

**1 Peter 5**  
**Ask These Questions**  
**J.D. Farag**

KAPONO: Heavenly Father, I feel like I say this every Sunday, but what a privilege it is to be here, Lord. What a privilege. We ask Your Holy Spirit, Lord, to just come into this place, Lord. Will You just fill us with whatever it is that we need at this moment, Lord, so that we can give You our full attention, Lord.

Would You speak to us through the word as delivered by Pastor JD Lord?

Would You continue to protect and provide for him and his family Lord?

Thank You. Thank You, and we ask this in the mighty name of Jesus. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning. Welcome. You can be seated. So glad you're here. I want to welcome those of you join us online as well. So glad that you are. Real quick before we get started, I just want to let you know that we will not have our Thursday night Bible study on Thanksgiving which if you can believe it or not is a week from this Thursday already on the 24th. How crazy is that?

So just make a note of it and today we are continuing our verse-by-verse study through 1 Peter. And we're going to commence in Chapter 5, the first four verses. That will be our text. I will ask you if you're able, if not, that's all right, but you can stand and follow along as I read. Again, if not, where you're seated is fine.

The Apostle Peter is continuing to write by the Holy Spirit and says, *Chapter 5:1*, **"To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed. Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And [Verse 4] when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away."**

Let's pray. Father thank You so much for Your word and this portion that we have before us this morning here in Your word. Lord, we're asking You at this time as only You can by the Holy Spirit to get our attention first and then hold our attention, so our minds don't wander. There is nothing the enemy would want more than to distract us and get us thinking about things so that we miss what You have for us here in Your word today.

Lord, were looking to You to speak in that still small voice of the Holy Spirit as You're always so faithful to. And when You do, Lord, we want to have hearts that receive what it is You're going to speak into our lives. We want to have supple hearts, the supple soil of our hearts so that when the seed of Your word is spoken, it is met with that supple soil and able to germinate and sprout and bear much good fruit.

So Lord, will You do that for us today?

We're asking You for that in Jesus' name. Amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you so much.

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All right, so I realize that the title of, "Ask These Questions" is somewhat vague, even generic, but I'm hoping you'll understand why here shortly. In *verses 1-4* Peter is specifically addressing shepherds, elders, pastors, overseers. But when we get to *verses 5-9* which, Lord willing, we will next week, he addresses the sheep, the people. So you have to come next week because that's about you. There, I said it. Be nice to me today because this is kind of directed toward pastors.

So I spent some time before the Lord and inquiring of the Lord as to how to best teach today's text, and I made the decision to pose five very important questions that we first need to ask ourselves and also anyone who is serving the Lord in ministry, especially those who are pastors or those who are serving in positions of leadership. So let's get started. You ready?

The first one in *verse 1*. Question: Is suffering understood?

Now bear with me on this. I'll try to explain why I'm couching it in these terms and asking it in this way, but you've got to think this through that what Peter is writing here, we would do well to consider his prominent position in the early church.

Again, stay with me on this. Did you know that of all of the disciples of Jesus, Peter was the one that was most referenced in the Gospels?

In fact it's believed that Peter was mentioned more than all of the other disciples combined. Yeah, let that sink in. Well, I think he did that to himself. It was of his own making. He was very outspoken, obviously. He was the one who always stood up and spoke out. And you've got to hand it to him. This man was — I mean his intentions were always for the Lord. He just didn't understand.

So now you fast-forward from Peter the disciple to now Peter the apostle and his epistle here, his first letter. And hey, something's happened to Peter. Did you notice?

He's not the same guy that he was back then that he is now because you might remember when he was with Jesus as a disciple of Jesus, he was really kind of jockeying for position a little bit. It was almost like, almost a competition. I kind of marvel because when you read the Gospels, there's some really interesting detail that's provided to us especially with John. I kind of wonder if John and Peter had kind of a, you know, they kind of had a testy relationship together, the two of them. It was always Peter, James, and John, right, the big three if you want?

But in John's Gospel, it is so interesting because he makes it a point to tell us that he beat Peter to the tomb. And he also in so doing is very careful to point out to us that he was the disciple that Jesus loved, right?

And here's Peter going really, John, really?

So that wasn't Peter then, but this is Peter now. Now watch this. He could have rightfully identified himself not as one who knew the suffering of Jesus, but rather one who was the disciple of Jesus, but he doesn't do that. In fact, he brings himself down

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to their level, saying hey, I'm a fellow overseer, a fellow elder, and I'm identifying myself not as a disciple of Jesus; rather, I'm identify myself with the suffering of Jesus.

Wow! Peter, I'm impressed!

See, I would have totally not done that. I would've said do you know who I am? I am Peter, upon the rock of my confession, the church would be built.

[ Laughter ]

I'm the one to whom Jesus said, "I'm going to give you the keys. Blessed are you Simon bar Jonah for man has not revealed this to you. But God..."

This is when they were at Caesarea Philippi, a very demonic place, by the way, for those of you that have been with to Israel with us. And Jesus poses a question to the disciples there at this location and He says, who do you say that I am?

And leave it to Peter to say, **"You are the Son of the living God."**

And what does Jesus say?

That's right! Right answer, Peter, good job.

And if I'm Peter, I'm thinking to myself, he's looking at the other disciples, did you hear that? Did you hear what He just said to me?

How about when they're in the boat on the sea in the midst of a storm that Jesus sent them into, to meet them on the other side?

And they're they are, and I mean it looks like this is it. We're going to die!

And then all of a sudden they're terrified because they see this figure approaching them in the storm on the water. And then they realize it's Jesus. And who is the one who says, "It's the Lord?" Peter. Who was the one that would dare have the audacity to say, "Bid me come."

You know we're so hard on Peter because the focus of our attention is on when he took his eyes off the Lord, and he sunk because he took his eyes off the Lord and he started drowning. "Lord, save me!" A three-word prayer, which God answers, which is very encouraging to me because God answers three-word prayers. And He saves them. And pastors are so good at this. We have crafted the best of sermons around Peter taking his eyes off the Lord.

Well, wait a minute. Peter was the one that said hey, Lord I want to walk on water to You and with You. How about that?

Hey, that's faith! We don't emphasize that. That's courage. We don't emphasize that. That's confidence in the Lord. We don't emphasize that. See, I would've totally done that. I would've wrote a book. 'Walking On Water with Jesus' by JD Farag. But he doesn't. He does not draw upon any of those things.

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What does he draw upon? What does he identify with?

Suffering.

So that's the first question and that's why I phrase it in this way. This is a question we need to ask of ourselves and certainly, it's a question we need to ask of those that are serving in positions of leadership and certainly, those who are in a pastoral role.

Do you understand suffering? Do you identify with the suffering of Christ? Because see, all those who want to live godly lives in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

It's the suffering because if you participate and identify with the suffering, so too will you identify with the glory that is to be revealed. So yeah, it's the fellowship of His sufferings. I understand that. And what brings that into clear focus is that as I identify with and share in the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus, so too will I participate in and share in the glory of Jesus. The Apostle Paul just, by the Holy Spirit, probably one of the most poignant and profound and powerful verses of Scripture in all of the pages of holy writ, he says basically this: **"the suffering of this life is not even worthy to be compared with the glory that awaits."**

So you see the connection here and the question here? Do you really understand the purpose of suffering? Do you fight it or embrace it? Do you understand it or misinterpret it?

Because I think if were honest with ourselves we would have to admit that much of our lives is spent on doing everything we can to avoid suffering, right?

Let me take it a step further, and I am as guilty as anyone else when it comes to this. I go to great lengths to make sure to ensure that I'm comfortable and not inconvenienced. And don't look at me like that; you're just as bad as me, right?

We don't like to be inconvenienced. We don't want to be uncomfortable. And if you really stop to think about it and examine it, we go to great extents to ensure that we are comfortable.

Here's an example and I'll use myself as an example. Our Internet went down this last week. I know it's a cross to bear. Well, I got work to do, man! I mean what's up with this?

[ Laughter ]

This is not convenient. This is very — and I suffered greatly I want you to know. And what made it even worse — I know this is horrible — what made it worse was it was an outage that lasted longer than the previous outages which infuriated me even more because I suffered even more.

But God. It was very interesting. You're not going to have to respond to the 5612 emails in your inbox right now and you don't need the Internet for your Bible software program. What do you think?

Hey, you can't even watch any YouTube videos right now.

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(Deep sigh)

No!

Come on. Now I've got you all to Myself. So think about what we do to avoid said suffering. And I think it is due in large measure to the fact that we don't understand the purpose of suffering and we're unwilling because of that to identify with the suffering of Christ. We're very quick to identify with everything but.

Let's talk about pastors since this is directed chiefly to the overseers and the elders. How about when it comes to teaching the Word of God?

We talked about this Thursday night, Jeremiah chapters 35 and 36. Oh, man!

This King Zedekiah, he takes the scroll, the Word of God that Jeremiah had his scribe Baruch write all the prophecies of the book. This is Chapter 36. This is crazy. Get this. He takes a knife, the scribe's knife, and he cuts the Word of God out and he throws it into the fire and burns it.

Why?

Because what the prophecy was about was about him and he didn't want to hear it. So he wanted to avoid it and eliminate it and cut it out and burn it. Well, now you're looking at me like Pastor I'm not cutting my Bible out. See, all the pages are there intact and surely that would be unthinkable to throw it into the fire and burn it. Well, we may not do it like that, but we still do it.

What do you mean?

Oh, we skip over and avoid the Word of God when it starts talking about uncomfortable topics and subjects like suffering. And pastors are notorious for this. You'd be hard-pressed to find a pastor who doesn't teach verse-by-verse to get up and have a topical teaching about the purpose of suffering. So what do you do?

See, there are places in God's word that burn off those areas in our life that God wants to purify, and it takes the fire of His Word. And so instead of being burned in a good way by the Word of God we burn the Word of God. We cut it out. Pastors cut it out of their sermon notes because that's uncomfortable, and I'm all about creature comforts. I want people to be comfortable. Well, that's a problem.

I'm sure you've heard it said, "God comforts the afflicted." But guess what? So too does God afflict the comfortable.

Sometimes we can get too comfortable in our sin. And suffering has a way of purifying and identifying us with the suffering of our Savior. And so I find it rather interesting that Peter would posture himself this way and identify with the suffering of Jesus and not the most holy disciple of Jesus.

So last thing on this one question, and it should be asked not only of ourselves, but anyone who is serving in any position in ministry: Is suffering understood? Is suffering understood?

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Question number 2, first part of verse 2. Is it a get-to our a got-to?

I don't know if it's possible to overstate the importance of what Peter says here as it relates to serving being a get-to not a got-to. Not because you have to. Could you imagine?

Why are you serving in the ministry?

Because I have to!

Don't bother. That's okay.

Again, Peter — God has done a profound work in Peter's life and in his heart and certainly, in his ministry over the years subsequent to the resurrection because this is the Apostle Peter, not the disciple Peter. This is the Apostle Peter who has now seen his serving of the Lord as being a profound privilege.

You mean I get to do this?

No way!

Way!

I'm so thankful that many years ago I was taught early on that if there was anything else I'd rather do other than be a pastor, to go and do it. I mean, do not enter the ministry if your heart isn't in it. If you don't see it, any service, whether it's the pastorate or any position of ministry, if you don't see it as a profound privilege that you get to do this, don't do it!

I know for pastors, if it's not seen like that and it's a got-to, well, you're not going to make it very long. You're going to get chewed up and spit out pretty quick. If you don't see our service to the Lord as a profound privilege, all it's going to take is even one thing and you're going to get offended.

How dare you? Do you know who I am? Do you know what position I hold? Do you know what kind of authority I have?

Yeah, I did that too good maybe. I don't know.

[ Laughter ]

What are you talking about, man?

Wait, you must fancy yourself as more important and thinking more highly of yourself than you ought. You see it like that?

It's not that you are privileged, it's that those under your leadership are privileged. You know what I mean?

It's kind of like well, they're the ones that should be so privileged to have me, Peter, the apostle and disciple who walked on water with Jesus and took on the whole Roman Army. That's Chapter 3. I think you get the point. It's a get-to.

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Real quick, Psalm, I want to say it's 34. I always get 34 and 37 mixed up. I'm pretty sure it's 34. You know the verse. We sing it. We put it to song. We memorized it. You know the verse. We quote it. **"Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart."** Right? You know what I'm talking about?

Okay, watch this. So when I was a young believer, I thought cool! All I have to do is delight in the Lord and whatever my heart desires He's going to give it to me? All right. I'm delighted!

[ Laughter ]

That's not how it works. Here's how it works. God puts that desire on your heart, in your heart prior and then begins the process of you desiring that desire that He put on your heart to the point where now you're delighted in that desire because it's the desire He put on your heart in the first place. It's His desire. It's the desire of His heart, and now your heart is after His own heart and you're desiring the things of God from the heart of God.

And this, by the way, is why it is that, I mean, out of the blue, somebody that's got it made in the shade, they sell everything. Had the beautiful home, all the trappings of worldly success, held high-paying positions. And all of a sudden, you hear that they are going to some third world country to live in a tent with a dirt floor. You're like, what happened?

I'll tell you what happened. God put that desire on their heart, and then it became a delight to have that desire fulfilled. That's the only explanation, right?

It's inexplicable in the realm of the logical but when you get into the realm of the supernatural, oh, now I get it. And you'd be probably hard-pressed to have a conversation with them and try to talk them out of it. Even when you question them, it's kind of like did you like suffer blunt force trauma to the head or something? What's going on here?

No, God called us, and this is our heart's desire because this is the heart of God. And I tell you when God gets you like that, and it's a get-to like that, He's ruined you for anything else.

One last thing on this. Did I say one last thing yet? Not yet? So I'm good? Just real quick.

You remember after the resurrection, after Peter had denied the Lord three times as the Lord said he would? Peter thought, for sure I'm so fired right now. And he goes back to his fishing business and fails miserably. And he's trying to fish. They're out all night. This is a professional fisherman, now. He was a very good fisherman until Jesus came along and said, **"Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men."** So he left everything to follow Jesus, but he denied Jesus.

So what does he do?

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He goes back to his business. Stay with what you know. Go with what you know. So he goes back out, probably had to try to rent or buy back the boat that he sold when he followed Jesus, and go back out, get the nets. He knows what he's doing. It's been a while, like three years since he was out here, but he hasn't forgotten. So he tries to go back to his business and fails miserably. Why?

Because God ruined him for that. And then Jesus appears to Peter in the midst of that. It's almost humorous; you'll forgive me for seeing the humor in this. I see the humor in everything, by the way, especially in the mirror every day. But it's kind of humorous. Because it's kind of like Jesus, when He appears to Peter, it's kind of like Peter, what are you doing?

Well, I thought You were through with me, and I'm so sorry. I denied you three times. Peter, first of all, put the net, get the fish, whoa, can't even contain it!

This, again, I love this about Peter the disciple then. When they put the net and they get all the fish, Peter says, "It's the Lord!" You think?

And he runs out of the boat. This time he's not walking on water. He's walking to the shore. And I'm sure he just fell before the Lord just weeping. And what does the Lord do?

Peter, sit down, boy. We need to talk. I told you, you were going to deny; what were you thinking?

No, it's more like this. Peter, nice try, trying to go back to your fishing business. Bless your heart, Peter. That's adorable. You're not going to go back to your fishing business. I ruined you for that. I'm restoring you, and you're going to be fishers of men. And boy, was he!

The first sermon: 3000 people get saved. You know who preached it?

Peter.

(Deep sigh)

I love this guy! I think he gets a lot of bad press. All right third question. We're getting there.

Second part of verse 2. This is a biggie. I mean they're all biggies, but this one especially. Question: Is it done out of greed?

You know what's sad? This is a huge problem alive and well today by way of the many who are in the ministry, not by calling, but for coin. Peter says don't do it out of greed but be eager to serve. There are those who go into the ministry and are even in the ministry or some other position within the ministry that are there for the financial gain. And by the way, people know it, they smell it. It starts coming out. Yeah, the first 20 minutes of the sermon is about tithing. In fact, there's a 12-week series, just part one, 12 weeks on tithing. They're in it for the money.



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I could tell you stories; I won't. Over the years, my experience has been, and I'm talking about on the mainland, not here. I wouldn't dare do that. But I've actually known guys that got fired from their jobs because they were terrible, lazy, good for nothing employees that were a horrible witness as a Christian to their employers. And you know what the response to that was?

Well, God's calling me into the ministry.

I assure you, brother, God is not calling you into the ministry because you got fired. You got fired because you deserved to be fired.

(Deep sigh)

I want to be careful, but it needs to be said. I don't know what it is, but people have this picture of ministry that is so (Deep sigh) what's the word?

It's so wrong. I promise you. It's like, you know, you're looking through the proverbial rose-colored glasses. And I've even had it, again, on the mainland, not here, where people have looked at me as a pastor going man, I want to be a pastor too. What do you do the rest of the week? Golf?

[ Laughter ]

What? Because see, they have this picture that oh, it's just — you do a midweek — I could do that. That's easy.

I've actually had people — again, on the mainland — come up to me and say, Pastor, I just wanted to ask you, so you know, what do you do on weekdays?

I'm working. What do you think I'm doing?

In all fairness, they're asking that question because there are those who are not, and it's given a black eye, if you will, to the ministry and to the pastor and to the profound privilege that is ours to be such. You know when we first started this church, I made the decision early on that we would not receive an offering, which we never have.

Nothing wrong with that. I mean, churches do that, but we've never passed the plate as they say or received an offering. Nor do we talk about money unless we're at a place in God's word where God's word talks about money. Then we talk about money. And by the way, we have lacked for nothing. God has provided everything and then some, plus more, times 10, to the 1000th power. It's that a number?

[ Applause ]

How many people have been turned off and stayed away and been stumbled by a church — and I'm sure you've heard it said — man, them preachers, all they do is talk about money. They do. They actually do. Why?

Because they need money. Why do they need money?

Because God's not the source to whom they look for to provide what they need. So what do they do?

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Well, when you don't have the Holy Spirit central in that ministry, then you've got to overcompensate for the Holy Spirit. Because see, the fruit of the Holy Spirit, even the gifts of the Holy Spirit, there's a gift of giving, but that's the Holy Spirit. So if the Holy Spirit is not central in that ministry, you've got to come up with gimmicks to make up for it. So you've got to manufacture the synthetic because you don't have the authentic.

That's why when I pray and ask the Lord to, by the Holy Spirit, get our attention and keep our attention, that's because only the Holy Spirit can do that. Thankfully, that's not on my job description. That's a lot of pressure. If it was on me to get your attention and keep your attention, I better go do something else and not be a pastor. That's not on me. That's the Holy Spirit.

Our reliance is upon the Holy Spirit. Our focus is upon the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the one that enables and empowers and it's the Holy Spirit through the holy Word that ministers to and provides to God's holy people.

And when you sever that or somehow hinder or grieve that or God forbid quench that, well, you better come up with something else pretty quick. God knows what we need.

I remember early on when we – actually from day one. It's ongoing but when we acquired this property which was an absolute miracle. I remember times where I'm like, God, what did You get us into?

And we started the renovation and I'm looking at the payables. And I'm thinking oh, God! God, You've got payables here due. It's Your church. Oh, how good we are at — oh, now it's Your church. It's like a parent when the kids are misbehaving. Your son — oh, my son now?

Yeah. Moses did that with God with the Israelites. These are Your people. God's like no, they're not, they're your people, Moses. Again, God's got a sense of humor.

Sorry, I digress. Question number 4, verse 3, question: Ask yourself, is it to control others?

While there are those who may not necessarily be in the ministry for the money, there are those who do so because they want power. Namely that of lording it over people in the controlling of people with the power they wield with people which fuels their spiritual pride. They're not there for the people. They're there for themselves. The people are there for them.

Back in the '80s, many, many years ago, there was a movement, one of those winds of doctrine that thankfully didn't have much of a shelf life. I mean, it may still be in small pockets within the body of Christ, but it was known as the 'Shepherding Movement.'

And this movement was such that the pastors, the elders, the overseers of the church controlled every aspect of the people's life. This is not an exaggeration. You could

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not buy an appliance unless you had their approval. Marriage? Oh, they lorded it over the people.

And here again, it's a textbook case of when you remove the Lord, the Holy Spirit, God the Holy Spirit from His rightful place, well, then something has to replace the Holy Spirit in that rightful place. And so what's going to replace, or better asked, who's going to replace?

Well, then you become the holy spirit. You become god. You become their lord and you lord it over them.

Again, I'm so grateful that particular movement, of which there were many at that time, and of course nothing new under the sun, but I'm so thankful that it didn't happen. But boy, the damage to the lives of people because of it.

Listen, the Holy Spirit is going to lead you, guide you. Our posture as pastors and elders and servants in the ministry here at this, God's church, is to give the Holy Spirit plenty of room, plenty of elbow room and time and space. Stay out of God's way. God's going to lead you and direct you. We don't have to lord it over you.

And again, thank You Lord! You're going to add that to my... So I have to help people buy appliances now? That's not in my job description. No, I'll go do something else. No. No.

Thankfully, there are those who conversely minister as under-shepherds and bondslaves, doulos in the Greek. This is a slave who of their own volition has bound themselves to their master for the rest of their lives. That's a bondslave. And they would mark them, the bond slaves — they were free.

They're like, I don't want to go.

No, you're free. You're not a slave anymore.

Yeah, but I love my master. He's my master. I want to be his slave.

He says, okay, come on. So they take the ear. There's a reference to this in the Psalms concerning the Savior, but they would mark the ear, pierce the ear. You will always know that's a bondslave, that's a doulos, that's a bondservant who's a slave by their own choosing. They want to serve.

And understand this. This is another thing and it's horrible, it's just absolutely horrible. And I fight it. I have to confess, and of course early on in the pastorate, this was a big issue. I was very uncomfortable initially when I first entered the ministry some over 20 years ago now. I was very uncomfortable being called "pastor."

In fact, I remember the first time when I was just green and new and had just started the church. This was on the mainland again. And somebody was like, Hey, Pastor JD. I thought they were talking to somebody else. Oh, wait, I'm the pastor. It was just an uncomfortable thing to wear. And actually, as it would turn out, there was a

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reason for that, and it was a sanctified reason. Because there is this stigma, this incorrect stereotype associated with the word "pastor."

Oh, you're the pastor?

We were talking a little bit about this in the Prophecy Update. You know you have arguably better opportunities to reach people that I as a pastor cannot. Because as soon as, and you know the question is coming. I've been in conversations many times where you're getting to know somebody. You know the questions coming.

What you do for living?

(Deep sigh)

I'm a pastor (Mumbling)

What?

Not because I'm ashamed. I'm not; I'm profoundly privileged. It's because I know as soon as I say I'm a pastor, everything changes and usually it's met with something like oh, you're a pastor? Excuse my French. Listen, dude, that wasn't French. My dad taught four languages in high school. He was a French teacher. That's not French, so we're clear. But all of a sudden everything, the wall goes up, and there's this big chasm between the pastor (Said proudly) and the people.

So you know what a pastor is? An under-shepherd.

You know what an under-shepherd is? And under shepherd is just that, they're under, not over. They're under. It's the opposite of the world. You know the pyramid: when you rise to the top?

And the corporate structure in the secular world is a pyramid and you're at the top, and it's lonely at the top. And then you've got all the people under you.

Flip it around. The ministry, the pastor is at the bottom. He's under shepherding. That's what a pastor does.

By the way, Peter and Paul? They had — actually, we have an account of it — they had a couple of really intense — that's putting it mildly — intense fellowship. Actually, Paul called Peter on the carpet, and it wasn't pretty. And I thank God that he deemed it necessary and that it would rise to the level of being included in Scripture, but he rebuked him.

But Paul, like Peter, you know when you start in the epistles of Paul, you see this progression. And it's not climbing the ladder up; rather, it's taking the staircase down. So he starts off an apostle by Jesus Christ because his apostleship was questioned at that time. So he was an apostle but by the time you get toward the end of his life, you know how he identifies himself and starts off his letters?

It's not apostle like Peter here. It's not, you know, Paul, the apostle. No, he refers to himself as the "chief of sinners." Now this is important because as you grow in grace

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and mature in Christ, you find yourself more aware of your sin before the Lord. Peter would say to Jesus, just get away from me. I'm a sinful man.

The Apostle Paul, **"Oh, wretched man that I am; who will deliver me from this body of death?"**

When we were in Isaiah, when he's in the presence of the Lord and he beholds the majesty of the Lord seated high and lifted up and the whole train filling the temple, and he's just in awe. And what does he do?

He says, "Take the coal and cleanse my lips." Here I am. I'm unclean. I'm dirty. When you're in the presence of purity and holiness, you have to readily admit I'm the chief of sinners. I am a wretched sinner. That's your title.

I've often joked about this over the years with people. You know we have business cards; I guess people still use them. I still have them. I don't ever give them out. You know pastor, Pastor JD. You know really what the card should say? Slave, JD Farag. Slave. That puts it into perspective and it's more accurate. We are under-shepherds. We are bond slaves.

Last question, number 5, verse 4. Oh, this is perfect, yeah? Is it eternity focused?

Here, the Apostle Peter is summing up everything he has just written here to for concerning one's motivation being eternally focused. Now why is this important? Because think about it. When one serves in the present with eternity in mind, it has the much-needed effect of purifying one's true motives.

When you ask yourself not just why you're doing what you're doing but what is what you're doing going to do in terms of eternity? Is my service done with eternity in mind? That changes the whole complexion of everything. When I have my focus through the lens of eternity, it will completely change everything I'm doing in the present because my eyes are on the prize.

What I'm doing, and I love how one said it, so apropos: Soon one life will be passed and only that which was done for Christ will last.

The Apostle Paul in *1 Corinthians Chapter 3* drew a comparison between two piles: one wood, hay, and stubble, the other gold and precious jewels. The same fire consumes the wood, hay, and stubble, the works of the flesh, and that same fire purifies, makes more valuable those works for the Lord.

So maybe the question is am I doing what I'm doing in my service to the Lord with eternity in mind? How does what I do matter for eternity? Is what I'm doing more worldly focused? Because it won't take long to figure out that if it's worldly focused, then you take the focus off of Jesus and eternal life.

But again, like Isaiah said, **"He will keep him perfect peace [Perfect peace] whose mind is stayed on Thee."**

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Again, you will forgive the reference of the Prophecy Update again, but Matthew Chapter 6:19-34, the Sermon on the Mount. Could be called a sermon on the amount because it's about the amount of treasures that we have here on earth where moth and rust have access to it and thief can break in and steal it and destroyed it. But if we transfer the treasures, not the necessities, the treasures to Heaven, if our treasure is there, our heart is there also.

What's that saying, "home is where the heart is?" That says it all, doesn't it? This isn't my home. My heart's not here.

Well, where is your heart?

It's where my treasure is.

Where's your treasure?

In Heaven.

Again, you'll forgive the Update reference, but you cannot take it with you. You can send it ahead. That's eternal focus. You can transfer it into eternity, and it will be there. And the yield, the return.

(Chuckling)

I mean wow! Transfer it. Transfer your treasures. And not only will you not be torn between serving and loving two masters, which you can't do anyway, you won't have double vision either because "the eye is the lamp of the body." So there is no double minded, double visioned, nothing. My focus is solely on Heaven.

You've heard it said, and it's unfortunate. It was Mark Twain who said it. Completely disagree with it, respectfully. But he was famous for saying, "You can be so heavenly minded, you're of no earthly good." I think the opposite is true. I think the more heavenly minded you are, the more earthly good you will do.

Why?

Because of that eternity focus. You're viewing everything in your life, every relationship in your life, every aspect of your life, you're viewing it through the lens of eternal life. And it changes everything. Because when you put the template of eternity over the temporal, whew!

So those are the questions. And you can't ask me as the Pastor these questions because I've already taken care of it.

(Chuckling)

Kapono, come on up. You can stand up and we'll close. Whew, I made it! All right. It's getting a little hot up here. That's why we have our own separate AC unit, which I turned up for this sermon.

Let's pray. Father, thank You. This is good. We need these introspective searching of our hearts with hard and good and honest questions like these because Lord, we

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want for You to search our hearts and the motives of our hearts, the desires of our hearts. We want them to be in alignment with You, pleasing to You.

And so Lord, thank You. This was good. We needed to hear this and we needed to be asked this. So thank You for this. Take it from here, Lord, as You're always so faithful to by the Holy Spirit, in Jesus' name, amen.