

Series: Clarity in Chaos; First Peter

Tend the Flock of God

Sermon by Teaching Pastor Paul Joslin

First Peter 5:1-4

Waterstone Community Church, Littleton, Colorado

Sunday morning, November 17, 2024

Hi, good morning. How are you all doing today? Good. I don't know if you know, this is a big day in our church. There is an election right after the service, and so yeah, that is happening. People keep asking me how I am doing in the polls, which I never really know how to answer, and really, I am running unopposed, so if I lose, it is really just like saying, "Anyone but this guy," right? Like so, I don't know. We will see how it goes today, and then if you never see me again, it has been great. I have really loved our time together. So yeah, it is a big day in our church. As we get started this morning, I want to call your attention, we have small groups that are coming up, and now this is going to sound so crazy that I am talking about it in November, but we have small groups coming up in March, and we are going to be going through. Yeah, that said, all the students just start laughing, like, "What is he talking about, March?" Here is the deal. We have a ton of new people at our church, a ton of new faces, and we want them to get connected. It is awesome. Our church is growing. We love that, but we need more small groups to be able to put people in who are newer to our church, and most of our small groups are full and do not have a lot of space, and so we are looking for some new small group facilitators. So, if you are interested in maybe being a facilitator of a small group, we have an informational meeting on December 7 and 8, so just a couple of weeks from now, where you can meet with Brooke Schmidt and Peter Gomez, who help oversee our small groups, and you can find out more about what it would look like to facilitate a small group for Waterstone. We're trying to get that started early so that we can add six new small groups to our rosters next year as we try to invite people into that space. So, if you are interested, just tag those dates in your phone, because we would love to see you there, to get you more information on how you can help lead our church in this space. Sound good? All right, let me let me pray for us, and then we're going to dive in.

Heavenly Father, God, we come before you, Lord, and as we are winding down this study on First Peter this week and next week, as we have been focusing on this idea of clarity in the midst of chaos, God, we know, we understand our world is chaotic. There are so many things that are happening in this season that we find ourselves in, and so we just ask that this morning we could encounter you, and God, we just ask that we would open ourselves to your word, that your Holy Spirit would speak to each and every one of us. God may this just be a grounding moment in the in the midst of our busy lives and our hectic schedules, in the chaos of the world, that we can come together, reminded of why we gather, why we worship, and why we dedicate ourselves to you, and it is in Christ's name that we pray, amen.

So, we have two weeks left in our First Peter series. I hope it has been a good study for you. We have certainly enjoyed preaching it and discussing it in small groups. It has felt very pertinent to the time we have found ourselves in, but as we are winding down, there are two weeks left that we are going to focus on First Peter, and what I have to tell you is this passage is particularly special to me, because a few months ago, when I found out that Larry was retiring, this is actually the passage I began praying over my life and over Waterstone and the passage I sent to some of my friends and some of my mentors and asked

them to pray this passage over me. So, it is very, very special, and we had actually picked this date for this passage to be preached all the way into last year. We had no idea that there was going to be a vote on the same day that I was preaching this passage, and so I was really excited when I saw that on the calendar, when I knew everything was coming. Then this week it just started to feel a little weird to me that I was going to be preaching, because this passage is all about the calling of pastors and what pastors are supposed to do and who they are supposed to be. I found myself this week just feeling stuck in this space of, “Man, I love this passage. I have been praying this passage for our church. I am so excited to preach this passage,” and it feels really weird to preach this passage and then ask people to go vote for me right after I preach on it. I just wasn’t quite sure what to do with that, and so I just struggled a little bit, because here is the thing. I want this passage to show you a little bit of my heart, of what I think it means to be a pastor, but I do not want that in any way to manipulate anyone into thinking, “Oh yeah, I guess I have to vote for this guy now.” That is not what we want to be doing in this space, and so what you need to understand about this passage at the outset is what Peter is trying to do is he is trying to, I know, I feel the same way. It’s hard. It’s hard. Yeah. What Peter is trying to do is he is trying to, he has been writing this letter to the people in the churches in Asia Minor. He has been saying, “I know you’re going through persecution and chaos and experiencing hostility,” and he has been addressing the whole church, and then at the end of the letter, he pulls aside the leaders, and he addresses them directly. Now you might think, “He is addressing the elders and pastors. I am not a pastor or elder, so I just need to tune out. It does not matter to me. It does not apply to me. This is just for the important people in the church,” but that is not at all what Peter was doing.

I want you to think for a moment if you were in one of those churches in Asia Minor. You are experiencing this hostility and this persecution, and Peter is writing a letter to encourage you to stand firm in the faith, to hold on to the faith in the midst of the chaos of the world, and he has been talking to you about how you need to submit and how you need to persevere, and then he gets to the end, and you hear this line, “To the elders among you.” Do you think when that was being read in these churches, that everyone else would just start to tune out and think, “Oh, no, that is not for me”? Or do you think they might lean in, because Peter is very specifically addressing the leaders of the church in front of the rest of the congregation, and he is calling them to how they are supposed to act? So, I want you to imagine for a moment, who is a famous pastor? Does anyone know a famous pastor? Just shout it out. Paul, I pray I am not. All right, that was good, though. Any actual famous pastors? Billy Graham. Perfect. All right. I want you to pretend for a moment that Billy Graham writes a letter to our church. He writes a letter to Waterstone, and he is encouraging us how to be faithful in the time that we find ourselves in, and as he has gone through this whole letter, and we are reading it to you, and we get to the end of the letter, and he says, “to Larry, to Paul, to Billy, to Marla, to the elders among you,” do you think you would just be like, “Okay, that is not for us. He did not say my name”? Or do you think you would lean in and say, “I wonder what he is going to say to these people?”

That is what we have before us today. This passage is intended to be addressed to the office of elders and pastors, and so it is really important. Peter is intentionally addressing the entire church, because he wants the entire church to understand what it means to be a pastor or an elder, what the calling is that is placed on their lives, but that said, what I also want to do today is take this passage and take the values and separate them from the office, because I think the values actually apply to all of us in this room. So,

if you are a Stephen Minister, can I get a raise of a hand or a whoop, whoop? Where are my Stephen ministers? Okay, a couple of whoop whoops. If you are a kids' volunteer, and you work with the kids, and you are not with the kids today, but you are in here, can I get a raise of a hand or a volunteer? Okay, yeah. All right, and let's say you volunteer with the students. We have our awesome students here. Does anybody volunteer for the students? Whoop, whoop. Yeah. I got some fist bumps. They are the loudest, because they are the most energetic, right? So, we have got all these different spaces where people have been placed, volunteer or not, placed in a leadership position over someone else in the church, and so these principles, the values of this passage apply to you too if you are a small group leader. Are there any small group leaders in the room? Oh man, that was so weak. Come on, small group leaders. Get excited. All right. Yeah. Here we go. This applies to you too, and so these principles for anybody who is in a position of leadership in church who is putting out, pastoring, shepherding, this is the call for people in those positions of what it is supposed to look like for them to love and shepherd the flock. Does that make sense? So, I think this will apply to everyone.

So, all of those caveats aside, let's dive in today and talk about this passage. I am just going to read it for you and be our scripture reader today. So, starting in chapter five, verse one of First Peter. All right, here we go: "To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and as a witness of Christ's sufferings, who also will share in the glory to be revealed, be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them, not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be, not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve, not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock, and when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away," the word of the Lord.

So, Peter starts out, and he's addressing his audience, specifically these pastors, and what you need to understand is in this passage he has three do's and three don'ts that the pastors and elders are supposed to live out for the people, so we are going to look through each of those. The first "do," comes from First Peter 5, verse 2, and it says this, "Be shepherds," do be shepherds, "of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them, not because you must, but because you are willing," and so the first thing we see is that people who are called to be to be pastors and leaders and elders of the church, they are supposed to be shepherds. Now we live in an age of skepticism about leaders, pastors, or outside of the church, we just look at people who are supposed to be leaders, and we have a sense of skepticism about how they operate, how they live their lives. I am sure if I asked you to raise your hand and to express if you had a story or knew of a pastor who had not lived out the office that they were called to, and they had maybe had an affair, blown their life up, or they had had swindled the church out of money, or they had abused power in some circumstances, I am sure you could tell me a story of where you have experienced that or seen that, so we understand that even from the very beginning, Peter is having to address the same problems that we sometimes see. He would not have to say this if this was not a problem in the early church, but he is calling the leaders to something different. He is calling these leaders of these churches to be shepherds, to watch over the sheep that have been placed under their care, caring for them and watching over them.

Now, if you think about the role of a shepherd and what a shepherd does, I want actually a little audience participation here. I am asking a lot of you today. You can't just sit back and listen, but when you think of the role of a shepherd, what do shepherds do to care for their sheep? How do they take care

of their sheep? Just shout out some things that you know. They lead them. They guide them. Okay, perfect. Someone over here. Keep them safe. Yeah, they protect them. What was that? They stay with them. Yes, so there is a bond of trust between them. They know them. Yeah, absolutely. I heard another one over here. What do shepherds do for sheep? Prayer. Okay, yeah. Absolutely. Are there any other things that you know shepherds do for sheep? Feed them. Yeah, absolutely. They feed them. Someone last night was like, “They shear them,” and I was like, yeah, that’s good, but that doesn’t apply to this right now. I am not shearing anybody, okay? No, I was really worried someone would be like, “They milk them.” I was like, Nope, we are not going there either. Like, that’s just no, but they have all these roles, right? They take care of the sheep. They lead them. They protect them. They stay with them. They lead them to water. They make sure they have food to eat. If there is danger, they know the danger is there, and so Peter is trying with all of these images to say that a pastor and that an elder, a leader of the church, a small group leader, a person who is teaching our children, they are supposed to be the people who shepherd and care for the sheep, but he also says a don’t along with that. He says, do be a shepherd, but don’t be a shepherd out of a sense of obligation or as if you were forced to do it. Don’t be a shepherd as if you had to be, begrudgingly, but do it willingly, that there should be a posture and the heart attitude towards the sheep that shepherds think, “I want to do this. I am called to do this.”

A few years ago, I was talking with a pastor and a mentor. He had been a missionary on the field for a long time, and we were getting tacos at Taco Selene. Has anybody been to Taco Selene? Excellent street tacos. They are amazing, and they are like \$2.00, so you’ve got to check it out. We were having a conversation over Taco Selene, and I remember talking to him, and he was a towards the end of his career as a pastor, and he was just sharing with me some of the burden, frustration, anger and resentment that he felt towards this particular season of ministry. It became very apparent to me that he was hurting, and if you have ever been in a position of leadership, you understand that sometimes the people you are leading can say hurtful things or do hurtful things, and there is a burden that comes with that, so I had all the compassion for him in his very long ministry, but I remember sitting across from him as a young pastor, and I did not say this to him, because again, so much compassion, but it was a lesson for me that I felt like God was telling me in the moment that you cannot lead and pastor and shepherd sheep if you are bitter towards them. It was just this realization that man, if you carry or harbor a bitterness towards the people you are trying to serve, it will not work, and so there is this calling that Peter says that the people who are called to shepherd and care for the sheep, that they are not supposed to do so out of a sense of obligation or being forced to, but there should be a desire, and so like earlier today, when I asked if you want to be a small group leader, you should not sit there saying, “Gosh, he is saying it again. I guess I need to go sign up and be a leader.” That is not the heart that Peter says for people who need to step in to these spaces. It comes from a place of feeling like God has placed a burden on my heart to care for and shepherd these people, to lead them, to protect them, to feed them, to walk alongside them, to pray for them. That is the place that it comes from, a place where your heart has been pressed to see the people you are supposed to lead mature and grow and heal. Peter says that is the beginning of the leader of the church, someone who wants to shepherd the flock. Then he goes on, and he has another point. He ties this do and don’t to this the one before, and he says that leaders of the church are supposed to be eager to serve. So, he flows out

of this idea, not out of obligation, not because they are forced to, not because of any kind of compulsion, but they are eager to serve.

Now I want you to think for a moment of what we just said about the role of a shepherd and a sheep. How much does a sheep do for a shepherd? I mean, if you want an animal to carry stuff for you, it is not a sheep, and if you want an animal that you can ride, it is not going to be a sheep. There is not a lot that the sheep give back to the shepherd in that illustration. It is all about the shepherd serving and caring for the sheep, and so Peter says in the second part of verse two, “not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be,” and he says, “not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve.” “

Not pursuing dishonest gain,” now again, I think if I ask people to raise their hands and to share a story about a person or a pastor in leadership that they knew, who may have misused church funds or maybe felt like they were in it for the wrong reasons. We have seen the stories. We have seen the “Preachers and Sneakers,” Instagram account. We have seen the preachers that have their own private jets, so they can minister the gospel. We have seen those kinds of things play out in the church, and apparently from its very inception, the church was dealing with people who were trying to misuse the platform that they had been given, the position they had been given, for dishonest gain, and so Peter just calls it out and says that they are not supposed to be the people who are serving for dishonest gain. They are supposed to be leaders who are eager to serve others. He says that pastors, elders, and leaders of the church should be eager to serve, and servant leadership is the foundation of what it means to be a person who is leading or pastoring and shepherding a church.

A couple of weeks ago Steffi and I were having a conversation with our daughter Camden about the transition and the succession plan, and we were at the dinner table, and we were just trying to help her, the five-year-old, really understand that Daddy’s job might be changing, and we might be committing to Waterstone for a long term. We were just having a conversation about that, and her question after we finished the whole explanation of “Daddy might become the new Larry,” was really how we put it, and her question back to me after that was like, “Okay, so when do you get to be in charge?” I was like, “Oh, no,” like, “That is what you got out of that?” and I was like, “No, sweetheart,” and then how you have those teachable moments sometimes as a father or as a person. I said, “No, no, sweetheart. It is not about Daddy being in charge. It is about Daddy caring for his church,” and it is just the answer that came to me, and so I just tried to help her understand that there is a difference. In the world, when you are a leader, you are in charge, but the kind of mindset that Peter wants for the leaders of the church to have is completely opposite of the world’s. It is not about being in charge. It is about taking care, and that is different, so I told her that, and she was like, “Yeah, but when do you get to be in charge?” I was like, “All right, we have some work to do. It is a good thing you are not the one who is up for a vote.”

If you think about it, Peter has seen this idea play out. He has heard Jesus talking about what it means to be a servant leader. He watched Jesus take off his clothes, wrap a towel around Himself, and wash the disciples’ feet, and if you remember that story, Peter actually fought against Jesus. He said, “No, you are my rabbi. You are my Lord. This is not what you are supposed to do,” and Jesus said, “If you want any part of me, you need to understand that this is the type of leadership that I am looking for, servant leadership.”

When I think of this idea, a pastor who is eager to serve, I truly believe this, and I am not just saying this, but I do not know if I have ever seen a pastor who is more eager to serve the flock that he has been entrusted with than Larry Renoe, and I think he is somewhere even in the room today, and if you agree with that, would you just affirm that? I feel like we have all experienced that with him in different ways, absolutely.

A couple of weeks ago we were going. Every year at the beginning of the school year we go to Chatfield High School. Are there any Chatfield teachers in the room? I think we have a couple. Yeah, we have a few, but we go over there, and we serve a meal. So, with the teachers, it is that they are going back to school, and we serve them, and so we are taking over all this food, and we are getting grills over there, and we are serving the meal to people, and it is an amazing day. We love it. We get to build relationships with those teachers. On the way home from that serving engagement, Larry, I am driving back with a few people from staff, and as we come into the church parking lot, Larry has just been serving over at Chatfield, and then we get back into the parking lot, and he is literally out in our church parking lot picking up rocks out of the parking lot and tossing them back into the median, and it was just this moment. Someone else in the car said, "What a servant leader," because there was no job that was too big for Larry. He literally sees rocks, and he is thinking, "Let's clean the parking lot up. Let's make sure it looks nice, and our kids are not tripping over it," and so everyone in the car has this moment of, "Oh, so sweet. Larry is such a sweet leader." I knew at that point that Larry was retiring, and I had this, "Oh, shoot," moment, because I was like, "Those are huge shoes to fill, that kind of posture, that kind of heart, that kind of attitude, that sense of responsibility, that eagerness to serve." I just said, "Man, I have some catching up to do." That is the kind of thing that Peter is talking about, people who want to serve the church not because of what they can get out of it, but because God has called them to care for the flock that He has entrusted to them.

It is one of the reasons why every once-in-a-while we will have these people who will come to church, and they will say, "Hey, I am new here, but I would love to teach a class. Are there any openings in the pulpit? I would love to get on stage and maybe share what I know," and my first thought is always like, "Great, I do not know what your skills are. I do not know what your gifts are, but can you just come and stack chairs with me for a little bit before we put you on stage?" It is about this heart posture of serving the church, not about building a platform, but tending the pasture. That is the heart of a pastor and leader and elder.

The third "do," and "don't," tie in closely with the first two. In verse three, Peter says this, "Not lording it over those entrusted to you," so not domineering over those who have been entrusted to you, "but being examples to the flock." Pastors, elders, leaders in the church, small group leaders, people who are working with kids or youth, are supposed to be examples to the flock. Now what we know from this language that Peter uses, "not lording it over them," is that Peter is actually quoting a story from the life of Jesus, where again, Peter was there, and it is found in Mark chapter 10, and I think Matthew 20. Now, if you remember, the gospel of Mark is actually Peter's first-hand account of his time with Jesus and being the disciple of Jesus. He told the story to Mark, who wrote it down, and so when we go to Mark 10, we know that this is a scene that Peter thought needed to be recalled and told to the disciples. So, in Mark chapter 10, we find Jesus talking to his disciples, his closest followers, the twelve, and He tells them, "We are on the road to Jerusalem, and when we get to Jerusalem, I am going to be mocked, flogged, crucified,

and killed, and after that I will rise again,” and rise from the dead. The disciples hear this, and we are told that immediately after Jesus shares this, He says, “It is going to be bad. It is going to go really poorly for me,” James and John come to Him, and they say, “Hey, we have a question for you.” It is like that moment when you are telling your kid, “There is something really important I need to let you know that is about to happen,” and they are like, “Hey, Dad, can we just watch TV? Is that okay?” That is like this moment, and so they come to Him, and they are like, “Hey, we have a question for you, Jesus,” and He is like, “Okay, what is your question?” “We want to ask you a favor. Will you grant us a favor?” and He says, “What is the favor?” They say, “After you die, and after all that bad stuff happens, after you are crucified, mocked, and flogged, after all that, do you think that we could be the people who sit at your right and left hand? Could we be your vice president and your chief of staff? Could we be the most important people in your kingdom?” They are totally tone deaf to the moment they find themselves in, and do you remember what happens? We are told that the rest of the disciples become indignant. They become indignant. They’re angry, not because James and John did something wrong, but because they did not think of it first, and they are sitting there, thinking, “Oh, I wish I would have gotten there first. I want to be at the right hand and the left hand. I should have asked before them,” and Peter would have been one of those disciples upset and angry that he was not being considered for the top spot in Jesus’ staff and appointments.

Then Jesus pulls them aside. They are all fighting and squabbling and angry with each other, and Jesus calls them together and gathers them, where it is like, “Guys, listen up.” He says, “You know how all those Gentile rulers, how they are regarded as rulers, and they lord it over others. They lord it over others, and they use their high officials to exercise authority over other people.” What Jesus is essentially saying is, “You know how the world works. If you are the top dog, if you are the one in charge, then you have all the other people who do what you want to be done. You get all the benefits. You have all the people who are willing to sacrifice and serve you. When you are on top, you are in charge. That’s how the world works. You know that, right?” They are like, “Yeah, that is why we are asking if we could be the top people with you,” and Jesus says very directly and pointedly to them, “Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must become your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be the slave of all,” and then He grounds it in his example and says, “for even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life his life as a ransom for many.”

Jesus did not just call people to live a different ethic in his kingdom. He also said, “Hey, the leaders in my kingdom need to look different from the world. In my kingdom, the leadership is not about who is serving you. It is about how much you can serve others,” and He established that ethic, but then He grounds it in his very life, an example. So, you better believe when Peter says, “not lording it over those who are entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock,” he has a very clear example in mind, and it is the example of Jesus, who did not come to be served, but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many. Peter is saying that is the heart and expectation of a pastor.

I think sometimes we have this expectation that pastors and leaders are supposed to be the gurus and the master theologians and excellent communicators. They are supposed to be the people who have all of the strategy and the CEO-type mindset to lead an organization, and they have to be a counselor who can take care of everyone and be therapeutically mindful, and we have all these expectations and all these burdens that we place on leaders and say, “You need to be all of these things,” and sometimes we miss the

very heart of what Jesus says it means. When you go to teach youth, it is not about being the expert in the room or having all the answers figured out. It is about making yourself available to serve them and walk with them in the places where they are struggling and hurting and need someone to trust. What Peter says is that these people, if you find yourself in leadership, that it is not because you have somehow earned it or are good enough or are masterful enough or anything. He says, “These are the people who have been entrusted to you. You haven’t earned the right to rule them. God has given them to you, and He has allowed you to lead and serve and care for and tend to the flock in this particular moment.” Then he goes on, and he concludes this section of the letter, and he says in verse four, “and when the chief shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory, that will never fade away.”

I want to call your attention for a moment to this idea of the chief shepherd, because what Peter is saying in this moment, whatever your role in the church, whatever opportunity or place you have been called to lead, whatever authority you have been given, you need to understand that there is someone above you who is in authority over you, and that is the chief shepherd. Anyone who is in leadership, who has been entrusted in the church with leading a small group or a kids’ Sunday school class or a youth Bible study, all of us are hired hands. Jesus is the only true chief shepherd.

Now I want you to think for a moment about the characteristics, the do’s and the don’ts of what Peter expects pastors to be. They need to serve and shepherd, not grudgingly, but gratefully. They do not shepherd for dishonest gain or for what they can get out of it, but because they are eager to serve. They do not domineer or Lord over the sheep. They love the sheep. Who exemplifies that more than the person of Jesus Christ? Peter is laying this foundation for a church that is experiencing hostility and exile and trouble, and he is saying, “If you want to make it through, then these are the types of leaders you are going to need, the servant leaders, who understand that they are under the authority of the chief shepherd, the one who is shepherding and caretaking the entire flock. He has entrusted these people to you, and Jesus exemplifies all of those things.”

So today, if you are called to lead a small group, or you are a Stephen Minister, or you are a small group leader for the youth, or you teach on a Sunday morning, I want to help elevate your vision of what you have been tasked to do. You are not just called to lead a Bible study or to try to teach people the right answers. You are called to shepherd, to care for, and to pastor the people that have been entrusted to you, eagerly and willingly. One of my favorite quotes of all time about pastoring, shepherding, leading, comes from Charles Spurgeon, who was an amazing preacher in the 1800s, and he grew a church to a massive amount of people, but he was not just some mega-church pastor. He was a person who lived it out and walked the walk, and they started orphanages, and then they served the poor, and he built a Bible college to train other pastors, and I mean, just an amazing man. They found a journal entry from him of what he thought it meant to be a pastor, to lead and shepherd the flock, and I want to read it to you, to elevate your vision if you are an elder in our church, or a leader or a shepherd, or someone who is called to serve the flock, because sometimes we get caught up so much in the minutiae of maybe the kid who is a little bit rambunctious and does not quite listen to the Bible study, or the person in your small group who’s a little difficult to deal with, and who you secretly hope won’t show up. Yeah, there are some there. You guys know what I am talking about. I want to elevate your vision of what it means, and this is what Spurgeon said it means to lead and shepherd the flock: “It is my business as best I can to kill dragons and cut off

giants' heads and to lead on the timid and the trembling. I am often afraid of losing some of the weaker ones. I have a heartache for them, but by God's grace and your kind and generous help in looking after one another, I hope we shall travel together safely to the river's edge. Oh, how many I have had to part with there. I have stood on the brink, and I have heard them singing in the midst of the stream, and I have almost seen the singing ones lead them up the hill and through the gates into the celestial city." If you are called to serve even our children or our youth or a small group, you are not just simply leading the Bible study. You are slaying dragons of anxiety and fear. You are chopping off heads of places where people are struggling and hurting. You are leading people safely home to the place where they can encounter the beauty and glory of Jesus Christ. What a calling and what a privilege, amen? Let's pray

Heavenly Father, God, I pray that whatever station position place you have maybe entrusted to us, God, I pray, and I ask that we would be worthy of this calling, that God we would be a people who look to one another to support one another, to care for one another. I pray that in this moment, maybe as someone has been listening to this message, that your Spirit has been working in them, and they are thinking, "Maybe I need to step into a place where I am helping to lead and serve and shepherd the flock." God, I just pray that they would have the boldness to step forward and say, "I could start a small group next year," or "I could serve in kids' ministry and kill dragons that are trying to steal our next generation." God, I pray that we as a church would build around this foundation, this ideal that was exemplified in Christ, the servant leadership of loving those, serving those who are entrusted to us, and it is in Christ's name that we pray. Amen.

34:54 minutes

Edited by Tom Kenaston

Message #807