



**Series Title:** "Exiles: A Study of the First Letter of Peter"  
**Message Title:** "Leading Exiles"

**Date:** April 2, 2022  
**Teaching:** Neal McKinney

**Reference:** 1 Peter 5:1-5

Here are some key points from the passage:

- Peter speaks to the elders of the local (house) churches not first as an authority, but as a fellow elder; he understands their challenges, and he shares their future hope (v. 1)
- Those whom God has placed into positions of leadership in a church must work from humility, not selfish aims; they must be called by Christ, not driven by internal or external pressures (v. 2)
- Elders are to be examples of Christ, serving as he served, giving their lives for those in their flock (v. 3)
- Younger believers, both in age and maturity, are to learn from older, more mature followers of Christ; living in humility and not from pride (v. 5)

**Message Notes:**

In verses 1-4, Peter uses the term "elders" for those whom God has called and placed into pastoral leadership, those with authority in the church. He first tells them that he is like them, a fellow elder serving Christ. He identifies with their challenges because he has lived with those same challenges.

Peter is also a witness to Christ's suffering. He writes of what he has personally seen and known from walking with Jesus. Peter is an apostle, and elder, a pastor, and a co-heir of the glory of God.

A pastor/elder is called by God to a specific body of believers, a specific church. And the image of the Good Shepherd in Psalm 23 is the example that elders are to follow. Peter likely never forgot the words of Jesus following Christ's resurrection: "Feed my sheep; tend my

lambs." What Jesus called Peter to is the same as what Jesus calls every pastor: to care for the flock assigned to them, to provide for them, to protect them, to teach and guide them, and to be with them in dark times.

"Oversight," a charge for elders, entails both leadership and responsibility. Those whom Christ has called are responsible for those to whom Christ has called them.

Hearing and responding to God's call can't be due to compulsion—pressure—from within or without. A man can't take on the pastoral mantle from desire for personal gain, be that in popularity, fame, influence, or money. To become a pastor is not a natural inclination! It has to be from a clear and direct call from God.

This is important: what Peter, writing under the influence of God the Holy Spirit, calls pastors to be and do is not so very different from what he calls every husband and father to be and to do. Provide, protect, lead, guide, teach—all of these are the responsibility of those whom God places at the head of every household. Men, we are challenged to lead well.

In leadership, whether of a church or a family, men are called to be examples of Christ Jesus... with all that it entails. Men in leadership are not to be arrogant, insincere, demanding, selfish. We are to be eager to take on the role to which Christ calls us, but not for our own profit.

In verse 5, Peter uses a different word for "elders," one that means "older, mature." This is a picture of discipleship: mature believers pouring themselves into younger ones. If you've walked with God for a good, long time, if you are one of the older believers in the church, whom are you discipling? How are you pouring into future generations? We are challenged to do so.

- Think of the toughest meetings or projects or groups of which you've been part. Did someone "shepherd" those involved, or did they simply "command?" How were they more like shepherds (or less like them)?
- What does it mean for someone to be given the role or office of elder in a church? What does and elder do?
- Why should someone take on the challenge of eldership? Why should they not take on that challenge?
- What are the earmarks of a humble leader?
- How does the role of elder take on new meaning in light of Christ's followers being exiles, strangers in a land that is not their home?
- What do you think is the hardest part of being an elder/pastor in a local church? Why?
- What does "discipling" mean to you? Why is it important to the life of the church?
- What does being submissive to older Christ-followers look like?
- If you are a mature believer, are you currently discipling anyone? If you're a younger believer, are you being disciplined by an older, more mature believer?
- Why do you think the "boomer" and "buster" generations have in large part abandoned their charge to disciple younger believers?
- What will you do in response to this passage?