

## 1PeterWeek10 1 Peter 5:1-14 "Grace in the Church"

### Community Group Questions

1. Have you ever been in a position in leadership?
2. Did people respond well to you or criticize you?
3. Do you have a problem following leaders? Why?
4. Do you have a problem with being loyal to your Christian friends and your church?
5. How have you experienced attacks against the church?

Before I get into the passage I want you to keep in mind as we learn today Peter was talking to Christians that were going through difficult times as a church. Think about it...relationships are easy when things are going well. But when things are not going well it is hard to keep our composure.

In many senses today's sermon is a pep talk for us as a church a pep talk to those that lead and pep talk to those that follow

*Today from 1 Peter 5:1-14 leaders are going to learn how to lead with grace, followers are going to learn how to follow with grace and we all learn about how to pursue unity by grace.*

Lets start with leaders...Just as society needs leaders the church does as well.

*Harry Truman said "Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better."*

What do those types of leaders look like biblically?

### **How to lead with grace...**

**-Identify with Jesus vrs 1** Jesus suffered so we can only expect that those that desire to lead people to Him or lead people in His name will

face suffering. That being said those who lead will also take part in the glory. When we are a part of God's work and we are a part of the fruit we give the praise and glory to Jesus because He did the work and used us.

The main message a leader in church carries is the GOSPEL

### **-Be a Good shepherd Vrs 2-3**

**-Manage well-** shepherds tend the flock and that is what leaders in the church are called to do in the local church. This can be a daunting task because there are so many people and so many problems and issues to take care of. For us as a church as move forward we have to be creative and purposeful about how we do this. This is not just for hired pastors but this is for anyone who takes leadership roles in the church.

God calls regular people to lead in His church

*Peter Drucker said "No institution can possibly survive if it needs geniuses or supermen to manage it. It must be organized in such a way as to be able to get along under a leadership composed of average human beings."*

A beautiful truth that we learn from observing the NT church is God chooses average people but He commands us to take whatever responsibility we have seriously and manage it well.

**-Good character-** *Abraham Lincoln said "Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."*

Leaders need to make their character of utmost importance, when it comes to the Scriptures and the qualifications for leaders in the church all but 2 have to do with character...people do not follow people that have bad character. Or I will say people will eventually not follow people with bad character.

**-Is an example**...how are leaders to be examples?

*-Gentle- Dwight D. Eisenhower said "You do not lead by hitting people over the head — that's assault, not leadership."*

Most people want to be dealt with in a gentle manner and not feel pressured into doing things. Leaders that lead people in harsh ways are not very likable...have you ever had a boss like that?

**-Learner-** Leaders should always be in the process of learning. Leaders in God's church should be people that are consistently learning. If the leader is always learning the people they lead will strive to do the same and be following someone that puts time and attention in learning more.

We can tell if people are leadership material if they love to learn.

Leaders that want to lead with grace not only identify with Jesus and are good shepherds they also...

**-Remember the reward vrs 4** The "Crown", much has been written on this issue of "what is this crown?" but to briefly sum it up is those who are called into leadership positions in the church do not go unnoticed by the Lord and are blessed with rewards in the next life. The Scriptures also teach that these rewards will be used to bring further glory to Jesus which will be satisfaction to the one that possess the reward.

So think about it this way, in the times when it seems like having a position in leadership is thankless (do people appreciate this or even care?), pointless(am I really making a difference?) or just becomes a pain(this is harder then I thought?)...

Peter is saying focus on the prize and that prize will enable you to bring more glory to Jesus in the next life and I know that is why you

accepted the call to be in leadership in the first place because you wanted to bring Him glory.

### **How to follow with grace**

*Helen Keller "The world is moved not only by the mighty shoves of heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."*

God's church needs followers...actually leaders are followers because they follow Jesus

We follow with grace by...

**-Willing to be under authority** vrs 5a This could be younger in age and also younger in faith.

Some people just have a problem following, they don't like to take directions, they are not team players and they don't like to listen.

How do you know if that is you?

Are you willing to...

-Follow biblical instruction?

-Respect leaders that hold up Biblical principles and instruction?

-Realize God put spiritual leaders in your life to benefit you?

-Back spiritual leaders when they have to make difficult decisions?

We have an unwritten rule here at our church, if you prove not be able to be under authority you will never be able to be in authority. Why? If you are not a good follower you wont be a good leader.

**-Practice Humility** vrs 5b-6 This is where people that are not in leadership have to come to the conclusion, that being in leadership looks easier then it is. Leaders always have weaknesses and prideful people love to point those weaknesses out.

Maybe you have not had much of an opportunity to lead something in life so it is hard for you to understand that leading is more difficult than it seems. (have you ever had people over?)

Was the item you forgot important? Yes, How did you feel when everyone criticized? You may be upset and you may even get angry because you put in all this work and what does everyone focus in on? The item you forgot.

That is how leaders feel often times when they are leading, I am working so hard on so many things and something falls through the cracks and now I am criticized for it.

Think about that next time a leader makes a mistake.

Not only that keep this in mind...there is a reward for following.

**-Remember the reward** vrs 6-7

-Keep humble and He will lift you up or deliver you out of the difficult situation

-He will comfort you because you relied on Him in the situation.

Peter knew this full well didn't he? When the authorities came to arrest Jesus, what did he do?

-Full of pride, anxiety and not trusting Jesus.

So in many sense Peter is saying when it comes to following Godly leadership in tough situations here is the reward. He will get you through the tough time if you humbly follow and at the end of the day it is in the hands of the Lord so He will comfort you.

The next section transitions to...

How leaders and followers **Pursue unity by grace** vrs8-11

**-Sober mind**-think clearly about who you are and what God called you to do.

**-Watchful**-realize there is a spiritual battle going on that does not want us to accomplish GOSPEL work in our community.

**-Resist evil**- followers you may be tempted to...criticize others, forsake gathering, complain. Leaders you may be tempted to get discouraged and want to quit.

*Thomas Carlyle the Scottish Philosopher said Men's hearts ought not to be set against one another, but set with one another, and all against evil only.*

**-Realize the strength that comes through suffering**- take away from suffering valuable lessons to move forward.

**-Bring Jesus glory**-we are brought together to bring Jesus glory.

Finally in Vrs 12-14

This closing reminds us that we are part of something bigger.

**-Stick Together**

-Silas probably penned the letter and delivered

-She who is in Babylon is the church

-Mark fellow disciple

*In the church leaders should lead with grace, followers should follow with grace and we can all pursue unity by grace.*