

# Following The Leader

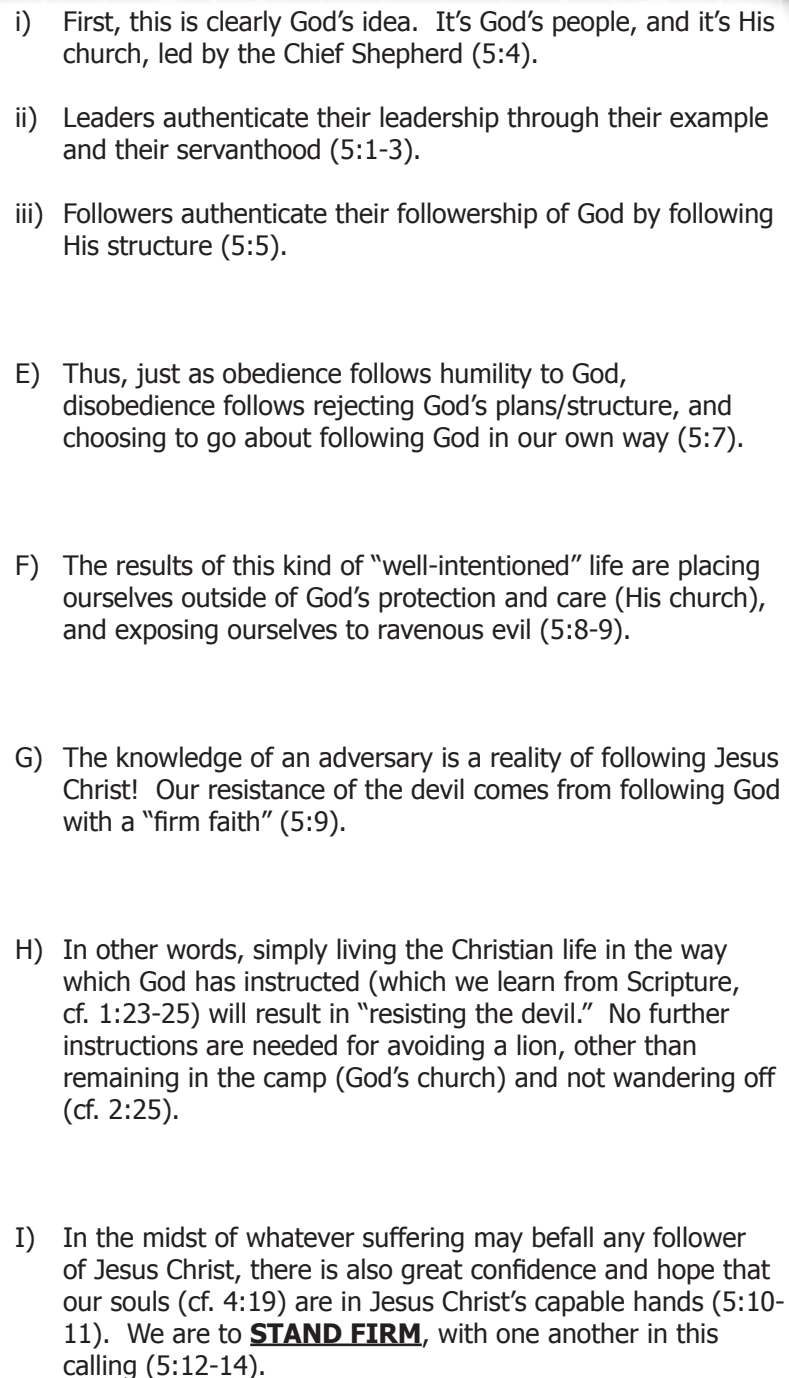
Long Beach Alliance Church • February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2008 • Pastor Chris Lankford

**THEREFORE HUMBLE YOURSELVES  
UNDER THE MIGHTY HAND OF  
GOD, THAT HE MAY EXALT YOU AT  
THE PROPER TIME, CASTING ALL  
YOUR ANXIETY ON HIM, BECAUSE  
HE CARES FOR YOU.**

**~ 1<sup>ST</sup> PETER 5:6-7 (NASB)**

## **1) God's Divine Structure For Hard Times**

- A) In light of the suffering with which the church is struggling (1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:12-19), Peter focuses on those which are on the "front lines" of persecution, the local elders (5:1).
  
- B) The focus of the passage is not actually on eldership, but is actually leading to a focus on the head of the church, Jesus Christ (5:4) and an "orderliness" of humility under God (5:6).
  
- C) The underlying theme is clear through this section, following God's structure for His church is directly related to humbling yourself under His mighty hand (5:6-7).
  
- D) The concern for how the church will properly function encompasses three aspects.

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- i) First, this is clearly God's idea. It's God's people, and it's His church, led by the Chief Shepherd (5:4).
  - ii) Leaders authenticate their leadership through their example and their servanthood (5:1-3).
  - iii) Followers authenticate their followership of God by following His structure (5:5).
- E) Thus, just as obedience follows humility to God, disobedience follows rejecting God's plans/structure, and choosing to go about following God in our own way (5:7).
- F) The results of this kind of "well-intentioned" life are placing ourselves outside of God's protection and care (His church), and exposing ourselves to ravenous evil (5:8-9).
- G) The knowledge of an adversary is a reality of following Jesus Christ! Our resistance of the devil comes from following God with a "firm faith" (5:9).
- H) In other words, simply living the Christian life in the way which God has instructed (which we learn from Scripture, cf. 1:23-25) will result in "resisting the devil." No further instructions are needed for avoiding a lion, other than remaining in the camp (God's church) and not wandering off (cf. 2:25).
- I) In the midst of whatever suffering may befall any follower of Jesus Christ, there is also great confidence and hope that our souls (cf. 4:19) are in Jesus Christ's capable hands (5:10-11). We are to **STAND FIRM**, with one another in this calling (5:12-14).