

## Leadership

Good morning everyone and welcome to the Main Street Church of Christ. We are glad that you have decided to join us this morning.

I would like to thank our Skillman Avenue brethren for volunteering their time in preparing lunch.

I would also like to remind everyone that we meet again tonight at 5pm.

A lot of you are probably wondering who I am. My name is Jordan Brewer, and I am filling in this week for Brother William who is out of town spending time with his family. I have been regularly attending Main Street for the past two years and in my time I have gotten to know Brother Kelly and all of the amazing people who volunteer here and I have done my best to follow their example.

I hold a Bachelor's of Science in Mechanical Engineering and work as an Engineer at Peterbilt Motors up in Denton. I grew up in a Christian household and I am a baptized believer. I enjoy just about any social activity and love to spend time outdoors.

I consider Dallas to be my home and I am very invested in this congregation. I want to see each and every one of you succeed in life and as Christian leaders in the community.

Let us pray

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Our topic for discussion this morning comes from the NT, the book of 1 Peter. Please turn your bibles to 1 Peter 5.

READ 1 Peter 5:1-10

### **Shepherd the Flock of God**

**5** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: <sup>2</sup>shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight,<sup>[a]</sup> not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you;<sup>[b]</sup> not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup>not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup>And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. <sup>5</sup>Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

<sup>6</sup>Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup>casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup>Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. <sup>10</sup>And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

Take note of these key word Shepherd in verse. Keep them in mind as we walk through today's lesson.

As you might have noticed the title of this passage is called **Shepherd the Flock of God**. Its context is church *Elders*. However, I would like to plunge even deeper into this subject. After all, aren't we all called to a higher purpose? I encourage ya'll to read this passage in a much broader sense, think of it as a spring board to this:

**To be a Christian is to be a Leader.**

Eldership is the biblical 'top of the ladder' when it comes to leadership, but do you think something like that is born overnight?? No! Of course not. It is the culmination of a life's work.

But where do we tend to look for leaders, the top right? But let me tell you church, it doesn't start with Elders, Governors, Presidents, CEOs, Managers, or even THOSE ON STAGE. It starts out in the back! It starts in the pews!

In Zachariah 4 the bible says

"Do not despise the day of small things."

It is a plea to NOT run with the crowd and become guilty of its foolish judgments. Believe me church, there were many who needed this warning. Being long accustomed to the traditional opulence and glory of their kings, and the grandeur of the first temple, many of the Israelites wept when they first witnessed the foundations of Zerubbabel's temple. However, the completion of that temple would serve as the cornerstone. That, in time, the true temple—the Church of Jesus Christ—would be built of whom God said, "He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever" ([2 Samuel 7:13](#)).

The bible provides PLENTY of examples on not only why we should WANT to be leaders but why we are CALLED to be leaders. For starters we are made in the image of the one true God, our Chief Shepherd.

<sup>26</sup> Then God said, "Let us make man<sup>(b)</sup> in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

<sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image,  
in the image of God he created him;  
male and female he created them. (Genesis 1:26-27)

Scripture's story of shepherding begins in earnest when God brings his people up out of Egypt, guides them through the wilderness for forty years, and leads them safely into their own land. Psalm 77:20 declares, "You led your people like a flock / by the hand of Moses and Aaron."

Like a shepherd, God was personally present with his people (Ex. 33:15–16). Like a shepherd, God protected his people (Num. 14:7–9; Deut. 23:14). Like a shepherd, God provided for his people. He fed them (Ps. 78:19, 105:40–41). He healed them (Ex. 15:26; Num. 21:8–9).

Like a shepherd, God gently, and tenderly drew his people along:

I led them with cords of kindness,  
with the bands of love,  
and I became to them as one who eases the yoke on their jaws,  
and I bent down to them and fed them. (Hos. 11:4)

In all this, God shepherded his people through Moses, the leader he called to shepherd them at the Burning Bush.

9 And now, behold, the cry of the people of Israel has come to me, and I have also seen the oppression with which the Egyptians oppress them. 10 Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” 11 But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” 12 He said, “But I will be with you, and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.” (Exodus 3:9-12)

Called leaders are those that are called by God to do His work. They are leaders that maybe were not qualified to be leaders, but God chose them and set in them great works to enhance His kingdom. Moses was not the only Called leader of the OT, there were many others such as Jeremiah, Job, Gideon, and Samuel.

God also uses Brave leaders. Brave leaders are those that step up and can be courageous in dangerous situations when others would not think about stepping up. Brave leaders are those that stand up for what they believe in and know what is right and do not back down.

Elijah had the courage to speak to the evils of his day and defeat the prophets of Baal. His sarcasm showed his disdain for those who had forsaken God. In every effective leader's life, there is a time for love, but also a time for courage. It may not come quickly. It will, however, come eventually.

Anointed leaders are those that become kings, prophets, priests, or otherwise dedicate their lives to God. Anointed leaders are consecrated in a ceremony with oil. These leaders are anointed to symbolize the introduction of a divine influence. Anointed leaders are called by God to rule over a nation and are to show the people God's glory and His kingdom. See what the bible has to say about anointing in Exodus 30:

25 Prepare a holy anointing oil, blending them like a skilled perfume maker to produce the holy anointing oil. 26 Use it to anoint the meeting tent, the chest containing the covenant, 27 the table and all its equipment, the lampstand and its equipment, the incense altar, 28 the altar for entirely burned offerings and all its equipment, and the washbasin with its stand. 29 Make them holy so that they may be perfectly holy. Whatever touches them will become holy. 30 Then anoint Aaron and his sons and make them holy to serve me as priests. 31 Say to the Israelites: This will be my holy anointing oil in every generation.

David, was one of these anointed Kings. The Lord took David from shepherding sheep and made him shepherd of Israel (2 Sam. 5:1–3, 7:8). The psalmist declares,

He chose David his servant  
and took him from the sheepfolds;  
from following the nursing ewes he brought him  
to shepherd Jacob his people,  
Israel his inheritance.  
With upright heart he shepherded them  
and guided them with his skillful hand. (Ps. 78:70–72)

Just as David tenderly nurtured the sheep under his care, so, in the main, he led Israel responsibly and compassionately, shepherding them in integrity and wisdom.

Yet God himself remained the true shepherd of Israel. Israel confessed, “For he is our God, / and we are the people of his pasture, / and the sheep of his hand” (Ps. 95:7). And David, God’s appointed under-shepherd, proclaimed his trust in God’s provision, protection, and guidance in Psalm 23.

Who is this shepherd whom God sets over his people today? Jesus, The Good Shepherd. Jesus had compassion on the crowds because they were harassed and helpless, sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). Jesus is the good shepherd who came to give abundant life to God’s sheep (John 10:10), who lays down his life for God’s sheep (v. 11, 15), who knows his own sheep (v. 14), who gathers all his sheep into one flock (v. 16).

In 1 John 2:27 we learn that we are the anointed of God because of what Jesus did on the cross.

"And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you, but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him"

And also in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

21 And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, 22 and who has also put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

So you see church, we are CALLED to be leaders because we are made in the image of God and because we have been anointed by Christ.

We are even called to be imitators of God in Ephesians 5:

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

## SHEPHERDING LIKE THE CHIEF SHEPHERD

Luckily the Bible also tells us how to be Leaders, both directly and through examples.

### **Good Leaders are faithful.**

We don't know much about Abraham's background. We do know that his family were idol worshippers (Josh. 24:2), so he did not grow up worshipping God.

Miraculously Abraham entered into a relationship with God who called him to risk everything by leaving his family and country to settle on the other side of the known world. He had to leave behind his land, his family support, his language, in fact everything that was familiar to him.

God's call came with some great promises (see Gen. 12:2-3), but don't think that there wasn't a huge cost and risk for Abraham. He willingly ventured off into the unknown trusting that God's hand was on his life and that God would do as he had promised.

That's faith! No wonder Paul paints Abraham as the "father of those who have faith" (Rom. 4:11-12). He trusted God when there was little to go on. He had no history of God's work to check out. No he just believed God's promises and stepped out.

Faith and risk are vital to Christian leadership. God calls us out of our comfort zone and asks us to lead people to a place that we ourselves don't know. Sometimes we fail. Abraham certainly didn't get it right every time. But as we hold on to God's promises and leading (by the skin of our teeth), we find ourselves trusting and believing God.

### **Good leaders persevere.**

Moses had a brilliant preparation for leadership in Pharaoh's court. He would have had the best training and the best resources. But then he messed up his chance to make a difference, so that he couldn't really take a leadership role among his own people until he was 80. Kind of late to start. And by then he was reluctant. Who could blame him? I plan to be well and truly retired by the time I'm 80.

But God convinced him that he was the person for the job, so he gave it a shot. Overall it went rather badly. Oh he did lead Israel out of Pharaoh's clutches, but that's as far as they got. The Israelites were a stubborn, lazy bunch of whiners who were almost impossible to lead.

So for 40 years (that's right, Moses led until he was 120), they wandered around in the wilderness in the no-man's-land between affluent Egypt and fertile, but occupied, Canaan. They just kind of did nothing. God looked after them physically, but there wasn't really anything else to do. It was like a whole nation on unemployment benefits for life. They were supposed to invade Canaan, but they lacked the backbone. They sweated it out in the desert until God could weed the whiners out and raise up a courageous, new generation.

Yet despite the discouragement and frustrations, Moses persevered. He had his moments of course, but he wasn't going to abandon the task God had called him to. He never made it into Canaan, but he was there cheering them on to the end.

I once asked one of my mentors how he survived some of the critics and difficult people he had faced in leadership. He said to me, "I outlasted them!"

Don't give up. Hang in there. And if you need some encouragement, study of Moses. You will find that things could be worse.

### **Good leaders are courageous**

Joshua took over the leadership of Israel from Moses. The whiners had died off, but the new generation was raw and inexperienced. Their life had been spent wandering around in a desert. They certainly weren't a well-trained, disciplined, experienced, fighting force. By the time Joshua became leader they had fought in a few skirmishes, but still, the thought of invading and conquering a land of "powerful people" in "fortified cities" (Num. 13:28) must have seemed like a pipe-dream.

But Joshua was no ordinary leader. Forty years before, when he had originally spied out this new land of Canaan and seen the strength of the people living there, his response (with Caleb) had been, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it" (Num. 13:30). He was no shrinking violet. He was a man of courage.

Nothing had changed. Now standing on the edge of this immense challenge with his raw recruits, Joshua gets God's call: "Moses my servant is dead. Now get ready to cross into the land I am about to give you. I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. No one will be able to stand against you. I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Josh. 1:2-5).

This promise to Joshua has inspired many Christian leaders, including myself. God has always done great things through leaders who believed his promises and courageously pursued them despite the difficulties and opposition.

Courage is necessary for Christian leadership because what God is calling you to do is always beyond your own abilities and will always be met with opposition. Discouragement is always a threat. There is no way that any sensible assessment would have given Joshua a chance of taking Canaan. And it's the same for you.

So Joshua courageously entered Canaan with God's words ringing in his ears, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go" (Josh. 1:9). And you know what happened!

## **Good leaders have a heart of God**

When God chose David, he said that he would look for a man “after his own heart” (1 Sam. 13:14).

Now I can't nail down exactly what it means to have a heart like God's. But from David's life, I think it's got something to do with passion to see God honored, desire to please God, and willingness to give everything to following God.

I'm certainly pleased that it has nothing to do with perfection. Most of the biblical material on David describes his failures and problems. There is no attempt to paper over his flaws and turn him into some matchless leader. He made plenty of mistakes and suffered through the consequences.

But under his brokenness was a heart that pumped for God. He gave everything he had and nothing would stop him. One day as a young teenager he arrived in the Israelite camp with sandwiches from daddy for his big brothers in the army. Hearing the taunts of the massive Philistine champion Goliath, and seeing the terrified Israelite soldiers, he made this offer: “Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him... The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine” (1 Sam. 17:32, 37). Now that's God's heart!

God is still on the lookout for leaders with his heart – guys and girls who will deeply love him and passionately pursue his honor no matter what the cost. That kind of heart is unstoppable.

### **A good leader Prays.**

In terms of sphere of influence in their own time, Daniel was probably the greatest leader in the Bible. He not only had prominent roles in successive Babylonian regimes (Dan. 2-5), but also was a significant early player in the Persian empire that followed (Dan. 6).

Not bad for a refugee whose country was wiped out by the Babylonians. To make such an impact in cultures that were unfamiliar and pagan, Daniel must have had great leadership skills and standing. I mean rising to the top leadership in your own country is tough enough. But becoming the right-hand man to a foreign emperor (2:48) that ruled the known world would take incredible ability.

Daniel obviously worked hard and must have been greatly gifted (1:20), but I get the impression that it was Daniel's prayer life and intimate relationship with God that set him apart. For example, the author of Daniel makes it clear that his outstanding abilities came directly from God (1:17) and that God gave him his insights (2:27-28).

When Daniel was being scrutinized for any imperfection or weakness that could be used to discredit him, it was his obvious prayer life (6:10-11) that stood out to his critics. The conspirators “went as a group and found Daniel praying and asking God for help.”

In some ways this is surprising. Daniel probably had a more challenging organizational job than any other biblical leader. You would think that he had little time to spend with God when he had so many pressures and demands. Yet we know that “three times a day he got down on his knees and prayed, giving thanks to his God” (6:10). Daniel’s leadership was centered around prayer.

You can push yourself hard, but ultimately the significant work will be done by God. So the more you are in touch with his plans and power, the more you will see happen through your life.

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Leaders are to feed their people with the Word, exhorting them in sound doctrine (Tit. 1:9–10), proclaiming to them the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). Leaders are to lead their people by providing a godly example (Heb. 13:7). Leaders are to care for their people by tenderly providing whatever counsel, help, and encouragement they need.

In a word, Leaders care. They don’t just care about their people, they care for them. They know them. They seek them out. They give their people what their souls need, even when the people themselves don’t know or want what they most need.

Have you ever considered that our current ministry is the fulfillment of a prophecy? Remember that God promised to set many shepherds over his people when he set his supreme Shepherd over them (Jer. 23:4, 5). These shepherds would feed the world with the knowledge of God and its understanding (Jer. 3:15).

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And to those that do not think they are leaders consider this: We are all leaders in some way. Spouses, Families, Jobs, Church, Community, and lest we forget Ourselves

Faith isn’t a spectator sport. The influential Christians we remember throughout history were the men and women who would not wait on the sideline when there was work to be done. They realized that Jesus didn’t just save us from something. He saved us for something. He has a mission, and His church and His people are part of it.

So then you must ask, what is stopping you?

To want to be a leader is asking for trouble. For we know that “To whom much is given, much will be required (Luke 12:48).

As we go up in levels of leadership and we begin to develop more responsibility we also begin to embrace more: Pressure, Problems, and Adversity

It bring new challenges bring but also new opportunities. When you say “I can take this” you are really saying that you don’t want to go any higher. You are rejecting the call to move forward. Because moving forward and moving up means more challenges.

The problems you face today are the ones training you for the next level. But only if you don't let it break you, and you master the situation. When you learn how to manage it ALL then the doors swing open.

God moves us in steps—not the elevator. This prevents us from fully breaking, God leads us.

<sup>13</sup> No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. <sup>w</sup>God is faithful, and <sup>x</sup>he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Cor 10:13)

When you “plateau” it is time to move to the next level. Continuous improvement – “6σ”. And this is a common theme we all know... did we stop at the chariot, the horse and buggy? No, today we have car... even airplanes.

When you complain at where you are you do like Israel, you wander around the wilderness because you are not eligible to make the promotion because you grumble about the level you are on right now, you are canceling out the opportunity you have.

Say thanks to God for the hardships. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. See Paul's example in 2 Corinthians:

<sup>8</sup> For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers,<sup>[b]</sup> of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup> He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us. On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.

## SHIFT

You don't have to have a title or office to be a leader. “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

Jesus Calls the First Disciples – Luke 5:1-11

5 On one occasion, while the crowd was pressing in on him to hear the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 and he saw two boats by the lake, but the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. 3 Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon's, he asked him to put out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 And when he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.” 5 And Simon answered, “Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.” 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 7 They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” 9 For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish that they had taken, 10 and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.”[a] 11 And when they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed him.

- Luke 5:1-11 → Jesus calls the first disciple Simon Peter (at this time just a businessman)
  - “Washing nets” – done for the day, given up
  - “Toiled all night” – no fish, failure
  - It takes great faith after failure to try again.
  - God rewards faith, don’t give up. Keep trying

Some of you are still washing your nets when the word says “try again”

Those who have lost everything, if you think your life is over there are things that God can teach you that can get you back in the game again . Not only restore what you lost, but pull you out more than what you are prepared to receive.

What really stops us from taking the lead a lot of time is not the lack of talent, resources, or education. Those attributes alone are not the answer, but do not mistake their importance.

What stops us a lot of times is ourselves. When you see those that are doing better than you .. don’t be jealous or bitter, but rather challenge yourself—your belief system—and ask yourself “What is stopping me from obtaining that?”.

It’s a shame to live long and make no progress. I don’t know about you but I want to have progress in every area of my life.

Is there anyone here who wants to move up? So I ask again, what is stopping you?

- The fear of failure
  - Many don’t go as far as they could because they have apprehensions that they will not reach their goal. So rather than to try and risk failure they will stay put and not try and therefore not fail.
    - Im not gonna buy a house bc I might lose it, Im not gonna get married bc I might get a divorce, Im not gonna apply for that position because I might not get it.  
THAT’S MADNESS,
      - Internal conflict. Have you given yourself permission to succeed?? Or are you so intimidated by the fear or failure.
- Intimidated by Success.
  - You will reach your goal but some disaster will happen.
  - I want it but I don’t want all the problems and pressures that come with it.
    - When you do this you reject God’s opportunity.
      - Left with the hope of magic: You say: I am gonna stay down here where its comfortable and in some kind of magical way I’m gonna get a blessing like I’m up here while I’m staying down here.

- “I don’t deserve it”
  - This often comes from people around you who have convinced you that you are a failure. They tell you things that limit you.
  - To this I say, don’t be defined by others. Be defined by yourself!
- “I don’t want to stand apart, I want to fit in, “I want to be ordinary”
  - I’m afraid I will become a target. And you will.
    - If you take the lead you are a target
      - But even though they are shooting at you does not mean they shot you
        - “The valley of shadow of death, but I will fear no evil”
      - Job 13:15 Though he slay me, I still trust in him”
- Social change
  - The fear of rejection, loneliness, or a sell out
    - I don’t wanna be rejected by my “people”
    - Minorities
      - Clanish survival mechanism - “We have to stick together” mentality
      - Watch out for the “we’s”—“We” people, will control you and will make you miss out on the best opportunity for you
- Fleeting – “my success will be temporal, and I will not be able to sustain it”
  - Performance anxiety, “it won’t last”
  - You won’t get back out on the boat and “throw a net”, because it won’t happen again.
- Perfectionism
  - I will have to behave as if I am perfect and I am not.
  - Simon Peter when he saw the power of god, he saw the blessing and the power to destroy him.
    - Why, because I know I’ve got imperfections!
  - So what, are you gonna be secretly talented?!?
  - I’m more concerned with my reputation than I am with my progress.
  - Newsflash: EVERYBODY HAS ISSUES
- Besiegement
  - I will be besieged by others wanting things from me
  - I don’t want all the controversy
  - You will do crazy things to show people you are still who you were, just to be accepted.
    - People will pressure you to stay low

The inability to manage these fears creates self-sabotaging situations. Where you are incapable of moving forward. It makes you a chronic under achiever. Locked to a system where you can’t get out of, and all because of internal conflicts.

The one who conquers, I will grant him to sit with me on my throne, as I also conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne. REV 3:21

In conclusion,

Prepare your minds for action, don't underestimate yourself. Bearing the name 'Christian' commands an influence. You don't have to have a title to be a leader. You don't even need people to recognize you as a leader. You just have to influence people. The truth is that your words, actions, and decisions affect and influence people and environments every day. This could be at home, work, in your community, in your church or even on social media. Leadership is about recognizing the influence you have in your current realm and then choosing to use that influence in an intentional way. For Christian leaders, that intent goes back to the imago dei. Our influence is to be used to reconcile creation to the ultimate leadership of Christ.

13 Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong. (1 Corinthians 16:13)

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Church tonight you can find rest for your soul. If you are here today and you have never trusted Christ. Listen! Turn from your sin, repent; and embrace his offer of grace and mercy in baptism. As together we stand and sing our invitational song!