

TITLE: "Matadors Make Bad Shepherds"

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 5:1-4

THEME: *Elders faithfully feeding and leading God's flock*

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{{Read 1 Peter 5:1-4}}

[i] I'm sure most of you are fam. w/the term "matador"

By that I don't mean a large ugly automobile made by the now defunct American Motors Corp.

Matador = bull fighter.

The word "matador" is derived from a Latin word meaning "to subdue or kill." That's what matadors do: they subdue and when they can, kill, the bull.

In some countries like Mexico and Spain, Matadors are venerated like pop stars. They have fame, power, money, prestige.

Even with his fame as a writer, Ernest Hemingway aspired to be a matador.

I'm confident that while matadors may be fit for the Bull Fighting ring, they would make horrible shepherds of sheep.

Sheep need the gentle crook of the staff, not the sharp point of a sword. They need to be led, not driven; comforted, not agitated.

If I could carry the analogy further - Leaders in the church who are Matadors are not fit to be shepherds.

There are leaders in the CH who are in it for wealth, power, fame. But like their toreador counterparts, they are as out of place in t/CH as a bull fighter would be in t/pasture.

[ii] There's something to be said for a faithful shepherd

Something to be said about a man who is fit for t/call & faithful to t/task. That really sums it up: fit and faithful.

[iii] As we enter into chapter 5 Peter makes a transition

He's bringing his letter to a close. In fact, after this morning we have only 10 more verses to go. Peter is making a transition and before he closes his letter he wants to remind the leadership, particularly the CH elders, of their responsibility as shepherds over God's flock.

He wants to rekindle w/i them some things that are very basic. But sometimes we need reminders, we need to be mindful of t/basics.

So this message is timely. It's timely for me, for Kevin, but also for Chip as we will be celebrating what is a momentous occasion in t/life of our CH - the installation of a man into t/eldership.

I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)

He is mindful of his calling and he is mindful of the gravity or seriousness of his calling.

A. Remember - he's now addressing the elders of the Church

1. The word "elders" (plural form of Πρεσβυτερος) isn't referring to a person's age, but to an office in the church

Elders were usually older men (age comes wisdom - or one hopes). But the word elder is more about mental and spiritual maturity than it is chronological age.

2. Elders were the key leadership office in the church

a. That goes all the way back to the O.T.

The Jews traced the beginning of the eldership to the days when the children of Israel were journeying through the wilderness to the Promised Land. Moses was overwhelmed w/the burden of trying to shepherd the Israelites, so God instructed him to appoint 70 elders to assist him (Numbers 11:16-30).

From that time onward, elders became a permanent fixture in Israel. They served as friends of the prophets (2 Kings 6:32); as the advisers of kings (1 Kings 20:8,21); as the colleagues of the princes in the administration of the affairs of the nation (Ezra 10:8).

Every village and city had its elders; they met at the city gate and ruled among t/people (Deuteronomy 25:7).

Elders were key leaders in the synagogues.

They formed a large section of the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel during t/time of X.

In t/Gospels t/elders are often mentioned along with t/Chief Priests, the rulers, t/Scribes, & t/Pharisees.

b. In God's Providence the CH adopted this same pattern of leadership

The CH in Jerusalem had elders – going back to Acts 11.

We see them in Acts 15 - Active leaders in t/Jerusalem Council which dealt w/some of t/very first issues of heresy in t/CH).

According to Act 14:23 Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in all the churches visited during their first missionary journey.

We find elders in Acts 20 and in James 5 where the sick are told to call on the elders of t/CH to pray for them.

1 & 2 Timothy show that elders led t/CH in Ephesus. Titus 1:5 says that they were to be appointed in Crete.

Tom Schreiner writes:

"Every piece of evidence we have shows that elders were widespread in the early church. They are mentioned by different authors: Luke, Paul, Peter, and James. They stretch over a wide region of the Greco-Roman world: from Jerusalem, Palestine, the whole of Asia Minor, and Crete. It is also likely that elders functioned as a plurality in the churches since the term is always plural Further, the elders who visited the sick in James were plural, but the elders who visited were almost certainly from one local church." [Schreiner, 231-32]

3. We have two central leadership offices in the CH today: Elders and Deacons

Some of you may wonder why I didn't mention "pastors" or "bishops". That's because the three terms are synonymous. A pastor is an elder and an elder is a pastor. Another term is overseer (which is sometimes rendered bishop). Overseer, Pastor, Elder = same thing.

I've heard of some CH's that believe women can be elders but not pastors. Absurd. They are the same thing.

a. Acts 20:17,28

ACT 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (ἐπισκοπος) to shepherd (ποιμαίνω - from ποιμήν = "pastor") the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

Paul begins his letter to the Philippians by addressing the overseers and deacons. You might expect "elders" and "deacons" but this shows overseer (ἐπισκοπος) was understood as a synonym.

Titus 1 5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward . . .

Cf. 1 Peter 5:1-2 => ("oversight" = ἐπισκοπέω)

You can't be an elder in the CH and not be a pastor in t/CH.

That's what we emphasize here. I'm not the only pastor, technically speaking. I may be full-time. I may be *primus inter peres*. But Kevin and now Chip also serve as shepherds or pastors.

Biblically, we hold the same office w/the same responsibilities and leadership authority.

I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)

He knows his calling as an elder is a calling to shepherd God's people.

That is serious. It's not trivial. It isn't to be taken lightly.

B. Peter begins with a word that is curiously omitted by the NIV:

Therefore . . . Yet it's a word that reflects the gravity of the call.

1. The word connects this passage to what we saw in chapter 4 – Namely verse 17

Something we saw back on October 18th ==>

For [it is] time for judgement to begin from the house of God; and if [it begins] with us first, what will [be the] end of those who are disobedient to Gospel of God?

a. Peter is alluding to Ezek. 9

When Peter says ==>

...[it's] time for judgement to begin (lit.) from the house of God...

he uses a phrase "house of God" that was always used to refer to the Temple in the O.T. (LXX).

In Ezekiel 9 – t/Prophet Ezekiel receives a prophetic vision from t/Lord. Remember, Ezekiel writes in the 6th c. BC. He was taken captive along w/his countrymen when Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian King, captured t/southern K.D. of Judah. Ezekiel speaks prophetically to t/Hebrew captives in Babylon.

In ch. 9 he has a vision in which he sees t/Lord calling 'Executioners' of judgement" come upon Jerusalem to judge her for her sins.

One messenger of God puts a mark on the forehead of all who were found to 'sigh and groan' over the 'abominations' committed in Jerusalem (9:4-5).

Then the executioners of judgement are told to kill all who do not have the mark on their foreheads (9:5-6). The mark is a sign of repentance.

God tells the executioners, 'Begin from my sanctuary,' and Ezekiel adds. 'So they began from the elders who were inside the house' (9:6). The words 'begin from', used twice here, are the same words Peter uses to say that it is time for judgement to 'begin from' the 'house of God'.

So when Peter says in 4:17, "It is time for judgment to begin with the household of God," it is easy to see why he would say in 5:1, "THEREFORE, I exhort the elders among you . . ."

Why does Peter feel the need to exhort the elders? To remind them of their Ministry? Answer: The "fiery ordeal" in 4:12 is a judgment from God that begins with the house of God-and in the house of God begins with the elders, the leaders.

It is a fearful and wonderful thing to serve as an elder in God's house. However, if the elders are to lead t/CH into strength & glory, they will also have to lead t/CH into t/refining fire of God's purifying judgment. They will not stand above t/CH or outside t/CH giving suggestions for how to cope with suffering; they will lead the church into the fire.

I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)

II. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Message (1b-c)

By message I mean testimony or witness ==>

. . . I exhort the elders among you . . .

exhort = παρακαλώ (παρακαλώ= to call alongside; encouragement).

A. Note what follows is a three-fold description:

. . . as [your] fellow-elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker of the glory which is about to be revealed:

1. He exhorts them here not so much as an Apostle but as their Fellow-Elder (συμπρεσβύτερος)

There's a tenderness here. Peter is himself a shepherd; a Pastor. He's even a pastor to these pastors.

He's saying, *"I know judgement is coming; it is here. I know our common suffering. But as your fellow-elder I encourage you to continue in faithful service to your churches."*

2. Not only a fellow-elder, but a fellow witness of Christ's sufferings

Some commentators take this to mean that Peter was an eye-witness of Christ's sufferings. While he saw some of them, he was absent during the last hours of Jesus' life when His suffering was most intense.

He was not an eyewitness either to the scourging or crucifixion of Jesus. He deserted Jesus with the others & 3x denied Him.

I think it is better to understand this in the sense of Peter's testimony. His message (thus the message of all faithful elders).

a. The word witness is the word for martyr (μάρτυς)

That, of course, is the ultimate witness: To remain a faithful example of God's grace & mercy thru t/emptying of your own life-blood!

From Stephen to James to Polycarp, Pastor of Smyrna, who was burned at the stake in AD 156 by the Roman authorities.

Before the pyre was lit he said, "Eighty and six years I have served Him and He has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me? You threaten me with a fire that burns for a time and is quickly quenched but you do now know the fire that awaits the wicked and the judgement to come and everlasting punishment. Why are you waiting? Do what you will."

b. To be a witness isn't always to be a martyr and I don't mean to imply that Peter is predicting anything that specific here

The element of truth in seeing lit. martyrdom behind t/word μαρτυς is that we are called to follow in the footsteps of X (2:21; 3:9). We follow Him on a path that leads thru t/glad acceptance of suffering to glory & joy – even if that means physical harm or even death (3:13).

We proclaim Christ's suffering and we share in His suffering.

Philippians 3:10 **that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death**

c. When we speak of X's sufferings we speak of t/Gospel

After all, why did He suffer? For His own sin? He had none! For our Sin! He suffered for you, for me. Cf. 1 Peter 2:24; 4:13.

Remember, following his resurr. but B4 his ascension he appeared to 2 men who were traveling together to a village called Emaus, about 7 miles o/s of Jer. The risen X appears to them, but they were divinely prevented from recognizing Him. He asks them, *"What are you discussing?"* They say, *"Have you not heard? A mighty prophet, Jesus of Nazareth has been delivered over for crucifixion. He died 3 days ago. We hoped he was the One who would deliver Israel. Some of t/women said that his tomb was empty & angels told them that he had risen. A few of the men saw the empty tomb, but not He."*

What did Jesus say to them before he revealed who he was?

Luke 24:25-26 **25 And He said to them, "O foolish men and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into His glory?"**

Cf. 1 Peter 1:11.

c. When we speak of X's sufferings we speak of t/Gospel

Not just true for elders, but for every believer in JC. This is OUR message.

It is a message about the sufferings of Christ, but what did that do?

Look at the end of verse 1 ==>

... and a partaker of the glory which is about to be revealed:

Peter says, *"I write as a fellow-elder with a common message. A message of Christ's sufferings and a fellow-partaker of t/glory which is about to be revealed."*

We are present partakers of a yet future glory. What exactly is that glory? All that is our salvation!

Jesus said that it was necessary for him first to suffer, then enter his glory. If that was the road He had to travel, who are we, His slaves, to expect anything less?

There is a theme of suffering to glory that is common in Peter (cf. 1:5,13, 4:13, 5:4).

Romans 8:17-18 **17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. 18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.**

I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)

His calling and the seriousness of that call.

II. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Message (1b-c)

He is a witness of Christ's suffering and glory & follows in His steps.

III. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Mandate (2a)

A. This is the corollary to Peter's exhortation

... I exhort the elders among you ... [what follows is a 2-fold M.]

shepherd the flock of God among you, [exercise] oversight . . .

Here we have elders; pastoring; overseeing. Three parallel descriptive terms for the one office. We shepherd [KJ = "feed the flock"] - teaching and preaching. Instructing in godliness. "Oversee" - we guard, protect, pray for, care for, love, encourage, exhort, discipline.

1. What imagery! Shepherd the flock of God!

About 30 years before Peter wrote this he had a life-changing encounter with Jesus, recorded in John 21 - perhaps he was mindful of this ==> 15 So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus *said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "Tend My lambs." 16 He *said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "Shepherd My sheep." 17 He *said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus *said to him, "Tend My sheep."

W. Phillip Keller, in his classic work, "A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23," wrote: "It is no accident that God has chosen to call us sheep. The behavior of sheep and human beings is similar in many ways. . . . Sheep do not 'just take care of themselves' as some might suppose. They require more than any other class of livestock, endless attention and meticulous care."

There are stories of animals finding their way home from long distances.

British biologist Rupert Sheldrake, wrote a book published in 1999:

Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home, and Other Unexplained Powers of Animals. He compiled a database of stories of animals finding their way home after being left many miles away, in some cases such as the Albatross – 4k miles.

None of his examples include sheep. They are easily disoriented (like me). In the parable of Luke 15 - the shepherd goes out looking for the lost sheep. Sheep are defenseless, they need protection. They are susceptible to eating anything – even poisonous plants. They do not fare well with water that is impure or too hot or cold – even water that is too quickly moving (hence "lead me beside quiet waters" in Psalm 23:2). They secrete a large amount of oily lanolin that causes the wool to attract dirt and other contaminants.

"All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way." (Isa. 53:6).

While we are all sheep in that sense, God has so ordained it that some of us, while remaining sheep ourselves, rise to the level of under shepherds.

III. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Mandate (2a)

He's also mindful of the fact that the sheep are not his.

... shepherd the flock of God ...

Genitive of Possession. It is ultimately God's flock, not man's.

ACT 20:28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

To paraphrase another: "If I had with me the very blood of my Lord, how would I care for and treasure it. And should I not, therefore, care for and treasure those souls for whom it was shed?"

Luther: We shepherd God's flock by preaching the Gospel. Those who faithfully listened to John Chrysostom preach were said to prefer that the sun not shine over his not preaching.

My main motivation is to work hard in teaching and preaching. My study often entails long hours of tedious work. But I think of you guys and the work is worth it. Many of you sacrifice to be here. How can I not work hard?

III. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Mandate (2a)

shepherd the flock of God among you, [exercise] oversight . . .

As a side note, the phrase "exercise oversight" // "take oversight" [KJ] // serve as overseers [NIV] is a tricky word to translate. It can be understood adverbially (to exercise oversight) or as a substantive (to be an overseer). There is also a textual issue in that some MSS omit the word entirely.

Could have been deleted because later scribes saw elder / overseer as two distinct offices.

Grudem notes that "the three main manuscripts omitting it [ἐπισκοποῦντες] are all from one geographical area, while those including it are diverse in location, and several are also quite early."

[Grudem, 187]

IV. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Motivation (2b-3)

How we are to shepherd; What are the accompanying attitudes and motives?

shepherd the flock of God among you, [exercise] oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to [the will of] God; yet not in fondness of dishonest gain, but willingly;

neither lording it over those allotted to your care, but being examples to the flock.

A. Peter sets up a series of contrasts: not this, but this; not this, but this (3 sets of two)

**not under compulsion, but voluntarily,
yet not in fondness of dishonest gain, but willingly;
neither lording it over those allotted to your care, but being
examples to the flock.**

1. He's specifically addressing three potential areas of sinfulness
"In exhorting pastors to their duty, he points out especially three vices which are found to prevail much, even sloth, desire of gain, and lust for power. In opposition to the first vice he sets alacrity or a willing attention; to the second, liberality; to the third, moderation and meekness, by which they are to keep themselves in their own rank or station." [Calvin, comment on 5:1]

. . . not under compulsion, but voluntarily . . .

a. Compulsion here is a negative, not a positive

It's not like what Paul says in 1 Cor. 9:16 – compelled to preach the Gospel. It's a negative, like Paul's warning to the Corinthians that they not give out of "compulsion" for God loves a cheerful giver. This "compulsion" is apathetic; lazy; unmotivated; moved by obligation or mere duty.

A man was sleeping soundly one Sunday morning when his wife came in to wake him. She shook him and said, "Wake up, dear! You have to get up!" He groaned and complained. "Give me three good reasons why I have to get up so stinking early." His wife answered, "First of all, it's Sunday morning and we need to be in church. Second, it's only 40 minutes until church starts, so we don't have much time. And thirdly, you are the preacher!"

No one should take an office he doesn't care to fill. Or be lazy in it.

Like some churches - any warm body will do for a deacon. If you are a man and you have a pulse, you're nominated!

Other men are lazy. They like the office, but not the demands.

Alexander Whyte, one of Scotland's Greatest Preachers, once said that:

"I would have all lazy students drummed out of the college and all lazy ministers out of the assembly. I would have laziness held to be the one unpardonable sin in all our students and in all our ministers."

There are those who order their sermons from a publishing company. Sometimes we get "sample" sermons in the mail. I have a pastor friend who looks some over and found a decent one. He would never use it, but he was intrigued. What really got him was when a national televangelist got up and preached the canned sermon word for word. Even using the made up stories and anecdotes as if they were his own.

... not under compulsion, but voluntarily ...

Here is where the emphasis lies. This word was used in the LXX for free, or voluntary service (Exod 36:2), voluntary sacrifice (Ps 53:8 [54:6]).

Peter adds (lit. *κατα θεον*) ==>

according to [the will of] God;

One thinks of Jesus moved with pity for the crowds for they were as sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). Jesus who likened himself to being a good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:1-18). Jesus sought out the lost sheep and rejoiced to find them.

b. Second couplet

... yet not in fondness of dishonest gain, but willingly;

(αἰσχροκερδῶς = in fondness of dishonest gain || Adverb). The word comes from αἰσχος (disgraceful) + κερδος (gain). Greed.

The noun form of t/his adverb was used in ancient Greece of a very negative character trait.

Theophrastus, known as the great Greek commentator on the issue of personal character, gives as an illustration the man who is *aischrokerdeia*.. It is he who never sets enough food before his guests and who gives himself double portion when he is carving the roast. He waters down the wine; he goes to the theater only when he can get a free ticket. He never has enough money to pay the fare and borrows from his fellow-passengers. When he is selling corn or gain he uses a measure in which the bottom is pushed up, and even then he carefully measures the top. He counts the half radishes left over from dinner in case his servants eat any. Rather than give a wedding present, he will go away from home when a wedding is in the offing. [Cf. Barclay, 265-66]

(1) Peter's warning here would indicate that there was some financial or material reward for elders

Sorry, not here guys!

Two things I resolved not to do when I sensed God was calling me to preach: 1) I would never compromise the message. I will preach what Scripture teaches, even if that's not popular - even if it might result in criticism or losing people. Once you start compromising, where do you stop?

2) That I would not put a price on my ministry. IOW - I would try to offer what I could for as little as possible. For me and for my church. That's not a vow of poverty. What I mean is that I wanted to be part of a church that could offer ministry help at little or no charge for those who couldn't afford it. Those times that I was asked to teach or preach somewhere else, I did for no charge. I don't understand how some men can be so calculating as to have appearance fees. There are Christian ministers with solid ministries who have that. Don't call for me to come teach or preach at your event unless you have a minimum of 5k dollars. I've heard of some (reformed guys) who require as much as 10k – and some of them most of you wouldn't even recognize their name.

TAP warned about ==>

2 Corinthians 2:17 **For we are not like many, peddling the word of God, but as from sincerity, but as from God, we speak in Christ in the sight of God.**

That's what many, if not most, televangelists are doing. They fleece the flock. It grieves me to turn on the television and look through the list of TV preachers one after the other promising health and wealth and happiness – all for a donation. I sat there aghast as the show of one TV evangelist broke into a commercial for new and improved miracle spring water! Not to mention the heresy. Terrorists in the church.

The pastor is not to commercialize his ministry.

... yet not in fondness of dishonest gain, but willingly;

The word (προθυμως is compound of προ, *forward*, and θυμος, *heart* or *spirit*. Hence Rev., *with a ready mind*; a forward spirit; denoting not mere willingness, but zeal.

ACT 20:33-34 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. "You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my {own} needs and to the men who were with me.

1CO 9:16-17 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward; but if against my will, I have a stewardship entrusted to me.

c. The third couplet (takes us to v. 3)

neither lording it over those allotted to your care, but being examples to the flock.

Matthew 20:25-28 25 But Jesus called them to Himself, and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. 26 "It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, 27 and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

There is legitimate authority in the CH. There are words used for that respons. But this word refers to a harsh, excessive use of authority. When this word is used it generally involves bringing something or someone into subjection by the use of force: physical, military, political.

No shortage of examples of power-hungry and abusive shepherds.

Milton's Satan thought it better to reign in hell, than to serve in heaven.

3JO 1:9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

... but being examples to the flock.

TIT 2:7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,

"Teaching is like putting nails in the wood; example is like hammering them deep." [Puritan Thomas Fuller]

History of Israel is one of disqualified and inept shepherds.

ISA 56:11 And the dogs are greedy, they are not satisfied. And they are shepherds who have no understanding; They have all turned to their own way, Each one to his unjust gain, to the last one.

Stark picture of that is found in Ezek. 34

I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)

II. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Message (1b-c)

III. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Mandate (2a)

IV. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Motivation (2b-3)

Lastly ==>

V. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Master (4)

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

A. This is the only place where Jesus is referred to as "Chief Shepherd"

Serves as a 2-fold reminder: 1) that no matter what, there is a Shepherd who does not fail. Some of you have been hurt in churches - hurt by leadership. Tragic. But there is a chief shepherd who never fails.

1 Peter 2:25

And when the Chief Shepherd appears,

That's the second coming.

you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

This may be a specific promise to pastors who pastor well. Or it may be common to all believers. It may be special reward or it may be a common promise of eternal life.

"There are other passages of Scripture which suggest that some kind of 'crown' will be given to all believers (2 Tim. 4:8; Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10; 3:11). Yet in these passages the 'crown' seems to be a metaphor for the heavenly life in general. The 'crown' of righteousness' in 2 Tim. 4:8 which the Lord will give not only to Paul but 'also to all who have loved his appearing' (i.e. all believers) probably means righteousness, which will be like a crown'. Similarly, the 'crown of life' in Jas. 1:12; Rev. 2:10; cf. Rev. 3:11) is probably 'eternal life in heaven, which is a reward like a crown received at the end of a race.' 1 Corinthians 9:25 implies that all believers should strive to obtain an 'imperishable' crown, but in the context it may also be viewed as a heavenly reward not for all believers but only for those who have continued through life faithful and obedient to God in a way worthy of special reward . . ." [Grudem]

στέφανον. (στεφανος = wreath, crown || From στεφω (to put round, encircle).

Not διαδημα (the king's crown). στεφανος has a variety of uses, not limited to a victory wreath. It may be the victory wreath in the games, the marriage wreath, military valor, a festal garland.

Not being a king's crown ties into the fact that we as Christians first, and for we who are elders in t/CH, are not lords. We are not to "lord it over." We're not ecclesiastical royalty.

Adjective - unfading. It is unfading - (ἀμαραντινος = unfading || related to word in 1:4 for αμαροντος, unfading.

Word came from a flower - Αμαροντινος is made from that word as the name of a flower (amaranth) so called because it never withers and revives if moistened with water. Therefore, it was a fitting symbol of immortality. [ATR]

Don't miss the connection to vv. 5 ff. as it relates to humility.

- I. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Ministry (1a)
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- IV. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Motivation (2b-3)
- V. A Faithful Shepherd is Mindful of His Master (4)