

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 23RD - 24TH, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 PETER

ELDER & OVERSEER (1 PETER 5:1-4) A WITNESS TO THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST

Peter qualified his ability to speak into these matters because he was a fellow elder, but he also was a witness to Christ's sufferings!

- Many witnessed the sufferings of Christ but were not transformed by what was done on the cross. The transforming power of the cross must mark our lives!

WHO IS YOUR ELDER?

This section was written for the elders of the church. Elders are those who serve as leaders within the church.

- This idea of an elder comes from Jewish culture, meaning *someone who is mature and wise*. Hopefully, these traits are found in an older person, but it is not about a specific age.

WHAT LEADERS IN THE CHURCH MUST DO

The first part of leadership is to **shepherd the flock of God, being an overseer** just as Peter was instructed to do when he was restored.

- One of the best ways that can be used to shepherd God's flock is by *having a heart that looks like Christ*. One that is ready to give its life for the good of others.

THE MOTIVE FOR SERVING

An elder should lead out of a desire to serve the Lord **because of a calling**, not for the money that will be received or for power that can be lorded over people.

- Lording cannot be mistaken for leading, which our culture tends to do. **Lording means to rule forcefully**, but **leading guides others by maturing them**.

AN EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP

The elders are to be an example to us, which means **these same traits should be applied to our lives as we disciple others**.

- We have all been entrusted with the responsibility of the spiritual care of certain people. **Do we do it with an eagerness to serve, without being harsh or forceful, or for what we can get?**

A CROWN OF GLORY

It is important to remember that **Christ is the "Chief Shepherd"** and is returning! Faithful shepherds are promised a crown of glory.

- James 1:12: "Blessed is the one who endures trials, because **when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.**"

HUMBLE RESISTANCE (1 PETER 5:5-9)

MUTUAL SUBMISSION

We should be in a place of submission to those in leadership over us. **Submission** means to **voluntarily yield rights or will to someone else's as an expression of love**.

- **There is freedom when we submit to God** by being able to come under others' authority for His sake. This is a theme that has played out throughout the entire letter.

CLOTHED IN HUMILITY

In v.5, Peter is drawing on the image of Christ putting on the servant's robe to wash the disciples' feet.

- **If we fail to humble ourselves, then God will oppose us! We must see ourselves for who we truly are**, not self-deprecating, but in humility, just like the tax collector in Luke 18.

CHRIST WILL LIFT US UP

Peter understood the pitfalls of pride and the places it leads, as seen when he boasted he would never deny Christ.

- **We can either choose to be humble or be humbled by God**. Either way, **when we decide to turn our eyes to Christ, He will lift us up**, just as He did with Peter's restoration.

AN INTENTIONAL DECISION TO TRUST

Our anxieties pull us in different directions, not allowing us to see what lies before us. This often causes us to rely on our strengths.

- When we finally look toward God, we see that **we were more concerned with matters of this world than the Kingdom**. **God's caring for us is constant, ongoing, and unending**.

LIKE A ROARING LION

A vivid image for the first-century Christian. Behind those in charge were principalities and spiritual forces. The same holds true today.

- He can roar at us through **persecution**
- He can roar at us through **temptation**.
- He roars through **blasphemies and accusations against God**

YOUR DESTRUCTION

One of the greatest deceptions of Satan is that he can't harm us if we don't choose him. But there is a second that is even more significant: **Satan doesn't exist at all**.

- Satan will use everything at his disposal to devour you. Sometimes he will make you **miserable**, but other times he may use **pleasure for your destruction**.

WE ARE NOT HELPLESS!

We have been given the Holy Spirit, which gives us access to the armor of God so we can resist Satan. **But this requires action on our part!**

- Peter calls on us to do the very thing he failed to do in the garden, which was to watch and pray. **Sometimes Satan lets us do the work for him. So we must have a humble heart and be in fellowship, prayer, and the Word.**

WE ARE NOT ALONE

We are never alone in our suffering. Some Christians are going through or have gone through the same struggles as you.

- **Satan wants you to be isolated in your suffering**. That is why **it is so important to be in community**, to encourage and build each other up!

FINAL GREETING (1 PETER 5:10-14)

A DOXOLOGY

Peter concludes this letter with a prayer about **the restorative power of Christ**, knowing from experience the pointless pursuit of trying to face suffering and danger under our own strength.

- **We can face everything that lies ahead because God is faithful to restore everything that was/is broken in us.**

CHRIST GIVES US THE COURAGE TO GO ON

Not only will He restore us, but He will establish, strengthen and support us!

- As Christ's Church, He will give us the strength to hold our position if we remain firm on His foundation. With his principalities and powers, Satan wants to destroy us because **we are made in the very image of God. But Christ is faithful!**

"AFTER YOU HAVE SUFFERED A LITTLE WHILE"

Suffering should be expected if we call ourselves followers of Christ because, **in our sufferings, we are purified!**

- How can we ever be **a church that knows how to radically love the broken** unless we have been broken but then also restored, established, strengthened, and supported. **We must remember our past!**

BROUGHT INTO HIS ETERNAL GLORY

After we have suffered, we are called into His eternal glory. **This is not our home!**

- This world will encompass suffering, but we have hope for our future glory. One in which we will be **purified, perfected** in complete **victory**, in God's **presence** reflecting His Glory, and forever enjoying His constant **fellowship**.

FINAL GREETING

We are left with the final greeting from Peter and those helping him, including Silvanus (Silas), she who is in Babylon (the church in Rome), and Mark.

- Just as Silvanus helped interpret the letter and answer questions they may have had, **we too have people in our lives to help us learn and understand the Bible**.

LEADERS ARE AN EXAMPLE

- God has placed pastors and elders in a place of authority to lead and shepherd us.
- Not only are they responsible for helping and leading people, but we are called to disciple others as well.
- **To do this, we must have a heart that looks like Christ's**.

WE ARE NOT ALONE AND HELPLESS

- We cannot be motivated by pride. If so, we won't be able to receive God's grace in our lives.
- We need His grace as we fight our anxieties, so we can be sober-minded and alert to resist the devil.
- **We need fellowship. We need to be in prayer. We need to read the Word.**

WE HAVE A FUTURE HOPE

- God purifies us to look more like Him as we suffer in this world.
- We have the **protective care of God** that will restore, establish, strengthen, and support us.
- **We are being brought into His eternal glory, for this is not our home!**

WE ARE A TESTIMONY TO THE BROKEN

- Peter's final words left us with the phrase "the true grace of God," in which we are to stand firm.
- We need to understand the magnitude of how **unworthy, unjustified, and extraordinary the gift of grace is**.
- **Because of this, we should be a testimony to the world with our radical love!**