

Connection

Tell us about a person you admire and would like to imitate.

Content Therefore Shepherd

When we press into Christ during our suffering we will receive a reward.

The New Testament book of 1 Peter urges believers, based on the good news of salvation through Jesus, to live out that truth. A series of “therefore” statements express how we should proceed: Therefore, Act; Therefore, Grow; Therefore, Be Ready; Therefore, Arm Yourself; Therefore, Stand; and Therefore, Shepherd. Here we will dig into the last of these: Therefore, Shepherd. We need to be shepherded through the trials and even suffering of life in Christ, but what does it mean to be shepherded, and who should do the shepherding?

Therefore, Shepherd

Read 1 Peter 5:1-4. Peter explains his own qualifications as an elder and exhorts church elders to “shepherd the flock of God.” He also describes some of what that shepherding looks like.

1. What would you say was special about Peter’s qualifications?
2. Based on these verses, how would you describe what a shepherd’s job and attitude should be like?
3. What does it mean to “lord over”? Have you ever felt “lorded over” by someone? How would you react to an elder who “lorded over” others in the church?

Verse 4 says the reward for worthy shepherding is “the unfading crown of glory.” In 2 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul the Apostle describes his race for a “crown of righteousness.” Now, read Revelation 4:9-11.

4. What happens to those elders’ “crowns”? How does this affect your thinking about the meaning of such a reward as described in the Bible?

Therefore, Shepherd: Who are the elders?

Every local church needs elders (Acts 14:23). But who can do that job? The qualifications named in 1 Peter and elsewhere in the New Testament say elders must be Above Reproach, Hospitable, Respectable, Prudent and Able to Teach. Elders must not be Quick-Tempered, Addicted to Wine, Lovers of Money, Accused of Dissipation or Rebellion, or Self-Willed.

5. Read Acts 20:28-30. What is at stake for a local church that is unshepherded or shepherded by “wolves”?

Therefore, Shepherd: How?

The Lord is the best example of a Shepherd. Read Psalms 23. “He restores my soul”; “He guides me in the paths of righteousness”; He is with me; He comforts.

6. What are the most important qualities you would want in a shepherd-elder?

Commitment

Therefore, Shepherd: The Church's Response

1 Peter 5:5 may be read to say that we believers who are being shepherded are to clothe ourselves with humility. After all, as 1 Peter 4:10-11 explains, each of us “has received a special gift” for serving each other in the church.

7. How have you served someone recently and had the opportunity to give the honor to God?

Challenge Assignment: Reread and put to memory, 1 Peter 5:5.