

THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER

1 PETER 3:13-5:14, THE BELIEVER AND SUFFERING

INTRODUCTION

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B. Review of 1 Peter 4:7-19

1. Warren Wiersbe, *Before God pours out His wrath on this evil world, a “fiery trial” will come to God’s church, to unite and purify it, that it might be a strong witness to the lost. There is nothing for us to fear if we are suffering in the will of God. Our faithful Father-Creator will victoriously see us through!*
2. Wayne Grudem, . . . *suffering is only for our good: it is purifying us, drawing us closer to our Lord, and making us more like him in our lives. In all of it we are not alone, but we can depend on the care of a faithful Creator; we can rejoice in the fellowship of a Saviour who has also suffered (v. 13); we can exult in the constant presence of a Spirit of glory who delights to rest upon us (v. 14).*
3. Charles Spurgeon, . . . *we are to be prepared to endure whatever trial or pain may come upon us for Christ’s sake, and to bear it joyfully, rather than to seek the pleasures of sin, and to be plunged under the waves of the wrath of God.*

C. Introductory comments on 1 Peter 1:5-11

1. Roger Raymer, *In the final chapter Peter emphasized new responsibilities within the church in light of the troubled times. He exhorted the elders to shepherd the people, the young men to submit to the elders, and everyone to stand firm in the faith.*
2. David Walls, *Peter has lived a real life, experienced real pain. Most of this pain was inflicted by others . . . That is what makes this letter so practical and relevant for our lives. This chapter challenges us to continue to trust our faithful God in the midst of all circumstances.*
3. Edmund Clowney, *Peter now moves to the conclusion of his letter, calling his hearers to stand fast in the faith he has again declared to them, and to do so in the midst of the sufferings they must expect. His final charge calls for two attitudes that he has been describing throughout his letter: on the one hand, humility toward others; on the other, bold resistance to evil.*
4. Peter Davids, . . . *this section, sandwiched as it is between 4:12–19 and 5:6–11 (both paragraphs dealing with suffering), is certainly not an accidental addition. Rather, it is a logically necessary explanation of the intra-church solidarity that is required in the face of persecution.*

1 PETER 5:1-11, PETER ADDRESSES THE CHURCH

- A. His charge to elders (5:1-4)
1. Peter prefaces his charge by emphasizing his position of leadership (1), *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:*
 - a. He directs his exhortation to the church elders.
 - 1) Acts 14:23, *And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.*
 - 2) An elder is placed in a church to provide instruction (note Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Timothy 5:17) and congregational oversight in 1 Peter 5:2-3.
 - 3) David Walls, “Elder” (presbuteros) refers to the officials who acted as pastoral leaders of the congregations. Because of the intense suffering and persecution that these believers faced, the need for pastoral leadership was crucial.
 - 4) Peter Davids, . . . it is the title of an office rather than a description of seniority.
 - 5) Roger Raymer, Peter’s charge to elders was given in three pairs of negative and positive exhortations. The exhortations reflect Ezekiel (34:1–16), where false shepherds were contrasted with the True Shepherd.
 - b. Peter’s authority
 - 1) He was an elder over the entire church but was one with them.
 - a) David Walls, *Wisely, Peter did not simply challenge the pastoral leaders. He included himself as one of them and as one included in his challenge when he chose the identifying term fellow elder to describe himself and part of his ministry.*
 - b) Louis Barbieri, *As an apostle he could have ordered them to follow his instruction, but he did not take this approach. His appeal is based on the fact that he was one of them and thus understood their problems.*
 - c) Edmund Clowney, *They are not fellow-apostles, chosen, like Peter, to be eye-witnesses of Christ’s resurrection. They are, nevertheless, fellow-elders, called by the Lord to exercise oversight in his church. They have received the witness of the apostles, and with them they confess Jesus Christ.*
 - d) Peter Davids, *The term “fellow-elder” is unique in the NT, but it is similar to a number of compound terms Paul used for the men and women who worked with him in his mission: fellow-worker (Rom. 16:3, 9, 21; Phil. 2:25; 4:3; Col. 4:11; 1 Thess. 3:2; Philem. 1, 24), fellow-soldier (Phil. 2:25; Philem. 2), fellow-slave (Col. 1:7; 4:7; cf. Rev. 6:11; 19:10; 22:9), and, with a somewhat different meaning, fellow-prisoner (Rom. 16:7; Col. 4:10; Philem. 23).*
 - e) Scot McKnight, *As an elder, he knows both the temptations these elders encounter and the joys. More importantly, he knows the essence of the calling he needs to spell out in 5:2–3. While it may be argued that Peter condescends to their level, it is more likely that he is elevating their ministries and incorporating their work into his.*
 - f) Oecumeius (6th c. AD), . . . *if he, who has so great an honor, does not mind referring to himself as a fellow elder among them, they too must not exalt themselves in the presence of those who serve in various offices.*
 - 2) He was an eyewitness to the sufferings of Christ.
 - a) Roger Raymer, *As an elder, Peter was speaking from experience. However, Peter’s authority came from the fact that he was an apostle (1 Peter 1:1), and a witness (martys; cf. Acts 3:15; 10:39) of Christ’s sufferings.*
 - b) David Walls, *Peter was a witness ... a witness who stood forgiven, who stood restored, who basked in the warmth of God’s grace.*
 - c) Peter Davids, . . . *Peter is indicating that not only does he talk about Christ’s sufferings, but as in 4:13, that he also identifies with them as a result of his witness.*
 - 3) He will take part in Christ’s future glory.
 - a) The word *partaker* comes from the word for *fellowship*.
 - b) Edmund Clowney, *Peter would prepare his fellow-elders to bear their witness by mirroring the gospel in their lives. They, too, share in suffering as they proclaim the suffering Saviour; they, too, taste of glory as they proclaim his return . . . For Paul [note Acts 20:18-35] as for Peter, sharing in ministry means sharing in suffering: suffering now, and glory to come.*
 - c) Peter Davids, *Knowing that he is faithful now, he already anticipates his participation in what is coming (cf. the anticipated joy of 1:6; 4:12). This should encourage his “fellow-elders” to continue on the same road of witness and participation.*

- d) Wayne Grudem, *Peter is an 'elder' who has sinned, repented, been restored, and will share with Christ in glory. He can rightly 'exhort' any elder in whose life there is sin likewise to repent and be restored before God's disciplinary refining fire reaches him.*
- e) J. Ramsey Michaels, *Peter is a "sharer" now in a glory that belongs to the future; his language here has nothing to do with the tradition of his own presence at Jesus' Transfiguration . . . but points once again to the common experience of all Christians, especially under threat of persecution . . .*
- f) Charles Spurgeon, *If you have been indeed planted with Him in the likeness of His death, you shall also share the likeness of His resurrection. You do even now share it with Him, for as He is so are you in this world.*

2. He exhorts them to shepherd the flock as a shepherd cares for his sheep (2-3)

a. Peter's exhortation (2a), ***shepherd the flock of God that is among you,***

1) Biblical references

- a) John 21:16, *He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep."*
- b) Acts 20:28, *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*
- c) Note Ezekiel 34:1-16, Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 23:1-4.

2) The word *shepherd* means to *tend*.

- 3) Roger Raymer, *"Overseer" seems to be interchangeable with "elder" and connotes both a spiritual and physical guardianship.*
- 4) Thomas Constable, *Pastoring includes the duties of feeding, leading, guiding, guarding, and providing for the needs of those in the church as a shepherd does for his sheep (cf. John 21:16).*
- 5) Charles Spurgeon, *Certainly, he was an eyewitness of Christ's sufferings. And I think, when he was writing to these elders, he seemed to say to them, "Feed the flock of God, for I saw the great Shepherd when He bought that flock. I was there when He purchased the sheep with His own blood. Then, after He had risen from the dead, thrice He said to me, 'Simon, son of John, do you love me?' " (John 21:17) And when I answered, "Lord, you know everything! You know that I love you," He said to me, "Feed my sheep. Shepherdize my sheep. Feed my sheep." Therefore, by His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross and passion, by His precious death and burial, by His glorious resurrection and ascension, I ask you, "Shepherd the church of God, which he obtained through his own blood" (Acts 20:28).*
- 6) David Walls, *Although Peter did not allude to the shepherd image in Psalm 23, the model presented there can be applied here. According to that psalm, the tasks of a shepherd are to lead (v. 2), to provide spiritual guidance and feeding (v. 3), to offer comfort (v. 4), strengthening (v. 5), and correction (v. 2).*
- 7) Peter Davids, . . . by noting that it is *"the flock of God"* he shows that they have no proprietary rights.
- 8) Charles Swindoll, *Throughout this passage the flock is seen as those entrusted to the care of the pastors—not as their own followers. The ultimate Shepherd is God. But pastors and teachers should serve as faithful under-shepherds, looking to the Chief Shepherd as their inspiration and model.*

b. Proper versus improper motives (2b-3)

1) Introductory comments

- a) John Calvin, *In exhorting pastors to their duty, he points out three vices especially which are often to be found, namely sloth, desire for gain, and lust for power.*
- b) Charles Swindoll, . . . *Peter gives three practical attitudes with which earthly shepherds are to exercise oversight. He structures each of these in the same form, including both a negative quality and its corresponding positive attitude.*

2) His three wise directives

- a) Give oversight willingly (2b), ***exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you;***

1] *not under compulsion*

- a] This word is only used here in the New Testament.
- b] The force of the word is *obligation on the basis of being imposed.*

- 2] *willingly*
- a] It means *without compulsion, deliberately, intentionally*.
 - b] The word is used here and in Hebrews 10:26, *For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,*
- 3] Comments
- a] Thomas Constable, *God wants us to perform any service for Him willingly. Elders should not serve because they feel they must do so because of external pressure but because they desire to serve God.*
 - b] David Walls, *Ministry should not be an unwanted burden; pastors are not to serve out of a sense of false guilt or fear, or in an attempt to please people. Any of these attitudes or motives can lead to an unwillingness to shepherd or to shepherd in an inappropriate manner.*
 - c] Peter Davids, *It is true that elders did not volunteer or select themselves but were selected by others (e.g., Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5), yet they were not to think of their work as something forced upon them. Even if they had wanted the job (as 1 Tim. 3:1 encourages people to do), the stress of pastoring (often while supporting themselves with long days of work) and the added danger in which it put them and their families (for who but the elders would be the first targets of persecution?) could well make the ministry an unwanted burden. Like the author of Hebrews (Heb. 13:17), our author wants elders to do their work “with joy and not with groaning” or, as he puts it, “voluntarily.” . . . After all, none of God’s acts for humanity was done out of necessity, but voluntarily, out of grace.*
 - d] Warren Wiersbe, *His ministry must not be a job that he has to perform. He should do God’s will from his heart (Eph. 6:6). Dr. George W. Truett was pastor of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas for nearly fifty years. Often he was asked to accept other positions, and he refused, saying, “I have sought and found a pastor’s heart.” When a man has a pastor’s heart, he loves the sheep and serves them because he wants to, not because he has to.*
 - e] J. Ramsey Michaels, *He wants it instead to be a free and joyous response to God’s love . . . Their calling is to embrace the will of God freely and gratefully and so to make it their own.*
 - f] Charles Swindoll, . . . *involuntary ministry leads to lack of enthusiasm, lack of motivation, mediocrity, and even depression. If this is the case, Peter’s words imply that a change needs to be made—either fix the problem leading to compulsion or find a way to step down for a while until the joy of ministry returns.*
 - g] E. G. Selwyn, *There is all the difference, especially in spiritual matters, between the man who does his work for no other reason than that he has to do it, and the man who does it willingly, as being in God’s service.*
- b) Serve the flock eagerly (2c), ***not for shameful gain, but eagerly;***
- 1] *shameful gain*
- a] It means *fondness for dishonest gain, greedily*.
 - b] 1 Timothy 3:8, *Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.*
- 2] *eagerly*
- a] It means *willingly, freely, with greatest eagerness*.
 - b] It may be translated, *from a real eagerness to serve*.
- 3] Comments
- a] D. Edmond Hiebert, *To enter the ministry simply because it offers a respectable and intellectually stimulating way of gaining a livelihood is to prostitute that sacred work. This warning also includes the temptation to use the work of the ministry to gain personal popularity or social influence.*
 - b] Thomas Constable, . . . *an elder should serve zealously and enthusiastically as opposed to selfishly. He should not serve for what he can get out of his ministry now but for the love of his Lord.*
 - c] Roger Raymer, *Social or financial pressures should not be substituted for the pure motivation to do God’s will and to serve Him freely and eagerly: not greedy for money, but eager to serve (cf. 1 Tim. 3:8; Titus 1:7, 11). Shepherds who serve with false motives care only for themselves and devour the flock (Ezek. 34:2–3).*

- d] David Walls, *Peter did not suggest that pastors should not be paid a salary for their shepherding ministries. The New Testament is very clear that generous remuneration for pastors is incumbent upon the churches (see 1 Tim. 5:17–18).*
 - e] Wayne Grudem, *Greed and selfish interest are so near at hand in all human hearts that especially in this work they must be constantly guarded against.*
- c) Minister by Godly example (3), ***not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.***
- 1] *domineering*
 - a] It means *to be master, lord it over someone.*
 - b] The emphasis of the word is *reigning not serving.*
 - c] Matthew 20:25, *But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them.*
 - d] Thomas Constable, . . . *an elder should lead by giving an example of godly living that others can follow rather than by driving people forward with authoritarian commands (cf. 1 Tim. 4:12; 2 Thess. 3:9).*
 - e] Roger Raymer, *Ezekiel indicted false shepherds: “You have ruled them harshly and brutally. So they were scattered because there was no shepherd” (Ezek. 34:4–5).*
 - f] David Walls, *A pastor should not delight in the use of authority (although at times he must exercise it), nor should he seek to increase, preserve, or flaunt his authority. This characterizes leadership that has degenerated into dictatorship.*
 - g] J. Vernon McGee, *I do not think that a preacher should get into the pulpit and browbeat his congregation to do something that he actually is not doing himself. I made it a practice never to ask my congregation to give to any cause to which I didn’t also give. I do not think we have a right to make a demand of other folk that we are not doing ourselves.*
 - 2] *being examples*
 - a] 1 Timothy 4:12, *Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.*
 - b] Philippians 3:17, *Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. The word is that which means type, pattern.*
 - c] Christians leaders are to imitate the Great Shepherd Who is the reality.
 - d] Warren Wiersbe, *If I have any counsel for God’s shepherds today, it is this: cultivate a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, and share what He gives you with your people. That way, you will grow, and they will grow with you.*
 - e] Roger Raymer, *They were not to drive God’s people, but to lead them by their examples of mature Christian character.*
 - f] David Walls, *Godly leadership in the church that can serve as examples to the flock involves sensitivity to peoples’ needs, affection for people, authenticity of life, and enthusiastic affirmation, without deception, greed, flattery, or authoritarianism.*
 - g] Peter Davids, *Jesus often presented himself as an example (Matt. 10:24–25; Mark 10:42–45; Luke 6:40; John 13:16; 15:20). Paul could write, “Walk according to the example you had in us” (Phil. 3:17) and “We gave an example to you so that you might imitate us” (2 Thess. 3:9), or even “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1; cf. Acts 20:35). Other leaders were also expected to be examples (1 Thess. 1:6–7; 1 Tim. 4:12; Tit. 2:7; Jas. 3:1–2) . . . Being an example fits well with the image of “flock,” for the ancient shepherd did not drive his sheep, but walked in front of them and called them to follow.*
 - h] Warren Wiersbe, *A Christian leader said to me, “The trouble today is that we have too many celebrities and not enough servants.” . . . It is by being an example that the shepherd solves the tension between being “among” the sheep and “over” the sheep. People are willing to follow a leader who practices what he preaches and gives them a good example to imitate.*
 - i] J. Ramsey Michaels, *The elders are to be good leaders of their congregations precisely by being good servants, so that the members of the congregation will in turn become servants to each other.*
 - j] Athanasius, *The life should command, and the tongue persuade.*

3. Faithful leaders will receive honor from Christ (4), ***And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.***

a. Jesus is the chief Shepherd.

- 1) Hebrews 13:20, *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,*
- 2) Edmund Clowney, *The Chief Shepherd who will come is the risen Christ, who had gone into heaven, and rules at God's right hand (3:22).*
- 3) Thomas Constable, *Elders are shepherds who serve under the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ (John 21:15–17). Peter wanted the Chief Shepherd to find his fellow elders faithful when He returns at the Rapture. Then they would have to give an account of their stewardship at His judgment seat (cf. Heb. 13:17).*
- 4) Peter Davids, *The picture of Christ as the Chief Shepherd is likewise most fitting in this context, for like the phrase "flock of God" in 5:2 it reminds the elders that the flock does not belong to them and that they are therefore undershepherds entrusted with another's possessions (cf. John 10:11, 14, "good shepherd" to whom the sheep belong; John 21:15–17, "Feed my lambs ...").*
- 5) Warren Wiersbe, *As the Chief Shepherd, He alone can assess a man's ministry and give him the proper reward. Some who appear to be first may end up last when the Lord examines each man's ministry.*

b. Those who shepherd well will receive the unfading crown of glory.

- 1) 1 Peter 1:4, *to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,*
- 2) John Calvin, *To prevent the faithful servant of Christ from being cast down, there is this one and only remedy, to turn his eyes to the coming of Christ.*
- 3) Thomas Constable, *The crown (Gr. stephanos, garland) of glory that does not fade probably refers to glory as a crown that will come to every faithful Christian when Christ returns. It is probably not a material but a metaphorical crown (as is the crown of righteousness in 2 Timothy 4:8, the crown of life in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10, and the crown of joy in Philippians 4:1 and 1 Thessalonians 2:19–20) . . . Elders who are faithful now will receive glory that will not fade when Jesus Christ returns.*
- 4) David Walls, *A crown that will never fade away adds a wonderful touch. This expression emerges from one word (amarantinon), meaning "of amaranth," a flower which took its name from the word amaranton because it was thought to be a flower that did not fade or wither. This contrasts with the fading crowns of laurel leaves awarded to the winners in the Greek and Roman athletic games.*
- 5) Peter Davids, *Here the common image is used to indicate the eternal honor or reputation that elders who serve well will receive from Christ at his return. They may be despised on earth (and indeed rejected by their own neighbors), but they will be honored in heaven. And that is something well worth working and suffering for.*
- 6) Warren Wiersbe, *The only reward we ought to strive for is the "Well done!" of the Saviour and the unfading crown of glory that goes with it. What a joy it will be to place the crown at His feet (Rev. 4:10) and acknowledge that all we did was because of His grace and power (1 Cor. 15:10; 1 Peter 4:11). We will have no desire for personal glory when we see Jesus Christ face-to-face.*
- 7) Augustine (354-420 AD), *While thinking of himself as a martyr to be, Cyprian [210-258 AD] did not allow himself to forget that he was still a bishop and was more anxious about the account he was to give to the chief shepherd concerning the sheep committed to him than he was about the answer he would give to the unbelieving proconsul, concerning his own faith.*

B. His charge to those who are younger (5:5a), ***Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders.***

1. Those who are younger are to follow the sequence of submission

a. *Likewise* means *in the same way*.

- 1) Note 1 Peter 3:1, *Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives,*
- 2) As the elders submit to the authority of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd, younger believers are to submit to the authority of their elders.
- 3) Charles Swindoll, *Just as the older leaders are to conduct themselves in a Christlike, countercultural manner, so the younger must do so as well. Though the positions may differ, our calling to live in conformity with Christ never changes.*

- b. *you who are younger*
 - 1) David Walls, *Specifically, it identifies all those in the church who are not pastors and who are likely younger in the faith, in Christian maturity, and in experience.*
 - 2) Wayne Grudem, *concerning you who are younger, This would not imply that the others were free to rebel against the elders, but quite the opposite: if those who are likely to be most independent-minded and even at times rebellious against church leaders are commanded to be subject to the elders, then it follows that certainly everyone else must be subject to the elders as well.*
2. Submit to the authority of the elders.
- a. Roger Raymer, *Church leaders were usually older members. The younger members were to place themselves willingly under the authority of those who had been given the responsibility of leadership.*
 - b. Thomas Constable, *The younger people in the church were and are to take a position under the authority of the older people. The reason for this, though unexpressed, seems self-evident. The older have more experience in living (cf. Job 32:4).*
 - c. David Walls, *Just as pastors have a primary responsibility to shepherd the members of the flock, the members of the flock have a primary responsibility: "submission" to their pastors who have been given the responsibility of leadership.*
 - d. Wayne Grudem, *Be subject indicates a general willingness to support the elders' directions . . . except if they should ever direct one to sin (see note at 2:13).*
 - e. J. Ramsey Michaels, *There is no evidence . . . that Peter knows of any cases of rebellion against the elders' authority.*
 - f. Scot McKnight, *The advice to this group is to listen to the wisdom of the elders and live in accordance with their instruction; that is, they are "to submit." As stated in 2:13, the term submission should be understood as "living according to some constituted order"—here, the order established by the directives of the elders. And since they have already been instructed to lead, not by domination but by example, we can assume that submission here was not some onerous task.*
- C. His charge to the entire church (5:5b-9)
- 1. Strive for humility (5b), ***Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."***
 - a. *all of you*
 - 1) Peter directs verses 5b-9 to the entire church.
 - 2) Peter Davids, *Our author continues, addressing the church as a whole . . .*
 - 3) Wayne Grudem, *There should be a new verse and a new paragraph beginning with the sentence, Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.' This is because Peter has moved from a discussion of relationships between elders and others in the church to a distinct section (vv. 5b–7) dealing more generally with all interpersonal relationships in the church.*
 - b. *Clothe yourselves . . .with humility toward one another*
 - 1) Philippians 2:8, *And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*
 - 2) Wayne Grudem, *The term humility speaks of an attitude which puts others first, which thinks of the desires, needs, and ideas of others as more worthy of attention than one's own.*
 - 3) Thomas Constable, *All Christians, regardless of our age, should put on humility as a garment . . . The Greek word translated "clothe" is a rare one that comes from a word referring to the apron that slaves put on over their regular clothes. This garment prepared them for service (cf. John 13:4–15). We should be ready and eager to serve one another rather than expecting others to serve us (Mark 10:45).*
 - 4) Roger Raymer, *Peter may have alluded to Christ's girding Himself with a towel and teaching the disciples that humility is the prerequisite for service and service is the practice of humility (John 13:4–15).*
 - 5) Edmund Clowney, *Peter's call to humility is not just for the young. We all are to 'tie on humility' in our relations to one another . . . The humility of those who serve Christ is not merely the absence of pride or the awareness of limitations. Christian humility is realism that recognizes grace. Paul declares: 'For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?' Note 1 Corinthians 4:7.*

- 6) David Walls, *The combination of godly leadership and submissive followership should flow into an attitude of humble respect for one another throughout the church body. Clothe yourselves with humility suggests that humility should be a part of the believer's wardrobe . . . As Charles Spurgeon once wrote, "Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self." Humility is to be aware of personal strengths and to be thankful to God for them. Humility is to be aware of personal weaknesses and to be dependent upon God to help you improve in those areas. Beyond this, humility describes an attitude which puts others first, which thinks of the desires, needs, and ideas of others as more worthy of attention than your own.*
- 7) Charles Spurgeon, *Humility is a qualification for greatness. Do you know how to be little? You are learning to be great. Can you submit? You are learning to rule. My symbolic sketch of a perfected Christian would be a king keeping the door, or a prince feeding lambs, or, better still, the Master washing His disciples' feet.*

c. God's attitude toward pride and humility.

- 1) In verse 5, Peter quoted Proverbs 3:34, *Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor. He used the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament.*
- 2) Note James 4:6, James 4:6, *But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*
- 3) Roger Raymer, *Peter quoted Proverbs 3:34 to emphasize God's different attitudes toward the proud and the humble. God opposes (lit., "sets Himself against") the arrogant but grants favor and acceptance to the humble.*
- 4) David Walls, *God stands against pride, while extending grace to the humble. Why does God act this way? Because proud people invariably trust only in themselves, not God. Furthermore, the proud see themselves only with strengths, not weaknesses. They consider themselves the standard for others to follow. They display an attitude of arrogant superiority and generally exude a self-centered and self-sufficient odor.*
- 5) Peter Davids, *Those who are powerful and self-sufficient God rejects and destroys, while those who are humble and submitted to God (e.g., Num. 12:3; Judg. 6:15) he enriches with his gifts and exaltation. This teaching, which in the NT was supremely seen in the teaching of Jesus, is surely reason enough for any Christian humbly to serve another. And if this is the case, the church will operate effectively even under the stress of persecution.*
- 6) Edmund Clowney, *The humility that serves others is found at the throne of God's grace. God opposes the proud, as Proverbs 3:34 teaches, not only because pride despises our fellow-creatures, but because pride rebels against him. The proud person sets himself against God, and God, in turn, sets himself against the proud. In contrast, God lifts up those who cast themselves utterly upon his grace.*
- 7) Wayne Grudem, . . . *the proud seek glory for themselves while the humble give glory to God—and glory rightfully belongs to God, not us (1 Cor. 4:7; also 1 Cor. 1:26–31; Rev. 4:11). Grace is God's undeserved favour toward us, and is needed not only to save us from eternal judgment but also to enable us to live the Christian life.*

2. Place trust in God and not in self (6-7)

a. Choose humility (6), ***Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,***

1) *therefore*

- a) Since God gives grace to the humble (verse 5), pursue humility.
- b) Roger Raymer, *Knowing God's attitude should cause Christians not only to be subject to others but also to subject themselves deliberately to God's sovereign rule.*

2) Comments

- a) Roger Raymer, *The command humble yourselves . . . could be translated "allow yourselves to be humbled." Those who were suffering persecution for Christ's sake could be encouraged by the fact that the same mighty hand that let them suffer would one day lift (hypsose, "exalt") them up (cf. James 4:10).*
- b) David Walls, *In humbly following the Lord and submitting to him, we are bowing to his mighty hand or power . . . The followers of Christ are to humble themselves under God's mighty hand. Although it may allow us to experience deep pain and suffering, it will still protect us and bring us safely through . . . Those who obey God in this manner find the promise that God may lift you up in due time.*
- c) Peter Davids, *He has already mentioned that persecution comes to faithful Christians according to God's will (3:17), that it is not foreign to their existence as followers of Christ (4:12–16), and that it is in fact God's purifying fire (4:17–19). If this is so, the duty of the believer is not to resist (either attacking the persecutors or raging against God), but to "humble [himself] under the mighty hand of God." . . . Thus they are to see God at work behind their suffering and submit, allowing themselves to be brought low, for his purpose is that "he may exalt you in due time."*

- d) Wayne Grudem, *Neither the specific time nor the kind of 'exaltation' are specified, so it is best to understand the statement generally: 'that in the time God deems best, whether in this life or in the life to come, he may lift you up from your humble conditions and 'exalt' you in the way that seems best to him—perhaps only in terms of increased spiritual blessing and deeper fellowship with himself, perhaps also in terms of responsibility, reward, or honour which will be seen by others as well.*
- e) Charles Swindoll, . . . *Humbling ourselves means we accept whatever comes from Him. We follow our sovereign Lord along the smooth highways as well as the bumpy back roads. We don't manipulate events or people. We don't hurry things to conform to our own timetable. Instead, we allow our God to orchestrate things at His own tempo. Only in this way will the promise of 1 Peter 5:6 be fulfilled in us: "that He may exalt you at the proper time."*
- b. Entrust concerns to our caring God (7), ***casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.***
- 1) Roger Raymer, . . . quoting Psalm 55:22: *"Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you." All a believer's anxieties can be cast ... on Him. Christ sustains because He cares. A Christian's confidence rests in the fact that Christ is genuinely concerned for his welfare.*
 - 2) David Walls, *Cast means "to throw something upon someone or something else." This word suggests a deliberate decision of trust. We are to trust God with our anxiety, the things we worry about . . . God's care and concern for believers is constant, ongoing, and unending. God is not indifferent to the suffering of his followers, but desires our active, humble trust in him, especially during difficult days.*
 - 3) Peter Davids, *Our author not only instructs one to humble oneself, but he also explains how to do this. It is by "casting all your anxiety on him." The reason one can do this is that "he cares about you." . . . When pressures come on the Christian the proper response is not anxiety, for that comes out of a belief that one must take care of oneself and a lack of trust in God. It is rather a trusting commitment to God (prayer expressing this, as Paul states explicitly in Phil. 4:6) in the assurance that God indeed cares and that his caring does not lack the power or the will to do the very best for his own.*
 - 4) Warren Wiersbe, *How does God show His love and care for us when we give our cares to Him? I believe that He performs four wonderful ministries on our behalf. (1) He gives us the courage to face our cares honestly and not run away (Isa. 41:10). (2) He gives us the wisdom to understand the situation (James 1:5). (3) He gives us the strength to do what we must do (Phil. 4:13). And (4) He gives us the faith to trust Him to do the rest (Ps. 37:5).*
 - 5) Wayne Grudem, *Proper humility is attained by 'casting all your anxieties on him, for he cares about you'. But who then will care for me?' The answer is that God himself will care for our needs. He is able to do so far better than we are (his hand is 'mighty', v. 6), and he wants to do so, for he continually cares for his children. Therefore casting all your anxieties on him is the path to humility, freeing a person from constant concern for himself and enabling him or her truly to be concerned for the needs of others.*
 - 6) Charles Swindoll, *Submission to others + Humility before God - Worry of the world = Genuine Relief*

TO BE CONTINUED, LORD WILLING!

4. Be alert concerning the devil (8-9), ***Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.***
5. A prayer of blessing (5:10-11), ***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. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.***