

A Study of 1 Peter 5

I. Outline.

1. Elder to Elder (1 Peter 5:1-4).
2. Humble submission enjoined (5-7).
3. Resist the devil (8-9).
4. Strength will come after suffering (10).
5. Closing remarks (11-14).

II. Summary.

Peter was an Apostle of Jesus Christ, but he was also an Elder in the Lord's church. In the first four verses of this text he speaks to his fellow-elders. He exhorts that elders in the church should tend or feed the flock; that they take the oversight willingly and with the right attitudes of heart. He urges elders to be examples before the flock and to think about the reward that is to come. Next Peter gives five instructions regarding how to live properly under the mighty hand of God. In his closing remarks he urges Christians to stand fast.

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Church.

*If you are not familiar with the **15 Bible Periods**, please [click here](#):*

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

AS A ROARING LION (5:8)... "In the time at which Peter wrote, Satan was indeed, not a sly and stealthy serpent, nor disguised as an angel of light; but he was a roaring lion elevated in the person of Nero upon the throne of the Caesars and thundering his decrees of death and destruction, like a roaring lion! Many of the Christians would be terrified and intimidated, and some under threat of death would renounce their faith. Satan's true nature is more visible in this than in the other Scriptural likenesses; because he adopts other methods only when circumstances make it impossible for him openly and wantonly to destroy, as was the case in the Neronian persecution" [James Burton Coffman's Commentaries].

IV. Words/Phrases to Study

- 1 Peter 5:1... "In this verse, 'There is neither self-exaltation nor disparagement, nor any hint of primacy, such as some have claimed for Peter.' The storm of persecution coming upon the church naturally focused Peter's mind upon the need for adequate leadership" [James Burton Coffman's Commentaries].
- 1 Peter 5:2... **FEED**--"The verb 'tend' (poimaino, to shepherd; to care for sheep) points to the similarity which obtains between the work of a shepherd and the duty of elders in the church. The word includes more than simply preaching or teaching; in it are all the varied duties which we sometimes, and properly so, style the 'pastoral' office. The noun form of the verb 'tend' is translated 'pastors' in Eph 4:11. A shepherd and his sheep have long served as a figure of teachers and those committed to their care. When David was taken from the sheepfolds of his father it was that he might feed Israel, 'the flock of Jehovah.' 'So he was their shepherd according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands' (Ps 78:70-72). One of the many charges leveled against the disobedient kings and rulers of Judah was that they did not tend the flock but scattered and destroyed it (Jer 23:1-4)" [Guy N. Woods, Commentary on 1 Peter, p. 123]. ...**TAKING THE OVERSIGHT**—"...translate the Greek participle episkopountes, derived from episkopos, the usual word for 'bishop' or 'overseer' (Acts 20:28). An episkopos is a superintendent, or overseer; and in exercising oversight of the flock of God, bishops or elders are obligated to superintend and direct the affairs of the congregation committed

to their care (Heb 13:17). To fail to do so is to be remiss in duty and recreant to the trust imposed; and for the congregation to refuse to recognize this oversight when properly exercised and by duly qualified and appointed elders, is to be in rebellion against God himself” [Ibid, p. 124]. |||| “How can a man oversee if he has no authority for such responsibilities? If a man were appointed an overseer of a manufacturing plant but was given no authority, he would be totally ineffective. No plant owner has that little judgment” [Winford Claiborne, Divine Relationships, p. 293]. ...**NOT FOR FILTHY LUCRE**... “The word describes gain that is base and dishonorable. This statement is significant beyond the instruction which it contains in revealing that in the apostolic age elders were supported financially by the congregation in the work in which they were engaged” [Guy N. Woods, Commentary on 1 Peter, p. 124]. |||| “Since elders generally are not paid for their service, why would Peter speak of money in this context? In our day—and true to some extent in Peter’s day—churches can handle large sums of money. If a man is greedy, he may be tempted to use some of the money for his own benefit. It has happened... There have been cases where church leaders—not necessarily elders—have misused large sums of money—sometimes into the millions of dollars” [Winford Claiborne, Divine Relationships, p. 290].

- 1 Peter 5:3... **NEITHER AS BEING LORDS OVER GOD’S HERITAGE**—“The Englishman's Greek New Testament renders it: ‘Not as exercising lordship over your possessions.’ ... If a man considers the church as his own, then he is indeed likely to rule in an improper manner” [James Burton Coffman’s Commentaries].
- 1 Peter 5:4... **THE CHIEF SHEPHERD**—“‘The chief Shepherd’ (1 Pet. 5:4) is a beautiful reference to our Savior who called himself the ‘good shepherd’ (John 10:11). The symbolism of Christ as the ‘good shepherd’ and ‘chief shepherd’ reveals so much about the love and care he has for his people. Earlier Peter had exhorted the elders to tend the flock of God as a shepherd would care for his sheep; now he reminds them that they have Christ as their ‘chief Shepherd.’ The term ‘chief Shepherd’ shows the relationship of elders to Christ. Since Christ is the ‘chief Shepherd’ all other shepherds are under his authority and have the responsibility to tend the flock entrusted to them. For such watchful care they will ‘receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away’ (1 Pet. 5:4). Elders are promised that for faithful service in shepherding those under their care they will be rewarded” [Paul Stidham, “Exhortation to Faithfulness,” in *Things Pertaining to Life and Godliness*, Edited by Rod Rutherford].
- 1 Peter 5:5... **YEA, ALL OF YOU BE SUBJECT ONE TO ANOTHER**—“The meaning of being subject one to another is very simple. There is no one who does not have to submit to someone: members to elders, wives to husbands, children to parents, citizens to government. We must submit as God has ordained—whatever the relationship” [Winford Claiborne, Divine Relationships, p. 300].
- 1 Peter 5:6... **MIGHTY HAND OF GOD**—Cf., Ex 3:19; 32:11; Deut 3:24; 4:34; 5:15; 6:21; 7:8, 19; 9:26; 11:2; 26:8; 34:12; 2 Chr 6:32; Ezk 20:33-34; Dan 9:15.
- 1 Peter 5:7... **HE CARETH FOR YOU**—“The thought here contrasts the living and true God with the dumb idol gods of paganism who had no feeling, concern, or interest of any kind whatever in their worshippers. Even those pagan gods and goddesses which were supposed to be more glorious were always represented as being far off from their devotees, and as having no care whatever for them. It is one of the most glorious teachings of the Bible that God, yes, even the Almighty God, loves his children, is concerned and interested in their welfare; and his eyes are always upon his beloved” [James Burton Coffman’s Commentaries].
- 1 Peter 5:8... **YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL**—“The Saviour himself warned Peter of Satan's ‘sifting him’; and from this it is clear that Peter got the message” [James Burton Coffman’s Commentaries]. Cf., Job 1:6-9.
- 1 Peter 5:10... **MAKE YOU PERFECT, STABLISH, STRENGTHEN, SETTLE YOU**—“Peter prays that God will make his readers ‘perfect.’ The word ‘perfect’ does not mean sinlessness. It means mending that which is broken. The word was used of the nets (Mt 4:21). Paul pled with the Corinthians to be

‘perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment’ (1 Cor 1:10). In Galatians 6:1, the word is used of restoring a brother who has been overtaken by a fault. The perfection Peter had in mind involved establishing every child of God in the faith. ... Peter probably uses these synonymous words to build a strong case for the members being faithful and steadfast unto the end” [Winford Claiborne, *Divine Relationships*, p. 320].

- 1 Peter 5.11... **TO HIM BE GLORY AND COMINION FOR EVER AND EVER**—“Christ’s constant desire was to glorify God (John 17:1-5, 1Peter 4:11, Ephesians 3:20-21). It is through the church that both He and the Father are glorified. That is another reason for emphasizing the importance of the church. Those who contend that the church is non-essential are basically saying that the means by which God is glorified in this day and age is not necessary.” [T.J. Clarke, in *Bible Institute of Missouri Notes*, Produced by Bradley Cobb, An e-Sword Module].
- 1 Peter 5.12... **WHEREIN YE STAND**—“1. Which infers that one can depart from the true grace of God, i.e. grace is conditional. 2. Once you have found the ‘real thing’ don’t let go of it (Proverbs 23:23; Ephesians 6:11; Ephesians 6:13-14). ‘Now is not the time to give up, but rather the time to stand fast in faith..and hold on to what they already have.’ (Davids p. 201) ‘What is revealed in the epistle answers to reality because there is no equivocation or falsehood in what has been revealed. This is the way grace actually exists in the spiritual world. It is altogether truth and not a lie.’ (Hamilton p. 334) 3. Being impressed that this ‘grace of God’ carries with it many rules and responsibilities (such as 1 Peter 1:14-15; 1 Peter 2:11ff).” [Mark Dunagan, *Commentaries*, An e-Sword Module].
- 1 Peter 5.13... **BABYLON**—“Babylon is likely the historical city of Babylon. There is nothing to indicate figurative language here. It became a figurative representation for Jerusalem and Rome, but there is no evidence that it is indicated to be figurative in this case. Peter refers to she who is in Babylon, which could refer to the church there or perhaps his wife. Woods says likely the ‘she’ refers to Peter’s wife because it is interspersed with individual greetings. Babylon is mentioned in Revelation 14:8; Revelation 18:2; Revelation 18:10. Catholics and Protestants maintain that the reference is mystical and figurative and that Peter was in Rome when this letter was penned. Woods (pg 135-136) gives 6 reasons to believe that it is not the case. Even if we don’t know what Babylon is being referred, it has no bearing on the meaning of the rest of the letter.” [T.J. Clarke].
- 1 Peter 5:14... **KISS OF CHARITY**—“It should be noted that the apostle did not enjoin kissing as a method of greeting; the custom already prevailed. His words were designed to insure that the custom would be observed in keeping with the morality and chastity characteristic of the high calling of Christianity” [Guy N. Woods, *Commentary on 1 Peter*, p. 136-37].

V. Lessons & Applications.

1. **FEED THE FLOCK OF GOD WHICH IS AMONG YOU, TAKING THE OVERSIGHT THEREOF...** (1 Pet 5:1). What an awesome responsibility elders in the church of Christ have. We must cooperate with our elders in order for them to accomplish the task of feeding us! We need to be present in the assemblies when the feeding is done. We cannot be fed by our elders if we refuse to be present at feeding times.
2. **NEITHER AS BEING LORDS OVER GOD’S HERITAGE...** (1 Pet 5:3). An elder who is scripturally qualified (1 Tim 3:7; Titus 1:6-11) will have no difficulty at all with this instruction from Peter! Those of us who are the “heritage” have nothing to fear from godly and scripturally-qualified elders. They will be well aware of their responsibilities and will be seeking to relate to the flock in a good way that will be productive of accomplishing the work of the Lord on earth. The goal of godly elders is to tend their flock in such a way as to lead them to the eternal home of the soul, the LONG home of Ecclesiastes 12:5.
3. **BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY** (1 Pet 5:5). What person other than the humble person is going to be willing to yield his/her will to that of the Lord Jesus Christ? Humility is the quality which is essential to having a spirit of obedience. When we begin to think of ourselves more highly

than we ought to think is the time when we begin to be a problem to the smooth functioning of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:21). A proud look is HATED by the Lord (Prov 6:17).

4. **FOR HE CARETH FOR YOU** (1 Pet 5:7). One of the reasons that God must be obeyed is that He is a benevolent God and He commands what He commands for our own good. He is omniscient, thus we do not have to worry that He will make a mistake in any of His commandments to us. He is our Creator, thus knows us and what we need. He loved us so much that He sent His only begotten Son (Jn 3:16). Whenever we get discouraged, surely this knowledge that the God of the Universe cares for me should be a great source of strength to move out of the discouragement.
5. **YOUR ADVERSARY THE DEVIL... Satan's Purposes** (1 Pet 5:8).
 - 1) To keep us out of the church.
 - 2) To get us into the wrong church.
 - 3) To get the church member back into the world.
 - 4) To kill our influence for good.
 - 5) To make Christians inactive in the work of saving souls.
 - 6) To have us serve with the wrong attitude.
6. **1 Peter 5.5-14...** These lessons come from Roy H. Lanier, Sr., in *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1956, pp., 314.
 - 1) Humility is essential to Christlikeness. Christlikeness is essential to salvation: Christlikeness is learned only from the revealed word of God. Hence, the necessity of studying God's word that we may know the character of Christ, that we may cultivate the likeness to Him that we may have eternal life.
 - 2) Faithfulness is essential to eternal life. God nowhere promises to keep the unfaithful in time of trial or to save them at the coming of Christ.
 - 3) Those who follow the teaching of the apostles have the assurance of inspiration that their course of life is the true grace of God. They also have Peter's assurance that God will perfect, establish, and strengthen them in that course of life if they are humble and faithful and dependent upon God.
7. **Promises of What God Will Do for Us** (1 Peter 5.10). "Peter makes some great promises to his suffering readers, assuring them of what the God of all grace will do for them. Peter does say that God *himself* will do these things. Every word has a vivid picture. It tells us what God can do for us. **God can perfect us.** The word means to restore.. It means to mend a broken fishing net or set a broken bone. It means to supply what is missing. Paul said we are to *restore* a brother overtaken in any sin (Galatians 6.1). Suffering, if accepted in humility, trust, and love, can add to a man's character that which is lacking. It can repair the weakness in his character and add the greatness to his character which is missing. **God can establish us.** The word means to make firm or steadfast. It is interesting that Jesus used this word when he challenged Peter to *strengthen* his brethren (Luke 22.32). Suffering does one of two things: It can cause a person to collapse from the trial, or it can cause him to grow in character like he never would otherwise. This process is like the athlete who, through the rigors of training and the effort of his performance, emerges with a new toughness of fiber and staying power to win the race. **God can strengthen us.** The word means to be filled with strength. A life with no effort or discipline almost out of necessity becomes a flabby life. No one knows what faith means until it is tested by affliction. **God can establish our faith.** The word means to lay a foundation. Only through suffering are we driven down to the bedrock of our faith. It is then that we discover the things which are decoration and the things that are essential. It is through trials that we discover the great truths on which life is founded and the truths we can't do without. Remember, suffering may well bring bitterness, resentment, and despair, and take away our faith. But, if accepted in love, in trust, and in reality, God's hand will never cause us needless tears. Then, out of our suffering come things which the easy way can never bring"

VI. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Peter was the Chief Shepherd.
02. _____ Peter considered his epistle a brief writing.
03. _____ It is the responsibility of elders to feed the flock of God.
04. _____ Humility before God eventually leads to exaltation.
05. _____ Paul refers to God as “the God of all comfort” (2 Cor 1:3), and Peter calls Him “the God of all grace.”

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ The kind of kiss mentioned in 1 Peter 5 was a kiss of: (a) death; (b) distinction; (c) charity or love.
07. _____ The EXALTATION Peter spoke of was to come: (a) to all saints; (b) in due time; (c) soon.
08. _____ Instead of being lords over God’s heritage, elders in the Lord’s church need to be this to the flock: (a) servants; (b) teachers; (c) examples.
09. _____ The special “clothing” mentioned in this chapter is: (a) humility; (b) righteousness; (c) wisdom.
10. _____ For ever and ever, to God be glory and: (a) praiseworthiness; (b) reverence; (c) dominion.

Fill in the Blanks

11. “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a _____ of _____ that fadeth _____ away.”
12. Peter wrote this epistle to Christians and made the direct statement that God _____ for you.
13. The only place name mentioned in this chapter is _____.
14. The devil is like a roaring lion and we must remember he is our _____.
15. Peter was a _____ of the sufferings of Christ.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week’s handout

ANSWERS to 1 Peter 4 Questions... **01**—True (19); **02**—True (10); **03**—True (4); **04**—True (5); **05**—False (12); **06**—b (7); **07**—f (15); **08**—a (8); **09**—a (5-6); **10**—b (14); **11**—righteous, ungodly (17); **12**—exceeding (13); **13**—for, us (1); **14**—manifold, God; **15**—Christian, ashamed (16).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. –DRL

O L Y N L U A E V E R T L J
 S H E P H E R D A M E N G E
 R E V E A L E D A F A B R S
 B R L U C R E F E E D M A U
 E I T O R F I L T H Y M C S
 I T A V N X U O H C H I E F
 N A K E V H C C E O S N L U
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 R H A G T L L L F R R I W B
 Y A O H A E S O F A I T H H
 I S E T K B O R F I S H E Y
 S U F F E R E D T N T E N F
 E X H O R T G S R T L R H D

ALSO	AMEN	ANOTHER	BEING	CHIEF
CHRIST	CONSTRAINT	ELDER	ENSAMPLES	EVER
EXHORT	FAITH	FEED	FILTHY	FLOCK
GLORY	GRACE	HERITAGE	HUMBLE	JESUS
LORDS	LUCRE	MIND	NEITHER	OVERSIGHT
PARTAKER	READY	REVEALED	SHEPHERD	SUFFERED
TAKING	THEREOF	WHEN		

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...