

SANCTIFIED SUFFERING

COMMENTARY ON BOOK OF 1 PETER

Paul Apple

1997

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TEXT: 1 PETER

TITLE: OVERVIEW

BIG IDEA:

BY THE GRACE OF GOD, THE PERSECUTED CHURCH FINDS VINDICATION AND VICTORY THRU LIVING FOR ETERNITY, MAINTAINING COMMENDABLE CONDUCT, AND ACCEPTING SUFFERING AS THE WILL OF GOD

SALUTATION (1:1-2)

1. Live for Eternity: 3 Living Realities Associated With Our Salvation:

a. Focusing on Our Living Hope (1:3 - 1:21)

Joy in Suffering -- Our Guaranteed Future Spurs Overflowing Joy
Despite Fiery Trials

b. Feeding on the Living Word (1:22 - 2:3)

Living for Eternity Requires Feeding On the Living and Abiding Word
of God in Order to Aggressively Love One Another

c. Functioning as Living Stones (2:4-10)

The Living Stone in Fulfillment of OT Prophecy Elevates the
Privileges and Worship of God's People in the Church

**2. Commendable Conduct -- Especially Submission to Every Appropriate
Human Authority -- Is the Only Answer to Persecution and the Best Way
to Glorify God (2:11 - 3:12)**

**3. Suffering (From the Perspective of Living for Eternity and in the
Context of Commendable Conduct) Fulfills God's Will and Finds
Vindication and Victory (3:13 - 4:19)**

4. Stand Strong in the Grace of God (5:1-14)

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:1-2

TITLE: SALUTATION: ROADMAP OF THE MESSAGE OF 1 PETER

BIG IDEA:

JESUS CHRIST (OUR SUPREME EXAMPLE) COMMUNICATES THRU PETER (HIS TRANSFORMED MESSENGER) TO US (THE ISOLATED ELECT)

1. The Source of the Message -- Jesus Christ Our Supreme Example

2. The Transformed Messenger -- The Apostle Peter

3. The Target Audience -- The Isolated Elect -- The Persecuted Church

a) Isolated in what respect? citizens of heaven living as strangers and sojourners in a hostile world

b) Elect in conjunction with the Work of the Triune God

1) Election Planned by God the Father who loves us

2) Applied by God the Holy Spirit who sets us apart

3) Intended for our Union with Jesus Christ

a)) Union of obedience

b)) Union of participation in the New Covenant and its blessings

4. The Customary Greeting

a) Grace - the desire and power to live the Christian life as a gift from God rather than as a result of works

b) Peace - the comfort of being right with God with associated inner blessings

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:3-6

TITLE: A LIVING HOPE

BIG IDEA:

I. LIVE FOR ETERNITY: (3 LIVING REALITIES ASSOCIATED WITH OUR SALVATION)

**FOCUSING ON OUR LIVING HOPE
FEEDING ON THE LIVING WORD
FUNCTIONING AS LIVING STONES**

A. Focusing On Our LIVING HOPE (1:3 - 1:21)

**Joy in Suffering -- Our Guaranteed Future Spurs Overflowing Joy
Despite Fiery Trials**

**1. We Have Been Guaranteed An Eternal Destiny and a Heavenly
Inheritance (:3-6a) -- emphasis on the work of God the Father**

a. Our Destiny Has Been Changed From Death to Life (:3)

- (1) New Birth gives us new life and new family identity
- (2) New Goal / New Orientation -- described as a LIVING HOPE
- (3) New Head -- Headship of Christ instead of Adam
Our destiny has been changed from death to life because of the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection is the key to our guaranteed future. Our future is as certain as His resurrection.

b. Our Inheritance Has Been Changed From Earthly to Heavenly (:4a)

- (1) Imperishable
- (2) undefiled
- (3) Unfading

c. Our Future Has Been Totally Guaranteed (:4b-5)

- (1) Our inheritance has been totally guaranteed -- it will be there when we get there -- "reserved in heaven for you"
- (2) Our destiny has been totally guaranteed -- we will get there to enjoy it -- "protected by the power of God through faith"

d. Application: "In this you greatly rejoice" (:6A)

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:6B-9

TITLE: *TRIALS FOCUS OUR FAITH*

BIG IDEA:

2. Fiery Trials Focus Our Faith On Jesus Christ -- Thus Intensifying Our Joy Instead of Extinguishing It (:6b-9) Emphasis on Christ

a. Trials Must Be Kept in Perspective (:6b)

- (1) Trials do cause grief and suffering
- (2) Trials are of relatively short duration
- (3) Trials are not accidental--but ordained by God when necessary to accomplish His purposes
- (4) Trials are packaged in a diversity of ways

Contrast Satan's goal = to use trials to extinguish our faith

b. Purpose of Trials = To Highlight and Reward Genuine Faith (:7)

c. Application: Genuine Faith Focuses on Jesus Christ (:8a)

d. Focusing on Christ Intensifies Our Joy (:8b-9)

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:10-12

TITLE: *GUARANTEED FUTURE*

BIG IDEA:

3. Our Guaranteed Future (which we are already experiencing to some extent) Is Worth Waiting For (:10-12)

Testimony of the Holy Spirit through those who have been eagerly anticipating that future:

- a. OT Prophets
- b. NT Proclaimers
- c. Curious Angels

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:13-21

TITLE: HOPEFUL AND HOLY

BIG IDEA:

4. Live For Eternity (1:13-21) -- Since We Have Such a Glorious Living Hope, Live For Eternity And Escape the Futility of the Human Condition

OVERVIEW:

- a. **LIVE IN HOPE BECAUSE OUR FOCUS MUST BE ON ETERNITY :13**
- b. **LIVE IN HOLINESS BECAUSE THAT IS THE STANDARD FOR ETERNITY 14-16**
- c. **LIVE IN FEAR BECAUSE ETERNITY MEANS ACCOUNTABILITY :17-21**

INTRODUCTION:

I've never been much of an investor - never had the resources to dabble in the stock market - but I remember 1 important principle -- Diversify, Diversify, Diversify; Don't put all of your eggs in one basket

While we might not be big players in the stock market - we all are making important investment decisions every hour of every day - We are deciding how to spend our time -- how are we going to live our lives??

Peter gives us some important counsel - and it is not what we would expect from the financial experts - He tells us: Put all your eggs in 1 basket and LIVE FOR ETERNITY - *"Fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to at the revelation of Jesus Christ"*

"Therefore" - Link to what has gone before

we won't respond correctly unless we have understood the foundation Peter has laid in vs. 1-12; We have been sovereignly called by God into a privileged position of being born into the family of God with the guaranteed future of:

- 1) a living hope, associated with the resurrection of Jesus Christ -- Death is not our Destiny -- we have been called to life
- 2) a protected eternal inheritance -- better than any inheritance this world could ever offer
- 3) a complete salvation -- not some partial deal where we still have the warts and blemishes of sin

The path to glory winds thru some troubling trials and intense suffering - but our faith is being refined and focused more and more on the person of Christ -- the object of our love and devotion and the source of our joy and rejoicing

Our privileged position in this NT Church Age (where God has revealed these precious truths about our guaranteed future) is the envy of:

- 1) the OT Prophets -- who could only predict the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow

- 2) the NT Apostles -- who only dealt with isolated fragments of the entire jigsaw puzzle
- 3) the holy angels -- who have not experienced salvation and a personal relationship with the indwelling Holy Spirit as we have

Let's think about what life would be like without the Living Hope as our focus; our Perspective; our Orientation --

Solomon in Ecclesiastes spells out the futility of the perspective of simply living under the sun -- without reference to eternity

(J. Sidlow Baxter) 10 Vanities that would frustrate us and condemn us to futility:

- 1) The vanity of human wisdom -- the wise and the foolish end up the same = in the grave - So what's the point??
- 2) The vanity of human labor -- The worker is no better off than the shirker in the end
- 3) The vanity of human purpose (cf. Management by Objective) -- Although man can plan all he wants, it will be God who actually brings about His purposes
- 4) The vanity of human competition -- You can strive to be #1 -- but the end result is envy rather than joy; people backstabbing you
- 5) The vanity of human greed -- You are never satisfied; the rich man builds his barns and stores his goods, but always wants a bigger barn -- elusive goal; you can never get enough
- 6) The vanity of human fame -- brief, uncertain, soon forgotten -- Who cares who Micky Mantle is today??
- 7) The vanity of entertainment -- Let's escape into a world of fun and entertainment -- only a temporary denial of the pain of reality
- 8) The vanity of human awards -- the bad are often honored; there is no justice
- 9) The vanity of human relationships -- How do others treat you?? Don't set your hopes on this or you will be disillusioned
- 10) The vanity of doing your best--- nobody more frustrated than a perfectionist -- We can't hit the target

How do we deal with our failures??

Nothing wrong with some of these -- but must be viewed from eternal perspective

Eccles. 3: 11 God has set eternity in the heart of every man so that we are restless until we find our rest and fulfillment in Him

The only way to escape the Futility of the Human Condition =
Since We Have Such a Glorious Living Hope, Live For Eternity

a. **LIVE IN HOPE BECAUSE OUR FOCUS MUST BE ON ETERNITY :13**

(1) Put All Our Eggs in One Basket = Eternity -- "*fix your hope completely*"

We don't have to hedge our bets with God

We don't have to provide for our own security

We already have a golden parachute - our future is guaranteed

Very important for these suffering Christians - they have made a commitment; they are paying the price - Will it be worth it??

Cf. Peter's question - Lord, we have left all to follow you - Did we do the right thing??
(Matt. 19:27-30)

Rom. 8:18 *"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us"*

(2) Bank On the Future = Eternity -- *"on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"*

The fountainhead of hope is the death, burial, resurrection and 2nd coming of Christ

Titus 2:11-13 *"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus"*

we have tasted of God's grace and experienced its transforming power in varying degrees -- when we are completely transformed into the likeness of Christ - that will be glory indeed

the older our bodies get, the more we long for that perfect redemption body
our hope is not focused on keeping this body in a Fountain of Youth state = impossible - but rather on Christ giving us a resurrection body

"being brought to you" -- present tense - it's already on the way

It's impossible to fix our hope on eternity while stockpiling all our resources for present luxury and comfort and future security;

Where our treasure is, there our heart will be also

(3) Roll Up Our Sleeves -- *"gird your minds for action"*

the picture here is of gathering up the long Oriental outer garment and tucking it into the belt around your waist so that you are ready to take a journey or get to work;
roll up your sleeves and get to work;
pack your bags and be ready to move out

Same imagery used in Luke 12:35 *"be dressed in readiness, and keep your lamps lit"*
be ready when the Master returns - time of accountability and journey to glory

can't coast thru life in Neutral, or even Cruise Control - no spiritual sluggishness here

Put it in Drive

Not: gird your minds for thinking, or for dreaming....ACTION

Danger: of going to excess; becoming unbalanced

(4) Exercise Self-control -- "*keep sober in spirit*" - keep your wits about you
don't lose your heads; don't go off the deep end in fanatical presumption
cf. The Thessalonian believers who quit their jobs and sat around waiting for the return of Christ

characteristic of cults - they can't keep life in balance
Hard to balance intensity of mission with self-control of attitude

Peter wants us to be level-headed about our commitment to eternity
fulfilling the tedious daily tasks and responsibilities must be transformed from the drudgery of
futility to the balanced side of living for eternity - by an attitude of obeying Jesus Christ with a
thankful spirit in order to be an example and testimony to others

(Peter will have more to say later about the virtues of commendable conduct -- in the home, in
the workplace, in the community, etc.)

The everyday details of life take their significance from eternity

Transition: Live in Hope = Our Perspective
Now look at our Character and how it impacts our Conduct

b. LIVE IN HOLINESS BECAUSE THAT IS THE STANDARD FOR ETERNITY :14-16

Hope motivates us to live for eternity
Holiness guides us -- gives us the standard

(1) Be Consistent With Our New Family Identity = "*children of obedience*" -- chip off the old
block

Viewed Negatively --

The goal of every parent: to have obedient children

Have nothing to do with the former lusts of our old family identity - when we were
children of Satan, walking in darkness, in bondage to sin, friends with the world
1 Peter 4:1-6 spells out in more detail what he means here

2 things are contrasted: the lusts of men and the will of God - they don't match; you can't
pursue both

"*yours in your ignorance*" - not talking about their IQ - their condition of not knowing God and
His holiness; now they are Enlightened - the grace of Revelation and understanding

(2) Be Consistent With the Character of God Who Called Us
Viewed Positively

God is Holy

-- in terms of transcendent = above His creation; separate from all that is created and earthly

the High and Holy one that inhabits Eternity
a Holiness of Divine Majesty

Exod. 15:11 Who is like Thee among the gods, O Lord? Who is like Thee, majestic in holiness?"

the angels cover their faces when they adore Him

-- in terms of moral purity = usually how we think of holiness
no darkness mixed with the light; total whiteness, no black

The Fundamental moral attribute of God is Holiness
controls the exercise of His other attributes

What is our standard for Holiness??

a) Not the world - doesn't take much to be holy in comparison with the world
self-righteousness - swelling our chest and thanking God we are not like that poor reprobate who did some awful deed on the 11:00 news last night

b) Not other Christians in our general circle of friends -
whether at school (cf. Christian schools - peer pressure to be an average Christian)
whether at work
whether in church
I can do "such and such" because Joe does such and such

cf. Attitude of How holy do I have to be?? How close can I get to that line that divides the world from Christians = wrong approach

c) Not even the best Christian role models we know
all our helpful; all our deficient; none are the standard
leads to legalism

d) All are inadequate - We need to go back to the life of Christ - to see Holiness Incarnate

Have we become so accustomed to sin that we no longer are righteously indignant??
Does nothing shock us anymore??

What does God mean when He says He is Holy??

Can't talk about the holiness of God without reference to Isaiah's vision in Chapt. 6

We have lost the sense of the Majesty of God - of God sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted - we want to know God as our father and friend in a familiar sense - but God is also the One who inhabits Eternity -

We cannot stand before such a one apart from forgiveness of sin

God as Judge -- connected to Holiness of God -- importance He places on moral purity

Do we really want to be Holy??

c. LIVE IN FEAR BECAUSE ETERNITY MEANS ACCOUNTABILITY :17-21

(1) Appreciate God as Both Our Father and Our Judge

(2) Appreciate the Temporary Condition of Our Present Earthly Life

(3) Appreciate the Infinite Cost of Our Redemption

(a) Its Price

i) Not perishable things like silver or gold

ii) Precious blood of Christ

(b) Its Purpose -- Deliverance from the futility of the human condition

(c) Its Place in God's Eternal Plan (:20)

TEXT: 1 PETER 1:22-25

TITLE: *PROPER EXERCISE*

BIG IDEA:

B. THE LIVING WORD -- Living For Eternity Requires Feeding On The Living And Abiding Word of God In Order To Aggressively Love One Another (1:22 - 2:3) -- Proper Exercise and Diet are keys to Good Health

1. PROPER EXERCISE -- Aggressive Love Should Be the New Lifestyle of Those Who Have Experienced the Power of the Word of God (:22-25)

a. The Command ("*ferently love one another from the heart*") Sets Forth the Expectation of the Goal of our New Lifestyle

b. Two Reasons That Support This Command -- Because we have experienced the power of the Word of God:

(1) In Initial Purification

(2) In Regeneration

Illustration (:24-25) -- The Word of God is Abiding

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:1-3

TITLE: PROPER DIET – GOD’S FORMULA FOR BABY BOOMERS

BIG IDEA:

2. PROPER DIET -- Feeding On the Living and Abiding Word of God Enables Us To Grow In Aggressively Loving Others (2:1-3)

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Growth is very simple: Requires the Proper Exercise and the Proper Diet -- just like Physical Growth

4 Pictures:

- 1) Mr. Bloatburger -- Bad Diet (spends all day at McDonalds); No Exercise
this guy can't even move
- 2) Mr Couch Potato -- Diet might be OK -- but no exercise
(doesn't do any good to just lie on the couch and read your Bible all day without ever putting anything into practice)
- 3) Mr. Worked to the Bone -- Works hard all day long; loads of time in church and in various Christian ministries; but no nourishment; never spends any quiet time feeding on the Word
- 4) Mr. Spiritually Fit

Peter is talking about the need for Proper Exercise and Proper Diet in order to grow properly in our spiritual lives

What type of Exercise have we been called to??

- 1) Love one another 1:22
- 2) Spiritual Worship 2:5
- 3) Testimony 2:9 "*proclaim the excellencies ...*"

These are 3 very important activities that require a lot of spiritual muscle and strength -- What type of energy are we giving to loving one another and to worshipping God??
Should involve planning, making these things a priority, giving commitment of time and energy

In between 1:22 and 2:5-9 we have a key section about the Word of God 1:22 - 2:3

We have experienced the power of the Word of God in Regeneration -- causing us to be born again

- 1) that Word is living -- it has brought us into new life
- 2) that Word is abiding -- it is eternal and imperishable
its glory won't ever fade away like the flowers of spring time

I. 5 GROWTH STOPPERS (or at least GROWTH STUNTERS) vs.1

In business, we talk about "Show Stoppers" = things that will stop you from closing a deal; if you can't solve the problem, you can't continue on; it stops you dead in your tracks

There are many things that are show stoppers in our Christian growth

"*putting aside*" -- a participle used with the force of a command; this is the necessary preparation for proper digestion of the Word of God; get rid of all this nastiness; You can't try to cover up dirty, smelly clothes by just putting on an extra layer of clean, fresh clothing over top

What are these Growth Stoppers??

A. Malice -- most general word; then he will get more specific; all evil (kakia) = Meanness here
KNIFE in the back -- anything harmful, hurtful directed against others (because of context)

general, all-inclusive term for active ill-will; the vicious nature bent on doing harm to others; opposite of godliness; of goodness

B. Guile -- "to catch with bait" deceit, cunning, treachery -- Tricky

FISHHOOK WITH BAIT

trying to trick and mislead others to their disadvantage and our advantage;
our ministry is not one of deception; or how we package things up; or manipulation
no confidence in the sovereignty of God; the will of God; the providence of God; we want to take things into our own hands and control things by hook or by crook

C. Hypocrisy -- pretending to be someone or something that you are not

MASK

we should be transparent = who we really are; this is how God sees us anyway
Why do we want to appear more righteous than we really are?? Cf. the Pharisees looking for the praise of men and whatever other benefits would come along with it
A concentration on externals vs. Internal character

D. Envy -- ill will stirred up at the sight of the good fortune of others; kids understand this concept

"I want what you have"

How do you feel when your brother gets something special and you don't???

Our natural response is one of envy -- Why him; Why not me?? It's not fair-- I deserve that; This is another simple test of our spiritual maturity

E. Slander -- evil speakings; speaking against someone; backbiting

FIERY TONGUE (James 3)

constant occurrence in the workplace; at school; should not be the case in our family or in the family of God

"Sticks and stones can break my bones, but words can never hurt me" = not always true; sometimes words hurt a lot

Application:

A good practical test of our spiritual maturity: To what extent do we have to battle with feelings of ill will towards others??

(Paul's ministry of communicating the gospel demonstrated that he had successfully put off these growth stoppers: 1 Thess. 2:1-12 totally transparent and honest in his dealings with them that's what people should say about our ministry -- What you see is what you get; No hidden meanness, no trickery or hidden agenda, no hypocrisy, no envy or selfish ambition, no slander)

Transition: We put off these things so that we can grow in a sincere love for the brethren, fervently loving one another from the heart

II. GROWTH COMES FROM FEEDING ON THE WORD OF GOD vs.2

WE MUST HAVE A DESPERATE APPETITE FOR THE WORD OF GOD LIKE NURSING NEWBORNS

God's Formula for Baby Boomers:

A. The Demonstrators = Newborn babes

What are babies good for demonstrating??

How did we suck up the Word when we were first saved??

Rate of growth is incredible

Transition: as the weeks go by, they get more easily distracted

B. The Desire = longing for

Can't be distracted by anything;

How important is the Word of God in our lives? In our priorities?

Think of all the other influences in our culture that are constantly trying to impact us in a negative sense

C. The Diet = the pure milk of the Word

look how careful we are that the infants get proper nourishment; after that we become more careless

Not trying to distinguish the milk of the Word from the Meat of the Word here

I don't want 2% ; I don't want skimmed milk; I want pure, whole milk

Don't mess it up by adding anything else:

- 1) Don't add the traditions of men -- you make the word powerless
Traditions will make you a great legalist, but will not help you grow spiritually
- 2) Don't add philosophy -- all the wisdom of Plato and Aristotle; or how about the wisdom of this management expert; or this self-help expert -- I don't want it
I'm not looking for a seminar on management by objective; etc.

Col. 2:8 " *See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ*"

Are we willing to go to the Word for answers to our most complex and confusing questions??
Have we forsaken the simplicity of the message of the Cross -- the death and resurrection of Christ -- for the wisdom of this world

Philosophy will get you a lot of advanced degrees, but won't answer any real questions

- 3) Don't add psychology -- Don't gum it up with a bunch of confusing and contradictory perspectives

Do we really believe that spiritual leaders in the church are Competent to Counsel?? Does that counsel have any content to it?? Any power to it??

Psychology will get you a wide audience of itching ears, but a leopard can't change its own spots -- there's no power in psychology

D. The Destination = what's the objective; what's the goal; where do we want to head? Where do we want to end up??

"that by it you may grow in respect to salvation"

Everything hinges on the 1 given = *IF YOU HAVE TASTED THE KINDNESS OF THE LORD*
goodness in action; the capacity to show kindness to everyone

Romans 2:4 *"Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?"*

Luke 6:35 *"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men."*

Ephesians 4:32 *"And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."*

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:4-10

TITLE: *THE LIVING STONE*

BIG IDEA:

C. THE LIVING STONE In Fulfillment of OT Prophecy Elevates The Privileges and Worship of God's People in the Church (2:4-10)

1. Those Who Value Christ as a Living Stone Enjoy the Privilege of Functioning as Living Stones in Worshipping God (:4-5)

a. God's People Value Christ as the Living Stone (:4)

- (1) Our Desire is to Constantly Draw Closer to Christ
- (2) Significance of "Living Stone" -- Combines Life and Permanence
- (3) Two Different Estimations of the Value of Christ
 - (a) Judgment of Fallen Man
 - (b) Judgment of God

b. As Living Stones Comprising the Spiritual House of God, Exercise the Privilege of Your Holy Priesthood By Offering Up Appropriate Spiritual Sacrifices (:5)

- (1) Our Identity as Living Stones
- (2) The Church Transcends the Glory of the Jewish Temple
- (3) Our Priesthood Transcends that of the OT Levitical Priests
- (4) Our Sacrifices Transcend Those OT Animal Sacrifices
- (5) All This is Possible Thru Jesus Christ--the Living Stone

2. The Fulfillment of OT Messianic Prophecies Regarding Christ as a Living Stone -- In Relation to Believers and Unbelievers (:6-8)

- a. The Value of Christ as a Living Stone for Believers
- b. The Liability of Christ as a Living Stone for Unbelievers

3. Those Who Enjoy the Privileges of Being God's People Should Proclaim His Excellencies (:9-10)

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:11-13A

TITLE: COMMENDABLE CONDUCT

BIG IDEA:

II. COMMENDABLE CONDUCT--ESPECIALLY SUBMISSION TO EVERY APPROPRIATE HUMAN AUTHORITY--IS THE ONLY ANSWER TO PERSECUTION AND THE BEST WAY TO GLORIFY GOD (2:11-3:12)

A. Introduction (2:11-13a)

1. Commendable Conduct Viewed Negatively (:11)

- a. Description of Such Conduct ("*lusts of the flesh*")
- b. Reasons for Such Conduct
 - (1) Our Privileged Relationship -- "*Beloved*"
 - (2) Our Pilgrim Residency here on this earth
"*as strangers and sojourners*"
 - (3) Our Personal Protection -- "*which wage war against the soul*"

2. Commendable Conduct Viewed Positively (:12)

- a. Description of Such Conduct--"*excellent behavior; good deeds*"
- b. Reasons for Such Conduct
 - (1) Our Fishbowl Environment -- "*among the Gentiles*"
"*as they observe them*"
 - (2) Our Maligned Reputation -- "*in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers*"
 - (3) Our Unselfish Objective -- that they might "*glorify God in the day of visitation*"

3. The Essence of Commendable Conduct is Submission to Every Appropriate Human Authority (:13a)

- a. Description of Such Conduct
- b. Reason for Such Conduct -- "*for the Lord's sake*"

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:13B-17

TITLE: *SUBMISSION IN SOCIETY*

BIG IDEA:

B. Submission to Civil Authorities is the Only Answer to Persecution and the Best Way to Glorify God (2:13b-17)

1. Description of Such Conduct

- a. Fundamental Responsibility is Submission
- b. Danger to Avoid is the Misuse of Our Spiritual Freedom (:15)
- c. The Special Honor We Give to Civil Authorities is Consistent With Our General Obligation to Honor All
 - (1) General Obligation to Honor All
 - (2) Specific Obligation to Love the Brotherhood
 - (3) Specific Obligation to Fear God
 - (4) Specific Obligation to Honor Civil Authorities in a Special Way

2. Reasons for Such Conduct

- a. Ideally, Submission Should Be Pleasing to the Authorities (:14b)
- b. Always, Submission Will Be Pleasing to God
- c. Hopefully, Submission Will Be Preventing to our Slanderers and Protecting to Ourselves (:15b)

TEXT: 1 PETER 2:18-25

TITLE: SUBMISSION IN THE WORKPLACE

BIG IDEA:

SUBMISSION TO THE BOSS IS :

THE ONLY WAY TO GLORIFY GOD

THE ONLY ANSWER TO UNFAIR TREATMENT

**THE ONLY WAY TO FULFILL OUR CALLING TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE
OF CHRIST**

Theme verse for this section: 2:12 - Commendable Conduct will be further defined as submission in the various realms in which we live - looked at submission to the authority of govt. last Sunday; today: submission to the authority of your boss in the workplace;

2 Prerequisites: can't take this course today unless you have nailed down these 2 points

1) requires purity first of all - "*abstain from fleshly lusts*" (talked about drawing near to the Lord)

2) remember: people are watching - especially unbelievers - this is our oppty. To show them that having Jesus as the Lord of our lives makes a difference (3:15)

at the end of this section - we are reminded that the Lord is watching as well 3:8-12

How we respond to authority in our life is the proof of to what degree we have submitted to the Lordship of Jesus Christ: Will we respond as the world does?? Or as Christ would - following His example; doing what He wants us to do - which is completely opposite from how our sinful, selfish hearts would respond on their own

The Sovereign God is in control of our workplace (our business) - He will never leave us or forsake us - He is right there with us while we are working all day long

We spend a good chunk of our day at work - so we'd better listen up and get this right

OVERVIEW:

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SUBMIT TO THE BOSS?

II. WHEN SHOULD WE SUBMIT TO THE BOSS?

II. WHY SHOULD WE DO IT?

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO SUBMIT TO THE BOSS? -- DESCRIPTION OF THE CONDUCT

Being a Christian should always make a person a better, more productive, more cooperative worker.

Cf. the Puritan work ethic

People won't listen to the testimony of a shoddy worker or a complainer.

A. THE FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY IS SUBMISSION

How is our context today different or the same from the type of relationship that existed between servants and masters in the first century?

The vast majority of businesses in NT times were family operated and provided goods or services on a very direct basis. (No giant corporations like Caterpillar; no assembly line production jobs; no labor unions)

Therefore, if you didn't have your own small business or farm you worked very directly for someone else as a servant - and often as part of their extended household.

You either fell into the category of servant or master for the most part

The word used here = house slave; member of the household;

Lit. = "to dwell in the house"

Note: Peter not a social reformation crusade to abolish the commonly practiced institution of slavery

Dealing with far more important issues - eternal issues

our type of employment, occupation, etc. which seem so crucial today and so defining of who we are - are really not so significant in light of eternity

Character issues and personal testimony and our role in the advancement of the kingdom of God are far more important and not conditioned on our occupation - Difficult to grasp in today's culture

In every sphere of authority the two points of reference are:

How to properly submit

How to properly exercise authority

Same principles apply today - even though in our jobs we have far more freedoms than the slaves of Peter's day

(also apply these principles to being in the military; to playing on a sports team; to relating to your teachers, etc)

Pres. Tense - ongoing action - willingly, voluntarily take this posture of submission = ranking yourself under

Practical Ways we can demonstrate this submissiveness:

1) have a teachable rather than defensive spirit when being corrected or instructed

2) don't complain about your boss or put him down behind his back - when others are doing it all the time

3) you don't have to agree with the validity of his instructions in order to faithfully carry them out

cf. in times of battle - you can't have the soldiers just following the orders they agree with

4) pray that God would prosper your boss - spiritually, financially

5) work diligently and faithfully all the time - not just when the boss is watching

6) show him respect in your tone of voice, body language, etc.

B. THE PROPER ATTITUDE IS APPROPRIATE RESPECT - "*in all fear*"

could be talking about fear of God (parallel passage in Col. 3:22 supports this)
more natural to think he is talking in the context of respect of the boss here - that is the
decision most translators have made

(last week: "fear God" not men - but same word used here...)

cf. Dennis the Menace - cartoon where he is being disciplined and sitting on his rocking chair in
the corner: "I'm sitting down on the outside, but I'm still standing up on the inside."

C. THE HARD PART = PATIENTLY ENDURING SUFFERING - in contexts where you are being treated unfairly;

"*bear up under*" vs. 19

"*endure it with patience*" vs. 20

First reaction should not be to run away - easy to do in our society

1 Cor. 10:13 - Endurance is possible with God's help

2 Tim. 3:10-12

II. WHEN SHOULD WE SUBMIT TO THE BOSS?

A. THE CHARACTER AND CONDUCT OF THE BOSS DOES NOT CHANGE OUR FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Whether they are Christian or non-Christian our response should be the same;

Whether they are considerate and looking out for our welfare, or like the Egyptian taskmasters:
piling on more and more work in the harshest possible way - our response should be the same;

(doesn't mean you can't cry out to God for deliverance as the Jews in Egypt did; doesn't
mean that God won't deliver; but He might choose to leave you under the pressure)

1) to the good and gentle (gracious, yielding)

equitable, fair, moderate, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law; reasonable
opposite of a brawler in qualifs of an elder

used in James 3:17 in conjunction with "easy to be intreated"

Christ exemplified this - 2 Cor. 10:1

2) to the harsh, unjust

crooked, unscrupulous, dishonest

opposite of a straight shooter

Phil. 2:15 we live in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation

good title for a book: How to Work for a Jerk!

Because ultimately we work for the Lord Jesus Christ who is a perfect master - He is in control of our workplace - we are really working for Him!
Col 3:22-24

B. THERE ARE SITUATIONS WHEN WE CANNOT SUBMIT

(cf. last week - talked about this some with respect to Civil Disobedience)

The example of Daniel and his friends probably the best illustration

III. WHY SHOULD WE SUBMIT?

Peter spends the bulk of his time on this point - Apparently we need a lot of motivation and understanding to respond correctly when our selfish, proud heart is hollering at us to retaliate and not take any abuse

A. SUBMISSION TO THE BOSS IS THE ONLY WAY TO GLORIFY GOD IN THE SITUATION

1) *"for this (finds) favor"* vs. 19 (xaris) with God (v.20) - Almost sense of reward here
This is pleasing to God

Luke 6:32-35 teaching of Christ - How are you deserving of any commendation or reward??

(requires God's grace to act in this way; ends up finding grace with God - God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble)

Illustration:

The story is told of an elderly missionary couple who were returning home on a ship after many years of sacrificial service in Africa. On the same ship was Theodore Roosevelt, who had just completed a highly successful big game hunt. As the ship docked in New York harbor, thousands of well-wishers and dozens of reporters lined the pier to welcome Roosevelt home. But not a single person was there to welcome the missionaries. As the couple rode to a hotel in a taxi, the man complained to his wife, "It just doesn't seem right. We give forty years of our lives to Jesus Christ to win souls in Africa, and nobody knows or cares when we return. Yet the president goes over there for a few weeks to kill some animals and the whole world takes notice." But as they prayed together that night before retiring, the Lord seemed to say to them, "Do you know why you haven't received your reward yet, My children? It is because you are not home yet."

Don't forget: we are aliens and strangers

2) *"for the sake of conscience toward God"* vs. 19

a consciousness of the presence and will of God so that we know what is the right thing to do in a difficult situation - gives us the anchor of conviction so that we are not swayed by our emotions or by what would make us comfortable and satisfy the flesh

No eye-service or lip-service here - truly serving God and our boss from the heart - whether the boss is looking over our shoulder or not

B. SUBMISSION TO THE BOSS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ANSWER UNFAIR TREATMENT

you won't find this in the labor union : Manual for Survival in the workplace
(Not saying that we can't stand up for our legal rights; can't follow appropriate channels to address wrongs, etc.)
we cannot have the attitude of retaliation; we cannot get bitter; we cannot show disrespect...

Important check: make sure we are suffering for what is right - rather than because we are a lazy worker

If we are doing what is wrong, we should expect the consequences

Hard message to get across to our children: Don't expect this life to be fair! That is not the issue; expect to get treated unfairly

God is righteous and fair - We can count on Him
"Shall not the Righteous Judge do what is right?" -- yes in light of eternity; in the ultimate sense; Don't expect to see that type of fair play and righteous judgment executed today

C. SUBMISSION TO THE BOSS IS THE ONLY WAY TO FULFILL OUR CALLING TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST

(somewhat circular: what is the benefit of following the example of Christ? This is the way to answer persecution and to glorify God in the situation)

Jesus let His integrity do the talking
Nothing people could legitimately find fault with

cf. Book "In His Steps"

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:1-7

TITLE: SUBMISSION IN THE HOME

BIG IDEA:
SUBMISSION OF WIVES TO HUSBANDS

INTRODUCTION:

Looking at 2 paragraphs--instructions to wives (especially those with unbelieving husbands) and balancing instructions to husbands; equal responsibility but not equal time devoted to these 2 topics

I. DESCRIPTION OF SUCH CONDUCT

A. Fundamental Responsibility is Submission

this is an attitude followed by appropriate behavior;
subordination is one of function (as wife, mother, helpmeet, hostess)
not one of intrinsic worth;
these are divinely instituted human realms of authority

1. Submission means a certain type of silence -- "*without a word*"

needs to offer valuable wisdom, input, counsel
assumes husband has been exposed to "the Word" -- because in fact they stand opposed to it (an active opposition of unbelief and disobedience); not preaching, harping, arguing, manipulating

2. Submission means behavior that is morally pure
pure from defilement; not contaminated

3. Submission means an attitude of respect -- "*in fear*"
same choice as in 2:18

B. Focus Must Be On Godly Character Not Outward Beauty (1 Tim. 2:9)

There is to be "order" = a system where order prevails (opposite = chaos) -- but what type of order? that which is fitting, not contrary to one's Christian character and testimony-- not trying to draw attention to self; not an exhibition of pride (Is. 3:17-23), but a genuine effort to glorify God
Proper stewardship of time and money as well

1. Negatively -- (:3) not overattention to conspicuous, extravagant, artificial adornment

a. braided hair -- an elaborate gathering of the hair into knots

b. wearing of conspicuous amount of gold jewelry
cf. athletes weighed down with numerous gold chains

"putting around" = a lot of jewelry

c. fine outer apparel -- like mink coats -- designed not just for comfort and modesty and protection from the elements, but designed to make a statement and attract attention

2. Positively -- "*the hidden person of the heart*" (:4)

glows with an inner beauty produced by the Holy Spirit

cf. how God is always described as clothed in light Ps. 104:2

cf. Transfiguration Matt. 17:2

a genuine expression of what's inside

a. Meek spirit -- the way she submits to her husband's direction like a horse (not an old nag) that can gently be reined in any direction (not talking about passivity or lack of personality or failure to express herself -- talking about response once a decision has been made)

b. Quiet spirit -- no sign of rebellion or resentment, fuss, or unrest -- makes for a peaceful household

C. Fear Must Not Be Allowed to Undermine Commendable Conduct

II. REASONS FOR SUCH CONDUCT

A. It's the Only Answer to Persecution

Remember the context: suffering for doing what is right -- here in the context of a marriage where husband is unsaved

not just an oppty. to relieve the pressure on yourself; but more importantly an oppty. to win your husband to the Lord

we should be more concerned about the spiritual destiny of those persecuting us than about the problems they are causing for us

B. It's the Best Way to Glorify God

1. "*a meek and quiet spirit*" -- These are imperishable qualities ties in with living for eternity even gold perishes as Peter has mentioned 1:7,18

2. such submission is precious in the sight of God that which you would pay the very most for in the market

3. Example of godly women throughout history -- especially Sarah

such submission has pleased God throughout history
these were women who hoped in God -- ties in with living for
eternity

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:7

TITLE: BALANCING INSTRUCTIONS TO HUSBANDS

BIG IDEA:
THE WIFE'S PRIVILEGED STATUS ENTITLES HER TO SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FROM HER HUSBAND

INTRODUCTION:

There are all sorts of Entitlement Programs in the United States today. Most of them Welfare programs based on meeting certain criteria - people are entitled to receive certain benefits.

We are going to talk today about a very special Entitlement Program that God has set up - one that some of you here today certainly qualify for; and you kids need to listen up, because some of you may qualify for these benefits later on in life as well.

I am talking about God's special Entitlement Program for the wives of Christian husbands:

THE WIFE'S PRIVILEGED STATUS ENTITLES HER TO SPECIAL CONSIDERATION FROM HER HUSBAND

REVIEW:

Last week we talked about the responsibility of Christian wives to submit to their husbands – with special instructions if their husband was not saved

Remember: submission is not really tested in areas where you agree with your husband. It is best seen in those areas where you find it difficult to rank yourself under the direction and leadership of your husband.

Not talking about being a doormat; not talking about weakness

Danger in our approach to Bible study: how can we let a week go by before explaining the rest of the passage that balances the few verses we have covered??

Importance of Balance in all of these instructions

cf. message to submit to govt authorities

balance = reminder that they are charged with fulfilling their mission of punishing evildoers and praising those who do right (v.14)

cf. message to submit to employer

balance = they are not our ultimate boss; we are ultimately serving the Lord and responsible to Him = the Shepherd and Guardian of our souls (v.25)

3:7 provides the balance to the responsibilities for wives laid out in 3:1-6 - It would be easy for husbands to take advantage of a submissive wife and to exploit her and to mistreat her

You might be thinking as we get started here that you are not receiving the benefits you should from this Entitlement Program God has set up -

Remember:

just because things are out of whack does not give you the freedom to live as you please; verses 1-6 still apply;

it just means that you might be in a context where you are being called to suffer as Christ suffered

Key Perspective:

We should be more concerned about the spiritual destiny of those persecuting us than about the problems they are causing for us;

Christ demonstrated this to the ultimate degree when He cried out from the cross: "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*"

I. WHAT TYPE OF SPECIAL CONSIDERATION?

A. Considerate Companionship

dwelling together with them in accordance with knowledge according to knowledge:

knowledge of God's design

knowledge of your wife and her role and her strengths and weaknesses

cf. Leave and Cleave = the basis for dwelling together; forming a family unit; concept of one flesh;

certainly there are some overtones and applications in this passage relating to sexual relationships as well and the consideration and gentleness and tenderness that must be expressed by the partner who is physically stronger and commands a higher level of authority

talking about staying at home; spending time together

understanding; considerateness

cf. the culture of NT times - husband was around the house much more - probably home for lunch a lot; worked out of a shop adjoining the home or worked in the fields around the home; a lot of interaction and active training of the children for their adult roles; a lot of apprenticeship; we are much more disconnected; easier for the husband to step out of his wife's world and to create a separate world for himself where the problems of the family and the priorities of the wife can't touch him

Wife values that companionship; requires communication

Is our wife really our best friend? Go away on business trip - miss the companionship; doesn't take long to get lonely

Examples of how not to live with your wife in an understanding way:

- 1) Treating your wife as a pack mule - you can carry the whole load - throwing every responsibility on your wife until she collapses (or a work horse)
- 2) Treating your wife as a jackass - unintelligent fool that doesn't know anything
- 3) Treating your wife as a mouse - Squelching her personality; being overbearing; allowing her just to squeek a little once in awhile - but not helping her to grow into the person God intended for her to be
- 4) Treating your wife as a lion = king of the jungle; bowing to every demand; abdicating our leadership in the home and allowing her to take over and rule the roost; some husbands are completely dominated by their wife; they live as a mouse in their home
- 5) Treating your wife as a golden retriever (get this for me; do this for me;...) rather than as a helpmeet provided by God; wife not intended to be your slave
- 6) Treating your wife as just one of the worker bees rather than as the queen bee one of the masses; vs. That very special and unique one

B. Active Appreciation -- "assigning honor"

Key = What value do I place on my wife? How precious is she to me? What type of gift did God provide for me?

Value of a Wife:

Proverbs 31:10 *"An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels."*

Proverbs 3:13-14 *"How blessed is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding. For its profit is better than the profit of silver, And its gain than fine gold."*

Prov 12:4 *"An excellent wife is the crown of her husband"*

Prov 18:22 *"He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord."*

Prov 19:14 *"House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the Lord."*

Church, the Bride of Christ:

Matthew 13:45-46 *"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."*

Parallel Passage: Eph 5:22-33

Practical ways to assign honor:

- 1) Tell her you love her and appreciate her
- 2) Tell others that you love her and appreciate her (especially in her presence)

Prov. 31 - her husband will praise her :

"Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all"

"a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised"

3) Treat her as one who enjoys a privileged status

Frustration builds up easily in a wife when she is not shown that special consideration to which she is entitled

II. WHAT TYPE OF PRIVILEGED STATUS?

A. Endangered Species Protection - both emotional and physical and spiritual protection
many forms of wildlife enjoy a special protected status that often we can't even understand - Yes the spotted owl is one of God's creations - but how concerned or worked up need I get about my responsibility for its protection??

The kids and I joke around when some of the environmental commercials come on the TV - trying to lay a guilt trip on us for not spending our emotional and financial energies on a crusade to save the whales or the tuna or the ...

but one form of wildlife we need to protect = our wife

She is a weaker vessel - physically (comparison here is to her husband)

Can you imagine a coed track meet - what event could a woman compete on equal footing with a man??

more sensitive emotionally (cf. example of how Eve was first to fall to temptation)
She is a woman - taken from man and dependent on man

Strange culture we live in - people trying to get rid of their privileged status - I don't want any special consideration; I don't want to be treated any differently than a man...

B. She is heir with you of the grace of eternal life
Equal Spiritual Privilege

What a gigantic step forward this concept was for women in the first century church!
Tendency for those in high positions to look down and despise those in lower positions

Gal. 3:28-29 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man (Did Peter think that this meant that slaves no longer had to submit to their master?), there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise."

Understand this verse in its context:

speaking of the role of the law in relation to faith

emphasizing that both Jew and Gentile come to God on the same basis = thru faith rather than by fulfilling the works of the law

the law really condemns all men - because no one can keep it; everyone comes to God on the same spiritual basis; the gospel of grace thru faith means that everyone comes to God on the same basis and is incorporated into 1 body with equality of spiritual life and privilege - no second class citizens in the kingdom;

talking about membership in the body of Christ - not whether there will still be distinctions in roles and authority in different contexts

People have taken the verses related to this and twisted them all out of context - losing sight of the glorious truths that are taught - What is more important than equality of spiritual life and privilege??

Equal pay for equal work??

Being allowed to fight in the military alongside of their male counterparts??

Wearing the same clothing so that you can't tell men and women apart??

Having the same Unisex hairstyle so that you can't tell them apart??

C. That Your Prayers be not Hindered - Effective Prayer Partnership
implies that you pray together regularly

How much value do I place on my prayer partnership with my wife?

What do I think God intends to accomplish thru our joint intercession?

(1 Cor. 7:5 there is a time for marital relations and there is a time for abstinence and for intensified joint focus on prayer)

CONCLUSION:

Importance of wife's perception - often perception = reality

Not enough for me to think that I am showing my wife consideration; actively honoring her; protecting her as I should; treating her as an equal spiritual partner - especially in the area of fellowship and worship and prayer...

What does my wife think

Assignment:

Design your own questionnaire - Interview your wife to see how she feels you are doing in these areas

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:8-12

TITLE: *GOING THE EXTRA MILE*

BIG IDEA:

F. COMMENDABLE CONDUCT ENABLES US TO ESCAPE THE FUTILITY OF THE HUMAN CONDITION

1. Description of Such Conduct

a. Five Attitudes that must Characterize All Believers

- (1) Harmonious -- thinking the same
- (2) Sympathetic -- feeling together
- (3) Brotherly in our love for one another
- (4) Tenderhearted -- quick to feel and show affection
- (5) Humble in spirit

Note: all 5 of these attitudes are essential for submission

b. One Action that must be taken when we are attacked =
The Only Answer to Persecution

- (1) Negatively -- not retaliation
- (2) Positively -- giving a blessing instead

2. Reason for Such Conduct -- Overwhelmed by Appreciation for God's Grace

a. God's grace in calling us

b. God's grace in blessing us

3. Description of Such Conduct

a. Not harmful living

- (1) words that are malicious (calculated to hurt)
- (2) words that are deceitful (calculated to mislead)

b. Holy living

c. Harmonious living -- seek peace and pursue it

4. Reasons for Such Conduct -- Best Way to Glorify God

a. Desire for a meaningful life

b. Desire for God's continued favor

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:13-17

TITLE: TRIUMPH OF SUFFERING

BIG IDEA:

III. SUFFERING (FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LIVING FOR ETERNITY AND IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMENDABLE CONDUCT) FULFILLS GOD'S WILL AND FINDS VINDICATION AND VICTORY (3:13-4:19)

A. INTRODUCTION -- TRIUMPH OF SUFFERING (3:13-17)

1. Suffering Should Be the Exception Rather Than the Rule in the Context of Commendable Conduct

Note: "*all who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution*" but not as the dominating factor throughout their whole life.

There normally will be some correlation between commendable conduct and prosperity

2. Suffering Finds Victory -- Promise = "*you are blessed*"

3 Responses:

- a. Don't fear their fear (i.e. what the world fears)
- b. Glory in the Lordship of Christ
- c. Keep a good conscience

3. Suffering Finds Vindication (:16)

4. Suffering Fulfills the Will of God (:17)

TEXT: 1 PETER 3:18-22

TITLE: ASSURANCE OF TRIUMPH – VICTORY IN JESUS

BIG IDEA:

CHRIST'S DEATH (THE ULTIMATE SUFFERING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF LIVING FOR ETERNITY AND IN THE CONTEXT OF COMMENDABLE CONDUCT) FULFILLED THE WILL OF GOD AND HIS RESURRECTION SECURED VINDICATION AND VICTORY

I. CHRIST'S DEATH FULFILLED THE WILL OF GOD (:18)

A. His Righteousness -- The Paradox of His Death

How could this be the will of God?

1. The Anointed of God
2. The Just for the Unjust
3. On Account of sins

His suffering was a pattern in some sense for us and yet was unique since His death was substitutionary and atoning.

B. His Reality -- The Finality of His Death -- It really did happen.

1. Died once for all
2. Having been put to death in the flesh

C. His Resurrection -- The Reversal of His Death

He was made alive in the spiritual realm of existence, with His spirit united to His resurrection body (1 Cor.15).

D. His Reconciliation -- The Purpose of His Death

II. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION SECURED VINDICATION (:19-20)

A. The Proclamation of Vindication

B. The Prisoners Who Heard the Vindication

C. The Provision That Required Vindication

III. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION SECURED VICTORY (:21-22)

A. The Proclamation of Victory = Baptism

B. The Prisoners Who Tasted Defeat = angels, authorities, powers

C. The Provision That Accomplished Victory = resurrect. & exaltation

TEXT: 1 PETER 4:1-6

TITLE: ACCEPTANCE OF SUFFERING

BIG IDEA:

THE ACCEPTANCE OF SUFFERING -- COMPLETE DEDICATION TO THE WILL OF GOD

INTRODUCTION:

Don't shrink back from total commitment to the will of God even though you see that it will bring some suffering. Peter has already encouraged us regarding the Triumph of Suffering and the Assurance of Triumph. Now he exhorts us to Accept Suffering.

Big Idea: ACCEPT SUFFERING (from the perspective of living for eternity and in the context of commendable conduct) **AND DEDICATE YOURSELF TO THE WILL OF GOD KNOWING YOU WILL BE VINDICATED AND VICTORIOUS**

The worse they can do is kill you (like they crucified Christ) and that just gains you a quicker entrance into the spiritual realm of sinless perfection (which is the goal we are longing for).

I. ACCEPT SUFFERING IN THE CHRISTIAN WARFARE (:1)

A. Our Example = The Suffering of Christ unto death

Strange warfare: you don't fight back, but you accept suffering
This suffering is limited to our earthly existence which is nothing from the perspective of eternity (John 18:10-11 a tough lesson for Peter to learn)

B. Our Armor -- another weapon to add to the Christian armor

"in mind" (Heb. 4:12 only other usage); program your mind correctly
patience and submissiveness under unjust treatment
we need to have the mind of Christ

C. Our Goal = Sinless Perfection When is that goal attainable?

Only after death = "suffered in the flesh" unto death!
Our Desire as Christians is to cease from sin; that is why we wanted a Savior (the thought of Christians who are satisfied with sin and just want a ticket to heaven that they can cash in when they die is foreign to Scripture)

II. DEDICATE YOURSELF TO THE WILL OF GOD (:2-3)

this is a result of the proper mind-set (not a result of ceasing from

sin); Our lives on earth should be clearly divided into 2 different periods of time and corresponding lifestyles

A. *"the time already past" -- "the desire of the Gentiles"*
"the lusts of men"

1. lasciviousness -- indecency, lack of restraint, immoral excess (2 Cor. 12:21) -- actions that excite disgust and shock public decency
2. sinful, passionate desires of all sorts; lusts perverting natural desires into sinful desires
3. drunkenness -- under control of wine
4. brawls, riots -- reinforcing one another in a crowd
5. drinking parties
6. abominable idolatries -- contrary to law and justice these must have been bad if forbidden by Roman law

B. *"the rest of the time in the flesh" -- "the will of God"*

How committed are we to the will of God? We are very concerned (almost obsessed) with God's will as it relates to our happiness (finding the right life partner, best job, best house, best car) but that is a very man-centered approach to the will of God; What is God's program = THE CHURCH; How am I functioning to further God's program?

III. VINDICATION (:4-5)

- A. The Astonishment of the Unsaved
thinking something to be foreign in nature to something else
- B. The Attack by the Unsaved = they blaspheme
- C. The Accounting (:5) payback
Despite what man think (cf. days of Noah), God is holding Himself in readiness to render judgment; Death will provide no escape judgment is often seen as vindication of the righteous

IV. VICTORY (:6) example of Christian martyrs

In view of final judgment, the martyred believers are better off than

the unbelieving Gentiles. "With this end in view (i.e. the final judgment and accounting) was the gospel formerly preached also to those (martyrs) now dead, that they might be (as they were) judged in the flesh by their persecutors (and condemned to martyrdom) after the fashion of men, but might live in the glorified spiritual realm according to God."

TEXT: 1 PETER 4:7-11

TITLE: URGENCY OF COMMITMENT

BIG IDEA:

**ACCEPT SUFFERING AND COMMIT YOURSELF TO THE WILL OF GOD
KNOWING THE END IS IMMINENT**

INTRODUCTION:

Some people work best under the pressure of a deadline. I'm one of them. There's a special urgency when you know you only have a limited time to produce. It seems to sharpen the focus of my mind and help my concentration level. I'm definitely more committed to the task at hand.

You think of people who know that they don't have very long to live--the end is near--for some of them the end might even be imminent--it could come at any time--the doctors can't say for sure. What a change in perspective if God told us that 1988 was going to be it for us. Time is precious and our perspective towards time helps to determine our priorities.

Peter has already told his readers to live for eternity. That is one essential perspective towards time that will help them maintain righteous living in the face of persecution.

But there is another perspective that is essential as well. (Last week we learned the lesson: Accept Suffering and Commit Yourself to the Will of God Knowing You Will Be Vindicated and Victorious)

**Big Idea: ACCEPT SUFFERING AND COMMIT YOURSELF TO THE WILL OF GOD
KNOWING THE END IS IMMINENT**

I. THE NEED FOR URGENCY OF COMMITMENT the end of all things is at hand

If this was true back in the days of the 1st century church; it must be even more true (if that's possible) in 1988 in the 20th century church

Throughout the epistle Peter has been laying the foundation for this perspective towards time -- that we are in the last days and must live accordingly

1:5 salvation ready to be revealed in the last time

1:6 trials and suffering are only for a little while

1:13 very parallel; links eschatological hope with urgency of commitment to holiness and the will of God in the present

"Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed."

1:20 "*Christ was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake*"

2:12 live good lives because day of visitation is coming

4:5 the judge is standing at the door; Christ is holding Himself in readiness to judge the living and the dead at His return will mean vindication and victory for us

We cannot afford to take a lazy laid-back approach towards the Christian life;

Maybe Peter had fallen asleep back in the Garden of Gethsemane instead of watching and praying because he really hadn't believed that the end of Christ's earthly ministry was at hand. Where was his sense of urgency? In the NT, the approach of the end is always accompanied by a challenge to watchfulness and irreproachable behavior

"*the end*" -- from a word that originally meant "to turn around"

"the turning point; hinge; the culminating point at which one stage ends and another begins" Marriage is a *telos* -- both an end of one state of existence and the beginning of another;

"*has come near*" -- Perf. tense with the result that it is at hand; imminent

II. COMMITMENT TO GOD

A. Thinking Straight -- Sensibly and Seriously

opposite of ignorance and frivolity
too often we go off half-cocked and pervert some doctrine into irresponsible living (cf. Thessalonian believers -- felt a sense of urgency of living in the last days, but responded by quitting work)

we need the input and counsel and exhortation of the body to protect us against stupid mistakes and enable us to think straight

B. Living a Disciplined Lifestyle

Be sober -- free from excess, passion, rashness, confusion
self-controlled; not carried away by self-indulgence or excitement
harness our emotions -- only possible if we are thinking straight

C. Appropriating God's Will and Resources Through Prayer

The Priority of Prayer for 1988 sustained & effective prayer

How can you take time for prayer if you are living with a sense of urgency? Do you think you can effectively worship God and minister to others according to your own plan and based on your own resources or only according to God's plan and with His resources?

Take time to be holy; speak oft with the Lord; forgetting in nothing His blessing to seek

III. COMMITMENT TO ONE ANOTHER

A. Mutual Love :8

same concept as aggressive love from Chap.1:22 -- directed towards the body of Christ

"*above all*" -- 1 Cor. 13 -- ministry is imp., but only from this solid foundation = priority of love

"*fervent*" -- root idea = stretched or strained -- like a horse reaching for the wire; exerting one's powers to their full extent

Why do we need to keep on aggressively loving one another? because love covers a multitude of sins

hate loves to dig up dirt and broadcast it and gloat (our media oriented society with emphasis on the hardhitting expose has conditioned us to believe that it is our right and responsib. to know the sins of others and inform everyone else)

it is true that some sins require addressing -- either individual confrontation or public exposure

When you get to know someone well, you notice their faults; love is needed to esteem them more highly than the irritations they cause

This year are we committed to fervently loving one another?

B. Mutual Hospitality :9 (love of strangers)

Def. from Gothard: "cheerfully sharing food, shelter, and spiritual refreshment with those God brings into my life"

Excuses people give for not exercising hospitality:

1. too expensive
2. inadequate facilities
3. I'm not an extrovert
4. no time -- my schedule is full

C. Mutual Ministry :10-11 good section on exercise of spir. gifts

5 Guidelines for Mutual Ministry

1. Mutual Ministry is the Responsibility of all believers
"each one"

2. Mutual Ministry is for the Benefit of the Body
"serving one another"
not to puff myself up so others think I'm great

cf. concept of civil servant -- used to be sacrificing income potential and power to sacrificially serve the public -- now much empire building and self-promotion

Same thing has happened in ministry -- Sacrifice must be involved

3. Mutual Ministry is a Stewardship from God

- a. minister based on what charisma we received -- no pride
- b. minister as good stewards of the manifold grace of God

4. Mutual Ministry is a Conduit (Pipeline) for the Resources of God -- Examples of ministering in word and deed

Whatever God gives you, to whatever extent -- you pass it on

5. Mutual Ministry is For the Glory of God thru Jesus Christ

TEXT: 1 PETER 4:13-19

TITLE: BE PREPARED

BIG IDEA:

BE PREPARED TO SUFFER INTENSELY AND STAY COMMITTED TO THE WILL OF GOD – LIVING OUT YOUR VICTORY AND VINDICATION

INTRODUCTION:

motto of Boy Scouts = "Be Prepared"

God's message to Joseph in Egypt = help the nation to be prepared for 7 years of famine;

doctors take much more time today than they used to to make sure patients understand and are prepared for the operation

Peter wants his readers to be prepared to suffer even the fieriest of trials

Big Idea: BE PREPARED TO SUFFER INTENSELY AND STAY COMMITTED TO THE WILL OF GOD -- LIVING OUT YOUR VICTORY AND VINDICATION

I. BE PREPARED TO SUFFER INTENSELY (:12)

the degree of suffering is in view here

A. Assurance of Love Produces Security -- "*beloved*"
this is true in our family; true in the family of God

B. Intense Suffering Should Not Produce Astonishment
Danger of prosperity doctrine = presenting Christ as a cure-all:
Christianity does not provide immunity from suffering; Don't be surprised if the world hates you (1 Jn.3:13) ; we need to teach people to count the cost

C. Intense Suffering Should Produce Purity

1. Intensity -- a fiery ordeal -- must have been a very severe trial in view since they already had weathered other opposition; only other NT usage = Rev. 18:9 the burning of Babylon

2. Purpose -- divinely allowed for testing; image of purifying metal

II. REJOICE IN YOUR VICTORY (:13-14)

A. The Degree of Rejoicing -- determined by degree of fellowship with Christ; God's purpose is to make us like His Son; we must go thru

same school of obedience (Heb. 5:8) Philip. 3:10-11

B. The Occasion of Rejoicing

1. Right now as we are going thru the suffering
2. Even greater rejoicing at the revelation of His glory that will be glory for me (Rom. 8:17-18; 2 Cor 4:17-18) obtaining a better resurrection Heb. 11:35 "shout for joy" used earlier in 1:6 and 1:8

C. The Reason for Rejoicing = Assurance of Victory produced by the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our lives right now; performing His function of exalting Christ in our lives

III. ASIDE: REMEMBER, THE CONTEXT MUST BE COMMENDABLE CONDUCT (:15)

Def. of *"troublesome meddler"*

a compound word:

"another" = denotes an activity which is foreign to the doer, or which is not his concern

"overseer" (same as bishop)

in the context -- seems to be someone guilty of conduct which justly involves him in shame and punishment at the hands of the state; some type of political agitator that would be viewed as a threat to the state?

IV. DON'T FEEL ASHAMED, BUT GLORIFY GOD IN YOUR VINDICATION (:16-18)

A. Don't Feel Ashamed -- not trying to deny or minimize allegiance to Christ

B. Glorify God in Your Vindication

C. Contrast between temporal judgment of the state in executing believers and eternal condemnation of God against unsaved

V. STAY COMMITTED TO THE WILL OF GOD BY ENTRUSTING YOUR SOULS TO A FAITHFUL CREATOR (:19)

TEXT: 1 PETER 5:1-4

TITLE: PROFILE OF A PASTOR

BIG IDEA:

FAITHFUL LEADERS HELP THE PERSECUTED CHURCH TO STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

INTRODUCTION:

(Show an assortment of Christmas toys -- What do these toys all have in common? They operate on batteries -- they need power to perform as designed.)

We need power to perform as God has designed us. We have learned a lot in the last several months in 1 Peter about how God wants us to perform when we face persecution.

Review: From the perspective of living for eternity, accept persecution and commit yourself to the will of God (maintaining commendable conduct-- particularly submission to human authorities)--knowing you will be vindicated and victorious.

Those are some pretty heavy expectations. How can I carry them out? We lack power; we lack the resources; we feel like somebody put us together and left out the batteries; or we feel used up and we need to recharge our batteries.

As Peter closes his epistle he is burdened that the persecuted church not just understand his message, but appropriate the grace of God to live as our faithful Creator has designed us.

STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

(V.1-4) FAITHFUL LEADERS HELP THE PERSECUTED CHURCH TO STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

(V.5A) FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS HELP THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

(V.5B-7) MUTUAL HUMILITY HELPS THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

**(V.8-11) FIRM RESISTANCE AGAINST THE ADVERSARY SATAN HELPS THE PERSECUTED CHURCH TO STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD
(not fighting each other)**

(V.12) SUMMARY VERSE

(V.13-14) CLOSING GREETINGS

the shepherding work of the elders in the local assembly -- profile of spiritual leadership; "elders, bishop, pastor" all synonymous here = same leadership position -- emphasize diff. roles involved

These 4 verses are especially significant when viewed in the context of church history. As early as the middle of the second century the Christian church as a whole seems to have lost the vision for how Christ wants his church to be organized and to function. Even today many evangelicals would probably equate shepherding with preaching + counseling (in specific crisis situations) + administration of church programs. Much more intimate fellowship than this is required from this passage alone.

I. THE PROFILER'S CREDENTIALS (:1)

Why should these elders listen to Peter or be concerned about the right way to pastor the flock? Is Peter really the first Pope? How concerned is God with the quality of shepherding His flock receives?

Our society tends to overemphasize academic credentials
What were Peter's credentials:

A. EXPERIENCE IN THE TRENCHES

His present ministry was that of a fellow-elder. He was not pressing his apostolic authority here, but he also is not speaking from an ivory tower sanctuary. He speaks out of maturity and a full life of feeding the flock--His earthly ministry is almost at an end.

B. INTIMATE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE GOOD SHEPHERD-- LORD JESUS CHRIST

He could ask these elders: How close are you to Christ?
Peter is a witness--giving testimony to what he saw of the sufferings of Christ. When Christ first taught His disciples that He must die, Peter's response had been: "God forbid it Lord! This shall never happen to You!"
But Peter came to appreciate the sufferings of Christ:

1. Shows the sacrificial love of the Shepherd for His sheep
2. As the Anointed One of God -- shows that these sufferings fulfilled the will of God
3. Christ was a perfect model in terms of His response to suffering unjustly
4. We will not be called on to suffer to the extent that Christ suffered

C. CONFIDENCE OF FUTURE, IMMINENT GLORY AND REWARD FOR FAITHFUL SERVICE

Peter had true insight into the believer's hope. He had personally seen glimpses of glory already:

the transfiguration scene (2 Pet.1:16-19)

post-resurr. appearances of Lord of Glory

His ascension and promise of return

What an encouragement to the elders to realize that present hardships are not even worthy of being compared with the future glory and the rewards for faithful service

Those are credentials that carry some weight: He had already faithfully performed the responsibilities of his profile of a pastor; he knows the Lord intimately and can address the issue of suffering unjustly; and he is headed for future glory and reward by now Peter had the attention of the elders. They knew they needed to hear what he had to say

II. PROFILE OF A PASTOR -- THE MISSION FOR THE ELDERS (:2-3)

A. PASTORS MUST FUNCTION AS A TEAM -- PLURALITY OF ELDERS

this is the only structure of church organization and authority that Peter knew anything about;
the responsibilities he lays out are going to be too comprehensive for one man to shoulder;

B. PRIMARY SPHERE OF MINISTRY IS THE LOCAL CHURCH

"the flock of God among you" -- the elders are instructed to give the highest priority to devoting their shepherding ministry to those in their own local church whom God has entrusted to them -- it is for these that the elders must ultimately give an account
Remember -- it is God's flock; not the flock of any pastor

the local church is the best support group for suffering believers

C. FUNDAMENTAL JOB DESCRIPTION IS SHEPHERDING

It is no mystery how Peter arrived at this job description: The Lord's final instructions to Peter still burned in his heart: "Do you love me? Shepherd my sheep." Peter had no qualms about exhorting the elders in this area--the Lord had given him a triple dose in one sitting: "Tend my lambs; shepherd my sheep; tend my sheep"

think of Biblical imagery of shepherding in Ps.23; Jn.10

1. Feed the sheep -- teaching and preaching the Word of God

publicly and privately

Christianity today is moving away from a doctrinal emphasis ;

make no mistake: error is poison;

sheep have a responsibility to exercise during the week and

to get hungry; shepherd helps them graze for themselves

2. Guide the sheep -- make & implement some decisions
3. Protect the sheep (requires a lot of discernment)
4. Discipline the sheep
5. Know the sheep; love them; care about them -- requires spending time with the sheep

D. PROPER MOTIVATION FOR A PASTOR

1. not by compulsion, but willingly according to God
important to hit hard on this, since elders could easily approach the shepherding task Peter has outlined with the wrong spirit--no one twisted your arm to force you to be an elder ; cf. compulsory exercises in Olympic skating -- Why and how did you take on this responsibility? not drafted, but a volunteer :

- a. seeing the needs of the flock and wanting to meet them
- b. desiring future reward
- c. sensing God's selection -- recognizing the Holy Spirit had raised them up to this position of leadership

2. not for sordid gain, but with eagerness
not for selfish, personal gain (probably had access to church finances or could use their influence to steer business their way, etc.) -- eagerness not an easy matter when prominence in leadership in time of persecution can target you for suffering rather than a listing in Who's Who

E. PROPER STYLE OF SHEPHERDING

not domineering, but leading by example

III. THE MEDAL FOR PASTORS (:4)

what can they expect if they perform this ministry faithfully?

A. THE AWARDING OF THE MEDAL

B. THE RECEPTION OF THE MEDAL

C. THE NATURE OF THE MEDAL

TEXT: 1 PETER 5:5A

TITLE: FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS

BIG IDEA:

FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS HELP THE PERSECUTED CHURCH STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

H. Gordon Selfridge built up one of the world's largest department stores in London. He achieved success by being a leader, not a boss. Here is his own comparison of the two types of executives:

The boss drives his men; the leader coaches them.

The boss depends upon authority; the leader on good will.

The boss inspires fear; the leader inspires enthusiasm.

The boss says "I" the leader, "we".

The boss fixes the blame for the breakdown; the leader fixes the breakdown.

The boss knows how it is done; the leader shows how.

The boss says "Go"; the leader says "let's go!"

Elders are to be leaders in the highest sense of the word -- that is why shepherding is such a good analogy as we saw last week.

Faithful spiritual leaders will help the persecuted church stand strong in the grace of God.

But FAITHFUL FOLLOWERS are essential as well. Elders cannot lead effectively apart from faithful followers. Important that people see the distinction in responsibility and that everyone does not consider himself to be one of the leaders -- this is the danger of plurality of elder church govt.: either the leaders will not be truly qualified and ministering at the highest standards (i.e. mediocre -- but plural); or the followers will see no distinction between themselves and the leaders.

Leaders are to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.

Saints must respect and submit to and obey and follow the example of the leaders.

Our passage simply gives the direction: SUBMIT -- familiar from the context of commendable conduct in other realms of human authority

We know that this is the best way to glorify God.

In this sphere it is the only way to fortify the church against persecution by opening the door to God's grace.

Hebrews 13:17 provides more insight into the responsibilities of followers towards their spiritual leaders:

involves putting confidence in those whom God has put them under so that when the situation arises they will more readily obey such authority

Lenski: one obeys when one agrees with what he is told to do, is persuaded of its correctness and profitableness; one yields, gives up, when

he has a contrary opinion

Obviously, when God's Word clearly contradicts the directives of the elders, God's Word takes precedence

Submitting in such a fashion to spiritual leaders can be a fearful thing since there is the risk of possible abuse -- but there are many more safeguards against such abuse than in the other realms (home, civil govt., workplace) -- and even in those realms undeserved suffering fulfills the will of God and finds victory and vindication

Safeguards:

- 1) authority rests in plurality of leaders, not just one man
guidelines for elders to be accountable to one another
- 2) qualifs. for elders are very imp. and must be taken seriously
people have oppty. to select a church on whatever criteria they choose; certainly the spiritual qualifs. of the leadership should be a primary consideration
- 3) believers still directly interact with Word of God; elders are not in some mediating position
- 4) other safeguards are spelled out:
don't lord it over the flock but be an example -- other things we looked at last week

MUTUAL HUMILITY -- which will be topic for next week

TEXT: 1 PETER 5:5B-7

TITLE: MUTUAL HUMILITY

BIG IDEA:

C. MUTUAL HUMILITY HELPS THE PERSECUTED CHURCH STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

1. The Call to Mutual Humility -- Humility Prepares Us To Serve One Another

- a. this call is for every believer
- b. this call prepares us for service toward one another
- c. the essence of the call is humility

2. The Link Between Humility and God's Resources -- Humility is the Door to God's Grace

- a. God resists the proud
 - (1) example of tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-9)
 - (2) example of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan.4)
- b. God gives grace to the humble -- example of Naaman (2 Kings 5)

3. The Link Between Humility and God's Character (:6-7) -- The Power of Humility -- Because of God's Sovereignty and Love, Humility Protects Instead of Exposes

- a. Humility Protects Because God is Sovereign
 - (1) Make sure we have relinquished control of our lives to God
 - (2) How do we humble ourselves? study specifics of 1 Peter
 - (3) Humility is powerful because of "the mighty hand of God"
 - In OT speaks of God's redemption of His people From Egypt;
 - If we trusted God for our eternal destiny why do we struggle with trusting Him for today?
- b. Humility Leads to Exaltation (Matt. 23:1-12; Luke 14:7-11)
 - "in time" has special eschatological signif. -- the end times when Christ will be manifested (1:5; 2:12)
- c. Humility Protects Us Because God is Love -- He Cares -- "it matters to Him concerning us"; contrast John 10:13); so we must cast on Him our anxiety (that which would distract us from wholehearted devotion and faith in Christ) regarding our

vulnerability due to humbling ourselves trusting that humility protects us rather than exposes us even during persecution (illustr. of Mark 4:35-41 -- the boat won't sink and the storm won't last forever)

TEXT: 1 PETER 5:8-14

TITLE: CAREFUL RESISTANCE

BIG IDEA:

CAREFUL RESISTANCE AGAINST THE ENEMY HELPS THE PERSECUTED CHURCH TO STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

ARE YOU READY TO FIGHT THE ENEMY?

INTRODUCTION:

"Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom" -- a familiar saying in our country. We remember from Pearl Harbor what it's like to get caught off guard. The enemy can be so deceptive: Japan's peace envoys were seated at the negotiating table at the very moment the attack was launched. Our country depends on a strong defense -- on being watchful so we are not surprised by a sneak attack and on being powerful so that we are prepared to fight when we have to. The same holds true in the spiritual realm:

Big Idea: CAREFUL RESISTANCE AGAINST THE ENEMY HELPS THE PERSECUTED CHURCH TO STAND STRONG IN THE GRACE OF GOD

I. Be On the Alert -- Be Careful -- Military Alert

He has just told them to be care-free; now he says be careful; not "let go and let God"; not passive in this spiritual warfare, but active;

- A. Disciplined self-control; clear thinking; good decisions
- B. Wide-awake watchfulness

20 times in the NT, believers are reminded to be on the alert, to Watch. Most of the time it is Jesus who commands it.

If we are not careful, Satan can quickly gain an advantage:

- 1) Eph. 4:26-27 keep short accounts regarding sin; be quick to repent
- 2) 2 Cor. 2:10-11 a resentful or unforgiving spirit
- 3) Jude 9 tread with caution; don't have a flippant attitude that the devil can't touch me

II. Know the Enemy and Sense the Danger -- Military Intellegence

A. His Makeup -- Character -- Identity

1. "your adversary" if you are proud, God opposes you; if you

are humble and submit to the mighty hand of God, Satan is your adversary = much to be preferred; we get to pick our adversary

2. *"the devil"*

but he is able to masquerade as an angel of light

B. His Mission and Methods -- *"prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour"*

Lion: great strength; crafty and deceptive -- can sneak up on you
some of Satan's favorite traps: moral temptation; get believers fighting one another; apathy; accusing our consciences

1. He likes to focus our attention on God's limitations
Submit ourselves under the mighty hand of God -- He is not limited
2. He likes to tempt us to doubt the goodness of God
Cast all of our cares on Him because in His goodness it matters to Him concerning us
3. He likes to present to us an attractive counterfeit for God's will and for true worship -- suffering is not that attractive -- that is why Satan tries to use persecutions
Peter says: Be prepared to suffer intensely while staying committed to the will of God
4. He focuses our attention on the present instead of on eternity's values
Live for Eternity

III. Defend Yourself -- *"Resist him, firm in your faith"* -- Military Resistance

Note that this follows "Submitting to God" = putting ourselves under God's control and His umbrella of protection -- only then are we ready to face and resist Satan; Here we see the power of humility once again: it is the humble man (not the self-confident and arrogant) who can overcome Satan's attacks

(James 4:7) if we fail to see the devil fleeing when we try to resist, the first thing to troubleshoot is our submission to God

Rev. 12:10-11 3 Invincible Weapons

A. *"the blood of the lamb"* -- The Weapon of Calvary -- the Victory of Christ

it was on the cross that Satan bruised Christ on the heel while Christ was utterly crushing Satan's head -- breaking the power of sin and of Satan for all time

Heb. 2:14-15 "Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that, the devil"

E.M. Bounds: "Satan cannot stand an exposition of the blood of Christ. He turns pale at every view of Calvary. The flowing wounds are the signal of his retreat. A heart besprinkled with the blood is the holy ground, on which he not only dares not tread, but He dreads and trembles and cowers in the presence of the blood-besprinkled warrior.

A clear-ringing word of testimony to the power of that blood he fears more than the attack of a legion of archangels. It is like the charge of an irresistible phalanx which bears everything down before it. It is the blood applied, and testimony to its application, the martyr witness in life and by tongue of the power of that blood is more a barrier to Satan than a wall of fire."

we are united with Christ in the victory of His death and resurrection -- assured of victory and vindication
we must regard Satan as defeated and live in union with Christ

Illustr: Satan was attacking Martin Luther with list after list of all of his sins; Luther quietly admitted that it was true: all of those sins had been committed by him; but then Luther turned to his accuser and said: "Now write across them all, 'the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin'" -- that is the perfect and sufficient answer to our accuser

Satan's goal is to have us take our eyes off Christ; to divert our attention from the cross -- we need to be looking unto Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith who for the joy set before Him endured the cross

B. "*the word of our testimony*" -- The Weapon of Testimony
these are not abstract theological or philosophical concepts--
we give testimony to the reality of the risen, victorious Christ thru our changed lives -- as we become more and more like Christ ourselves

Satan's goal is to silence our testimony; to discourage us, to introduce doubts, to divert us into philosophy and psychology so that the power of the Word of God in our own experience will be snuffed out

C. "*they loved not their lives even unto death*" -- The Weapon of Commitment

Sanders: "This third weapon is not to be directed at the enemy as are the first two. It is a sword which we take with both hands and plunge into our breast. The weapon of testimony of one who has the martyr spirit is mightily effective. To him, life is of secondary importance when compared with the outcome of the battle and the victory of his Lord. His supreme concern is to see Satan defeated and Christ victorious, even if his life is sacrificed in the process. He regards himself as expendable."

1 Pet. 4 -- arm yourselves with this same willingness to suffer even unto death; be committed to the will of God at all costs

take up your cross daily and follow the Saviour

present your bodies as living sacrifices

IV. Draw Support From Christian Solidarity -- Military Support

1 Cor. 10:13 no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also that ye may be able to bear it
if you seem to be tempted to an incredible extreme -- take comfort --
God's message is He could lay such suffering on you because you are able

V. Draw Support From "the God of all grace"

CONCLUSION:

We have all of the resources we need, so let's be on the alert; let's know the enemy and his tactics; let's exercise our faith in resisting all attacks, and let's draw support from the Christian community and the God of all grace

TEXT: 1 PETER 5:10-14

TITLE: STAND FIRM IN THE GRACE OF GOD

BIG IDEA:

**CLOSING REMARKS -- "STAND FIRM IN THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD"
OUR FUTURE GLORY IS GUARANTEED BY THE GOD OF ALL GRACE**

INTRODUCTION:

Alarming to see how some people present the gospel -- How they explain the marvelous grace of God and what that will mean for your Christian life

1) Easy Believism -- just say the magic words -- "I trust in Jesus" -- no commitment; no repentance;

no change in who you recognize as the ultimate authority in your life; not much different than rubbing a rabbit's tail;

No genuine faith involved -- just mouthing some formula and hoping for the best

2) Legalist -- Like the Pharisees back in Christ's day; or like some of the present day teachings of the Roman Catholic Church; God's Grace is available; He wants to freely give it to you; but you need to do your part and earn it by cooperating with God. Say some more prayers; get some more grace. Partake in mass daily, get more grace; give money to the church, get more grace. Do, Do, Do in order to Get, Get, Get.

3) Health and Wealth Gospel -- God has all sorts of goodies in this life ready to hand out to you --

sort of like Halloween candy -- all you need to do is go spiritual trick or treating -- Name and Claim what you want;

deliverance from any type of physical problems; financial prosperity; your favorite sports team will always win --

you name it = A Perverted presentation of the Grace of God

yes, God is a good God

yes, God delights to give good gifts to His children

yes, God is powerful enough to give you any of these things

NO, this is not God's design for how you will best grow spiritually or how He will receive glory from your life and testimony

Our study in 1 Peter -- if it has taught us nothing else -- should have taught us that we should expect to follow in the footsteps of Christ and experience some level of suffering before we enter into eternal glory

5:14 -- THIS IS THE TRUE GRACE OF GOD. STAND FIRM IN IT!

"On Christ the Solid Rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand"

The foolish man built his house upon the sand; build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ

OUR FUTURE GLORY IS GUARANTEED BY THE GOD OF ALL GRACE

This is what gives us security both now and for the future -- the wonderful grace of Jesus

many of our problems come from being insecure

we are afraid, so we don't step out in faith and do what we need to do

we are insecure about whether God really loves us and cares about us, so we get caught up in a works mentality trying to earn God's favor

we are insecure about God's forgiveness, so we live with the weight and paralysis of guilt

I. THE PROMISE OF FUTURE GLORY MADE BY THE GOD OF ALL GRACE

"called you to His eternal glory in Christ"

A. God makes some amazing promises

Matt. 19:27-30 Peter had some moments of insecurity when he questioned whether it was really worth it to make such sacrifices and commitment to follow the path of discipleship "It will be worth it when we see Jesus"

B. Effectual Call -- 1:3 *"according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope"*

We didn't start on this journey by our own self-effort or works --

Likewise, our confidence in reaching our final destination is in the grace of God

James 1:18 *"In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures"*

Rom. 8:18-39 *"the suffering of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us --whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified"*

(cf. the glory of the most beautiful jewelry to the cheap plastic rings given to kids by dentists -- you

can't even make such a comparison -- not in the same league)

1 Cor. 1:7-9 *"awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord"*

2 Thess. 2:13-14 *"But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.*

And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. So then, brethren, STAND FIRM!"

Interesting tension:

Everything depends on God's mercy and grace

Yet we are called to Stand Firm! -- as our responsibility in living by grace thru faith

C. Eternal Glory

What's it going to be like to reign on the earth with Christ in the Millennial Kingdom??
What's it going to be like to enjoy the glory of heaven forever?

That's what the Almighty God has chosen for Himself -- He could have chosen any destiny He wanted -- We get to share in the same destiny

What's the most valuable thing you can think of on earth? Gold and silver
the streets in heaven are made out of gold (Rev. 21:21)

D. God of all Grace

(elsewhere in 2Cor.1 -- "the God of all Comfort")

able to communicate that grace to us right now -- as much as we need to enable us to remain faithful and to persevere in the midst of whatever fiery trials we might experience

We experience the grace of God as we are united to Jesus Christ -- He is the one who came to bring us the grace of God

John 1: 14-18 *"full of grace and truth; of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace"*

We want to focus on Jesus in the midst of our trials, instead of focusing on our trials
focus on His love for us -- He gave His life for us; His grace and mercy

"Turn your eyes upon Jesus" -- this is where we will experience the grace of God in our present troubles

II. THE PATHWAY TO THAT FUTURE GLORY = PRESENT SUFFERING

"after you have suffered for a little while"

"The Via Delorosa"

cf. The road that Christian travelled in Pilgrim's Progress

Review of what we have covered in terms of the content of 1Peter

III. THE PAYOFF OF THAT FUTURE GLORY

"will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you"

"He Himself" will do it -- the God of all Grace -- the only one who can do it; don't think that it is your job to grab onto future glory and pull yourself up there

Psalm 1 -- picture the righteous standing tall and solid like a large oak tree

"the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish"

CONCLUSION:

2 Chron. 20:17 -- Moabites and Ammonites join forces to invade Judah and Jerusalem and to try to defeat King Jehoshaphat
 appealed to God's power and dominion vs. 6
 appealed to the promise of God vs.9
 acknowledged they did not have the power in themselves to win the victory vs. 12

ultimately the battle is the Lord's (vs. 15); Yes we need to wrestle hard against our adversary the devil -- firm in our faith; we need to gird our minds for action and live a life of holiness -- but most importantly we need to stand firm in the true grace of God and see the salvation that God accomplishes