

# What is the Church?

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## Study 5: Shepherds and Sheep

**READ** 1 Peter 5:1-5 and **LISTEN** to Pastor Craig Baxter's [sermon](#).

In this study we see that God has appointed shepherds to care for and nurture the church. These shepherds are warned to serve the church, the flock of Christ, willingly, eagerly, and in such a way that exemplifies the character of the Chief Shepherd, Jesus. While this is a serious and weighty task, the Lord promises to reward His shepherds. As such, church members should cloth themselves with humility toward one another and willingly submit to the shepherds.

**Main lesson:** The church is a flock of Christ's people who freely receive the oversight of willing, eager, and humble under-shepherds.

### Questions:

1. From your understanding and what you read in Scripture, what is an elder? See 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; Acts 20:28.
2. **Challenge question:** V. 1 begins with "So" or "Therefore" before addressing elders. Why do you think Peter begins to address elders at this point in his letter? What is the context? See 4:17 and Ezekiel 9:6.
3. Peter begins by appeals to the elders as "one of them" (v. 1) despite his being an apostle (1:1). What does this tell you about the nature of Christian leadership?
4. Peter reminds the elders that "the flock" is God's, not theirs (v. 2, cf. Acts 20:28). How might knowing this guide the way Christian leaders lead or do not lead?

5. A. Why is the image of a shepherd helpful in understanding the role of an elder?  
  
B. What is the main way elders shepherd "the flock"? (Acts 6:4; 2 Tim 3:14-4:2).
6. What is the difference in shepherding "under compulsion" versus "willingly" (v. 2b)? How do you serve? How did Jesus serve? See John 10:17; Gal 2:20.
7. Why is the motivation for ministry and the life of the elder/leader crucially important to serve Christ well (v. 2c, 3)? How can such affect the church?
8. What do the following verses say about the weightiness and blessings of the shepherd's role: v. 4; Heb 13:17; James 3:1?
9. Why do you think submission and humility are important qualities of Christ's church? How did Christ exemplify these? See Luke 2:52; Phil 2:7; Heb 5:8.
10. Is there any sin you need to repent of or action you need to take as a result of this study that you may serve at HBC in a way that pleases Christ?

### STOP AND PRAY:

**Praise:** *God that He sees the righteous and rewards them for their deeds*

**Thank:** *the Lord for willingly and joyfully submitting Himself to death for His people*

**Pray:** *that you would encourage and support the elders as they shepherd HBC*