

DAILY BIBLE STUDIES

“Shepherding the Flock of God”

1 Peter 5:1-4

JULY 8 – JULY 14, 2007

THE LORD'S DAY –This week we begin the final chapter of the Epistle of **1 Peter**. After speaking at length to the suffering and persecution of these believers Peter now goes on to explain what type of leadership is necessary in this type of tough time. In these next four verses he gives us some practical instruction on the Elder’s responsibilities in the matter of shepherding the flock of God. Read: **1 Peter 5:1-4**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: Ask God to teach you from His Word this week.

MONDAY –As we stated in the introduction of yesterday; the people of God always need good leadership and this is made more evident in times of trouble and persecution. Peter begins **verse 1** by directing his exhortation to “*the Elders who are among you*”. God has designed for His people (the church) to be guided and overseen by qualified, Godly men whom the Scriptures refer to as Elders. We have previously studied this principle of Eldership in great detail as our local church has adopted this Biblical method of church leadership. Let’s here briefly refresh our minds with a few thoughts from Scripture: Local congregations were organized as soon as possible under the oversight of Elders (**Acts 14:23**). In the Scriptural examples we have, there is always a plurality of Elders; never just one elder overseeing the flock (**Acts 20:17, 21:17-18**). God lists the necessary qualifications to be an Elder (**1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9**). We will continue this brief overview tomorrow.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: Thank God that He has provided Spiritual leadership for His people and be faithful to pray for your Elders.

TUESDAY –Continuing a bit further with yesterday’s topic, we need also to remember God gives the people their duties and responsibilities toward their Elders as well and they are listed in the following texts: (**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, 1 Timothy 5:17-20, Hebrews 13:17**).

Praise & Prayer	ADORATION Hallowed be Your name. (6:9)	AUTHORITY Your Kingdom come... (6:10)	APPEAL Give us this day... (6:11)	AQUITAL Forgive us our debts... (6:12)	ASSISTANCE Deliver us from evil. (6:13a)	ADMIRATION For Yours is the Kingdom... (6:13)
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Finally, I want to point out that the Scripture uses some words synonymously to describe Elders. Peter speaks in our text to the Elders responsibility to “*shepherd the flock*”. This is where we get the term “pastor” from. Such terms as “elder, pastor, bishop, shepherd, overseer” are all used interchangeably in Scripture to refer to the same office of leadership (**Acts 20:17, 28, Titus 1:5-7**). Now, let’s begin to see Peter’s exhortation to Elders.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Ask God to help you follow and obey His Word concerning your responsibilities toward Him and then also to your Elders.*

WEDNESDAY –Peter, in verse one gives the basis for his exhortation. He says that he also is a “*fellow Elder*” as well as “*witness of the sufferings of Christ*”. We can learn so much from just this little portion of Scripture. Peter demonstrates the humility of true Elders here as he identifies himself with them. Peter does affirm his apostolic authority which only 11 other men in the entire world could also claim and yet we see his caring shepherd’s heart as he reaches out to encourage and exhort his “*fellow Elders*”. He also reminds them that they will receive from Christ the reward (*crown of glory*) for faithful service to Him and His church. Peter speaks of being a “*partaker in the glory that will be revealed*”. Peter himself was given a foretaste of this glory when he actually did see the Lord’s glory on the mount of transfiguration. Read about it in **Matthew 17:1-8, 2 Peter 1:16-18**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank God for His grace and that all His promises will come true, and praise Him and meditate on His marvelous glory today.*

THURSDAY –In **verse 2** we find out who it is that needs to be shepherded; namely, “*the flock of God which is among you*”. The Greek word used here is one to refer to a flock of animals and of sheep in particular. We, as true believers in Jesus Christ are His sheep. Christ Himself is as Peter later states the “*chief Shepherd*”. We also see that the church (redeemed people) are not the flock of the preacher but “*the flock of God*”. Elders must be aware that this is God’s business; and the true, born again saints we minister to are God’s sheep and not our own. This is important imagery and terms being used here in description of God’s people. We see the tender and precious relationship that believers have to God as well as to the Elders or “undershepherds”. The Scripture is full of texts describing and using the shepherd / sheep relationship. Read **Ezekiel 34:11-12, John 10:1-30**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Thank the Chief Shepherd Jesus Christ for laying His life down for you as a believer. Ask Him to help you to be a sheep that would come under the oversight of His ordained undershepherds.*

FRIDAY –In **verse 2-3** Peter lays out some instruction on how men in Eldershops are to lead and shepherd God’s people. They are first to shepherd the flock (“feed the sheep”) and then serve as “*overseers*”. This literally means they are to be “looking over” the flock to see what needs to be done and assessing their condition. They also are to be eager to serve “*willingly*” then as some translations add, “*...as God would have you*”. Elders are to zealously serve and all the while they should not be doing their service for “*dishonest gain*”. True shepherds are men who serve with pure motive and are never driven by the acquisition of wealth and material possessions. As one of my favorite quotes by John MacArthur says, “You may be a preacher and you may be a pastor; but if you love money, you’re not a man of God”. This is not to say that God’s undershepherds are not to be paid well by the church, for they are; in accordance to their effort (**1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Corinthians 9:14**). Read **Hebrews 13:17**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Pray today for your Elders that they would be men of God who are zealous in service. Also ask Him to raise up other men, faithful and qualified to the task of shepherding His people.*

SATURDAY –We also read that Elders are not to lead by acting like “*lords*” over the people of God. This is to say that true servant leadership is humble and serves meekly without the domineering and oppressive style that is so characteristic of the lost, unsaved world. Instead of being the type of leader who leads by “*lording over*”; true Elders serve, live, and behave as “*examples to the flock*”. Sadly many sheep under the care of true Godly Elders never seem to realize and see these things we have explained. But Peter closes out **verse 4** by telling true Elders and shepherds that Jesus Himself will evaluate your efforts for Him and those who were His true servants (living out these former verses) will receive “*the crown of glory that does not fade away*”. Read **Matthew 20:25-28**.

What truth(s) did I learn from God’s Word today?

Suggestion for prayer: *Pray that God would do a mighty work in our church. Ask Him to help you be an example and to diligently follow one.*