



## Serving with Humility

Sunday, March 14<sup>th</sup> 2021

<sup>1</sup> Peter 5:1-11 (ESV) So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

<sup>5</sup> Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

<sup>6</sup> Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. <sup>8</sup> Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. <sup>10</sup> And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup> To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

**Introduction:** Peter wraps up his letter with an exhortation to the church leaders and instructions to all the believers.

**A summary of his thoughts:** You must work together with humility and stand united in the faith especially when facing trying times. For the enemy like a roaring lion is seeking to devour,

overcome and destroy us from being who God called us to be and doing what He has called us to do.

Peter knows what it's like to lose your way and almost fall prey to the enemy. His metaphor of the devil being like a roaring lion may be a memory recall of the moment when Jesus warned him that the devil has requested to sift him as wheat and would have succeeded, after he denied Jesus three times, had it not been for the very prayers of Jesus.

He was a witness of the sufferings of Jesus. The beating and crucifixion of the Lord at the hands Romans was still vivid in his mind. Yet what kept him going was the living hope of the glory that was going to be revealed at the return of Jesus Christ.

He was an elders in the present, a witness of the sufferings of Christ in the past, and partaker of the glory that was to be revealed in the future.

If we are going to overcome the trials and temptations that the enemy throws our way then we must do so by staying focused in our role and calling in the present, looking to victorious work of Christ through the cross in the past, while waiting for the glory the glory that is to be revealed in the future.

1 Peter 1:3-6 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials.

### **An exhortation to the elders (leaders) of the church**

1 Peter 5:2a (ESV) shepherd the flock of God that is among you

- Responsibility - Shepherd poimainō feed or tend

Leadership in God's kingdom is not a power role but a caring role. As leaders in the church, our home or in the marketplace we are responsible to care for people, not use them to advance our personal agendas.

What will keep us from mistreating those under our care is a clear understanding that they belong to God, not us.

- Ownership – the flock of God.

Peter wants the Elders to understand that they have been appointed as under shepherds to tend God's flock. Good leaders understand that ownership belongs to God. We are entrusted with caring for the flock of God.

When we understand this then we will watch over with the right hearts.

1 Peter 5:2b-3 (ESV) exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

- Oversight (watch over)

Watching over those under our care require the right attitude and heart.

**Not under compulsion** – not because you have to but because you get to

**Not for shameful gain** – not because you get paid to do it, nor as a stepping stone to a better job, but because you are passionate about doing it.

**Not domineering over those in your charge** - Not because you want the power over people but because you desire to serve people by being an example.

Now I can imagine some people, who may have had prior issues with leadership, hearing this and think that what Peter was saying was that the leadership is called to be serve the people by giving in to their every whim and desire, like a server at a restaurant. But this is not what he is saying. Relationship between leaders and those under their care goes both ways. Notice that in the next verse he addressed the younger.

1 Peter 5:5 (ESV) Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Whether we are leaders or followers, young or old, male or female we are all part of the body of Christ and should practice humility towards one another.

**God is the one who assigns roles and functions in the kingdom.**

Romans 12:3-6 (ESV) For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. <sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. <sup>6</sup> Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them:

1 Corinthians 12:18 (ESV) But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose.

### **Addressing everyone**

**1 Peter 5:6-7 (ESV)** Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, <sup>7</sup> casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Sadly, there are too many people in the kingdom that are more caught up and concerned with, when they will get their opportunity, to be in light of significance, that they have lost sight that significance is not found in what you do for Christ but in who you are in and because of Christ.

Several truths that jump out from these verses

- Humility precedes advancement in the kingdom.
- God determines the time of advancement
- We need to stop worrying about everything and start serving, with a spirit of humility, in the place where we find ourselves.

So long as we are looking forward to being used by God we are not allowing God to use us now.

- God's care for us is not seen in how He uses us but in how He saved us.

A spirit of pride and dissatisfaction opens the doors for the enemy to bring ruin to our lives.

### **Be sober and vigilant**

1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

### **Resist the enemy and Stand firm in your faith**

1 Peter 5:9-11 (ESV) Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. <sup>10</sup> And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup> To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Stop being anxious about your role in the kingdom, or the trial you may be facing as there are others who are facing similar challenges. God does care about you and His realizing His purpose and plan, in His time frame.

The enemy who wants you to give in to pride, take matters into your own hands, But, whatever you do, be sober and vigilant by staying humble, keep serving, keep leading, keep loving and keep believing. You may have to deal with the trial for a season but remember...

1 Peter 5:10-11 (ESV) The God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. <sup>11</sup>To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.