

## 32. The Epistle of 1Peter—5:1-14

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(8/29/18)

As we come to the fifth and final chapter in Peter's first epistle—it contains a mixture of greetings and exhortations.

**1 Peter 5:1 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup> The elders who are among you I exhort...**

The word 'elders' is *presbuteros* in the Greek and it not only referred to an older man in the community—but often to an older man who was a *leader* in the community.

In both Old and New Testament times, the elders in a city or town (men who had gained wisdom over the years) were chosen to oversee the affairs of city government as aldermen and judges.

These would sit in the city gates ('city hall') and make decisions that affected city government and would also judge in civil matters.

This was also true with regard to the early church where elder Christian men were appointed by Paul and the other apostles to oversee the churches that were started which then allowed the apostles to move on to plant churches in other areas.

These elders were the spiritual leaders and overseers in the local churches—the pastors (shepherds).

And so, Peter, now turns his attention to address and exhort these church leaders—

**1 Peter 5:1 (NKJV)**

**<sup>1</sup> The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed:**

As we said last week, Peter viewed himself, not as the pope, but simply as one of the men God had appointed to look after His flock—a fellow elder (shepherd).

The word **witness** is *martus* in the Greek—a word we get the word martyr from.

A witness is someone who sees an event take place and then testifies to others of what they saw—often in a court room setting.

In New Testament times, when a Christian gave testimony to having seen the risen Christ (and then later to simply believing in Christ)—often they were put to death.

This happened so often that eventually the word *martus* (witness) became synonymous with a Christian being killed for their testimony (faith)—or in other words a ‘*martyr*’.

When Peter said he was—“**A witness of the sufferings of Christ**”—it could be that he is saying he snuck back (after his denial of Jesus where he went out and wept bitterly), to witness the beaten and tortured Savior hanging on the cross.

When he goes on to say that he was also “**a partaker of the glory that will be revealed**”—this is probably referring to the Mount of Transfiguration where he witnessed the Second Coming glory of Christ.

**Matthew 17:1-2 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, led them up on a high mountain by themselves; <sup>2</sup> and He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.

**Matthew 24:29-30 (NKJV)**

<sup>29</sup> "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

<sup>30</sup> Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

Peter mentions the suffering and glory of Christ to these elders—because he knew that, they were at that moment or would in the near future, be experiencing suffering for their faith.

He wanted them to remember that their sufferings for being a witness for Christ would be short lived and would give way to eternal glory and inexpressible joy—

**1 Peter 1:3-7 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup> to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup> who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup> In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup> that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,

**1 Peter 5:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> **Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers...**

The word ‘**shepherd**’ comes from a Greek word we get the word *pastor* from.

In both the Old and New Testaments, the people of God are likened to sheep—a fitting description seeing as sheep are dumb, helpless and prone to wander—which is why they need a shepherd. (Comment)

The responsibility of the shepherd was to lead the flock, feed the flock, and watch over the flock—just like a shepherd (pastor) of God’s flock.

In Acts 20:17-35 Paul exhorted the elders of Ephesus to ‘lead and feed’ the flock of God, as well as to ‘watch out for and warn’ them with regard to wolves and false doctrine. (Explain)

The exhortation that Peter is giving here to these fellow shepherds was the same one he received personally from Jesus a number of years earlier—

**John 21:15-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>15</sup> So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son of Jonah*, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Feed My lambs.**" <sup>16</sup> He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son of Jonah*, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Tend My sheep.**" <sup>17</sup> He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son of Jonah*, 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, "**Feed My sheep**".

I don't understand a shepherd who doesn't feed his flock healthy and nutritious spiritual food from God's Word instead of spiritual 'junk food' of the world. (Elaborate)

Or a pastor who is so undiscerning (ignorant and flat out stupid) that he opens his church and turns his pulpit over to wolves masquerading as men of God. (Explain)

**1 Peter 5:2 (NKJV)**

<sup>2</sup> Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, **not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;**

So, the first exhortation that Peter gives to elders in the church is that they are to conduct their ministries to God's people **willingly and not by compulsion** (forced, intimidated or pressured into).

In other words, serving God in ministry (especially pastoral ministry) is a great blessing, a high calling, and an incredible privilege—which must be the mindset that motivates our service.

One pastor said with regard to this—

*"The obvious point is that the shepherd must be diligent rather than lazy, heart motivated rather than forced to be faithful, and passionate about his privileged duty rather than indifferent.*

*When the heart is fully Christ's and driven by love for Him and for souls, there is much internal compulsion that precludes any need for external motivational pressure."*

The exhortation by Paul with regard to giving God our money also applies to giving God our service—

**2 Corinthians 9:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> *So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver.*

The second exhortation Peter gives to pastors is that their service must never be **“for dishonest gain but eagerly”**.

This reminds us of what Paul told the Ephesian elders regarding his ministry to their churches—

**Acts 20:33-35 (NKJV)**

<sup>33</sup> I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. <sup>34</sup> Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. <sup>35</sup> I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

The church is rife with phonies, con-men, hucksters and rip-off artists masquerading as good shepherds but whose only interest in the flock of God is to ‘fleece’ them—

**2 Peter 2:3 (NLT2)**

<sup>3</sup> In their greed they will make up clever lies to get hold of your money.

We see this in celebrity pastors, speakers and evangelists who demand to be flown first-class to your event, put up in a 5-star hotel and paid upwards of 10 to 15 thousand dollars to bless you with their ‘ministry’.

However, it's not only phonies and false prophets ripping off God's people—sometimes God's people are guilty of ripping off God's people! (Explain)

The third exhortation Peter gives to pastors is—

**1 Peter 5:3 (NKJV)**

**<sup>3</sup> nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;**

There is a movement that was really popular in the church thirty or forty years ago but is still around today—the ‘shepherding movement’. (Explain)

But Peter (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) said that as pastors we are not to put ourselves in the position of ‘lords’ over God’s people.

I am not your Lord—nor do I want to be your Lord.

Sometimes Christians try to make the pastor their Lord by giving him an inordinate amount of control over their lives.

This is not only wrong—it’s dangerous! (Explain)

My role as your pastor is not to control your life but to lead your life—by my example as someone who is following the Lord Jesus (Chief Shepherd) personally.

Paul affirmed this—

**Acts 20:17-18 (NKJV)**

<sup>17</sup> From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. <sup>18</sup> And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you..."

**1 Thessalonians 1:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

This is why pastors are likened to *shepherds* and God's people to *sheep*; and not *ranchers* and *cattle*—it's because sheep are *led* whereas cattle are *driven*. (Explain)

The term '**entrusted to you**' is a sobering thought that all spiritual shepherds need to consider and constantly remind themselves of that—these are not our sheep, they are God's sheep—

**Acts 20:28 (NKJV)**

<sup>28</sup> Therefore take heed to yourselves and to 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.

Pastors need to understand that we have been made under-shepherds over God's flock (those Jesus purchased with His own blood) and someday we will have to appear before Him, the Chief Shepherd, and give an account as to how well we took care of His sheep!

**1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

One pastor said with regard to this—

*“It is important for shepherds—pastors—to realize that they lead Jesus' sheep. He is the Shepherd, He is the Overseer (1 Peter 2:25). In this sense, the Christian shepherd doesn't work for the sheep, he works for the **Chief Shepherd**.”*

Another said—

*“If a pastor ministers to please himself, or to please people, he will have a disappointing and difficult ministry. “It must be hard to keep all these people happy,” a visitor said to me after church service. “I don't even try to keep them happy,” I replied with a smile. “I try to please the Lord, and I let Him take care of the rest.”*

**“You will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.”**

**1 Corinthians 9:25 (NKJV)**

<sup>25</sup> And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for an imperishable crown*.

Pastor Chuck Smith—

*“You see, in the Olympics, the winners were crowned with a laurel wreath. Just twigs with the leaves of a laurel tree that were sort of woven together to make a crown. So you train all year. You go through a strict regimen of discipline, getting your body prepared so that you run the race. And you come across the finish line and you come up to the judges and they take and put this laurel wreath on your head. Oh yes, it was worth it. But that fades away. How quickly the leaves dry up. And the laurel wreath fades away, but the crown that we receive, the crown of glory doesn’t fade away.”*

Crowns are not only for shepherds, but also for everyone who was faithful to Jesus and who did what He called them to do—

**2 Timothy 4:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

**James 1:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

**1 Peter 5:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

These are just a few of the crowns believers are promised for faithful service to Jesus Christ—what do we do with them in heaven?

**Revelation 4:10-11 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> the twenty-four elders [the Church] fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: <sup>11</sup> "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

**1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of you be **submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

The word ‘**submit**’ is ‘hupotasso’ in the Greek.

“Hupo” means ‘under’ and “tasso” means “to line up” or “to arrange”—*hupotasso* therefore means to “*line up under*”.

In a military sense it meant to rank beneath or under another.

As Christians we are to rank ourselves under one another—not over each other. (Matt.20:25-28)

The term ‘**clothed with humility**’ is interesting, it translates a rare word that referred to a slave putting on an apron before serving—even as Jesus did before washing the disciple’s feet (John 13:4).

One author says—

“Some marks of humility:

- The willingness to perform the lowest and littlest services for Jesus’ sake.
- Consciousness of our own inability to do anything apart from God.
- The willingness to be ignored of men.
- Not so much self-hating or depreciation as self-forgetfulness, and being truly others-centered instead of self-centered.

**1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)**

<sup>5</sup> ...Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, **for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

It is certainly true that God hates pride—

**Proverbs 6:16-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> These six *things* the LORD hates, Yes, seven *are* an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup> A proud look...

**Proverbs 8:13 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate.

***“God resists the proud—but gives grace to the humble.”***

**Proverbs 22:4 (NKJV)**

<sup>4</sup> By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *Are* riches and honor and life.

**Proverbs 29:23 (NKJV)**

<sup>23</sup> A man's pride will bring him low, But the humble in spirit will retain honor.

Grace is getting what you don't deserve—the word literally means ‘a gift’.

So what Scripture is saying is that if we will humble ourselves in the sight of God (“*I can do nothing apart from Him*”) and we cry out to Him for His strength, help, victory, freedom, guidance (whatever we need)—He will supply to us as a gift of His grace.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**1 Peter 5:6 (NKJV)**

<sup>6</sup> **Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,**

If we obey the beginning part of verse 6—that is “**humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God**”—then God will “**exalt**” us in due time.

The word ‘**exalt**’ means “*to raise or lift up*”

Some believe that this is a reference to the Rapture—that in ‘**due time**’ God will *lift us up* off the earth and all its trials and tribulations, into the sky where we will meet our Lord Jesus face to face and receive our glorified bodies!

And that might be true, however the term ‘**due time**’ literally means “*in time*” and is not used in the N.T. as an eschatological term.

Therefore, what Peter is probably saying is that—believers need to keep submitting to God regardless of the trials and persecutions they face—and at one-point (“in time”) God will lift us out of the adversity and give us peace.

I believe this is the correct interpretation because if you follow the flow of what Peter goes on to say it seems that this is what he had in mind when he says—

**1 Peter 5:10 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you* [in His time].

**1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

The word translated “care” means “*anxiety, the state of being pulled apart.*”

Notice that Peter didn’t say “*lay all your care (anxieties) upon Him*”—the idea he wanted to communicate was that we must “*throw our cares away from us onto Jesus!*”

And the Greek is ‘*once and for all time—past, present and future*’.

One pastor said that often requires ‘two hands’ to cast our cares upon Him—the ‘*hand of prayer*’ and ‘*the hand of faith*’! (Comment)

Another admonished—

*“We must not hand them to Him piecemeal, keeping those cares that we think we can handle ourselves. If we keep “the little cares” for ourselves, they will soon become big problems! Each time a new burden arises, we must by faith remind the Lord (and ourselves) that we have already turned it over to Him.”*

**1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV)**

<sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

This is very much like Peter’s earlier admonition—

**1 Peter 4:7 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers.

The word ‘**watchful**’ is the same Greek word translated ‘**sober**’ in chapter 5 verse 8.

This is a word that carries with it the idea of *self-control* (yes with regard to alcohol)—but in the context that Peter uses it, it means “*the discipline of mind and body that avoids the intoxicating allurements of the world*”.

The word “**vigilant**” means “*to be on the alert*”; “*to stay awake—and that’s an order!*” as Peter gives a command in the Greek.

The Lord warned His disciples: “*Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak*” (Matt. 26:41).

**1 Peter 5:9 (NKJV)**

<sup>9</sup> **Resist him, steadfast** [being firmly planted] **in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.**

Satan’s attacks are universal throughout the Body of Christ—world-wide, which means I’m never the only one suffering or going thru difficult circumstances at any given time.

Notice that Peter didn’t say “**resist him** (the devil) **with faith**” (with the power of faith—as if faith was a ‘force’)—but “**resist him in the faith**” (not a verb but a noun).

The best way to defeat the devil is to be strong in the Lord—by being firmly planted in the Christian faith (in the Word, prayer, fellowship etc.).

Jesus won the victory over the devil at the cross and as Christians we are ‘in Christ’—that’s what the Christian faith is all about.

“**Resist**” comes from two ancient Greek words: *stand* and *against*.

Warren Wiersbe—

*“This means that we take our stand on the Word of God and refuse to be moved. Ephesians 6:10–13 instructs us to “stand ... withstand ... stand.” Unless we stand, we cannot withstand. Our weapons are the Word of God and prayer (Eph. 6:17–18) and our protection is the complete armor God has provided. We resist him “in the faith,” that is, our faith in God. Just as David took his stand against Goliath, and trusted in the name of Jehovah, so we take our stand against Satan in the victorious name of Jesus Christ.”*

**James 4:7-8 (NKJV)**

<sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist [not ‘rebuke’] the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you...

**1 Peter 5:10-14 (NKJV)**

<sup>10</sup> But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. <sup>11</sup> To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen. <sup>12</sup> By Silvanus, our faithful brother as I consider him, I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God [the Faith] in which you stand. <sup>13</sup> She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you; and so does Mark my son. <sup>14</sup> Greet one another with a kiss of love. Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

This may be the literal city of Babylon (which still existed in Peter’s day), or it may be a symbolic way of referring to either Rome or Jerusalem.

These were two cities that in Peter’s day were famous for their wickedness and spiritual rebellion—in any regard, this was one church greeting another.