

Christian Leadership in Times of Crisis

Hook (20%) – The 2012 Presidential election is just two days away. Lesson 1 – vote, Lesson 2 – encourage others to do so.

David Hegg (pastor) - When I was a child I heard my father say, “If God has called you to preach, don’t step down to be the President of the United States. But if your heart will let you do anything besides preaching, do it!”

Which has more lasting power, the Church or the State?

1. The Church has existed for over 2000 years, and God has had His people on earth since the dawn of time. No state has endured that long.
2. The Church has over two billion people who claim allegiance. No state has that many.
3. Through the Church God gives power and direction in life and salvation in the afterlife. No state can do that.
4. The Church is empowered directly by the Holy Spirit of God. The state has a mix of people, some indwelt by the Spirit and others not.

How to lead in the church	<h2>Leading the Church in Crisis</h2>	How to follow in the church
How to live in the church		Why to live in the church

Book – 1 Peter 5:1-10

Look

How to Lead in the Church

V1 – After writing extensively about suffering, Peter moved on to one of the key needs of any group of people going through hard times...leadership. The expectation in such patriarchal societies as Israel, Greece and Rome was that the eldest capable male in the family was the leader of the family. In Israel the leaders of the leading families would choose the leader of the tribe. The Lord would choose the leader of the whole nation, as He did with Saul and David. Likewise the Lord had chosen certain men to be leaders in the churches.

Peter was aged by this time and he was writing as an older man to older men. Further, he was writing as one who had partaken in the blessings of Christ to other men who had partaken in the blessings of Christ. Finally, Peter was writing as one who had greatly suffered to others who had greatly suffered. By reminding his readers of all that he shared with them, Peter placed himself uniquely to exhort them to excellence in Christian leadership.

VV 2-3 – Peter reviewed the tasks of elders (πρεσβύτερος *presbyteros*) in the church:

Word (Greek)	Meaning	Other uses
Shepherd (ποιμαίνω <i>poimainō</i>)	Feed, nourish, rule over, supply needs	Matthew 2:6, John 21:16
Oversight (ἐπισκοπέω <i>episkopeō</i>)	Look after, care for, beware for the safety of, inspect or examine carefully	Hebrews 12:15
(not) lording over (κατακυριεύω <i>katakuriēuō</i>)	Subduing, bringing others under your own power, physically overcome	Matthew 20:25, Acts 19:16

These tasks needed to be done if the church was going to thrive, but Peter knew that it was a tall order. The leaders of the local church would be the first to die when persecution arose, and sometimes people refused to assume the burden of leadership. Peter did not want unwilling men who felt forced into positions of leadership, but rather men whom God had called to lead and therefore wanted the mantle of responsibility (cf. 1 Timothy 3:1).

While godly ambition is good, the danger was that men would want to be leaders of the church for selfish motives. Elders must not seek sinful gain (αἰσχροκερδῶς *aischrokerdōs*), such as personal aggrandizement through pride, wealth, or power. The New Testament specifies that leaders in the church must be paid well enough to live reasonably in the culture in which they minister (1 Corinthians 9:7-14), but money should never be a motivation to lead the church. Instead ministers must be eager to serve because of the call of God.

Dr. David Martyn Lloyd Jones wrote:

It was Mr. Spurgeon, I believe, who used to say to young men – “If you can do anything else do it. If you can stay out of the ministry, stay out of the ministry.” I would certainly say that without any hesitation whatsoever. I would say that the only man who is called to preach is the man who cannot do anything else, in the sense that he is not satisfied with anything else. This call to preach is so put upon him, and such pressure comes to bear upon him that he says, “I can do nothing else, I must preach.”

That is the motivation that Peter is looking for in this passage.

V4 – In the persecution that was soon to come, Christian elders would face terrible trials. Peter reminded them that when Christ returned, their reward would be great.

How to Follow in the Church

V5 – It is impossible for a minister to lead if there are not faithful Christians following him. The shelves of libraries and bookstores groan under the weight of books on leadership but how many books are written and sold on how to be a follower? People want the money, fame and power of being a “leader”, although they prefer to avoid the sacrifice. How many of us are willing to submit to the leadership of another?

Understanding this fact, Peter exhorted the younger men in the church to be faithful followers. Younger men typically had less experience in the Lord and needed to be molded by the Spirit into Christian maturity before they could successfully lead. For many young men, at the peak of their physical powers and full of the fire of ambition, this was hard to take. Nonetheless, their job was humility and service...leadership would come later.

V6 – Peter reminded the young men that in their submission to their elders they were also submitting to God. Since God is faithful, He would exalt whoever faithfully followed Him at the proper time.

This verse, however, applies not only to the young men but also to the whole church. They were soon to be humbled with terrible persecution and yet they had to patiently endure. They too, every Christian, would be exalted by the Lord at the proper time, whether in this life or in the next.

Remember that Moses spent 40 years as a prince of Egypt, and then 40 years as a fugitive shepherd, before he was ready to be used by God.

How to Live in the Church

V7 – There are many cares implicit in this powerful passage. The elders would be anxious about their ability to lead the church of God. The young men would question whether their ambitions and dreams would be realized during this time of humbling themselves. Women would share these worries in their own way. Everyone would be concerned about their lives, property and safety during this time of persecution.

V8 – It is easy during times of difficulty to be excitable and emotional. During the tragedy of September 11, 2001, many people, even those not directly affected, were overwhelmed by the enormity of their feelings and unable to function. While this is understandable it is not what Christians are to do. Followers of Christ must be sober (νήφω *nēphō* - *calm, collected, temperate*), always to serve God in His chosen way. They must not allow themselves to be overwhelmed by emotion no matter the circumstances. The reason for this is that the devil is constantly on the prowl like a lion, ready to destroy anyone who falls into sin.

This is not to say that believers are emotionless. Emotions are a marvelous gift from God, the Maker of all emotions, and are to be enjoyed like every other good gift. However, emotions are to be brought under the control of the Spirit of God in our lives, just like our minds and our bodies. Every part of man is corrupted by sin, and every part must be sanctified by the power of the Lord in our lives.

V9 – The sober minded believer, firm in his faith, will be able to resist the devil. One of the greatest lies from hell is that the trials each believer is facing is unique and worse than those trials faced by anyone else. Peter reminded his readers that the difficulties they faced were the same as those faced by the saints of God everywhere. Paul did the same thing (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Why Live in the Church

V10 – Peter finished the teaching portion of his letter with a reminder that their suffering, no matter how severe, would last only a little while. Afterwards, whether in this world or the next, they would receive a reward. In the next world, they would enjoy His eternal glory.

V11 - This is a common benediction.

V12 – Silvanus is the same person as Silas, who traveled with Paul.

V13 – “She” probably refers to the church in Rome. “Mark” was John Mark, author of the Gospel of Mark and Peter’s spiritual son.

V14 – Peter concluded by encouraging the saints in Asia Minor to show compassion towards one another and gave them a blessing of the peace of Christ.

Took

<p>How to lead in the church</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is God calling you to do? 2. Do we do our whole task? 3. Is the Lord our motivation? 4. Are we leading for time and not for eternity? 	<h1>Leading the Church in Crisis</h1>	<p>How to follow in the church</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are we following faithfully? 2. Are we waiting for God’s timing before trying to lead? 3. Are we helping others to wait for His time?
<p>How to live in the church</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are we sober? 2. Are we firm in the Faith? 3. Do we resist the devil? 		<p>Why to live in the church</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are we anticipating our heavenly reward? 2. Are we united in compassion towards one another? 3. Do we feel the guaranteed blessings of Christ in our lives?

Verdict – What do you want them to DO as a result of the truths they have just received?

Closing Prayer