)
- Christians are **called to** unjust persecution. (1 Peter 2:21)
- Persecution of saints is part of God's will. (1 Peter 2:15; 4:19 Acts 9:15)
- God's purpose for persecution is CLEANSING (Hebrews 12:5-13); PURIFYING (1 Peter 1:7); and SEPARATING (1 Peter 4:17)
- "The race" is NOT an easy race. (Jeremiah 12:5; Matthew 7:13-14)
- Christians are called to PERSEVERE TO THE END. (Matthew 10:22; Hebrews 10:36-39; 6:11; 3:6, 14; James 1:12; Romans 8:23-25)
- God has equipped us to PERSEVERE:
 - ① He gave us a new heart that loves His ways and hates every false way. (Ezekiel 36:26; Psalm 25:4; 27:11; 86:11; 119:15, 30, 33, 104, 128)
 - ② He gave us His Holy Spirit to "cause us to walk in His statutes, to keep His judgments, and to do them." (Ezek 36:27; Gal 5:16-25; Rom 8:4-5)
 - ③ He gave us His Word to learn from and for endurance. (Romans 15:4)
 - ④ He gave us His Church to serve each other and to build each other up in the faith. (Eph 4:16, 29; Rom 14:19; 15:2; 1 Cor 14:26)
 - ⑤ He gave us HIMSELF! (Matt 28:20; Gen 15:1; Psalm 121; Heb 13:5-6)

The Call of An Elder (1 Peter 5:1)

- The New Testament uses three **interchangeable** words to describe an elder:
 - ① πρεσβύτερος presbuteros {pres-boo'-ter-os} (1 Peter 5:1)
 - one who presided over an assembly.
 - ② ἐπίσκοπος episkopos {ep-is'-kop-os} (1 Tim 3:2)
 - a man charged with the duty of seeing that things are done by others and done in a biblical way, any curator, guardian, overseer or superintendent.
 - ③ ποιμήν poimen {poy-mane'} (Ephesians 4:11) Literally, a shepherd with

the primary duty of “feeding” and “protecting” (teaching, preaching, exhorting) the Church.

➤ Consider the shepherds in the Bible: Abel, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Christ.

- An elder is an **appointed and gifted** leader of the Church.
- God gives specific qualifications for HIS elders. (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5)
- An elder of Christ's church **MUST BE** (δεν̄ dei {die})- **emphasis on absolute necessity**)...

★ **BE AN EXAMPLE** (John 13:14-15; Heb 13:7; 6:12; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:7, 9; 1 Timothy 4:12; Matt 20:25-28)

★ **BE COMMITTED** as an elder. “Elder” is not a title it is a responsibility and a very, very high responsibility to God and the Church. (Philip 1:21-24)

★ **LOVE GOD'S CHURCH JUST AS HE LOVES CHRIST.** (John 10:11 is Christ's example for His sheep.) Consider Ephesians 5:25.

★ **BE A MAN!** (1 Corinthians 16:13; Isaiah 46:8; 1 Kings 2:2-3; John 19:5)

★ **BE a leader.** (Matthew 20:25-28; Psalm 23:1-2)

✓ **Blameless** - above reproach - he must be a moral and spiritual example. (Luke 1:16; Philippians 2:15)

★ Have a good reputation with those outside the Church. (3:7)

✓ **Husband** (by God's definition) of one wife (Mark 10:7-12; Luke 16:18; Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:39)

✓ **Temperate** (Greek: *nephalios* - “wineless”), vigilant, disciplined

✓ **Sober-Minded** (self-controlled)

✓ **Good Behaviour** - respectable, prudent, well-disciplined

✓ **Hospitable** (1 Peter 4:9)

✓ **Able to Teach**

➤ He must have a deep knowledge and understanding of the whole of God's Word (whole counsel of God - Acts 20:26-27) and doctrine and . . .

➤ **Life experience** - Example: Timothy

★ This is the primary task of elders. (1 Tim 4:6, 11, 13, 16; 5:17; 2 Tim 2:15; Titus 2:1; Ephesians 4:11-14)

★ An elder must be a **student** of God's Word.

★ An elder must be uncompromising in his teaching, preaching, and counseling. (2 Timothy 4:1-4)

✓ **Not given to wine** (See Prov 31:4-5; 23:29-35; Lev 10:9; Num 6:3)

✓ **Not violent**

✓ **Not greedy for money** - 1 Peter 5:2; consider 1 Tim 6:6-10

✓ **Gentle/Patient**

✓ **Not quarrelsome** - consider 2 Timothy 2:24

✓ **Not covetous** (1 Thessalonians 2:5; 2 Peter 2:1-3; Jude 16; Acts 20:33; 2 Cor 11:9; 12:15-16; 1 Thess 2:5)

✓ **One who rules his own family well** (1 Timothy 3:5)

✓ **Having children in submission with all reverence** (Titus 1:6)

- ✓ Not a novice (both in word and life experience) - lest he become conceited, puffed up. Paul speaks of the danger of PRIDE.
- ✓ A good testimony among those who are outside
- ✓ Humble - he must be a slave of the Church (Matt 20:28; John 13); Christ is his example (Philip 2:5-8) **SEE Ephesians 3:8; 1 Cor 15:9.**
- ✓ He must know that he will be held to a higher account before the judgment seat of Christ. (James 3:1)
- ✓ Willing to watch over the souls he has been given knowing that he will have to give an account to God. (Hebrews 13:17)
- ✗ **BE NOT A HIRELING!** One who runs away from trouble, difficulties, problems. (John 10:12)
- Elders, who **LABOR** in their office, are to be highly respected by the Church. (1 Timothy 5:17-18; Hebrews 13:7; 1 Thess 5:12-13)
- An elder's primary responsibility: Word and Prayer (Acts 6:2)
 - REMEMBER: Every member is given a gift and grace for God to be used in a local Body of believers (local church).
 - Churches ought to be jealous for the elder's time. When he is distracted with other duties taking him away from prayer and the study of God's Word the whole congregation suffers.

Peter: Apostle & Elder (1 Peter 5:1)

- Peter had witnessed the sufferings of Christ and he was a partaker (κοινωνός koinonos {koy-no-nos'} - partner; sharer) of the glory that will be revealed.
 - ➔ That "glory" was the second coming of Christ and the "inheritance" reserved for him in heaven. (1 Peter 1:3-5)
- Peter had been commissioned by Christ Himself to "shepherd" Christ's sheep. (John 21:15-17; 10:26-29)

Shepherd the Flock of God (1 Peter 5:2)

- God **gives** His sheep to His "under-shepherds" to feed, care for, and protect.
- This is a SERIOUS STEWARDSHIP – this is why each elder must give an account for each "sheep" (soul) given him. (Hebrews 13:17)
- (Acts 20:27-31) Paul warns the elders of Ephesus to "watch" over the "flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers".
 - ➔ He warned them of the DANGERS they faced from without **and** from within.
- The "sheep" are GOD's and elders are STEWARDS responsible to GOD.
 - ➔ Consider Acts 20:28.
- The shepherd must KNOW his (God's) sheep. (Psalm 80:1)
- A shepherd must FEED the sheep what is good for them!
- An elder has a responsibility to preach "the Word"; "the whole counsel of God"; "sound doctrine". (2 Timothy 4:1-2, 3-4; Acts 20:18-27; Ezekiel 2:1-3:15; 3:16-27)

Oversee the Flock of God (1 Peter 5:2-3)

- To “oversee” is ἐπισκοπέω (episkopeo) which is the verb form of the office of the “overseer” (elder or bishop).
- To “oversee” is to watch over, **to lead**, to protect, and **to feed**.
- Notice the qualifiers the Holy Spirit provides:
 - NOT by compulsion but willingly (voluntarily). He is to “oversee” with joy. Remember Hebrews 13:17!!
 - NOT for dishonest gain (money, prestige, honor) but with eagerness (determination).
 - ★ 1 Corinthians 9:16-17; 2 Corinthians 5:11, 14.
 - ★ Paul’s example: Acts 20:33-35; 1 Thess 2:8-9; 1 Tim 6:6-11
 - NOT “lording over” but as examples! See Matthew 20:25-28.
 - ★ Elders are SERVANTS/SLAVES of the Church.
 - ★ Elders are to be EXAMPLES to those whom he oversees.
(1 Tim 4:12; 2 Thess 3:9; 2 Tim 1:13-14; 1 Cor 11:1; Heb 13:7)

The Reward (1 Peter 5:4)

- GOD rewards diligent faith. (Hebrews 11:6)
- “The LORD is My Shepherd” (Psalm 23:1) is called:
 - ★ Here, “the **CHIEF SHEPHERD**”.
 - ★ “the **GOOD SHEPHERD**” (John 10:11)
 - ★ “the **GREAT SHEPHERD**” (Hebrews 13:20-21)
 - ★ “the **SHEPHERD and OVERSEER** of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25)
- “WHEN” Christ returns – this is what Christians “groan” for! (Romans 8:23-25; Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 9:28; 1 John 3:2)
 - ★ UNTIL then Christians “purify” themselves “just as He is pure” – 1 John 3:3; 2 Peter 3:12-14; 2 Corinthians 7:1)

God’s Safeguard for His Elders (1 Timothy 5:19; consider Deuteronomy 19:15)

What Must We Learn & Do

- ① Expect our elders to: (1 Timothy 3:1-7)
 - ❶ Feed us
 - ❷ Oversee us (watch over our souls; warn us; lead us)
 - ❸ Set an example for us
- ② Test our elders. (Acts 17:11; 1 Thess 5:21; 1 John 4:1; Isaiah 8:20)
- ③ Follow our elders’ example. (Hebrews 13:7; 1 Cor 11:1; Revelation 2:2)
- ④ Honor our elders, especially those who “labor in the word and doctrine”. (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13)
- ⑤ Obey/submit to our elders. (Hebrews 13:17)
- ⑥ Care for our elders’ needs. (Galatians 6:6; 1 Cor 9:9-14; 1 Tim 5:17-18)
- ⑦ Make our elders’ job a joy. (Hebrews 13:17)
- ⑧ **Pray for our elders.**