

1 PETER 5:1-4

READY, WILLING AND ABLE

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: ² 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; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

Christian leadership is characterized as being ready, willing and able to render service to others under the authority of Christ. You are able because you have been called and God has placed a flock in your charge. The God who calls is also the Holy Spirit who empowers you to fulfill that call. Although Peter is specifically addressing the elders/overseers (pastors/bishops) of the churches, this message applies to all believers who are in positions of authority and leadership, whether in the family, neighborhood, work place, sports team, mentoring relationship or Bible study group. Your “flock” has been entrusted to you by God.

St. Paul taught that *God loves a cheerful giver* (2 Corinthians 9:7c). Although we usually hear this during stewardship messages at church, and a financial gift to the Church in Macedonia was Paul's context, I believe that this applies to all service to God and others. God wants us to be willing examples and witnesses to the Gospel of Christ. Our execution of the role of leader is to be motivated by thanksgiving and exercised through love.

Above all, whatever our present position and circumstances, we are to be *eager to serve*. We have been recruited by the love of God and in response have enlisted in the Kingdom. Through that same love we have been tapped for leadership at some level for the Kingdom. Let us respond with the same excitement with which we responded to God's gift of salvation. May our attitude always be an enthusiastic, *Here am I. Send me!* (Isaiah 6:8).

I acknowledge Lord that you have called me into leadership by calling me into your kingdom. Even in the most mundane of daily actions I am to be an example of your grace and glory to those around me. Jesus, you have promised that your yoke is easy and your burden is light. Help me to wear it enthusiastically and at all times. Amen.