

## 1 Peter 5:5-14

“Walk In Humility And Trust God Wholeheartedly”

Life lessons; that's the pool that Peter was drawing from as he issued some final exhortations unto the elders in the body of Christ. There were some essential elements pertaining to ministry that he'd gleaned throughout his time walking *with* the Lord and learning *from* the Lord that he was seeking to impart to the local church leaders. Things that if they'd just take *in* and grow *by* it would bless and benefit them tremendously, so to with you and with me. God has instructed us in His word, not because He wants to be a *burden* to us, but rather He wants to be a *blessing* to us. He wants to impart to us insight and understanding that if we would simply receive it, not resist it but respond appropriately to it, far from *hindering* us in life we would find it such a *help*. Far from burdening us we would find it such a blessing, Jesus didn't come to lay on you *this* trip, or enslave you in *that* way through *these* rules. He came that we might be set *free*, He came to liberate us from the bondage that sin had imposed upon us... So, far from God's word (the instructions and exhortations found therein) making for your *incarceration* (as the world or Satan would have you believe) in reality it makes for your *liberation*. As Jesus said, "...*if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*" John 8:36 So when it comes to God's word we want to be like sponges soaking it up, we want to feast on it and learn all that we can from it.

I don't want to have to go through things unnecessarily in order to learn the lesson that I could've received had I only taken the time to take in what God has already shared with me in His word. Here's what I'm saying pertaining to 1<sup>st</sup> Peter Ch 5, if I can glean and grow by the things that life has taught the apostle Peter I want to be all ears, saved some heartache and placed in a better position to avail myself to the Lord, that He might use my life and be glorified *through* my life.

The exhortation initially as you recall was to the shepherds, now he turns his attention to the sheep. We spoke last week about the fact that God's people need good/godly leaders. Well equally true is that good leaders need good followers, it doesn't really matter how good a leader is if people refuse to submit or subject themselves to him he won't really benefit anyone. God has established order in the body of Christ, there's an order of authority in every arena of life, at work, in society, governmentally, doesn't matter; there's an order of authority. The church is no exception, we're responsible to be in subjection to the godly leaders that God places over us, it's a simple aspect of our obedience unto the Lord. So Peter continues.

Vs5-7

He begins Vs 5 with the word, “Likewise,” the idea being, “I’ve issued an exhortation to the leaders, now in like manner I have an exhortation for the rest of you,” the exhortation has gone out to the leadership *specifically*, now for the remainder of the body of Christ *generally*. He mentions the younger people and tells the younger to submit themselves to their elders. Now from a practical standpoint it’s absolutely true that younger people should respect and subject themselves to those who are older. We read in the book of Leviticus, “*You shall rise before the gray headed and honor the presence of an old man, and fear your God: I am the Lord.*” Lev 19:32 We’re to treat the elderly among us with the utmost of respect. Peter says, “Submit yourselves to your elders.”

with regard to the spiritual *principle* that’s at hand as we pointed out last week physical age is not necessarily a guarantee of spiritual maturity. So regarding an appropriate application of what’s before us we need to understand that what Peter is saying to us here is that younger believers (believers that are young in the Lord) need to submit to the authority that God has entrusted to those who are the spiritual leaders in the local assembly.

The word “submit” here speaks of a “voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden.” Which is to say that we shouldn’t be difficult for our leaders but rather we should be doing all that we can to ensure forward momentum in the body of Christ.

Of course Peter underscores here immediately that, that kind of mentality needs to be coursing throughout each of us individually, it’s not something that’s directed specifically to one group of people. As believers in general we all need to have an attitude that is willing to place the needs of others before our own, an attitude of cooperating, assuming the responsibility and carrying a burden. As Paul the apostle said in Gal 6:2, “*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*” You see, that’s a “one another” command, it’s for all of us, none of us should be going at this thing alone, we should be leaning *upon* and draw strength *from* one another in turbulent times, or difficult days. So Peter quickly emphasizes the point, “Yes, *all* of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility.”

Another life lesson comes into focus for us here doesn’t it? How’s that? It’s found in the word, “clothed.” The word speaks of the apron of a slave that he would tie around himself as he began to serve others...you’re familiar with the story, there they were on the night of the Lord’s betrayal. There in the upper room; and we read (Jhn 13) that supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, *rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.*

After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded... What's that? Listen, Jesus "clothed" Himself with humility that He might serve others rather than He Himself being served.

Here's the point; each of us should have the heart of a servant toward one another, ministering in love *to* one another, being clothed in humility... One commentator put it like this, "...humility is the prerequisite for service and service is the practice of humility (John 13:4-15)."<sup>1</sup> Service and submission, they're earmarks of humility. Being willing to serve *not* just in a high profile "everybody can see me" kind of position, but being willing to perform the lowest and littlest services for the Lord's sake. What are some other earmarks of humility? A conscious recognition of our own *inability* to do *anything* apart from God; someone who is clothed in humility is willing to be ignored of men. That is, I don't need the accolades or acknowledgment of man before I'm willing to serve the Lord. It doesn't matter to me if man recognizes me or my service, why? Because I'm serving the Lord, and the Lord's reward is sure.

The one who's clothed with humility isn't really mindful of them self or *self*-centered, they're mindful of others, they're others centered, others oriented. You see if I'm clothed with humility I'll be cheerfully/happily willing to put away my own agenda that I might serve the Lord's agenda, *even* when His agenda is expressed through someone else, in this case a leader in the body of Christ.

So, submit yourselves to your elders and all of us should have a servant's heart and mind toward one another being clothed with humility, why? "For God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

In quoting Prov 3:34 Peter really brings us right to the epicenter of so many of the problems that arise in the body of Christ, where so much of the strife stems from. He shares with us 2 reasons why we *should* be clothed in humility and the one reason we so often won't... What are the 2 reasons that we should be clothed in humility? 1 negative, 1 positive, to the negative #1 God *resists* the proud, this word "resists" here isn't really a nice word, it's not really a word that means to try and hold back, like we might think of resisting something, trying to keep ourselves from partaking of something. It's a word that more literally means to "range in battle against," God doesn't merely "resist" the proud as we might think the word indicates, He literally *opposes* or takes His stand *against* the proud.

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<sup>1</sup> Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., and Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-c1985). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (2:856). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> reason that we need to be clothed with humility is to the positive. He “gives grace to the humble,” unmerited; unearned, undeserved favor comes to the humble. Yet for some reason we struggle with the practical application found in walking in humility, putting our own agenda aside to serve others and to submit to those in authority over us, why is that? Well, we’ve already mentioned it haven’t we? It’s called *pride*.

We puff ourselves up in pride, we don’t want to serve we want to be served, we don’t want to submit we want to be submitted to, yet the bible is clear; God hates pride. As you survey the 6<sup>th</sup> Ch of the book of Proverbs you discover 6 things that the Lord hates, yes, 7 that are an abomination to Him. . . #1 on the list “a proud look,” it’s almost as if our pride is an unspoken battle cry against the Lord, it beckons Him to stand in opposition to us. Here’s what Peter is saying, when we don’t submit to godly authority, when we don’t clothe ourselves in humility, we stand in opposition *to* God we meet the resistance *of* God. For God resists the proud, but gives *grace* to the humble. In Isaiah 57:15 we read, “*For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, To revive the spirit of the humble, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones.’*” God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. You see do you want to take your stand *against* God, or be a recipient of the *grace* of God?

Vs6-7

Couple things here, 1<sup>st</sup> of all I suppose that we do well to note the fact that another exercise in humility is a conscientious casting of our cares *upon* God and a surrendering of all my fears *to* God rather than trying to tackle all of life’s troubles on my own (again that’s called pride). We’ll talk more on that in just a moment, before we do I want to get back to Vs 6 and draw attention to the fact that the verb that’s been translated “humble yourselves” is in what’s known as the “passive voice.”

What that means is that rather than the subject doing the acting, the subject is being acted upon, which is to say that the subject of the verb (in this case you and me) is passive in God’s hands and is acted upon by Him. In other words Peter is saying that God is utilizing the various circumstances and hardships *of* our lives to work the fruit of humility *into* our lives. In reality Peter is saying, “Therefore allow yourselves to be humbled under the mighty hand of God.” Don’t react in a such a way as to resist the molding process, the refiner’s fire, the taking of your life and the making of your life what He wants it to be. Remember when you prayed, “Oh God just take me and make of me whatever You desire, I want to be clay in Your hands, mold me, shape me, have Your way and be glorified *in* me.” Remember that? Well, why then are you fighting against it? Do you want God to take you and make of you an instrument through which He can flow, through which He can show Himself strong on your behalf? Well, I’ve often said that “*humility equals usability*,” but the humbling process can be rough.

Someone once said, “He must take a low place before God, who would take a high place before men.” To the degree that God would lift you up He’ll first take you low...

The time of your *exaltation* is coming, 1<sup>st</sup> comes the *humiliation*, not humiliation in the sense of shame that we might think of, but a deep inner working of humility. The bible says, “*Before destruction the heart of a man is haughty, And before honor is humility.*” Prov 18:12 The time of your exaltation is coming, He will exalt you in due time, (at the perfect time) whether that be here or in eternity I can’t tell you, because I don’t know God’s specific plan for you. But God has redeemed you, He’s desperately in love *with* you and has a plan to exalt you; you wait, you watch, and you’ll see. Meanwhile receive the inner working of humility...

Vs7

The word “casting” here is a very forcible word, it’s not a leisurely kind of laying down but a conscientious/energetic effort, the idea being that the anxieties, the pressures, the stress and burdens of your life are heavy, they difficult to bear and it takes great concentration and a pointed/purposed effort to cast them upon Christ as opposed to shouldering them yourself. No one will argue the fact that it’s a discipline to cast your concerns to the feet of Jesus and not really worry about it anymore. Yet at the same time we need to recognize the fact that anything less is to not really believe in the promises of God to tend *to* us and take care *of* us.

We worry about things that God has told us not to worry about don’t we? Remember these words? “*Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?*” Matthew 6:25 “Don’t worry about my life!?” That’s my primary point of concern! What, you don’t trust in the word of God, the promise of God to take care of you? We wrestle with it don’t we? Jesus said, Consider the birds of the air, they don’t sow, they don’t reap, yet your heavenly Father feeds them all, now don’t you think He considers you of more value than some birds? “Well, when you put it like that...” Here’s another one, “*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*” Philippians 4:6 Translation; don’t worry about *anything* pray about *everything* and trust God to take care of your life. “Casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you.”

That’s what it all boils down to isn’t it? Do we really believe that God cares for us?

In reality the fact that God cares for us is one of the fundamental differences that distinguishes Christianity from what one might consider to be any other “*religion*.” Religion is occupied with somehow seeking to get the attention of God, somehow gaining the approval of God or peaking the interests of God as to where Christianity says that it’s not about our reaching out to God out of our love for Him. It’s about God’s reaching down to us in His love for us, the fact that God cares for us and so *loves* us that He’s given His only Son for us and having provided His best for us in Christ how will He then not freely give us all things. That is, having given His Son for us how then would He with hold anything that’s beneficial for us? You see we have to come to the point whereby we actually believe the word of God, that God cares for us, therefore we can cast our cares upon Him.

Vs8-9

More fingerprints of Peter’s personal life lessons here, he knew all about the shifty, stealthy, stalking ways of the devil. He made the mistake of underestimating the enemy and it cost him dearly. Again it was the night of the betrayal, Jesus was telling them that they would all be made to stumble because of Him as it was written, “I will strike the Shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.” Peter began to act offended, declaring that he would *never* deny his Lord, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail, and when you’ve returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”

“Simon, Satan wants to destroy your life, watch, be ready, resist him!” Had Peter obeyed these very words the night Jesus was arrested he wouldn’t have gone to sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane; he wouldn’t have attacked Malchus with the sword or denied the Lord. But he didn’t take the warning of the Lord’s word seriously, he trusted in his own self will rather than realizing that the spirit is indeed willing but he flesh is weak.

But having failed in that moment what did he do? He repented *of* those things and learned *from* those things and now in obedience to the Lord he’s seeking to strengthen the brethren so as not to fall *prey* to those things. “Be sober” or keep a clear head, “Be vigilant” or remain watchful; don’t be ignorant of your enemy’s devices. Don’t be deceived, your adversary, your opponent the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He’s got eyes *upon* you, he’s looking to exploit weaknesses that he spots *in* you so as to destroy/devour you.

The bible mentions multiple ways that Satan might confront you, he may come as a fowler (Ps 91:3), one who captures birds. The fowler lurks secretly, quietly, never really wanting to reveal the fact that he's on the scene personally, yet the snare has been set and he waits patiently. 2<sup>nd</sup> Cor 11:14 tells us that Satan may present himself as an angel of light, giving the appearance of that which is good, or glorious, something attractive and appealing (like bait on a hook). Here we're reading that Satan comes against as a roaring lion, loudly, ferociously, viciously, seeking to employ intimidation and fear.

Note his agenda, he's not looking for a midnight snack, he wants to completely consume you, to destroy and devour you. Jesus said it like this, *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."* John 10:10

He's not out to make you miserable, that's just a bonus along the way, he's trying to utterly wipe you out. To devour you, entangle you in worldly cares, or get you pursuing other priorities until ultimately he's completely and utterly destroyed your life.

Now, I've heard others teach that in reality the roaring lion is the old toothless lion of the pride and though he's got all the intimidation he really has no power so don't buy the lie Satan is in reality powerless against you. Though it's true that through the blood of Christ and the power of the Spirit that Jesus has effectively triumphed over the enemy and he can do nothing to you apart from the sovereign approval of God for whatever reasons God has ordained... I hesitate to put much stock in the "powerless, full of hot air with out anything to really back it up" position that many have taught. The scriptures don't really indicate that Satan isn't to be taken seriously as though he's all bark and no bite.

As a matter of fact the scriptures utilize the phrase "roaring lion" as the polar opposite to "all bark and no bite." Concerning the prophecy of the cross we read in Ps 22 *"They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion."* Ps 22:12 Jeremiah prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem saying, *"The young lions roared at him, and growled; They made his land waste; His cities are burned, without inhabitant."* Jer 2:15 The proverbs tell us, *"The king's wrath is like the roaring of a lion, But his favor is like dew on the grass."* Proverbs 19:12 The implication being that his wrath isn't an empty threat of simple intimidation with out ramification. I'll give you one more, Ezekiel 22:25 *"The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey; they have devoured people; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in her midst."* So even though the "all bark no bite" position makes us feel better, I'm not sure there's much substance to it, the scripture places "roaring lions" in a far from harmless kind of a light, they ravage and destroy, they devour their prey, don't underestimate your enemy, Peter did and it cost him, he's seeking to spare you and me the same pain.

So then what are you to do? 3 Things, “Be sober (keep your head clear), be vigilant (that is stay alert and watchful) and #3 (Vs 9) Resist him steadfast in the faith.”

Now there are things that the bible tells us to flee from, we’re to flee temptation, sexual immorality, idolatry, youthful lusts etc... When it comes to Satan you are nowhere advised to flee *from* him but rather you are exhorted to *withstand* him, to oppose him, to make you stand against him. Why? Well, are you going to out run him? Never turn your back on the enemy, as you survey the weapons of your warfare in Eph Ch 6 you’ll note that every piece of armor is frontal; there’s nothing to cover your back. You’re not to flee, you’re to fight, to stand, withstand and move forward, how so, in your own strength? No, we’re to “...*be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.*” Eph 6:10 Paul told the Corinthians, “...*the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God,*” 2 Cor 10:4-5 Or as we have it here, resist him “steadfast in the faith.” Just as David didn’t flee from Goliath but took the offensive and moved forward in the fight trusting in the Lord and leaning not on his own understanding so we take our stand in the name Jesus Christ James tells us the same thing, “...*submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*” James 4:7 You fight till he flees, never back down, never back off, don’t give up and don’t give in, pray more, get in God’s word more, share the love of Christ even more and take heart that you’re not alone in the fight, you’ve got brothers and sisters all over this planet standing *with* you engaging the enemy the same *as* you, they’re fighting *alongside* you don’t abandon ship.

Vs10-11

The glorious hope of the gospel, that God has called us (by His grace) to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. Through the sacrifice of Himself upon the altar of the cross Jesus has paid the full penalty price for our sins, He’s made a way where there was no way. He’s the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except through Him. It’s by Christ; it’s through Jesus that God has called us to His eternal glory.

Peter says that God has a plan for you, He’s doing a work in you, and after you’ve suffered a while (after you’ve been refined in the fire) may He perfect (that is mend) you, stabilize you, strengthen you and settle you (it’s a word that speaks of a firm foundation). That you not be tossed to and fro or easily carried about with various and sundry winds of doctrine, but that you would have a firm foundation in Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

At this point it’s probable that Peter picks up the pen and finishes the letter himself, notice.

Vs12-14

More than likely Silvanus is the same Silas that was with Paul on his missionary journeys, a faithful right hand man. Didn't need the spotlight, content serving in whatever way accomplished God's agenda. Babylon could mean the city of Babylon or it could be a cryptic code for Rome, that's what most believe since there was persecution breaking loose that Peter was keeping some anonymity for the church in Rome ("She" being the church).

Mark would be the same John Mark that wrote the gospel of Mark, this links him closely to Peter like Timothy was to Paul (another reason that most people think that Mark's gospel was primarily fueled through Peter's report).

As far as the kiss of love it was a cultural thing, the men would greet the men and the women the women, for us a handshake of love will be just fine ☺.

Peter signs off with a "Peace out" to all who are in Christ Jesus. Really it's only those who are in Christ who can know true peace, with out Christ there's no true peace, how important it is to make peace *with God through Christ* that we might experience the peace *of God in Christ*.

Be clothed in humility, serve Christ whole heartedly, fight the good fight of faith steadfastly, unwaveringly, and to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever...Amen.

Prayer Points:

God we thank You for Your goodness, that You care for us, that You're always with us and you never leave nor forsake us. Help us to have a heart of submission both to You and toward one another, to walk in humility, serving you diligently and resisting the roaring lion steadfastly in the faith. May we fight the good fight to the glory of Your name.

You know whether you're a believer or not a believer Satan's agenda remains the same, he's not your buddy, he isn't all about good times and great memories. He wants to destroy your life, he wants to distract you from your true need for Christ, and destroy your life. But God is calling you to eternal glory by Jesus Christ Jesus poured out His blood for you, He was delivered up to the cross because of our sins, and He was raised up from the dead that we might stand forgiven before God. God doesn't ask you to understand it, He asks you to trust Him for it. If God is dealing with you right where you're at and you know you need to be forgiven of your sin and washed clean before Him, you may be confused God can make it real clear, just open your heart to Jesus and give your life to Him. The bible says that whosoever will, may come, the choice is yours...do it today.