

1 Peter

Living and Hoping as Exiles

How the church remains effective under pressure (5:1-5)

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

In this passage, Peter presents a guide for how the church can remain healthy and effective under God's testing and refining judgment. The foundation is godly leadership. Elders have the primary role to shepherd the flock in a way that affirms their own love both for Christ and for those under their care. They are warned not to become lazy, greedy or proud, but to be examples to the flock, even if it means personal suffering. God's church is to show mutual humility and love.

Main Lesson: A church that is effective under pressure is one where the elders lead, the young willingly follow, and all remain humble.

Questions:

1. What authority has God placed over local churches and what does submitting to this authority look like? See Acts 14:23; 20:17, 28; Tit 1:5; Heb 13:17. Do you struggle with submitting? Why/why not?
2. How is Peter a model to the elders to whom he writes and how is Peter's life modelled on Christ's (v. 1)?
3. Consider the Lord's charge of Peter in John 21. Why is it important for an elder to first love Christ before lovingly leading His people? What might this look like?
4. A. Which specific dangers and temptations does Peter point out in vv. 2-3 that elders may be vulnerable to? Why are these lethal for the church?

B. In each of these areas, how does Peter encourage the elders or shepherds to imitate the Good Shepherd (vv. 2-3 and John 10:11-18)?

5. To whom does the flock belong and what difference should this make to elders (v. 2 and Acts 20:28)?
6. What rewards can the faithful shepherd look forward to and how might this act as motivation and protection (v. 4)?
7. In what ways is it so easy for church leaders to have the mentality of the hireling (John 10:11ff) rather than the Good Shepherd?
8. Why do you think Peter specifically commands those "who are younger" to be subject to the elders? What advice would you give to the younger? See Tit 2:6.
9. What is the responsibility of all the people (v. 5b) and why is this important for a church to remain healthy and effective, especially when under pressure?
10. What are the ways you could best support, encourage and pray for your church leaders to fulfil the pattern outlined in these verses?

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: the Chief Shepherd who humbled Himself, laying down His life for His sheep
Thank: the Lord for the elders He has appointed as under-shepherds over His church
Pray: that you would better encourage, affirm and submit to God's appointed elders