

^{5:1} To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: ² Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, 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.

Review the context.

- How do Peter's own leadership experiences (and leadership style) translate to what his audience is going through?

Understand it.

- When Peter uses the word "elder", he is referring to the *presbuteros* – "the leaders of the assembly". What do you think it meant to be a "leader" in these early churches?
- What is the chief metaphor Peter uses to paint a picture of godly leadership? (v.2)
 - How has the Bible used that metaphor before?
 - Why is it a helpful image? (See Psalm 23)
 - How might it be a complicated one to grasp in our modern context?
- Shepherds have flocks to watch and serve. In three contrasts, how does Peter describe the responsibilities *and* the dangers of shepherding? What are the benefits to the church community when leaders live into this biblical model?
- In Mark 10:42-45, Jesus instructs his followers to lead differently than the Gentiles. In what ways would this type of servant-leadership seem unique?
- Who is the Chief Shepherd? Why does he bear that name?
- By contrasting the behavior of the good shepherd and the bad shepherd, Peter essentially describes the example of Jesus. How does Jesus represent the calling of a caring and faithful servant-leader?
- The return of Christ presents an inevitable and enduring reality of the "crown of glory". How might this future glory inspire pastors and elders to lead well?

Apply it.

- In what ways are you called to shepherd others?
- In your areas of leadership or influence, what dangers or temptations do you experience that Peter warns against?
- How do bad shepherds jeopardize the message of the Gospel? How should the Church respond to such unhealthy models of leadership?
- **Some suggestions:**
 - Spend time praying for our community's pastors and elders.
 - Write notes of encouragement to those who have led you in the way that Peter prescribes.