

Elders Then Must Be

by Phil Beach Jr.

Elders are called by the Holy Spirit to shepherd the flock of God and lead them to the Great Shepherd, and they must be diligent in their study and prayer to fulfill this responsibility.

Duration: 31:31

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:1

Topics: "Eldership", "Shepherding the Flock"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the profound responsibility and privilege of being entrusted with the care of God's flock as elders. He encourages elders to remain soft, tender, and pliable in the hands of the Lord, reminding them that their ministry extends beyond the local church to the entire body of Christ. Beach highlights the importance of being examples to the flock, serving selflessly, and being vigilant against false teachings. He urges elders to find their sufficiency in Christ and to diligently study the Word of God, as they will be held accountable for their leadership. Ultimately, he calls for a humble and compassionate approach to shepherding, reflecting the love of Christ for His people.

Transcript

One that should cause us to be very grateful, very thankful, very soft before the Lord. Very soft before the Lord. He's entrusted us with the care of His flock.

And it's a great responsibility. It's a great privilege. As elders, we've been called by the Holy Spirit.

And the Holy Spirit equips us, empowers us, and enables us to fulfill the ministry. And I wanted to just encourage you to continue to be soft before the Lord, and tender, and pliable in His hands. Oftentimes, people will come and say, well, do you have recognized elders? And I have to take a couple thoughts about it.

And oftentimes, I really don't know what to say. Because, see, God's work doesn't need to be publicly recognized. God will recognize those in whom He has gifted and trusted.

That's the beautiful thing about the things of God. And there's a ministry of eldership right in this little fellowship. Watching over the flock, isn't it precious? Taking care of the little lambs.

But remember, beloved, if God is truly preparing you and nurturing you, it's not for this flock alone. It's for His people, His body. And your ministry goes way beyond just the local fellowship here.

It goes into every time you meet a child of God anywhere. See, there's one body. And while praying this afternoon, I sense the Lord encouraged me to share that we ought to take heed to the great call that God has given to us, and be faithful, and be examples, and look to the Lord for all of our sufficiency, and all of our power.

Because the flock of God is precious to Christ. Very precious to Christ. And I want to read just several scriptures that are upon my heart in relation to this.

And let's let the Lord encourage our hearts. First of all, in 1 Peter chapter 5, the Apostle Peter, after exhorting the believers who were scattered, then he turned his attention to the elders in the church. By the way, when Paul was in Ephesus, this is what we're going to look to in Acts chapter 20 verse 28.

Before leaving Ephesus and having told the elders there that he wouldn't see their face any longer, he called the elders together. I was telling Joe this afternoon that the Lord deals with his flock very gently, but deals with his elders very firmly. You'll notice the word in the church, the book of Revelation, you'll notice the words of correction and rebuke when to the elders, to the pastors, to the overseers of the flock of God.

Therefore I exhort the elders among you as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed. Shepherd the flock of God. Among you.

We are to shepherd the flock of God. Lead them and guide them to the great shepherd. Exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily according to the will of God and not for sordid gain or filthy lucre, as the King James Version says.

Elders don't ever see dollar signs in the eyes of the flock. Don't ever look to see how you could profit personally from anything that you do for God. Not just monetarily, but there's many ways to profit that are very grieving in the Lord's eyes.

But with eagerness, verse 3, not yet as looting it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. Now proving to be examples to the flock, just a few weeks ago, we did an entire teaching on qualifications for elders. And we went into this in great detail, explaining these words and the implications.

But this afternoon I was thinking about this, and this is a very profound charge that Peter gives to the elders. Its implications are very challenging to the elder. When Peter says to be examples to the flock, here's what he's saying.

Peter's saying, listen, I want you to exemplify the life before the flock that they have not yet attained, so that they can see what they should become. And there's a holy high calling. That's what that word, being examples to the flock actually means.

It's a picture of something not yet realized. And verse number 4, and when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. And then we find in Acts chapter 20, Paul's charge to the elders at Ephesus 20, beginning in verse number 17, And from my leaders he sent to Ephesus, and called to him the elders of the church.

And when they had come to him, he said to them, You yourselves know from the first day that I set foot in Asia how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, with trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews, and how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that

was profitable, and teaching you publicly and from house to house. Solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, bound in spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me that in every city, same good bonds and afflictions await me.

Verse number 24 is a precious testimony to possess, but I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, in order that I may finish my course and the ministry which I receive from the Lord Jesus to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. God had brought such a work in Paul he didn't consider his own life dear to himself. Elders, this is a goal that we need to have in our hearts, asking the Lord Jesus to so move in our hearts and lives, so as to bring us to the place where our own lives do not count to be dear to our own selves, but rather our whole thrust, our whole heartbeat revolves around the will of God, pleasing God and being a servant to the church of Jesus Christ, as whom the Lord loved so very dearly, he purchased the church with his own blood.

And now, behold, I know that all of you among whom I went about preaching the kingdom will see my face no more. Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men, for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers to shepherd the church of God, which you purchased with his own blood.

I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. And from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I do not cease to admonish each one with teeters.

And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. You yourselves know that these hands ministered my own needs unto the men who were with me.

And everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus that he himself said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Some powerful exhortation to the elders.

And truly, beloved, we're living in a day when the elders of God need to be on alert. For truly, there are many worlds that have come and are turning the eyes of the flock from the Lord Jesus Christ. So, God's word charges us tonight that we are to be alert and we are to be on guard.

And we are to selflessly serve the body of Christ, turning them to the Lord Jesus Christ, leading them to him, bringing to them the soundness that comes by him and through him. And in the word of God, much of the flock today is captive to everything but Jesus, bound to many things, and have forgotten the weightier matters of the law, which is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, strength, and soul. This indeed is our responsibility, to bring the flock of God to the feet of Jesus Christ.

And there they can learn to receive bread from the Savior as he has bread for all who come to him. And this we need to remember, gentlemen, that as we continue to serve the Lord, to be mindful of the call that God has placed upon our lives, and to be ever careful that we walk softly and humbly before the Lord, being an example in all things. Keep your eyes on the flock, gentlemen.

God is doing a work in our midst. The Holy Spirit is moving. The Lord is drawing his little lambs back to himself.

But beware, because the enemy lurks too. Don't become troubled and don't react when you see the enemy doing something. Don't be a reactionary person.

Just stay prayed up and filled with the word of God, and learn to be led by the Spirit of God, and keep a watchful eye over the flock of God. The most profitable thing that you can do is be a good example and pray for the flock of God, and find in Christ the love that he has for his people. And then you exemplify that love.

You exemplify that love when you have the opportunity. But be on guard. Guard the flock of God.

This is why God has appointed elders in the church, not to lord it over, not to control them, not to make of themselves personal little disciples, but to guard them. Understand, know the jealousy of God for his people. Be jealous for the Lord's people.

Be watchful. When you see one of them being thrown astray, following this or following that, weep for him, cry for him, pray for him. Ask the Lord if it would please him to give you an opportunity to possibly instruct him.

But learn to wait on the Lord. Don't take things into your own hands. Learn to wait.

Learn to let the Lord move you. Let the Lord move you. We have an awesome responsibility.

God is moving in our midst. God will continue. People are being touched and ministered to.

God is searching, looking, finding those that have a heart for him. And our responsibility will increase more and more. And as it does, the grace of God will abound.

I'm encouraging the grace of God is always there to equip us. You may turn, if you like, to Hebrews. We have another admonition from the Lord.

I want to encourage you gentlemen to read and study. Be diligent. Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that need if not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Be diligent. Don't be diligent before men, be diligent before God. Don't serve before men, serve before God.

For it is he that shall bring you into account one day. It is his judgment seat that I will stand before. Be diligent.

If you aspire to be an elder, anointed by the Holy Spirit and called by him, then you must be diligent. You must be diligent. You must find in Christ that place of diligence.

Now in Hebrews chapter 13, 13, 17, Obey your leaders and submit to them. This is only true if your leaders are leading you to Jesus Christ and ministering the word of God. This is not true if your leaders begin to operate in a spirit that's outside of the Holy Ghost.

You are in no obligation to obey anybody who would lead you astray. Always remember that. So this again is a very awesome responsibility.

Live a life worthy that would constitute the ability for others to obey your example and follow your example. Obey your leaders and submit to them for they keep watch over your souls. I've often said to certain folks whom the Lord would allow me to share with, one of the first things that occur in your life when God is preparing you for eldership is you begin to become concerned about the souls of people.

You're not interested in how they look. You're not interested in the kind of clothes they wear. You're not interested in their mannerisms or their personalities.

You learn to go beyond all of the things that appear by the natural observation and you become burdened for their souls. You become incredibly concerned about their soul. Desiring that they would find a haven in the Lord Jesus.

Desiring that they would find a place of safety in Him. Ever desiring that they would find their full satisfaction at the feet of Jesus Christ. Their drinking of His water and eating daily of His provision.

This is a burden that God would put in the elder's life. For they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. So God is going to hold us into account in relation to how faithful we were in keeping a watch over the souls of God's church and then following His instruction regarding what we should do.

Keep a watchful eye. Keep a watchful eye, beloved. As the flock continues to move.

And again, you are not an elder of this church. This church has no identity in itself. You are an elder of God appointed over His flock.

See? And this is what you want to remember. So, this applies to a far greater than just confined to this building. No local fellowship has a monopoly on anything that God's given.

Elders don't belong to local churches and pastors. Elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit They're anointed by God and their purpose is to feed and watch over and pray with and minister to and love the flock of God. See, it's God's work, not my work, not your work.

See? Let them do this with joy and not with grief. For this would be unprofitable for you. And of course, that's an admonition to the church to receive the ministries of those whom God would anoint to help them and lead them and guide them to the Lord Jesus Christ.

But as I was going to say earlier it would be good to ask the Lord to give you a burden and begin to go through 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus and maybe do a little search. If you ought to pray I know Kerry probably has some study helps but Joe and Norman and I think you're getting them a little bit as time goes on you ought to pray and ask the Lord to help you get your basic study guides for the Bible like a concordance and get in and find all the places where the Lord exhorts elders. And I mean read those things until they become second nature to you.

Let me see. Alexander White. He's the man who authored Bible characters, right? Let me see.

Leonard Ravenhill heard him preach. I read it in one of Ravenhill's books. And Ravenhill said that his sermon was this.

He read 1 Peter. That was his sermon. You know what he did to prepare himself for it? He read it a hundred times in tears and prayer.

I like that. I like that. I read that and said, Yes Lord, I like that.

How do you prepare yourself for the ministry? You devour the Word of God. You love it. You consume it.

You let it become the book that you live by. You study it. You find in its pages the very life of God himself.

That's how you prepare. You fall in love with God's Word. Read it.

Meditate upon it. Ponder it. Search it.

Ask the Lord to open your eyes to it. Read through 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Read through Peter.

Meditate on those books. They're letters from a great man of God to another great man of God, Timothy. They reveal the shepherd's heart to the elder.

Paul understood the shepherd's heart and he penned the very desires that Christ would have for the elders in the church of God today. So you should read through these and study them and pray. Pray through them.

Every single verse. Pray through it. Get the meat from God's Word.

And as you equip yourself in that area and you're diligent, you'll find God will be faithful and he'll bless your soul. He'll bless your soul. So gentlemen, may we be encouraged and may we take heed and may we walk softly before the Lord and let him minister to us that we may be faithful.

And as the work of God continues, not just here, but God is working all over, may we be true to our calling wherever we are. We may be at the shopping center and we may see a brother in the Lord who doesn't even come to the church, who doesn't even fellowship here, but they're still part of God's church and if you're a true elder, then the Holy Spirit will give you a burden for that man, for that person. You don't try and proselyte him.

You don't try and say, oh, guess what God's doing. See, the church, we don't vault the church, we don't vault the preacher, we talk about Jesus. We bring men to the Savior.

We bring them to the loving Word of God. We make disciples of Jesus. We turn them to Him.

So be encouraged, gentlemen, that God's promise to be with you and anoint you and equip you to fulfill that responsibility upon your life. It's a great one. Would anybody have anything they want to share at this time? I am 100% destitute.

I'm you alone in life. Let God make that real in you every day in your life. Find your sufficiency in Him and then He will always be faithful.

He cannot fail. Amen? Be a servant of the brethren. Be willing to let the Lord stretch you and enlarge you.

The cross of inconvenience, it's one the Savior bore and one we will bear if we follow in His footsteps. Every true elder, that means your elder is going to want to do what you want to do, when you want to do it, but you're going to be inconvenienced for the sake of others. Now, inconvenience can either make you or break you.

If you stay close to God and you're inconvenienced, you'll become better in Jesus. But if in inconvenience you let it draw you from God and you're not drawing the grace that you need, then it will backfire. I've known many people who got bitter and hurt from the ministry, whose faith became shipwrecked because they failed to draw from the Savior during times of testing.

Beloved, you don't have it within yourself to endure the fire and heat of watching over the flock of God. You don't have it within yourself. You cannot do it.

You can't do it. But the Savior imparts grace, and that's where you find it. The cross of humility, being a servant, being an example, being gentle, being kind and compassionate.

These crosses are unfamiliar to the world, but familiar to Christ and those who walk near His heart. All elders have to walk close to Jesus because He alone is our strength, and without Him, we won't fall. We won't fall.

That's another good study you could do. What were the crosses that Jesus bore walking close to the heart of His Father? Shall we who follow Him escape them? No. But we can bear them as we trust in Him.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30282.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/phil-beach-jr/elders-then-must-be/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net