



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - 1 Peter Study

Week 7 - Day 1

Approaching God

Read Psalm 23 - *The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul. He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.*

Prayer: "Restore my soul, O God. There are green pastures around me for which my eye has no lens; there are quiet waters beside me for which my ear has no chord; restore my soul. The path on which I go is already the path of your righteousness; open my eyes, that I may behold its windows. The place I call dreadful is even now the house of the Lord; the heavens shall cease to hide you when you have restored my soul. May I be content to know that goodness and mercy shall follow me without waiting to see them in advance of me."

George Matheson

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - 1 Peter 5:1-4

Passage Introduction: *As Peter winds down his letter to the church, he concludes with an exhortation to those charged with leading it. His message matters, not just for those in authority, but for those under it. We will work to hear chapter 5 as those who lead and those who are led. Because all Scripture is God-breathed and profitable, we will even spend time looking at Peter's final greetings to see what treasure they hold.*

Shepherd:

The Old Testament uses the shepherd figure for those charged with the care of the people of God, but especially for God himself and the Messiah. Moses was called from Jethro's flocks to shepherd Israel. King David was God's royal shepherd. Yet Moses and David were only undershepherds, serving the divine Shepherd. Jesus is the one, true, Good Shepherd. (John 10)

1 Peter 5:1-4 - 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.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. What words or ideas are repeated, related, compared, contrasted?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

Questions for Study

- How does Peter say he is qualified to appeal to church leaders (elders)? Of all the qualifications he could have appealed to, why do you think he chooses these in particular?
- What occupation is the position of elder compared to? (5:2) Think about the role and tasks of a shepherd. What makes this a fitting analogy for a church leader? Try to come up with 3 parallels.
- What three wrong reasons for accepting a position in church leadership does Peter give?

Questions for Meditation & Application

- How might the flock behave in such a way that the job of the shepherds is made easier? How might the flock help keep an elder from slipping into serving for the wrong reason or out of the wrong attitude?
- Do you think it would be difficult or easy to be a leader of a church body? Why or why not? How can you pray for your pastor, elders, and staff in this regard?

Close in Prayer:

Take a moment to pray for the pastors, elders, and staff at KCP. Ask for a servant's heart rooted in the love of Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Pray for wisdom in their leadership, humility, and that they would be protected from any of the enemies' schemes to devour or destroy.

Resources for Further Study

1 Peter chapter 5 notes

Commentary & Notes on 1 Peter 5:1-4

From time to time the television or the newspapers tell us that there is a crisis of 'leadership'. What that means, often enough, is that the media disapprove of the actual political leaders we happen to have at the moment, but even without that rather cynical observation I find myself anxious about discussion of 'leadership' in a vacuum. Sometimes, when I have been asked to give talks on the subject, I have begun by saying either that I don't really believe in 'leadership', or that I don't think it's the most important category – certainly not in the way it is often talked about today.

What I find is that anything worth calling 'leadership' happens, often without people thinking about it as such, when someone is so energetically and productively involved in whatever it is, whether making music or running a business, whether organizing a market stall or heading up a government department, that they communicate that energy and productivity, that enthusiasm and effectiveness, to those around them. Leadership, in other words, is a bit like friendship: it's something that happens best when you're not thinking about leadership (or friendship, as it might be), but about whatever it is that you're actually doing together.

Come to think of it, 'happiness' falls into the same category. If you start the day thinking, 'Now: what will make me happy today?' you are less likely to be happy than if you think, 'Now, the sooner I can start painting that picture/going for that walk/ playing with the grandchildren the better!' I would rather belong to a group or a fellowship where the 'leader' had no idea about 'leadership', but was out-and-out committed to God and the gospel, than one where the person in charge had done three or four courses on 'leadership' but had found it left little time for studying scripture or for praying.

Now I know there's more to it than that. Any 'leadership' experts reading this will no doubt shake their heads at me as another hopeless case who just doesn't get it. But I have to say that today, whether in church or in society, what we need is people who care deeply about the state of the community and the wider society; people who have studied the relevant issues with professional attention; people who listen to what all sorts of other people have to say; and people who can articulate and communicate the vision to which they have come in such a way as to help others to share it as well. Now of course the 'experts' might say, 'But that's what we mean by "leadership".' If it is, well and good. But let's study and practice the thing itself, not some abstract category removed from reality.

What Peter is describing here is not 'leaders' but shepherds. And the point about 'shepherds' is that the best of them aren't thinking, 'How can I be a shepherd?', but, 'How can I best look after these sheep?' The focus of the good shepherd is not only on his or her own qualities but on the needs of, and potential dangers for, those they are looking after. That, of course, is the first main point Peter makes here (verse 2): don't think about your own profit, but rather about the needs of the flock. Peter appeals as himself an 'elder' – the word means 'senior', both in the sense of status within the community and in the sense of older in years, and the two of course often go together – who has responsibilities like this and hence knows what he's talking about.

In particular, Peter has learnt well from Jesus himself the central thing about being God's under-shepherds: don't lord it over them, but be an example (verse 3). I was recently visiting a large college which trains army officers, and to my surprise and delight met, at almost every turn, the college's motto: 'Serve to Lead'. This isn't an empty slogan: they mean it, model it and teach it. Unless an officer is serving the soldiers in the unit – thinking about them as people, getting to know who they are, what they are afraid of, what makes them give of their best, and looking after them in those and all other ways – they will simply not be able to lead them in any difficult or dangerous situations.