

1 Peter 5

1 Peter 5:1-4 To the Elders of the Church

- v1 Peter identified himself as an elder, a witness to Christ's sufferings & sharer in the glory
 - *Elder* has both a Jewish and a Gentile background
 - Jewish: traced to the days of wandering in the desert (Num 11:16-17), when God told Moses to appoint 70 elders to help him; also, friends of prophets (2 Kings 6:32), advisors of kings (1 Kings 20:8; 21:11), administered the synagogues, dispensed justice (Deut 25:7), and included in the Sanhedrin
 - Gentile: especially in Egypt, elders led the communities & issued edicts, collected taxes, etc.
 - *Elder* can also be translated *overseer*--connotes both a spiritual & physical guardianship
 - Elders were leaders in Jerusalem and elsewhere (Acts 15:2; 16:4; 21:18-19; James 5:14)
 - **Acts 15:2** This brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question.
 - **Acts 16:4** As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey.
 - **Acts 21:18-19** The next day Paul and the rest of us went to see James, and all the elders were present. ¹⁹Paul greeted them and reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.
 - **James 5:14** Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.
 - Paul ordained elders in churches he founded (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5)
 - **Acts 14:23** Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.
 - **Titus 1:5** The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.
 - Peter saw the pain in Jesus' eyes after his denials (Luke 22:61-62)
 - **Luke 22:61-62** The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." ⁶²And he went outside and wept bitterly.
 - Peter knew about the glory from the Transfiguration (Luke 9:32) & the promise (Matt 19:28)
 - **Luke 9:32** Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.
 - **Matthew 19:28** Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.
- v2 What Peter said to the elders is applicable to all Christians serving in- and outside the church
 - *Shepherds*--a good shepherd was totally dedicated to caring for the flock
 - *Caring for* includes: teach, lead, guide & protect; *feed* includes to feed spiritually (via the Word)
 - Jesus had given Peter the task of feeding His sheep (John 21:15-17)
 - **John 21:15-17** When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." ¹⁶Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." ¹⁷The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."
 - *As God wants you*--literally, "shepherd your people as God would;" our attitude must be like His

- *Dishonest gain*--a warning to not be like the false teachers who are motivated by financial gain
- One of my favorite sayings: “God doesn’t call the qualified; He qualifies the called.”
- v3 *Not lording it over*--essentially, being a petty tyrant to dominate/manipulate others
 - *Entrusted/allotted*--not by merit, but given by God, just as God allotted Israel to Himself
 - **Barclay**: What an ideal! And what a condemnation! It is our task to show to people God's forbearance, his forgiveness, his seeking love, his illimitable service. God has allotted to us a task and we must do it as he himself would do it. That is the supreme ideal of service in the Christian Church.
- v4 Jesus was also the Good Shepherd who was ready to lay down his life for the sheep (**Jn.10:1-18**)
- Why does God give such stringent standards for leadership? Can anyone really live up to these requirements? Should public/civil leaders be held to the same standards? Why or why not?
 - **Matthew 20:25-28** Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ²⁶Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—²⁸just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1 Peter 5:5-11 To the Flock

- v5 Peter returns to the thought that the denial of self must be the mark of the Christian
 - *Clothe yourselves*--from a Greek word to tie something on oneself with a knot or a bow
 - Used for a slave’s garment, such as an apron, but also for clothes that were the sign of honor
 - The word signifies binding firmly on and wearing constantly
 - Jesus had tied a towel around Himself to wash His disciples’ feet (**John 13:4-5**)
 - Note that both apply! We must do as Jesus did to gain what Jesus did--serve to gain honor
 - *Humility*—literally “lowly-mindedness,” an attitude by which one is not too good to serve
 - **Philippians 2:3b** Rather, in humility value others above yourselves
 - Quotation is from **Proverbs 3:34**
- v6 *Humble*--Submit to God’s will; a concept that the world fights against and ridicules
 - *God’s mighty hand*--common OT symbol of the power of God working in human experience
 - Despite every trial, we must always remember that God’s love & mighty hand steer our destiny
 - *In due time*--God will lift up the suffering of His submissive believers in His wisely appointed time
- v7 *Cast all*--literally, to throw one’s discontent, discouragement, and despair onto the Lord with confidence that He cares for us and knows what He is doing
 - **Matthew 6:25, 33** Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ³³But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
 - **Romans 8:28** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.
 - **Romans 8:32** He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?
- v8 Though we cast all anxiety upon God, we cannot sit back and do nothing
 - *Be alert*--be mindful and wary of the strategies of the evil one
 - *Sober*--have clarity of mind to resist worldly allurements and to have an eternal perspective
 - *Your adversary*--Greek for an opponent in a court of law
 - *Roaring lion*--a picture of Satan’s vicious, malevolent nature. He wants to destroy believers

- **Cromwell:** "Trust in God and keep your powder dry."
- v9 Resist (*withstand*)--Believers are to stand up against the devil by remaining firm in the Christian faith (that is, living according to Scripture); a term of defense rather than attack
 - The devil is ever out to see whom he can ruin, but he is like any bully and retreats when he is bravely resisted in the strength of Jesus Christ
- v10 *After you have suffered*--God's purposes realized in the future require some pain in the present
 - *Restore*--word for setting a fracture, mending a net, supply what is missing.
 - *Establish*--word for to *make as solid as granite*: the toughest steel is tempered in the fire
 - *Strengthen*--to *fill with strength*: muscles are built by pushing the bounds; non-use makes flab
 - *Steadfast*--word for to *lay the foundation*: suffering can drive one to the bedrock of faith
 - ⇒ One that meets suffering with trusting certainty in God will find increased faith and character
 - ⇒ **Barclay:** Suffering, if accepted in humility and trust and love, can repair the weaknesses of one's character and add the greatness which so far is not there.
- v11 A doxology (short expression of praise) that concludes Peter's guidance to all of us

1 Peter 5:12-14 Final Greetings

- v12 *Silvanus*--Silas, a Roman citizen; replaced Barnabas for Paul's 2nd missionary journey
 - **Acts 15:40** but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.
 - *Silas* (Greek)/*Silvanus* (Latin) was sent to Antioch with the decision of the Council of Jerusalem
 - **Acts 15:22** Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers.
 - The excellent & classical Greek of the letter makes it probable that Silvanus (a Roman citizen) either wrote as Peter dictated or took Peter's writings and generated the final copy
- v13 *Babylon*—most probably, a veiled reference to Rome
 - *Mark*--likely the writer of the Gospel that was probably sourced by Peter
 - **Papias** (lived towards the end of the second century and was a great collector of early traditions) describes Mark's gospel in this way: "Mark, who was Peter's interpreter, wrote down accurately though not in order, all that he recollected of what Christ had said or done. For he was not a hearer of the Lord or a follower of his; he followed Peter, as I have said, at a later date, and Peter adapted his instructions to practical needs, without any attempt to give the Lord's words systematically. So that Mark was not wrong in writing down some things in this way from memory, for his one concern was neither to omit nor to falsify anything he had heard."
- v14 The kiss became an essential part of Christian worship for the early church
 - A kiss was a typical Jewish greeting of welcome and respect
 - Paul's letters frequently end with the injunction to salute each other with a holy kiss
 - A disciple customarily kissed his Rabbi on the cheek & laid hands upon his shoulder
 - **Mark 14:44** Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest him and lead him away under guard."
 - In the Church of the west issues with the kiss gradually brought the end of the custom
 - *Peace*--the peace of God which is greater than all the troubles & distresses the world can bring

Questions for Discussion (you can likely come up with additional and/or better answers)

- v4 Why the “Chief” Shepherd here?
 - Only Jesus is the **Chief Shepherd**; all elders & leaders who shepherd are accountable to Him
- v5-6 How do you define “humility”? Why is it such a rare commodity today, even in the church?
 - Humility puts others before self; our culture focuses on self before all others & everything else
 - Humility says ‘no’ to one’s own wisdom & worldly wisdom, but submits to God’s revealed wisdom
 - **Reeder**: This does not mean that the elders can pontificate to us whatever they want and we have to do it. No, anytime you are in a God-ordained authority structure – marriage, government, church, business, etc. – whoever is in authority is there by God’s appointment and they have delegated authority in which they are always in submission to the one who delegates it and can never supersede the one who delegated it to them. God calls us to be submissive to those in authority over us and to one another but it does not mean that whoever is in authority is infallible or inerrant or that they now own you. It means you are in an ordered relationship & you’re submissive unless they cause you and call you to be disobedient to the authority of Christ in your life through disobeying the Word of God.
- v7 How can we know that casting our cares upon God is a winning strategy?
 - We are to trust in God and not on ourselves. God deeply cares for **YOU**, knows your every care and is able to handle every one in the best way--even if at the time we might question His method
 - **Proverbs 3:5** Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.
 - **Philippians 4:6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. .
- v8 Do you think Satan is real? Why or why not?
 - Jesus referred to Satan by name numerous times, as did other passages of Scripture, for example:
 - **Matthew 4:10** Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ““You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.””
 - **Luke 10:18** And He said to them, “I watched Satan fall from heaven like lightning.
 - **Luke 22:3** Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.
 - **John 13:27a** As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him.
- v9 What defenses do we have against the devil?
 - Study God’s word to avoid blindness; build faith through prayer & Bible study; talk to other believers that have gone through suffering—especially in similar circumstances
 - In the wilderness, Jesus quoted Scripture to each of Satan’s temptations
 - **Matthew 4:4** But he answered, “It is written, ““Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.””
 - **Matthew 4:7** Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”
 - **Matthew 4:10** Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written, ““You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.””
- v9 Should we try to fight Satan on our own? How can we resist him?
 - Absolutely not! We have God’s promises, Jesus’ grace and the Holy Spirit abiding in us
 - **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation He will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.
 - If you resist Satan in Christ, for Christ, by the Spirit to the glory of God, then you will be victorious
 - **James 4:7** Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
From **1 John 4:4** for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.