

1 Peter 5:1-11

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Preacher: Joel Shorey

[0:00] It is my joy to present to you, I guess, introduce you to our speaker for this morning. His name is Joel Shory.

He's a pastor of Redeemer Fellowship Church in Newark, Delaware. It's a church plant also, three years ago. But before that, he was serving at Covenant Fellowship Church, where we've had a lot of pastors come and visit us from.

You've been pastors in 2005, right, Joel? And Joel's married to his wife, Ashley. They have four children. They're all a lot older than my kids. Joel's a wonderful man of God, and he had great leadership gifts and serves a lot in our denominational context as well.

So he was actually on the ordination committee that was grilling me when I was getting ordained through Sovereign Grace. And he serves as a church planting committee now, helping church plants get started within our denominations in various places in our region.

And Joel, thanks for coming to serve us. Joel is actually the youth pastor at Covenant Fellowship for a lot of the Hawkins non-grown children when they were youth.

[1:10] So it's wonderful to have him come and have that connection. So Joel, come and serve us, please. Good morning, everybody. Good morning. It really is a joy to be with you today.

I am very grateful for the opportunity, particularly on this special occasion as we install Matt as an elder here. I not only love Sean and his leadership of this church, and Hannah I met last night and spent time, but I also love Matt and Cheryl and their whole family very, very much.

We were members of Covenant Fellowship Church together for many years. And honestly, I'll never forget when we first found out that they were prayerfully considering moving all the way up to Boston to be a part of this local church family.

I was and I still am blown away by that sacrifice of service and willingness to follow the Lord in all of life. So I love it very much. Not only do I love your pastors, I love all of you, even though we have never met before.

I cherish being in partnership with all of you in our denomination, Sovereign Grace Churches, and my own church family, Redeemer Fellowship, and you aren't dealt with.

[2:20] I send their greetings and their love to you and the Lord this morning. It is an honor. Friends, if you have your Bibles, please go ahead and open them with me to 1 Peter chapter 5.

1 Peter chapter 5. We're going to read the first four verses as we consider pastoral ministry and elders within the church. Peter says this.

He says, So I exhort the elders among you as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly as God would have you, not for shameful gain, but eagerly, not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. Amen.

May God bless the preaching of his word this morning. Friends, I want to talk to you about godly leadership this morning. And as you may know, godly leadership is under attack in our day and age.

[3:41] And oftentimes, leadership is under attack because of very legitimate concerns about the abuse of power because of ungodly men using their leadership to do harm rather than to do good.

Sadly, people have an issue with leaders and sadly, people specifically have an issue with pastors because so many pastors have used their positions of leadership in very ungodly ways.

But my friends, that does not mean that leadership is inherently bad. Now, in fact, God's word paints a very different picture for us. It paints a picture not just that leadership is important, but rather that godly leadership is an extraordinary gift and a blessing.

That God calls gifted and qualified men to lead his church in ways that will edify and encourage and strengthen and build up his people as they live lives in this fallen world.

God calls weak and unimpressive men to fill an extraordinary role in the life of his church. But these men will only be a blessing if they pastor under the chief pastor or the chief shepherd.

[5 : 00] And this is what we see in 1 Peter 5, verses 1 to 4. This passage is about the shepherding care of pastors within local congregations.

In these verses, Peter is talking directly to the men that are called to serve as pastors in the local church. And so specifically in our context here this morning, Peter is talking most directly to Sean and to Matt as your pastors.

But Trinity, that does not mean that as a church you should not pay very close attention to what he says. Why? Because we all need to be led. We need to be led by Jesus first, but we also need to be led by godly leaders within the body of Christ.

And because we should know what to look for in these leaders. How do we know whether our pastors are leading us well or not? Well, Peter helps us to know today.

And so while these first four verses are primarily directed towards pastors, the entire church should pay very close attention to what Peter says here because this picture that he paints of pastoral ministry is for all of our good and for all of our joy and for the strength of our souls.

[6 : 18] The main idea for our message today is simply this. Pastors are gifts of guidance to God's people who must themselves be guided by God's grace.

Pastors are gifts of guidance to God's people who must themselves be guided by God's grace. And friends, believe it or not, we have ten points this morning. I'm not joking.

We really do have ten points this morning. I promise not to preach for an hour and a half. But there are ten things that are needed for pastoral ministry as seen in these four verses. Point number one, pastors need to remember their calling.

Pastors need to remember their calling. So we see this in the first three words. Peter says, So I exhort you. So I exhort the elders among the words.

So there is a tie back to the preceding discussion of chapter four, which was primarily about suffering and trials within the church. If you read chapter four, you will see that an essential part of our suffering as God's people is the testing or the proving of our faith over time that God is doing.

[7 : 33] And Peter says that this judgment, he says in chapter four, this testing of our faith we trial begins with the household of God. He says that it begins with the local church.

And so friends, doesn't it make sense that Peter would move directly from that discussion about the testing of our faith within the church to talking about pastors? If God's judgment would begin with the household of God, well then how that household is led matters a great deal, doesn't it?

In fact, many scholars see a direct connection between the judgment of chapter four verse 17, they see a direct connection all the way back to Ezekiel chapter nine when God passes through Jerusalem to mark out those who are his and those who are not.

And it says explicitly in Ezekiel chapter nine verse six that God will begin with the elders of the sanctuary. And so it seems very clear in first Peter chapter five that it's consistent with the pattern of scripture that when God comes to evaluate his church on that final day, he will begin with the pastors.

James says in chapter three verse one, not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strength. And so if God's judgment starts not only with the church, but with the leaders of the church that these verses make sense here.

[9 : 02] Peter needs to exhort the pastors to be faithful to their calling, not just for their own sake, but for the church's sake. As the pastors lead, so goes the culture of the church.

And so if the church will be judged as faithful, pastors must be exhorted to lead faithfully in their calling. And Matt, every pastor needs this in their life, brother.

We need to remember that our calling is a holy calling. That eternity is at stake for ourselves and for those that we lead. Pastors are not just building a fun club that people can choose to be a part of or not.

No, the pastor's calling is to the eternal matters and every pastor needs to be regularly reminded by each other, by other pastors and by their church family that they are laboring not for this world, but for eternity and for the glory of Christ.

Trinity, pray for your pastors. Thank you. Pray for Matt as he is ordained today. Pray that he would never forget the eternal significance of his calling.

[10:17] Point number two, pastors need team ministry. Now this is a point that Peter doesn't clearly state in this text but it is clearly implicit in what he is saying and it seems important to highlight this morning.

Verse 1 says, So I exhort the elders among you. That word elder or elders is the Greek word presbyteros. That word when used throughout the New Testament to speak of the leaders of the church is always in the plural.

It's never singular. Paul charges Titus to raise up elders in the churches. James instructs the sick to be prayed over by the elders of the church.

Plural. Acts chapter 20 speaks of the elders at Ephesus. And we see this pattern elsewhere in scripture as well. Moses raises up elders to share leadership with. Jesus even had 12 disciples and when he sent them out he did not send them out alone but together.

Alexander Strzok in his excellent book on biblical eldership says this about team ministry. He says, Shared leadership should not be a new concept to a Bible reading Christian.

[11:31] Leadership by a plurality of elders is a sound biblical practice. Friends, here's why this is important and so good for us to see this morning.

team ministry or a plurality of leaders is so valuable because it brings balance and accountability to a pastoral team. Shared gifting, mutual accountability, workload distribution.

Team ministry is one of God's primary ways to strengthen and to protect his church. Friends, you have a wonderful lead pastor. Sean is such a gift to all of you.

I remember I was on the ordination committee that examined Sean and I was blown away. It was probably the best exam that I ever conducted. The man's brilliant. The man is gifted and the man loves you.

But listen, he's not enough by himself. He needs team. And so praise God that God has brought Matt to be by his side and we pray regularly that God raise up even more elders among them.

[12:31] Pastors need team ministry. Point number three, pastors need to live in community. So verse one continues, so I exhort the elders among you.

Those two words, among you, speak to a value of biblical leadership as well. They speak to the need for leaders to not be above those that they lead but among those that they lead.

Pastors have God-given authority over the church to be sure but they live among it as part of the church that they lead. Friends, too many pastors today stand apart from their church.

They stay in their offices. They study hard. They work at their books and then they come and teach and then they retreat back to their offices but that's not what a true shepherd is, right?

Think about the rule of a real shepherd. A man with a staff in his hand guiding flocks of sheep to where they should go. He can't do that from behind a desk.

[13:38] A skilled shepherd spends days with his sheep. A skilled shepherd knows the young and the older sheep. He knows which sheep are weak and which are strong. He knows ones that are prone to wander and need to be brought back.

A good shepherd sleeps under the stars protecting and listening for danger. A faithful shepherd doesn't look out and just see a big pile of wool out there. No, he knows the sheep by name.

Dr. Timothy Laniak is a professor who also trains pastors and back in 2003 he took a year-long sabbatical to visit many different Middle Eastern countries in order to study the imagery of a shepherd.

During his sabbatical he lived with and spent time with many different modern-day shepherds and he tells the story of one shepherd whose name was Abu.

he asked Abu about how much contact he had with his flock of 2,000 sheep. Now, Abu was a very successful and very affluent shepherd with a lot of hired help and so he could have just delegated the actual shepherding of the sheep to other men but he didn't.

[14:54] His response to Laniak's question of how much time he says, he says, I am with the sheep every day. He says, in the summer I sleep outside with them too.

If I weren't with them every day I shouldn't be their son. Church, a pastor should be among and a part of the church. Church members should know them and that can only happen when a pastor lives within the community and not just over the community and again, I love your pastors for this.

I traveled up here with them yesterday and just hearing them speak of all of you by name reflected this burden in their hearts. A pastor needs to live in community.

Point number four, pastors need extra local care. So verse one continues, so I join the elders among you as a fellow elder.

Very briefly, what we see here is a biblical model of extra local care and partnership being put on display. Peter was not a local elder of these churches that he is speaking to but he chooses to relate to them here as a fellow elder.

[16:06] The speech of the beautiful picture in the New Testament of partnership between churches and between pastoral teams. Listen, as we just talked about team ministry, pastors should not pastor alone.

They need plurality, they need team ministry, but it's also true that pastoral teams should not pastor alone. No, they need partnership with other local churches and with other pastoral teams.

And friends, this is why we thank God for Sovereign Grace Churches as much as we do. We love our denomination of churches so much and I don't know about you but I talk to my church family about our denomination all the time and what a blessing it is to us to be a part of.

I hope that you do too. Not only does our partnership help us to do global work, missions throughout the world, not only does our denomination encourage us as pastors as we get to lead with other pastors and other churches, you know, extralocal partnership is also a significant blessing to individual church members as well.

You get to partner with people throughout the globe who are like-minded and are serving in the same way. One of the ways that this is true is how extralocal partnership holds your pastoral team accountable to how they are shepherding you on a daily basis.

[17:31] Friends, did you know this about our denomination? Did you know that within Sovereign Grace Churches there are policies and procedures in place that allow members of any local church in Sovereign Grace who feels as if their pastors are not being faithful or who are being authoritative or abusive, if they have a charge against their pastor, there are ways that members of a local church can invite the care and accountability and leadership of extralocal churches to come in and to help.

What a gift! That your pastors don't have the authority in and of themselves just to do whatever they want to do, but you have the place that you can go and invite help and accountability for them. We try to tell our members that all the time. So yes, pastors and churches need extra local partnership and so we should loudly celebrate our partnership within our denomination Sovereign Grace Churches.

Point number five, pastors need to long for glory. They need to long for glory. I love how Peter continues here.

He says of himself, a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed.

[18:47] When Peter references the sufferings of Christ, that is perfectly consistent with the rest of his writings in this letter. The sufferings of Jesus have been spoken of frequently throughout this letter and he has spoken of those sufferings of Christ as an example for us to follow him.

And so it seems that in this verse Peter is referencing the sufferings of Christ again and then immediately transition to the hope of glory as an encouragement not just to every Christian though he has already done that in this letter but he's doing it specifically to weary and suffering pastors. He wants to direct your pastors beyond individual moments of pain and trial to the hope that lies before them. He wants to direct Sean and Matt's eyes beyond the fear of persecution.

He wants to direct your pastors beyond the bone deep weariness of caring for church members who are living in unrepentant sin. He wants to direct your elders beyond the weight of anxiety and the fear of walking through trial.

Peter is directing your pastors beyond the immediate burden and weariness of needing to prepare yet another someday warning message or to lead another group. He wants to point their eyes beyond that to the glory that is to come.

[20:08] Peter's been doing this for the whole church as they suffer but he's now doing it in a particular way for pastors as they labor and even as they suffer in a particular way.

He says that he is a partaker of the glory that is going to be revealed. That glory still needs to be fully revealed, right? We live in a fallen world but because of the gospel church because of the

sufferings of Jesus because he died for us and because he rose from that great triumphant the glory is not in question.

It is a certainty. It is a guarantee. In fact, Peter and all of the pastors and all of God's people can say that they are partakers of that glory even now. It is ours because of the work of Christ.

Amen? This is amazing. Pastors need to hear this as they fight and struggle for faith to lead their church and the church needs to hear this as we wrestle through all of life.

Brothers and sisters, be encouraged this morning by this. No matter what you are going through right now, no matter how tired you may be, no matter how worn your marriage might seem, no matter how painful that disease continues to be, no matter how anxious you are about the future in this broken and dark world, Peter reminds us here that glory is coming.

[21 : 38] Heaven awaits. We will be victorious together. Amen? Point number six, pastors need to shepherd the flock.

They need to shepherd the flock, and here we find the very heart of Peter's exhortation to pastors in these verses. This is the center of what he is saying. Much of what we have seen so far are hints of what a pastor needs, but this is what a pastor must do.

This is the job of a pastor. Matt, this is your job description. Verse two, shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight.

But what does that mean? Well, we get at what this means by considering what an actual shepherd does and by considering the terms that Peter uses here to describe us as pastors.

A shepherd's responsibility is to live for the well-being of his flock, and that happens in a number of different ways. A pastor's role is diverse and varied.

[22 : 43] See, in this passage we see three words used by Peter to describe the role of each pastor. And so we see the word elder, we see the word shepherd, and we see the word overseer, and they all speak to different parts of the pastor's job.

Pastors must be elders. They must have spiritual maturity about life. They must not be careless about how they carry themselves throughout life.

And so praise God that Sean and now Matt have this spiritual maturity and godly character to be examples to you as your elders. Pastors must be shepherds.

That's actually what pastor means. This speaks to the need to feed and to teach and to at times correct and adjust.

This speaks to the need to protect from wolves. And the pastor must do this with the word of God as his staff. Paul charges the young pastor Timothy, preach the word.

[23 : 53] Faithful shepherds use the staff of God's word to guide his people. Matt, we together must love God's word and we must love it a lot. It must be our staff and our leadership and in our care of God's people.

Pastors must also exercise oversight. We must be overseers, meaning we must watch over the practices and the direction and the mission and the habits of the church.

We must stand watch and we must bring direction in spiritual and in practical ways. Pastors call to care for the flock and that happens not just through preaching and counseling but through bringing godly leadership and direction and vision to the people of God.

Yes, the pastor is called on many things but he does it all for the sake of the flock and for God's glory. And that brings us to our seventh point. Point number seven, pastors need to cultivate joy.

They need to cultivate joy. Listen, too many pastors hate their jobs. I'm part of a pastor's lunch in the area in which I preach and I can't tell you how many of those pastors groan and complain about their calling.

[25 : 10] Too many pastors view their role within the church as just a mere vocation that they need to be faithful to when in reality, friends, pastoral ministry is an honorable and joyful call.

To walk in this role as under shepherds of the chief shepherd is a privilege and it should always be seen that way by faithful pastors. Peter says that we are to do all of this not under compulsion but willingly as God would have you not for shameful gain but eagerly.

Those words willingly and eagerly they speak of desire and enjoyment and pleasure in the work. A loving shepherd should not be forced to do his job.

He shouldn't care for his sheep begrudgingly and then run back to do what he really wants to be doing. Though a pastor, a true shepherd and I see this in your pastors, a pastor should find joy and delight in his calling.

How can we not as pastors? If a pastor is following the chief shepherd, if we're following Jesus, then our eyes are fixed on the hope of the gospel and we know that what God is doing in our lives and in the lives of those that we lead and that's a glorious thing to be a part of.

[26 : 24] If we do not pastor eagerly, then we have forgotten the power of the gospel. If we have no joy in the task, then it likely means that we have lost our hope in Jesus.

But when we keep our eyes on him, our service will be marked by eager and joyful anticipation of what God is calling and equipping us to be and do even in the most difficult situations and triggers. I hope and pray that you feel that from Sean and Matt. I believe that you do. You know, there's a documentary on ESPN. I don't know if you're into basketball or not, but I'm sure you know the name Michael Jordan.

Michael Jordan, the greatest basketball player of all times. Michael Jordan was unbelievably good and he played for 15 long seasons and there were struggles along the way.

But did you know that Michael Jordan had a clause in his contract with the Chicago Bulls that was called For the Love of the Game Clause. Though basketball was his job, Jordan never wanted to stop loving the game.

[27 : 30] He didn't want to be restricted by the Chicago Bulls and so he wanted to be able to play basketball wherever and whenever he wanted to. He didn't want to be restricted by his employment as a basketball player.

Friends, I want that to be my heart as a pastor. And I believe it should be the heart of your pastors as well. If we ever run out of love for the ministry, we should step out of ministry.

This is too great a thing for us to do begrudgingly. As Christ loved us and joyfully sacrificed for us, so we as under-shepherds should find great joy and fall in his steps.

And that's so important. It's so important because the joy in ministry will change the way that we do ministry. And that brings us to our eighth point.

Point number eight. pastors need to be gentle. Peter says in verse three, not domineering over those in your charge.

[28 : 31] Here's the thing. When leaders find joy in the gospel, they will find joy in their ministry. And when they find joy in the ministry, they will lead the church with gentleness.

it is when people have taken their eyes off of the chief shepherd and the hope of the gospel. It's when we forget Christ that bad things begin to happen.

First of all, we start leading in our own strength. And when we lead in our own strength, we begin to domineer. We become pushing. We become bullies. We become rough in our leadership.

We want people to do what we want them to do rather than allowing the grace of God to be at work in their lives. That's where poor leadership comes from. Abusive pastors are pastors that have forgotten the power of the gospel that they are preaching and they're relying too much on their own strength and their own wisdom.

Abusive leadership also happens when pastors forget who they are in Christ. If pastors forget that they have everything that they need for life and godliness already given to them in Christ, then pastors will begin to look to others for what they need.

[29 : 39] They will want to control others. They will want to manipulate others. They will serve for selfish gain. But when we cultivate joy in Jesus and joy in our calling, we will see it as a privilege and an honor and we will lead with gentleness because we know we're not the ones doing the work.

It is Christ doing the work through us. Now it's not that pastors should not have authority or that pastors should not at times exercise their authority with great strength.

No, pastors are called by God to govern and to protect and to lead the church and at times that will require strong leadership against certain patterns in the church. It will take courage and boldness on their part but that strength of courage and that leadership must come not from their own authority but from the authority of Christ and it must be gentle.

Paul the Apostle is such a good example of this. Even when he wrote to the church of God in Corinth which was a pretty jacked up place a church that needed strong correction and redirection Paul still does it with gentleness and with a shepherd in care.

He says, I thank God upon every remembrance of him. He writes to the church in Thessalonica in 1 Thessalonians 1 he says, but we were gentle among them like a nursing mother taking care of her own child.

[31 : 05] Meaning they led with grace and not with force not domineering. A pastor must be gentle. Point number nine pastors need to have godly character.

Peter says, not domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. Peter makes the connection here from gentle leadership to being godly examples and really what this speaks to is the sincerity of the pastor's heart.

We should be conformed by the gospel before we seek to preach about the gospel. Our ministry is not just in words but in our actions as well.

And friends, this is seen throughout the New Testament particularly in the pastoral epistles of 1 Timothy and Titus Paul gives the qualifications for pastors and most of these qualifying characteristics are not distinct from other Christian men and women.

This is what we should all be. But they are highlighted in a way that speaks to the fact that the pastor should be faithful and seek to excel in these things. How we live out the gospel as pastors matters.

[32 : 15] Our godly character is a significant part of being faithful to preach the gospel as understanders. One of my favorite books is called *The Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter.

Now have you ever read that book? It's an extraordinary book. It's an old book but it is so good. The first hundred pages or so of that book Baxter doesn't even talk about our leadership of the church. The first hundred pages he charges pastors to shepherd their own hearts before they go and shepherd the church. He says this, he says, take heed to yourselves lest your example contradict your doctrine lest you lay such stumbling blocks before the blind as may be the occasion of their ruin lest you unsay with your lies what you say with your tongues and be the greatest hinderers of the success of your own ministry.

The pastor's life should not contradict his doctrine. The two should be consistent. Now that does not mean that a pastor's life should be perfect.

Church, you're not to be nitpicky about your pastor's sin. God knows that we are not perfect but a pastor's shepherd should be able to be seen as a faithful example of what it means to live for Christ in this world in every area.

[33 : 45] And so Matt, even as we are thrilled by the events of today, even as you are now going to be spending hundreds of hours in studying God's word and preparing sermons as you already have been, Peter charges you though, brother, to not ignore your own life and godliness.

Matt, keep close watch on your conduct. Keep close watch on your soul. How you walk in humility. How you love your family, which you do so well, brother. How you exercise self-control.

How you use your words for good. Be shaped by the gospel before you seek to preach the gospel. God's point number 10. Pastors need a chief shepherd.

Pastors need a chief shepherd. Peter concludes with these amazing words, and when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

There is no better way for Peter to end this than in this way. by focusing our eyes on Jesus, the chief shepherd. He ends where he began.

[34 : 53] King Jesus is coming, church, and he is going to judge his church. He is going to test his people, and that testing is going to begin with the pastors, the elders of the church.

But as we see in chapter 4, this is not reason to fear. This is not reason to run away. This is not reason to quit the ministry, because King Jesus promises that those who have faith in him will be proven faithful.

Peter says that we will receive a crown of glory, and indirectly, that is for the church as well. If the pastors are faithful, indirectly, Peter is saying that the church will be judged faithful as well.

Why? All because of Jesus, amen? The chief shepherd, the one who laid down his life for the sheep, who died so that we might live, who gave us everything that we need for life and godliness. Because of Jesus, because of his sacrifice, because of his life of righteousness, because of his resurrection over the grave, you and I will receive crowns of glory on that final day.

[36 : 02] But when we receive them, you know what we're going to do? We're going to turn very quickly, and we're going to throw those traps right down at his feet, because what pastor is them?

Church, what Christian, man, or woman is there who can cling to any glory for himself? It's all Jesus. It's all his grace. He has loved us.

He has sacrificed for us. He has equipped us, and he is going to sustain us. He will call and equip pastors to be faithful to their calling, and he will call and equip church members to follow the chief

shepherd, even as they follow their imperfect undershakes.

Friends, pastors are gifts of guidance to God's people who must themselves be guided by God's grace. It is all about Jesus, and it's all about his grace.

We need him, and we need the gifts of guidance of pastoral ministry that he has given to us until that final day. Church, again, pray for your pastors.

[37 : 09] And church, by God's grace, follow you pastors, even as they follow Christ. Amen. Let me pray. Jesus, we thank you for being our chief shepherd.

We thank you that as we seek to live this Christian life in a fallen and broken world, we are not looking to fallen and broken men for our hope and confidence. We are looking to you, the perfect God of God, the one in whom all our hope is placed.

But we do acknowledge, Jesus, that you have given under shepherds to guide, to lead, to feed, to protect your church. And we pray that you would equip both Sean and Matt to do that well here at Trinity.

And we pray that you would give Trinity faith and ambition to follow them well. And God, we pray for more pastors to be raised up. We pray that you would equip more men to lead your church for the glory of your name.

Father, we love you. We put all of our hope and all of our confidence in you. In Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[38 : 15] Amen. Amen. Even hoping that our