

Devotional Details

THEME	pastor is not a job title
AUDIENCE	Leadership Team
TONE	Challenging
DURATION	10 minutes
MODE	Men's Ministry

Scripture

1 Peter 5:1-4

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: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Opening Activity

Consider the last time you heard someone describe their 'dream job.' What were the characteristics they listed? Now, honestly, how many of those characteristics align with the biblical call to pastoral ministry? Let's be brutally honest with ourselves about the world's view versus God's call.

Main Point

Brothers, we are called to lead, to shepherd, but let's be clear: 'pastor' is not merely a job title to be listed on a resume or a position to be climbed. It is a sacred calling, a burden, and a lifestyle that demands our very essence. Peter's exhortation to the elders cuts through the modern, professionalized facade of ministry. He doesn't speak of KPIs, organizational charts, or salary negotiations. He speaks of 'shepherding the flock of God,' a task that is inherently sacrificial, relational, and utterly dependent on divine grace.

This isn't about punching a clock; it's about pouring out your life. The 'not under compulsion, but willingly' and 'not for shameful gain, but eagerly' clauses are direct challenges to any leader who views ministry as a means to an end—be it financial stability, social status, or even personal fulfillment above God's glory. We are called to serve with a heart that mirrors the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for His sheep. This means embracing the messiness, the sleepless nights, the thankless tasks, and the spiritual warfare that comes with guarding and guiding God's people.

Furthermore, the command to be 'examples to the flock' is a heavy one. Our lives, both public and private, become living sermons. We cannot expect those we lead to pursue holiness, sacrifice, or evangelism if we are not demonstrably leading the charge in those very areas. This isn't about perfection, but about authenticity and relentless pursuit of Christlikeness. This calling demands a level of spiritual maturity, integrity, and self-denial that far surpasses the requirements of any secular profession. It's a divine appointment, not a career choice, and our eternal reward is tied to our faithfulness in this profound stewardship.

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways have you personally, or have you observed others, treat the pastoral or leadership calling more like a job than a sacred stewardship?
 2. Peter warns against leading 'under compulsion' or 'for shameful gain.' What are some subtle ways these temptations can creep into our leadership motivations today?
 3. The passage emphasizes being 'examples to the flock.' What is one specific area in your life where you feel God is challenging you to be a more authentic and compelling example for those you lead?
 4. Considering the 'unfading crown of glory,' how does an eternal perspective reframe your approach to the challenges and sacrifices inherent in ministry leadership?
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Challenge

Identify one aspect of your current leadership role where you've allowed professional expectations or personal comfort to overshadow the sacrificial, shepherd's heart God demands. This week, intentionally choose to serve in that area with a renewed spirit of willing, eager, and exemplary self-denial, remembering the Chief Shepherd's call.

Closing Prayer

Almighty God, we confess that our hearts are often prone to seek comfort, recognition, or gain, even in Your sacred calling. Forgive us for treating Your divine appointment as merely a job. Ignite within us the true shepherd's heart—willing, eager, and exemplary. Strengthen us to bear the burden of leadership with integrity and sacrifice, always pointing to Christ, our Chief Shepherd. May our lives be a testament to Your glory, not our own. Amen.
