



blog twenty-two

The Joy of Leading

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. 1 Peter 5:2-4

Elders and Church Leadership

Peter is addressing the local church leaders in his region. In the New Testament, these leaders are often called “elders.” These elders are commissioned to “shepherd God’s flock” and exercise loving leadership and responsible oversight.

This passage describes both the office and the function of local church leaders. Peter exhorts his fellow elders to serve their churches in an attitude

“Jesus is the chief cornerstone. He’s the one who died and rose again for the Church, not a particular pastor, a committee, or a denominational hierarchy. Jesus paid the ultimate price.”

of zeal, gladness, and generosity. They are to example the authentic God-life and model a loving leadership to those they serve. He exhorts these leaders to use their God-given authority to build people up rather than tear them down (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

The Church Belongs to Jesus

In-touch Christian leaders are aware that Jesus is the real senior pastor of every church. He’s the chief cornerstone. Just because we can’t see Him doesn’t mean He’s not ultimately in charge. He’s the one who died and rose again, not a particular pastor, a committee, or a denominational hierarchy. The Church is Jesus’ bride.

But what’s amazing is that because Jesus loves His church so much and wants the best for her, He’s installed human leadership teams through delegated spiritual authority to make sure His bride keeps growing, maturing, perfecting, and beautifying. Hence, we have pastors, elders, leaders, and committed and engaged members to assist the Holy Spirit in accomplishing Jesus’ plans for protecting, nurturing, growing, unifying, multiplying, and maturing His people: the church (Ephesians 4).

Peter's Take on Leadership

Peter finishes this portion of scripture by challenging the “young in the faith” to not be a burden to their local church leaders. Unintentionally, they can be headstrong and are sometimes hesitant to follow and can make leading a “pain in the ...” rather than a joy (Hebrews 13:17). Peter’s remedy: humility. God dishes out lots of grace to those who are humble. He opposes those who are prideful and emit a know-it-all attitude.

This portion of scripture always challenges me to be a better leader and elder. Jesus loves people and He loves His church. He’s the senior leader and I’m an “under-shepherd.” It’s always good for me to keep that mind-set. That way, I will take upon myself the right roles and responsibilities, and reject roles and responsibilities that Jesus is not asking of me. Easier said than done.

Grace Chapel Rocks

I really do love serving the people of Grace Chapel. It’s always been an honor. Each Sunday that I stand in front of them and teach God’s Word, I’m still humbled and thrilled, just like I was that very first Sunday back in 1993.

Grace is a great church. It’s filled with many outstanding men and women from diverse backgrounds and experiences. We are currently entering again an exciting season where God is adding to our leadership team in new ways in order that we can successfully shepherd the wonderful people of Grace and the many individuals and families who have yet to join our fellowship.

“But in order for God to do this great work in us and through us, it will take more leaders who join our team by rolling up their sleeves and being willing to become a force for God and for good in our community.”

The Lord of the Harvest

Like a parent longs to see their small children grow and mature, I too long to see this wonderful fellowship called Grace Chapel grow to its full potential and become a lighthouse to a searching world in a confused culture. But in order for God to do this great work in us and through us, it will take more leaders who join our team by rolling up their sleeves and being willing to become a force for God and for good in our community. That's what Jesus meant when he exclaimed that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. (Luke 10:12)

Today I'm praying to the Lord of the Harvest. God, please send fellow laborers who have an unquenchable passion for you and a zeal for the things you love. Thank you for the honor and privilege that it is to serve as one of the stewards over your bride, the Church. A few more spins of this Earth and many of us will be out of here. This is the day. This is the time. The season is now. We want to build for eternity!