

What About Leadership?

1 Peter 5.1-4

¹ 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: ² 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; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Christians do not live their Christianity on their own. Having identified with the Lord Jesus they become related to others who are identified with him. Peter has a lot to say concerning the church and the leaders of the church (or elders). The Bible repeatedly used the imagery of sheep and shepherds as expressions to describe people, the church and the leaders in the church.

WE ARE TOLD THAT PEOPLE ARE LIKE SHEEP

For **you were like sheep** going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls. 1 Peter 2.25; Isaiah 53.6

Mark 6.31-34; Matthew 26.31-35; Zechariah 13.7

WE ARE TOLD THAT THE CHURCH IS LIKE A FLOCK

¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me – ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father – and I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and **there shall be one flock and one shepherd.** John 10.14-16

Luke 15.3-7; Hebrews 13.20-21

WE ARE TOLD THAT THE LEADERS OF THE CHURCH (ELDERS) ARE LIKE SHEPHERDS

Two important **functions** of the elders are emphasized by Peter.

- The first is the shepherd function.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care. 1 Peter 5.2

- Secondly, Peter talks about the overseer function as well.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, **servicing as overseers.** 1 Peter 5.2

See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many. Hebrews 12.15

Peter not only speaks of the functions of Elders, he also addresses some potential **problems** that leaders may experience.

- First there are potential problems *in attitude*.

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. 1 Peter 5.2

- Then there can be serious problems with *motivation*.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – **not greedy for money, but eager to serve.** 1 Peter 5.2

- Lastly, problems in "style" regularly surface in the church.

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – **not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.** 1 Peter 5.2-3

D. Stuart Briscoe. *When the Going Gets Tough*. Regal Books, Ventura, CA, 1982.

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