

Study 4.

Perseverance Pays. I Peter 5



In this last chapter Peter takes the time to address the Leaders of the church and impress upon them the importance of their role as example setters. Leadership in any organisation is crucial for a number of reasons. Leaders set the behavioural standard. Their emotional disposition whether happy, moody, serious or otherwise, will and does affect all who are under them. Just think of the different people who have had a leadership role in your life, your parents for instance. Leaders also set the goals. Quality leadership has a defined purpose and heads in the direction most likely to attain its purpose.

Leadership also, is open to misuse, and sadly this misuse of position can often be detected both within the Church and in the community.

1) Under Shepherds

Read 5:1-4. Peter uses the Shepherd/Flock metaphor to describe leadership. A good shepherd's life was tough. Look at these verses...

Psalms. 23:2. You have bedded me down in lush meadows, you find me quiet pools to drink from.

Amos. 3:12. In the same way that a shepherd trying to save a lamb from a lion manages to recover just a pair of legs or the scrap of an ear, So will little be saved of the Israelites who live in Samaria

Ezekiel. 34:8. As sure as I am the living God--Decree of GOD, the Master--because my sheep have been turned into mere prey, into easy meals for wolves because you shepherds ignored them and only fed yourselves,



Ultimately, Ben lost his job as a shepherd because he fell asleep every time he tried to count his sheep.

Make a list from these verses of a literal Shepherds job description?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

How should quality Christian leadership go about fulfilling this list in the church?

Complete the comparisons Peter draws between good and bad leaders in the table below. vv2-4. What stands out?

Good leaders	Bad Leaders
Serve willingly (gratitude)	Serve grudgingly (duty bound)
	
	
	

Christian leadership is not about power or prestige in this life. Leadership is a spiritual gift and as such is to be used for the good of the Christian community.

2) Humility

Read 5:5-10. How would you describe humility in twenty five words or less? (*The best entry receives a pat on the back!!*)

Humility, like all virtues, can be simulated, and the result is false humility or disguised pride. How can we avoid, and help each other to avoid this attractive substitute?

The reward of true humility is God lifting you up. Jesus is the best example of someone who was humble and then exalted. Look back at 3:22. But humility doesn't mean we sit back and do nothing. What are some of the actions we should be engaging in, vv8-10?

V8. gives us an interesting take on the devil. How is he described?



What does vv8-10 tell us about the devil's power and God's sovereign control? V9 gives us further advice regarding the devil. By reading between the lines, can you discover one strategy the Devil uses when trying to attack us?

3) Encouragement.

Peter's purpose in this letter was to bring encouragement to suffering Christians. He has done this by, 1) constantly comparing our life on earth with eternity to get suffering in perspective, and, 2) by setting before our eyes the example of Jesus, His attitude toward suffering and His glory.

The trouble is defining what sort of persecution we Christians in Australia are suffering from. In what ways would direct persecution make living the Christian life easier?

In what ways are wealth and relative security actually harmful to effective Christian living?

How can we encourage each other to continue to keep our focus on Jesus and eternity?

