

# 1 Peter 5 Notes

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## ***Suffering Christians Should Remember Their Lord Will Return (4:7-5:11)***

- The requirements for Christian leadership (5:1-4).
  - It is no accident that God chose to call us sheep. Sheep need constant attention and meticulous care. When the church is under severe persecution, it needs strong, godly, effective shepherds. "Exhort" means literally "to call alongside," or in the general sense, "to encourage or compel someone in a certain direction." Peter is their fellow elder. In John 21:15-19, Jesus charged Peter with the care of His sheep.
  - There are three New Testament terms used interchangeably to refer to these men: "elder" (*presbuterion*; cf. 1 Timothy 5:19; 2 John 1; 3 John 1), "bishop" or "overseer" (*episkopos*; cf. 2:25; Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7), and "pastor" (*poimen*; cf. Ephesians 4:11). "Elder" emphasizes the man's spiritual maturity necessary for such work. "Bishop" or "overseer" states the general responsibility of guardianship. "Pastor" expresses the priority duty of feeding or teaching the truth of God's word.
  - "Taking" the oversight does not imply that it is to be done as if by force. The term simply means that the elder must accept the responsibilities of his charge. The term "overseer" implies that he is to superintend or look over all phases of the work of the church. Since the responsibilities of the office of elder are great and since elders will be required to give account of their work (Hebrews 13:17), no one should be forced into this position.
  - Elders must avoid the temptation to be motivated by money or material benefits. An elder is a selfless servant committed to sacrifice and not preoccupied with money and materialism. "Filthy lucre" actually goes beyond just seeking wealth and speaks to the shameful acquisition of it. True shepherds will never use the eldership to steal the sheep's money or acquire it dishonestly.
  - Some think that "lording it over the flock" means that the elders are not to exercise any authority in discipline that does not agree with majority rule. But the Lord's church is not set up to be ruled by the majority. Elders cannot go beyond the authority of Christ, nor can they legislate the liberty in Christ of each Christian. According to the wisdom of God, a plurality of elders preserves it against imbalance.
  - An elder cannot "lord" their will over the church as a "boss," but he must lead the way for the others to follow. Instead of giving strict commands to others in trying to drive them to service, he must set

the example and beckon the others to follow. However, this does not mean

- Elders "lord" over the flock when they issue commands and restrictions without due respect to the congregation and the Bible -- when they make laws that are not in harmony with the Bible or for the welfare of the congregation. An elder should be an example in all aspects of life. He should be an example in faithfulness to the Lord's church and as a worker in the kingdom.
- "Chief Shepherd" is one of the most beautiful titles for the Savior in all of scripture. The reward of eternal glory ought to be all the reason any elder needs for desiring to sever faithfully.
- The realization of Christian victory (5:5-11).
  - Peter specifically targets those who were "younger." The reason is not stated, but it could be because of the difficulty of submitting when one is young. "Be clothed" is a rare word that refers to a slave putting on an apron before serving. So Christians are to imitate their Lord, who girded Himself and served (John 13:4-17). Like today, humility was not an admired trait in the first century pagan world.
  - To reinforce his exhortation for humility, Peter quoted from Proverbs 3:34. Pride sets one against God and vice versa. Peter encouraged his audience to persevere by speaking of the "mighty hand of God." "Casting" means throwing something on something else or someone else.
  - The concept of God's concern for human affliction is one of the peculiar features of the gospel; though Greek philosophy at its highest could formulate a doctrine of God's perfect goodness, it could not imagine His active concern for humankind. Although "sober" usually means self-control in relation to intoxication, it is used here in a more metaphorical connotation. It includes balancing life's important issues, which requires the discipline of mind and body.
  - Peter's exhortations perhaps reflects his own experience in which Satan had "sifted" him (Luke 22:31) and he had failed to "watch" (Matthew 26:38; Mark 14:34). There is perhaps no more appropriate appellation that can be given to the devil than to say that he is a malicious "adversary" and resists all our efforts to obey God. This lion mentioned here is not the stealthy one creeping through the grass. This is the raging lion who roars when he is roused with hunger; it is then that he is most fierce, and most eagerly seeks his prey.
  - "Stedfast" means "solid" (the Greek is *stereos*, from which comes the English *stereo*, meaning "solid," or balanced at both ends). Peter assures his readers that if they persevered humbly and submissively, vigilantly and courageously in the midst of trials, they were not alone.

- Peter contrasts satanic opposition to God's purpose and power. For Christians, God has as His gracious purpose bringing His children Himself to share in His glory (cf. Psalm 73:23-24; John 17:22, 24; Romans 8:30). The eternal glory contrasts with the temporal trials Christians suffer. God wants His servants strong in order to face their spiritual battles.

### **Conclusion (5:12-14)**

- Silas is the same person as the one mentioned earlier (Acts 15:22-33; 15:40-18:5; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1). He was one of the leading men in the early church, and was a model of fidelity to the truth and the church. What help he gave Peter in writing this letter is uncertain. If he was the secretary (amanuensis), it would have been normal for him to have a significant part in writing, perhaps even using his own words to convey Peter's message.
- Although there are three possibilities for the location of "Babylon," it is probably a name for Rome. The reason for giving it a cryptic name is not given. Perhaps Peter did not want to endanger the Roman Christians, but this is not certain.
- By using the term "my son" for Mark, Peter was indicating that Mark was the apostle's spiritual son (as Timothy was to Paul). This is the John Mark mentioned in Acts 12:12 (cf. Mark 14:51-52). He was Barnabas's cousin and accompanied Paul and him to Antioch and Cyprus (Colossians 4:10; Acts 12:25; 13:4-5). He later deserted them at Perga (13:13), which caused Paul to refuse to take him along on the apostle's second missionary journey (15:36-41). Paul later found John Mark to be useful to him (2 Timothy 4:11). Mark was also the author of the gospel that bears his name.
- The formal kiss was common among early Christians as an expression of love in the church. From the third century A.D., the sexes were separated in the practice of the "kiss of love." But we do not know how old the practice of the formal kiss was in existence.