

Brianna and Grant have been out of town for two weeks and so it has just been Calvin and I. We have had some fun, but we are both ready for them to be back. Calvin especially has had a hard time without his constant playing buddy. One thing I have had to remind him of is that it will only be hard for a little while, and then they will come back.

In a much larger sense, that is true for life. And that has been a bit of the theme of 1 Peter. In this life of exile we have to suffer for a little while, but glory forever is coming. We are at the end of 1 Peter now. And Peter starts to conclude his letter. He gives some parting words but all of them have this theme. We have to endure now because something better is coming.

Turn with me to 1 Peter 5:1-12

### **I. [Elders] Shepherd like the chief shepherd (v. 1-4).**

Peter directs these first instructions towards the elders.

Those who are serving as lay elders and those serving as pastors.

Elders, we are to shepherd the people of God like Jesus does.

We should be shepherded like the good shepherd.

He is the supreme example and the model of ministry.

Verse 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:"**

Notice first that Peter does not lord these instructions over us.

He exhorts and encourages us as an elder himself.

As someone who pastors and leads churches.

He gives these instructions as one of us.

He could call himself the chief apostle or the rock of the church.

But he doesn't claim any title for himself here other than fellow elder.

He also refers to himself as a witness of the sufferings of Christ.

The teachings of Peter on suffering are not theoretical.

Sometimes you hear theologians sitting up in ivory towers opining about theology.

Or talking about how the poor and weak should approach life.  
This is not what Peter is doing.  
Peter is teaching us about suffering because He saw Jesus.  
With His own eyes He watched Christ crucified.  
He watched Jesus endure suffering.  
He himself has endured suffering.  
And so based on that, he directs and instructs us.

He calls himself a partaker of the glory to be revealed.  
We are all waiting for the glory.  
Right now this life is filled with suffering.  
But we know that glory is coming one day.  
Peter calls himself a partaker of that glory.

I think this is partially a reference to the transfiguration.  
Peter got to be on top of the mountain.  
He saw Jesus Christ reveal the fullness of His glory.  
He knows what is coming.  
So when Peter writes about suffering.  
When he tells us that we will suffer for a little while, but glory is coming.  
He does not write this as someone with mere hope.  
He does not write this as someone who just has some ideas about the future.  
He has already seen the glory with his own eyes.  
He knows that it will all be worth it.

Verse 2, **"shepherd the flock of God that is among you,"**

There are two things to see here.  
First, notice how Peter describes the ministry of elders.  
We are called to shepherd.  
Not to dominate.  
Not to lead.  
Not to vision cast.  
We are to shepherd and to care for the sheep.

Because our church is the flock of God.  
You are not our sheep.  
You don't belong to me or TBF ultimately.  
You are the sheep of God.  
And elders need to treat you like it.

I also see he clarifies that this is among you.  
We are to shepherd and lead the sheep God has given us.  
Which implies the flock has people who are identified as being part of it.  
Some pastors try to steal other sheep.  
They don't try to rescue lost sheep.  
They don't try to preach the gospel to non-Christians.  
They want and can even encourage people in other churches to leave and come here.  
That does not seem to be the attitude we are to have.  
We are to just shepherd and take care of the sheep God brings us.

You might be tempted to think this part does not apply to you.  
Most of us in this room are not elders or pastors.  
But this is for all of us.  
Because we should be aiming to live like elders do.  
Elders and pastors provide an example of holiness.  
But also this passage tells us what kind of elders you should expect.  
This is the behavior that you should hold myself and the elders to.  
You don't get to sit back and let us wrestle with it.

You have a responsibility for making sure our church has elders who live this out.  
This kind of behavior and leadership is not optional for us.  
If we fail here, when we fail here, we need to be rebuked.  
We need to have a church that is not afraid to confront it's leaders.  
It is our responsibility as elders to lead the church.  
It is your responsibility to keep us accountable.  
And you may have to remove us if we disqualify ourselves.

**"exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you;"**

This basically means that as elders, we need to be happy to serve the sheep.

We should be grateful and willing to serve the people of God.

This is not something we should have to have our arms twisted into.

We should not approach shepherding as a hinderance.

We should do it willingly and gladly.

The moment someone begins to treat being an elder, or serving as a pastor as a regular job.

Something you just have to punch the clock and get through the day.

That is the moment you need to step down and take a break.

Because you should not have to be forced to serve.

You should do it willingly and gladly.

I saw this a lot with my dad.

If you have been around church at all, you know that there are some people in church who are a joy and there are some who are a burden.

There are people who are needy.

They are messy.

And they can be frustrating.

And being an elder or pastor is a lifelong thing.

You are always on the clock.

I saw a good example of this from my dad.

He never complained about it.

When people called who I thought were annoying, he did do big sigh and then answer.

He did not act annoyed when people stopped to chat in the aisle at the store even though I knew he was busy and had a lot to do.

He did it all willingly and gladly.

So should we.

**"not for shameful gain, but eagerly;"**

We are also to shepherd not for our own gain.

We do not lead based on what we want.

This is a temptation I see elders and pastors fall into.

We can start to want to turn the church into our own image.

Not just to follow our convictions, but to be exactly what we want.

We start caring less about the sheep who are here now and more about this thing being what we want it to be.

This is a subtle temptation.

The more obvious one is the elders who use the church to enrich themselves.

Pastor who treat the church like a piggy bank.

They write a book and have the church buy thousands of copies to get it on a best seller list.

They make sure the church hires not just themselves but all of their children to give them exuberant salaries.

We have seen and think of churches that do this.

This should not be.

It must not be true of us.

**Verse 3, "not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock."**

The last command given to elders is to not domineer.

We are not to lead by force.

We are not to stand up here and tell the church the way it is to be.

We are an elder led church.

But we must not be an elder domineering church.

It is not our job to boss around the church.

We are to serve them.

And we do this by being an example to them.

By living out what God has called us to.

Not by forcing the church to go with all of our ideas.

Or forcing the church to adopt what we want.  
But by modeling the life of Christ.  
By living lives that are so holy.  
And so full of godliness and the Holy Spirit that the church wants to listen to us.  
That is how we are to lead.

Remember the words of Christ who commanded His disciples to not lord over their people like the gentiles do.  
The church should never be run like a business.  
It should be run like it is the kingdom of God.  
And we should run it like good shepherds.

Verse 4, **"And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."**

Jesus is the called the Chief Shepherd.  
This is the word used when a flock of sheep is too big to be watched by only one shepherd.  
There is another shepherd over all of them.

My title is Senior pastor.  
I am the chief shepherd of this church, But Jesus Christ is the chief Shepherd of THE whole church.  
All of us are under shepherds.

We must shepherd this one, because one day the chief shepherd will appear.  
One day we will stand before the good shepherd.  
And He will asks us how we have treated His sheep.

And for those who do this well.  
Elders who serve with character and like Christ,  
they will receive and unfading crown of glory.  
There is eternal rewards for you.

For all of the sacrifices you have made for the bride of Jesus.

Great leaders are a gift to the church.

They really are.

This church has been blessed with a number of really good faithful pastors and good elders.

They deserve the crown and the glory they will receive and the ones some have already received.

Those of us elders still here.

Shepherd in a way that earns the final reward.

We have to live these out.

Those of you who are our wives and our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Hold us to this standard.

Do not let us off easy.

So that this church will be faithful in every generation.

## **II. Everyone] Humble ourselves under the humble God.**

Now Peter turns his attention to the rest of us.

Verse 5, "**Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders.**"

This might be the elders favorite verse.

But we have to endure the last section, now this one is directly for you.

You are the be subject to the elders.

I don't think this is just meant for the young people in the church.

Because the elders still refers to the elders of the church.

Those officially chosen to be over God's people.

The others are to submit to them.

Whether they wish they were the ones in charge or not.

They are to be willing to submit.

And this takes humility.

Often people these days don't want to have to submit to leaders.

They like church as long as it is something they can attend instead.

It takes humility to submit to someone even if you wish they would make a different decision.

It does not mean you have to stay quiet or pretend to like it.

It means you can express your opinion with humility.

And at the end say you are willing to submit to what the elders want.

**"Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another,"**

The image of putting on humility is one of clothing.

Our clothes are what should mark us.

Clothes often mark someone's profession.

A priest wears a white collar.

A banker might wear a suit.

A lot of the people who work for Halliburton wear red jumpsuits.

It didn't take me long of living here to learn to recognize what the people dressed in red meant.

Because their clothes marked them.

It should be the same with us.

Our humility is the clothing that identifies to the whole world who we work for.

Some of us might take a lot of time to get dressed in the morning.

You take care to pick out your clothes for the day.

Especially when it is hot.

You want to wear something comfortable.

When you get dressed in the morning, you should be clothing yourself in humility.

You should be thinking about putting on the humility of Jesus.

Of wrapping it around ourselves.

This means that when we walk out of the door in the morning, we should be a humble people.

And we should especially be humble towards one another.

Our humility should not just be something that happens up in our heads.



It is not just something internal in our hearts.  
Our humility should be towards one another.

We should consider other people as more important than ourselves.  
We should be more concerned about what others have to say instead of ourselves.

Peter gives part of the reason in the rest of the verse.

**"for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."**

We must be humble.

Because God is against people who are proud.

It is not just that pride goes before a fall.

Pride goes before God trips you.

God does not root on proud people.

He works against them.

But instead, it is the humble people who find grace.

Because you can only receive the grace of God when you are humble.

You can only find salvation when you admit how much you need it.

When you humble yourself before God and admit your lack.

But the proud do not do this.

And the proud do not find grace.

If you want to experience more of God's grace in your daily life, be humble.

If you want God to oppose you as you go throughout the day, then be proud.

I don't know about you, but my days are often hard enough already.

Life and the world throws so much at us.

I don't want to have to deal with the opposition of God as well.

Verse 6, **"Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,"**

We are to humble ourselves now, that God may exalt us.  
But it is also the reminder that we humble ourselves ultimately not to other people, but to God.  
God is over us.  
His hand is over our lives.  
We need to be humble to Him.

This is the basic call of salvation.  
This is how we become Christians.  
We humble ourselves before God and admit our need and sin.  
And then we will be exalted, one day to salvation.  
And the promise is that one day He will exalt and lift us up.  
The humble and meek shall inherit the earth.  
We shall be exalted to the heavens as Christ was.  
Christ was humble in His coming.  
And now He sits at the right hand of God.

Verse 7, **"casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."**

I don't think this verse is telling us to never feel anxious.  
I am an anxious person.  
I can get anxious about anything and everything.  
I get anxious around people and preaching still.  
I am working on this, but part of it is what I will wrestle with in varying degrees until Christ comes.

This one does not tell us we have to stop, but to cast our anxiousness on Christ.  
We are to take that anxiety and give it to God.  
Almost to throw it at him.

This is an act of humility.  
It takes humility to tell God what worries us.  
To admit them aloud.

My children have reached a stage where they talk a lot.  
They tell me every single thought that comes to their minds.  
They are constantly bombarding me with their ideas.  
Sometimes I wish they would stop so my own mind can get a break.  
They do that with me, but if some of you try to talk to them they be silent as a log.

Why?

Because they know I love them.

Because I have proved to them I am trustworthy.

And because they know they can tell me anything they want even when it is complete nonsense because I care for them.

We should approach God that way.

We need to know that we can give Him all of our anxieties.

Even the silly nonsense.

Why? **"Because He cares for us."**

Because He loves you.

So humble yourself, knowing that God loves you.

### **III. Resist until God restores (v. 8-14).**

We need to resist the world.

We need to resist giving into cynicism and despair.

We need to resist giving up in the world.

We must resist while we wait for the restoration that God will bring.

Verse 8, **"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."**

First we are commanded to be sober-minded and watchful again.

We are to keep our minds clear.

And we are to be on the lookout.

Because the enemy of our souls is looking for someone to devour.

Don't picture a regular lion here.

Like you are going through your day and a lion is around every corner.

I think the image they would think of was in the Colosseum.  
The gladiators and slaves who would be fed to the lions.  
That is the image.  
Because we are in the arena.  
Life is the Colosseum and the lion is here stalking you.  
Be sober-minded and watchful.  
You would certainly pay more attention if you could see the lion and know that it is nearby.  
Well, the lion is.  
And he is waiting for someone who is not paying attention.  
This is what Satan does to us.  
He is waiting and looking to destroy us.

Verse 9, **"Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world."**

Two things we need to see here.  
First we are to resist not fight.  
Our natural tendency is to want to go to war.  
We think of offensive weapons and wanting to charge the gates of hell.  
But God just tells us to resist.  
He will attack.  
He will tempt.  
He will come for you.  
Just resist.

And stand firm in your faith.  
Do not let Him move you.  
Even if everyone around you falls and gives up.  
Stay firm in Christ.

We also need to remember that we are not alone.  
We suffer alongside our brothers and sisters in the faith.

Our siblings in Christ in Russia, North Korea, India, China, Syria, Iraq and all over the globe.

None of our sufferings are unique.

We are not alone.

Too often our view of the kingdom is only on our lives, our community, our nation. But the kingdom of God is so much bigger.

Verse 10, **"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."**

This is the key and beauty of this section.

We suffer for a little while, but glory is coming.

All of us will suffer for a little while, but it goes fast.

It is not long in the concept of all eternity.

Because God has called us.

And our God is the God of all grace.

He is calling us into eternal glory.

Glory that will last forever instead of the little time of suffering.

And on that day, Christ will restore us.

He Himself will pick us back up.

He will confirm our faith and salvation.

He will strengthen our weak arms and hearts.

And He will establish us forever.

Listen, what we face now is nothing compared to what is to come.

Our suffering hurts.

But it is only a little and the glory to come will make it fade.

Verse 11, **"To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen."**

Sometimes we are tempted to skip past these verses.

They seem to us like a general benediction or empty words to close a letter.

But this is a radical claim.

This is a political claim.

Because Rome claimed dominion over the world.

And they claimed that their dominion would last forever and ever.

Here Peter is claiming dominion for Christ.

He is saying that we may be in exile now.

We may be suffering for awhile under the dominion of Rome.

But Christ will have dominion forever and ever.

Verse 12, **"By Silvanus, a faithful brother as I regard him, I have written briefly to you, exhorting and declaring that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it."**

Silvanus is a brother in Christ who helped Peter write this letter.

He may even be the one delivering this letter to the churches spread throughout the empire.

But Peter is closing and winding down the letter.

And he reminds them to stand firm.

To declare and hold to the true grace of God.

Don't fall for false grace.

Verse 13, **"She who is at Babylon, who is likewise chosen, sends you greetings, and so does Mark, my son."**

This is almost a throwaway line but there is a lot in here.

The first question might be who is the she?

It is either Peter's wife.

We know Peter was married from Mark 1:30 and 1 Corinthians 9:5.

Some try to say this is just the church.

But I think it appears to be his wife.

Especially since Mark, meaning Johnmark who wrote the gospel of Mark is the disciple of Peter.

But the key phrase here is **"who is at Babylon."**

Peter means she who is in Rome.

This is an important reminder and fits the theme of the book.

The Roman Empire, the greatest empire in the history of the world is called Babylon.

And this is not just about that particular city.

This is the paradigm we are to see.

Every follower of Jesus lives in Babylon.

One pastor I read this week named Gary Britton said, "I love this country. It is the greatest Babylon in the history of the world. But it is still Babylon."

He is right now.

And that is the attitude we need.

Love our country, seek its good, but remember it is Babylon.

We are in exile.

The glory is coming.

Verse 14, **"Greet one another with the kiss of love. Peace to all of you who are in Christ."**

I have known people who wanted to take this literally.

And so they started making sure everyone kissed each other as they went around church.

That is probably not a good idea today.

But what does Peter mean?

Why is he saying this?

The kiss was a normal greeting in this part of the world.

In many parts of the world it still is.

But at this time you only greeted family, or incredibly close friends with a kiss.

Here, Peter says we should all greet each other with it.

The application for us then, is to greet one another just like you do to family.

Don't just give each other a head nod or ignore each other.

Greet one another with joy.

Shake a hand, give a high five or a hug.

If you aren't a physical person just be excited to see each other.  
We are to treat each other like family, an eternal family.

#### CONCLUSION:

1. Shepherd like the chief shepherd. Humble yourself before the humble God. Resist until God restores.
2. Sometimes we talk about how fast the years go. How quickly our children grow up. How quickly we have gotten old and our bodies slowed down. At first it can seem like a curse of life. But it is a blessing and a reminder. This world is but a vapor. The suffering here is very short. But it gives us a taste of the glory that is coming.
3. In this life, suffering feels long and the glory so short. In the life to come, suffering will be a distant memory. It will fade like a vapor and give way to glory. Where ever moment will be better and sweeter than the last. And the days will never run out or dull. The suffering now is only a little, glory forever comes.