SMALL GROUP / STUDY GUIDE

1 Peter 5:1–5 — Shepherding with Humility

SCRIPTURE

Read 1 Peter 5:1–5. Also read Philippians 2:5–11 and Ephesians 4:11–16 as you consider how Jesus shapes the way leaders shepherd and the way all believers serve one another.

KEY TRUTH

Jesus is the Chief Shepherd. Church leaders are called to care for God's people willingly, eagerly, and by example, while every believer is called to walk in humility and serve others.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage say?)

- Who does Peter address in verses 1–4, and how does he describe his own relationship to them?
- What three instructions does Peter give the elders about shepherding and overseeing God's flock?
- What contrasts does Peter make between leading willingly and by compulsion, eagerly and for dishonest gain, and by example rather than by domineering?
- What does Peter say the Chief Shepherd will give when He appears?
- In verse 5, what does Peter tell younger people to do, and what does he ask all believers to practice toward one another?
- According to the final words of verse 5, how does God respond to the proud and to the humble?

INTERPRETATION QUESTIONS

(What does the passage mean?)

- Why do you think Peter emphasizes that the flock belongs to God, not to the pastor? How should that shape the way spiritual leaders view their responsibility?
- What is the difference between overseeing the care of people and "lording it over" them?
- Why might willingness and eagerness matter as much as a leader's outward actions? What can happen when someone serves only out of obligation?
- How does Jesus' example in Philippians 2:5–11 help us understand humility, submission, and servant leadership?
- Ephesians 4:11–16 describes leaders equipping believers for the work of ministry. How does this help clarify the different responsibilities of pastors and the rest of the church?
- Why is it important for a pastor to teach God's Word faithfully, even when some of its truths are difficult to hear? How can truth be shared with both love and compassion?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

(What does this mean for us?)

- What expectations do you tend to bring to pastors or church leaders? How can you evaluate those expectations by Scripture rather than by personal preference or tradition?
- What qualities from 1 Peter 5:2–3 do you most appreciate in spiritual leaders? Which are most challenging to live out in your own relationships?
- Where might you be tempted to seek control, recognition, or your own way instead of choosing humility and serving others?
- What is one practical way you can help care for someone in your church or community rather than assuming that ministry is someone else's responsibility?
- How can you respond when a pastor or another believer lovingly shares a biblical truth that is difficult for you to hear?
- Are you currently serving willingly and eagerly, or has serving begun to feel like something you simply have to do? What might help renew your heart?
- How can our group encourage and support the pastors and ministry leaders who care for our church?
- What would it look like this week to follow Jesus' example by putting someone else's good ahead of your own preference?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Take a moment and ask:

- Am I looking to Scripture to shape my expectations of church leaders?
- Do I treat the church as God's flock, and other believers as people entrusted to our care?
- Where is pride influencing the way I respond to others?
- Am I willing to serve when there is no recognition or personal benefit?
- Who could I encourage, care for, or help equip this week?
- What is one area where I need to follow Jesus' example of humility?

PRACTICE FOR THE WEEK

Choose one concrete act of humble service this week. Look for a person in your church, family, or community who could use encouragement or practical care. Serve without seeking recognition, and do it willingly rather than out of obligation.

If you are involved in leading or serving others, take time to examine your motives: Am I doing this willingly? Am I serving eagerly? Am I setting an example that reflects Jesus? If you are not in a formal leadership role, consider one way to support the church's ministry and help care for God's people.

> *Pray: "Jesus, You are the Chief Shepherd. Shape my heart to reflect Your humility. Help me serve willingly, care for others with love, and trust You with the results. Show me one way to build up Your people this week."*

Come back next week ready to share how you practiced humble service and what God taught you through it.

PRAYER

Thank God for giving the church leaders who help shepherd and equip His people. Pray for pastors and ministry leaders to serve willingly, eagerly, and as examples of Christ. Ask God to protect them from pride, selfish ambition, and the temptation to lead through control. Pray that every believer would grow in humility, submit to one another in love, and take part in the work of ministry. Ask Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, to make the whole church healthy, growing, and full of love.