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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Refuge Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ of the Apostolic Faith, Inc.**

3750 Washington Street, Sanford, FL 32771; www.RefugeSanford.com

**Elder Joel Brooks, Pastor**

**Bishop Dr. M. Ruel McCoy, Sr., Diocesan**

**“MINISTRY READY”**

**1 Peter 5:1-5**

***I Peter 5:1 "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:"***

Peter’s exhortation is addressed to elders, signifying one who had the spiritual and chronological maturity to lead the church. As a fellow elder himself, Peter has an exhortation for the elders of the church, the church’s leadership. They are part of God’s chain of command. For God’s blessings to flow through the church, the elders must faithfully exercise authority, and the congregation must faithfully follow. He separates them out from the average Christian, because their responsibility is greater. He is aware that they are not only responsible for themselves, but for the Christians in their congregation. Peter related to them because of the great responsibility of the church placed upon him. Peter’s admonition comes as a fellow elder who witnessed the sufferings of Christ. Witnesses are not merely spectators but those who give testimonies. Peter will share with them the glory that is to be revealed, a reference to the glory of Jesus that will be manifested to the Church at the time of the rapture.

***I Peter 5:2 "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight [thereof], not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;"***

The Apostle’s exhortation is to shepherd the flock of God among you, tend the flock entrusted to your care. They must remember that they are “under-shepherds,” caring for a flock that isn’t theirs a flock the Lord “purchased with his own blood”.

***Acts 20:28 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”***

He is not speaking of physical food, but the food of the Word of God. Jesus told Peter three times to care for the flock.

***John 21:15-17***

***15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.***

***16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.***

***17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.***

Elders are not to minister because of obligation to do so, but from love of the brethren. The minister must desire to help others. This should be his motivation for ministering, and not because they are compelled to do it. Ministry is not a natural occupation it is a spiritual vocation of gifted men.

***Ephesians 4:8-13***

***8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.***

***9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?***

***10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)***

***11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;***

***12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:***

***13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:***

Those who minister because of the salary they receive are not in the ministry for the right reason. The call of God on ministers' lives should be so great that they would minister if there was no payment for it at all. We all know they need a salary to live, but it should not be their reason for ministering.

***1 Corinthians 9:11 “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?”***

It should be noted that God calls men to the ministry and gives them ministry gift(s). However, experienced gifted men are required to validate, train, ordain and commission those chosen by God.

***Acts 13:1-3***

***1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.***

***2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.***

***3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.***

In this passage, we note some key facts:

1) It is God Himself who calls the men to the ministry and qualifies them with gifts (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11).

2) The members of the church recognize God’s clear leading and embrace it.

3) With prayer and fasting, the church lays hands on Paul and Barnabas to demonstrate their commissioning (Acts 6:6; 1 Timothy 5:22).

4) God works through the church, as both the church and the Spirit are said to “send” the missionaries.

When God calls and qualifies a man for the ministry, it will be divinely apparent to that man, the church, and the devil! The minister, regardless of how gifted, must the biblical qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3:1-16 and Titus 1:5-9. It is the duty of the church elders, together with the congregation, to recognize and accept the calling.

***1 Timothy 3:2-6***

***2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;***

***3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;***

***4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;***

***5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)***

***6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.***

After that, a formal commissioning ceremony (ordination) is appropriate. The ordination ceremony itself does not confer any special power; it simply gives public recognition to God’s choice and the church’s acceptance of leadership.

***1 Timothy 5:17-22***

***17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.***

***18 For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.***

***19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.***

***20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.***

***21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.***

***22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.***

***I Peter 5:3-4***

***3 "Neither as being lords over [God's] heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."***

***4 "And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."***

The high priest and the priest's office in the temple had been used many times to rule over the people. This is not the way Jesus taught the leaders of the Christians to be. The greatest among you should be the servant, is what He taught. The ministers should not glory in their authority but should live godly lives before the people as an example of how the people were to live. The Chief Shepherd is Jesus Christ our Lord. Notice the word "receive" in the verse above. The crown belongs to Jesus, but He puts it on our head. In the ancient world, crowns were given as rewards for victorious achievement. The elder-shepherd who faithfully serves his entrusted flock will be rewarded with the unfading crown of glory, a reward coming not from the sheep, but from the Lord Himself. Jesus is Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. Anything He gave you, would be for all of eternity. When Jesus {Chief Shepherd} appears means at the coming of Christ. A shepherd’s job is to preserve and protect the sheep. It is only when pastors and elders serve as examples to the flock that they will be rewarded by the chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

***Hebrews 13:20-21***

***20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,***

***21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.***

***I Peter 5:5 "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all [of you] be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."***

Younger men, (probably younger in age and ministry experience), are encouraged to be subject to [their] elders (older in age, and ministry maturity). It is often difficult for younger people to be patient, but respect for age and for a Christian leader is always appropriate. This is saying that the Christian, who has been one for a long time, should have studied the Word of God more than one who is a new Christian. It would be best for the new Christian to learn from the elder. However, sadly this is not always the case.

***Hebrews 13:17 “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”***

***1 John 2:14 “I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.***

***Hebrews 5:12-14***

***12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.***

***13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.***

***14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.***

For the people of God to be in proper alignment, church congregations must be subject to the elders when they are exercising godly, biblical authority. This takes humility. But remember: God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. Those who believe they already know everything, cannot be helped. They are too proud to receive help. To humble yourself before God is the first step to receiving from God.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What does Peter call himself in verse 1?
2. What had Peter been a witness of?
3. What did Peter tell them to do in verse 2?
4. What should be their purpose in doing this?
5. Ministry is not an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, it is a call.
6. What should the ministers be to the flock?
7. The greatest among you should be the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
8. Who is the Chief Shepherd?
9. When will the Chief Shepherd appear?
10. Younger submit yourselves unto the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.