



1 Peter 4 Servant Leaders

Today marks the Day of Pentecost. The moment in history when the Spirit descended upon the Apostles while they were 'tarrying in the upper room'. This is the moment of conception for the New Testament Church. From this time forward, they went, they established new gatherings of people with the Gospel of Christ. They cared for these churches and continued this incredible mission that Jesus left them with. Here we are today, a couple thousand years later, able to celebrate such a powerful time for our Church and continue in that mission until He returns soon!

Appointed leaders and overseers is not a new concept for God's people. The Jewish people were very familiar with an order and structure to most of their life. There were priests, elders, teachers, prophets and kings. These men and women were established by God to aid in the process of serving, leading and directing His people in the direction they were to go. This did not place a higher value on an individual person, but a greater responsibility that if not stewarded well were subject to greater judgement.

The New Testament Church was established also with God ordained structure. This was not to be a vessel for a domineering system to control people and to usurp authority. It was instituted by God to ensure that His people would be led well. One role that was established was one of an Elder. There were to be mature in character, eager to serve, willing to wear the mantle of overseer and were examples to the flock of Godly pursuit. All of this while being submissive to the Good Shepherd who is Christ Jesus. This was set up to ensure that His people were cared for and led in the direction God established. It's because of His great love and commitment to His Church that He establishes leaders, shepherds, pastors and the like.

There are two different ways to shepherd a flock, one from behind with sheep dogs, nipping at one's ankles, forcefully moving the sheep in a certain direction. The other is from the front, where the shepherd knows his sheep and the sheep know his voice. Most of the shepherding in the middle east is still based on the latter. Where the shepherd goes so does the sheep. The shepherd knows his sheep by name and has earned trust, built upon various trials and victories. Earning trust as a shepherd is pivotal to engage as a Godly leader. A servant-hearted leader puts others well-being ahead of themselves because of their great love and desire to care for those who have been entrusted to them. Christ modelled this perfectly in His life and left us all with an example on how to lead-with the willingness to wash His disciples feet, first to give up His life and go to the cross and the first to model forgiveness. To grow in leadership and in being led is to grow in maturity in Christ.

There is also a covering and a protection that is established when one flourishes under a God appointed, spirit filled leader. Not everyone may be called into a role of eldership, but everyone, especially elders are called to submit to one another and desire to see their flocks healthy.

As a church, we have elders, overseers, pastors and shepherds and with that comes a great responsibility as a whole to pray for those that are overseers in our life. If the shepherd goes astray, so will those who are being led. Our enemy knows this and will target those in authority to discourage, accuse and deceive. We as the body have a responsibility to pray for, intercede, encourage and love those who the Lord has established in various positions of leadership. So that our trajectory will not veer in the face of troubles and trials but will flourish under Him who is Head of all.

In the face of trials, persecution and suffering, leaders are faced with numerous hurdles-some they have never faced before. We are in a global pandemic that needs an appropriate amount of grace in all of our relationships to fend off any attack from the enemy. We need each other to fulfill our callings and giftings. We need each other to be sharpened, to oversee, to equip and protect one another in various seasons of life. We are called to function as 'a' body with a single eyed focus on the Kingdom of Heaven while elders and shepherds are to be on the frontline of that pursuit.

DISCUSSION

As we look at the letter Peter wrote to the early church, there are Godly principles and impressions that we can apply to our lives.

- Looking to Christ our example, how can we grow in our willingness to serve and be led?
- Are there things in your life that make it difficult to be led? Ask the Lord to reveal anything that would be a hinderance on your spiritual maturity.
- Why is Godly character (the fruit of the Spirit) so important as a governing authority over callings into leadership?
- In what ways can you grow in maturity in Christ and nurture your inner life?

POSTURING

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.” James 5:16

Confession: (admit, acknowledge, reveal, make known)

- In light of our conversation, is there anything that the Lord is asking you to confess and be made known?

*“Praise the Lord! Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever!”
Ps 106:1*

Thanksgiving: (a prayer expressing gratitude)

- Thank Him for all that He has promised and for His faithfulness upon your life.

EMPOWER

“God will strengthen you with His own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient. And you will joyfully give thanks to the Father who has made you able to have a share in all that He has prepared for His people in the kingdom of light.”

Colossians 1:11,12

- Pray for each other for strength, strategy, wisdom etc.
- Listen in prayer for words of encouragement and edification.
- Spur each other on!

May 31, 2020

Bible Verse: “This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven. Acts 1:11b

Bible Story: Jesus Is Coming!
Revelations 1:1-2; Revelations: 21:2-4

Worship Songs:

<https://youtu.be/SzYr3sXi2Js>

<https://youtu.be/YUageJdwPY>

<https://youtu.be/Q4oC4Xuvclk>

Video Lesson: <https://youtu.be/s4FDdybCbcc>

Life Application Activity: Read to the children what Jesus says in Luke 21:27, 28 and Mark 13:32, 33. Discuss these verses. Ask them what Jesus would like to find them doing when he return. Talk about how people who love Jesus will feel when they see him coming again.