

Standing in the True Grace of God

Peter's Life, Letters and Lord

1 Peter 5:1–5

Read 1 Peter 5:1-5.

1. Peter, having addressed various groups in the church, now turns his attention to the elders. What is an elder? (v. 2; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:6–9)

2. In what three ways does Peter identify himself in verse 1?

3. Why do you think Peter mentions being “a witness of Christ’s sufferings” (v. 1)? (Consider the wider context, especially 2:21, 4:13 and 5:10.)

4. Moving from suffering to glory is a major theme in 1 Peter. What hope does Peter himself have for the future? (v. 1; Jn. 21:18–19)

5. God has used the image of a shepherd with his flock throughout the Bible. Why do you think this picture is so powerful and instructive? (You may want to consider Ps. 23; Ezek. 34:11–16.)

6. Why might this calling to shepherd God’s flock have been especially dear to Peter’s heart? (Jn. 21:15–17)

7. In verses 2 and 3 Peter warns the elders against three sinful motivations for serving and contrasts them with right motivations. List them in the chart below:

Sinful motivations	Right motivations

8. How do these sinful motivations in an elder undermine the health of the church?

How do the right motivations build up the church?

9. Shepherding God's people is a costly sacrifice. Consider how you might show gratitude to one or more of the elders in your life, and then take time to follow through.
10. Having instructed the undershepherds, Peter now refers to Jesus as the "Chief Shepherd" (v. 4). What has the Chief Shepherd done for the sheep? (2:24–25; Jn. 10:11–16)
11. What sign of honor awaits the faithful shepherds of God's flock? (v. 4)

Why is this better than any earthly reward?

12. The word translated "older" in verse 5 is the same word that is used in verse 1 for "elder." What attitude should the young men have toward the elders?

Why? (Eph. 5:21; Heb. 13:17)

13. What does Peter say should characterize the people of God in verse 5b?

14. Contrast God's responses to the proud and to the humble. (v. 5)

15. Living as followers of Jesus is counter-cultural. We are called to embrace suffering now, knowing that glory is coming; we are to look for opportunities to serve instead of demanding our rights; we are to live humbly, submitting to one another instead of being proud. In which of these areas has Peter challenged you? Commit this to God in prayer, asking him to help you "follow in [Jesus'] steps" (2:21).