LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

SAY YES

CALLED TO SERVE WITH AN UNDIVIDED HEART

1 Peter 5:1-4
Pastor Nick Hardy • The Bridge Church • 23 August 2026

WELCOME

Sunday centred on the ordination of Hein and Sarah Stapelberg as elders, but Pastor Nick Hardy deliberately widened the message beyond eldership. Peter's appeal to shepherd God's flock became a call to all of us to ask what God has entrusted to us, how we are carrying it, and whether we are willing to say yes when He calls. Tonight is not about deciding that everyone should become an elder. It is about allowing the same questions of stewardship, service, humility and wholeheartedness to search us together.

THE WORD BEFORE OUR WORDS

READ ALOUD TOGETHER

Before discussing the sermon, have two people read 1 Peter 5:1-4 aloud - one reading verses 1-2 and the other verses 3-4. Listen before anyone comments. Give the Word of God the first voice in the room.

> *To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and 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.*
> *- 1 Peter 5:1-4 (NIV)*

THE SERMON IN A FEW MINUTES

Nick began with the seriousness of ordination, but quickly reminded the whole church that God can tap an ordinary person and call them forward. Peter, despite being an apostle, does not pull rank. He appeals as a fellow elder. The tone is humble: calling is not a title to seize but a trust to receive. The question is not whether we feel impressive enough; it is whether we are available.

The centre of Peter's instruction is that the flock belongs to God. Leaders are stewards, not owners. Nick used his own story of being entrusted with his grandparents' finances to show what it means to carry something that is not yours to use for yourself. Peter then gives three contrasts: not because you must but because you are willing; not pursuing gain but eager to serve; not lording it over people but being examples. Nick's blunt antidote to greed was simple: serve.

The sermon then moved into humility, correction and prayer. Nick spoke honestly about pride, the pain of being rebuked, and the hidden prayer life that has sustained Redpoint. The service itself became the final application: Hein and Sarah were ordained, Eugene brought a personal word over Hein and his family, Grant Askham asked Nick to pray for future elders, and men stood to make themselves available. Kati Hardy's closing reflection on an undivided heart gathered the whole morning into one final challenge: God is not looking for a divided, half-hearted yes.

WHAT WE HEARD THIS WEEK

- God may call ordinary people; availability matters more than self-importance.
- Whatever God entrusts to us remains His - people, resources, influence and responsibility are a trust, not a possession.
- Peter's pattern is willingness over compulsion, eager service over personal gain, and example over control.
- Humility is something we deliberately put on; correction and repentance remain part of mature Christian life.
- Visible service must be sustained by hidden prayer and dependence on God, not by the need for human recognition.
- We do not need to wear somebody else's shoes. We need an undivided heart and the courage to obey God in the calling He gives us.

THREE CONVERSATIONS

Take your time. The aim is not to rush through answers, but to let the sermon move from a Sunday ordination moment into the responsibilities, relationships and callings God has already placed in our hands.

1 WHAT HAS GOD ENTRUSTED TO ME?

Nick kept returning to the phrase ‘God’s flock’. The people under a shepherd’s care do not belong to the shepherd; they belong to Jesus. That principle reaches far beyond formal eldership. Family, money, gifts, opportunities, influence and responsibility are all received as a trust.

LET'S TALK: **What has God placed in our hands that we are most tempted to treat as ‘mine’? How would our decisions change if we consciously saw those people, resources or opportunities as belonging to Him? What does faithful stewardship look like in ordinary life?**

FROM THE WORD: 1 Peter 5:2; Luke 16:10-12

2 WILLING, EAGER AND AN EXAMPLE

Peter’s three contrasts expose the spirit in which responsibility is carried: willing rather than forced, eager to serve rather than focused on gain, and an example rather than controlling. Nick also connected this with the continual need for humility, cleansing and prayer.

LET'S TALK: **Which of Peter’s three contrasts most challenges the way we currently serve at home, at work or in church? Where can duty become willingness, self-interest become service, or control become example? How do humility and prayer keep responsibility from turning into pride?**

FROM THE WORD: 1 Peter 5:2-6; Psalm 51:7

THREE CONVERSATIONS

3 WHAT AM I WILLING TO SAY YES TO?

After Hein and Sarah were ordained, the moment widened. Eugene's word was specifically for Hein and his family, including the encouragement not to run in somebody else's shoes. Grant then asked Nick to pray for others God may raise up, and men stood simply to say they were willing to be trained if called. Nick prayed for future shepherds, fathers and intercessors. Kati's final reflection brought the focus back to the heart: divided devotion produces a divided life.

LET'S TALK: **Where might comparison be making us imitate somebody else instead of obeying God faithfully in our own place? What kind of service or responsibility is stirring in us when we hear the need for shepherds, fathers, mothers, intercessors and faithful helpers? What would an undivided yes to God look like this week - not someday?**

FROM THE WORD: 1 Peter 5:5-7; Psalm 86:11

FOR THE BRIDGE

The morning was also a real commissioning moment for our church. Pray deliberately for Hein and Sarah, their children, the existing elders and those whom God may still raise up. The call to multiply healthy leadership is not only about finding names for positions; it is about forming people whose homes, character, stewardship, prayer and service can carry responsibility safely.

A SIMPLE RESPONSE

Give everyone a quiet minute. Ask each person to finish this sentence privately before anyone speaks: 'Lord, what You have entrusted to me right now is _____, and my next faithful yes is _____.' Those who are comfortable may share their answer with the group.

LET'S PRAY TOGETHER

Rather than one person praying through everything, invite several people to pray briefly. Keep the prayers rooted in what we heard on Sunday.

Hein, Sarah and their family: Pray for grace, protection, wisdom, unity and joy as they carry this new responsibility, and for their children as they share in the cost and privilege of church leadership.

The existing and future elders: Pray for shepherds who are willing, humble, prayerful, financially trustworthy and able to lead by example rather than control.

Faithful stewardship: Ask God to show us where we have treated people, money, influence, time or opportunity as our possession rather than His trust.

Humility and hidden prayer: Pray for teachable hearts, quick repentance, freedom from comparison and a deeper dependence on God rather than talent or recognition.

An undivided yes: Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal where our hearts are divided and to give us courage to obey the particular calling God places before us.

TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

What God entrusts to me remains His. My response is a willing, humble and undivided yes.

Suggested flow: Scripture aloud • sermon recap • three conversations • prayer • take-home thought