



“Therefore

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1 PETER 5:6-7



## Lesson 5 – 1 Peter 5:1-14

It has been said that the church rises and falls on the spiritual quality of its leaders. Immature leaders motivated by personal gain seem to replicate their kind among the flock. Before saying goodbye in his final chapter, Peter strongly challenges the leaders to serve by example, with motives and methods worthy of their high calling. He then exhorts all believers to humbly submit to God and to one another and to stand strong in the face of the enemy's resistance.

### **Memory Verse:**

*"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." 1 Peter 5:6–7*

Review this verse often throughout the week. Write it out a couple of times to help you commit it to memory. By week's end, try to notice *how* and *where* you are able to it into practice. Note your results on the last page of your homework.

### **FIRST DAY – 1 PETER 5:1-4**

Begin your study each day with a word of prayer.

Read 1 Peter 5:1–14.

Peter addresses this portion of his letter to the elders who serve the church congregation. The word *elder* refers to those officials who serve as pastoral leaders, occupying a position that is crucial to believers experiencing suffering and persecution. Peter includes himself as a *fellow elder*—one of them.

1. Notice the two significant statements Peter makes regarding himself. v. 1

a. He was a witness of what?

Proclaiming himself a witness of Christ's sufferings would cause Peter to recall the most painful time of his own life. Think back to the kind of witness Peter was at the time of Christ's death. (See Matthew 26:31–35; Luke 22:31; Luke 22:54–62.)

- b. Even though he initially failed Jesus as a witness, in what way would Peter be included as a partaker?

At the time Peter wrote this letter, he was a church leader who had sinned, repented, and been restored by God's grace, allowing him to be included as one who would share in Christ's glory. He has become a pillar of the Jerusalem church but wrote as a fellow elder. He states that a pastor's primary role is to *shepherd the flock of God*.

- 2. In verses 2–3, Peter summarizes the pastor's role. Using your resources, look up the word *shepherd* and write a definition.
- 3. In verses 2–3, Peter highlights the right and wrong ways to shepherd the flock of God. Jot down the descriptive words he uses in the following for:
  - a. Wrong motives (v. 2):
  - b. Right motives (v. 2):
  - c. Wrong methods (v. 3):
  - d. Right methods (v. 3):

In order to better understand Peter's heart on this matter and the emphasis of his words, take some time to carefully read through the Old Testament passage of Ezekiel 34. In it is a graphic portrayal of the problems with irresponsible shepherds and the detrimental effects upon God's flock. Then answer the questions below . . .

- a. How does God feel about these shepherds? What will He do with them?
  - b. Contrast their behavior with that of the True Shepherd.
  - c. What do you learn in this passage about God's love and care for His flock?
  - d. The perspective Peter put forth in chapter 5 was indelibly written on his heart. See John 21:15–17 to why this was so; record your thoughts on it.
  - e. Think about it: What are some of the duties of the pastor-shepherds in your own church? Take a moment to pray for them and their huge responsibility.
4. Peter concludes this section of the passage by focusing on the highest motive for shepherding God's people; what is it? What reward will the shepherd receive? v. 4

The *Crown of glory* is not a literal crown that each person will wear, rather a common glory that all pastors/leaders will share—those who are faithful servants as well as those who have persevered through suffering.

5. Personal: How does knowing you will share in this *Crown of glory* encourage *you* to continue serving in hope?

## **SECOND DAY – 1 PETER 5:5-7**

Read 1 Peter 5:5–7.

The remainder of the chapter is directed to those in the church who are not pastors, but are most likely younger in terms of their Christian maturity and experience. The pastor's responsibility is to shepherd the flock, and the members of the flock have the responsibility to submit to those in leadership over them. Again, Peter issues a command rather than an option. The word *submit* used here means to *defer to the authority of another*. It indicates a cooperative spirit and a willingness to support the pastor.

1. What motive is there for believers to be submissive? v. 5

a. How does Hebrews 13:17 support what Peter is stating in verse 5?

The combination of godly leaders supported by submissive followers will result in the mutual respect and humility between all members in the body of Christ. Peter's exhortation to be "clothed with humility" suggests that this virtue should be a part of the believer's spiritual wardrobe.

2. Briefly describe the occasion and example of humility displayed by Jesus in each of the following passages . . .

a. John 13:1–17 (Consider the impact this scene would have on Peter's mind and heart.)

b. Philippians 2:1–11 (Paul the Apostle shared here about the unity that comes through humility, modeled by Jesus Christ that we are to follow.)

c. Personal: Charles Spurgeon wrote that, "*Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self.*" By doing so, we can be made aware of our own strengths and weaknesses. We can also commit these to God to help us improve where needed. How can this help *you* to follow Christ's example in serving others?

Notice that the verbs Peter uses in verse 5 are in the present tense, meaning that God *continually opposes* the proud—those who think they do not need to listen to Him. But He *continually give grace* to those who listen and humbly follow Him, particularly in the midst of suffering and persecution.

3. What does Peter mean when he says: “*Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God*” (v. 6)? What happens to those who follow this command?

Is the believer who trusts God fully trusting in Him if he/she hangs on to their worries, problems, and struggles in life? The answer to fear and worry is found in verse 7: “*Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*” Below are three passages that contain the secret to knowing how to cast your care on Him and the results you will achieve. Write down what you discover here and begin applying these principles.

- Psalm 55:22
  
- Matthew 11:28
  
- Philippians 4:6–7

### **THIRD DAY – 1 PETER 5:8-9a**

Read 1 Peter 5:8–9 for review.

If you cast yourself and your cares on God, you are safe. If you do not, Satan will gain the advantage. C.S. Lewis once said, “*The two mistakes Christians make in talking about Satan are that we either joke about him or we ignore him.*” Neither of these can be an option for the believer. The words *be sober* and *be vigilant* could better be translated as *be self-controlled* and *alert*. The true intent here means *pay attention—wake up!* It is a strong warning for every Christian to realize that we are in a life-and-death spiritual battle and the stakes are very high!

All of the persecution believers will ever face comes down to one source: “*your enemy the devil.*” He is known by various names in Scripture: *Lucifer, Accuser, Beelzebub, Destroyer, and Satan*. Regardless of what you call him, he is God’s archenemy. As such, he is also the enemy of God’s

people and the source of all evil in the world. Although he has no power over God, he does what he can to divide and destroy those who belong to God. We must learn to be aware of his tactics and always be on guard.

1. How much do you know about this “roaring lion” that is seeking to devour you? It is vital that you have a correct understanding of the person and work of Satan and his demonic forces in the world. Here’s your opportunity to examine some of his activities, limitations, and ultimate destiny. Look up the references that will enable you to say that *you are not ignorant of his devices* (2 Corinthians 2:11)!

a. Satan's **activities** include:

- Job 1:7
- Matthew 13:19
- 2 Corinthians 4:4
- 2 Corinthians 11:14
- Ephesians 6:16
- 1 Thessalonians 2:18

b. Satan's **limitations**:

- Job 1:12
- James 4:7
- 1 John 2:13b
- 1 John 5:18
- Revelation 12:10–11

c. Satan's ***destiny***:

- Matthew 25:41
- John 16:11
- Romans 16:20
- 1 John 3:8
- Revelation 20:2–3
- Revelation 20:10

2. From the exercise you just completed, what stands out to you? Why?

3. What instruction does Peter give in verse 9 about how you must deal with Satan?

- a. The word *resist* is a reference to maintaining a position of defense rather than one of attack. What do *you* think is the best way to resist him and remain steadfast in the faith?

**FOURTH DAY – 1 PETER 5:9b-14**

Read 1 Peter 5:9-14.

1. What statement does Peter make about universal suffering in verse 9?

2. How does this reality underscore the importance of believers praying for one another? Do you take this to heart?



3. In terms of the bigger picture, what does Peter say God will do? v. 10

4. Which of these saving grace actions are you most in need of right now? Why?

In verses 12–14, Peter writes his final thoughts using the first-century custom of offering greetings at the conclusion of his letter. He mentions Silas, who served as Peter’s secretary, taking down the dictation of this letter as Peter spoke it into existence.

5. For what reason does Peter say he wrote this letter? v. 12

The “kiss of love” (v. 14) was a form of greeting popular with the early church. It represented unity and expressed love among the believers. Today a handshake or hug is the equivalent. But no matter what greeting is used, the point is that we are to let our love for others show through our actions.

Peter ends his letter as he began it, by wishing the believers the peace that comes to all those who are in Christ Jesus. Do *you* have His peace right now? If not, would you like to? Just bow in His presence and invite Him into your heart by repeating these words: *“Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner in need of Your forgiveness. I ask You right now to be my Savior and Lord. I thank You for dying for me and rising again from the dead and for granting me Your peace that passes all understanding.”*

If you prayed this prayer of forgiveness, please tell your group leader or pastor (or someone you trust) today as an open profession of your new-found faith. God bless you and welcome to the family of God!

→ Memory Verse Review: Can you recite your memory verse? Have you been able to put it into practice this week?